

**What
is
SOUL?**

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ

فَالرُّوحُ أَمْرٌ
مَّا نَدْرِكُهُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ
وَلَا نَحْصِيهِ كَمَا نَحْصِي
الْمَالَ وَالرُّوحُ أَمْرٌ
مَّا نَدْرِكُهُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ
وَلَا نَحْصِيهِ كَمَا نَحْصِي
الْمَالَ وَالرُّوحُ أَمْرٌ

17 : 85

**‘Allāmah
Naṣīr-al Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai
(Sitārah-yi Imtiyāz)**

وَيَسْتَأْذِنُكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ

فَالرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

(O Prophet!) They ask you
concerning *ar-rūḥ* (the Spirit). Say:
the *rūḥ* (Spirit) is from (the world
of) Command (*amr*) of my Lord.
(17:85)

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What is Soul?

°Allāmah
Naşir al-Dīn Naşir Hunzai (S.I.)

Translated from Urdu into English by

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What is Soul?
What is the personal world?
What is a human being?

Q. What does the above title mean?

A. It means that the human being who wants to recognise his soul, has to undertake the journey of his personal world, which is potentially within himself. First he needs to have due recourse to the Imām of the time (*hādī-yi zamān*). Then in the light of his guidance he has to actualise his personal world from potentiality and travel in it and in order to be successful in this extremely great feat he has to cheerfully bear all hardships.

The personal world is mentioned all over the Qur’ān in the language of wisdom. [In order to see it] either study the Qur’ān with wisdom and due discipline or study the wisdom of the Qur’ān acquired by the hard work of others. Alas! You accept the wisdom of the Qur’ān by calling it the wise Qur’ān, but you do not endeavour to acquire it, whereas the abundant good lies in wisdom.

We humbly pray to God, may He be exalted, to enrich all the people of faith with the everlasting wealth of the profound wisdom of His cherished Book, the wise Qur’ān. Āmīn!

Karachi,

Saturday,

15th Ramaḏān al-Mubārak 1422 A.H.

1st December, 2001 A.D.

Dedication

Date of Birth: 01/12/1929

Date of Passing: 29/12/2017

The Revised Second Edition of this book “What is Soul?” is dedicated to the memory of late Roshankhanu Badrudin Jamani, who was born in Kenya to a very faith-oriented family and as a result, from a young age, the regularity of attendance in Jamā‘at Khānah was of utmost importance to her. This commitment continued when she arrived in the United Kingdom in 1972 from Uganda as a refugee. Despite the great challenges of settling in a new country she made it a priority to pass on the values of the faith to all her four children and her grandchildren.

Her interest in this miraculous *ḥaqīqatī* knowledge began to flourish and she spent her days in search for these pearls of wisdom. She would make her own notes in Gujarati (her mother tongue) and was very particular about the pronunciation of the recitation of Qur’ānic *āyāt* and *tasbīḥāt*. She was always eager to listen to the esoteric understanding of spiritual life in the Hereafter. She practised *‘ibādat* regularly and also performed *sujūd* privately without anyone knowing. She was a very hard-working *murīd*, had the admirable habit of regularly reading books and was extremely aware of *farmāns* relating to healthy living. She made a conscious effort to maintain an active, independent lifestyle as well as fulfilling her responsibilities to her family.

She was 65 years old when she joined Khānah-yi Ḥikmat’s branch Markaz-i ‘Ilm-ū Ḥikmat, London. As one of the most senior members of the branch she set an example of dedication and yearning for *ḥaqīqatī* knowledge by her regular attendance of class and participation in all the activities to the very end of her life in

December 2017. Through this she had acquired the skill of analysis and was able to judge whether what she heard in Senior Citizen gatherings was logical or not.

By sponsoring this extremely important book her family are ensuring the lasting service of true knowledge. May Mawlā bless Roshankhanu's soul with eternal peace and happiness, *Āmin! Yā Rabba'l-ālamīn!*



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Daily Jang, Karachi (3), Friday, 19th June, 1987 A.D.

A Review of “What is Soul?” by Ra’is Amrōhwī

°Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai has already been mentioned in the columns [of this newspaper]. He has an amazing personality and he is the author of one hundred and thirty books. He has a perfect command of Burushaski, Urdu and Persian and composes poetry in these languages. °Allāmah Hunzai has traversed the stations of the recognition of self (*°irfān-i khwudi*) in the prisons of China.

He is especially kind to me. He treats all with kindness but does not make a show of it. One should learn the graceful manners of benevolence from him. He says that the everlasting wealth, that is, spirituality can be attained through the external and internal blessings of the Qur’ān. For seekers of spirituality it is necessary to reflect and ponder on the verses of the glorious Qur’ān to attain its blessings.

[Explaining] “What is Soul?” [he says]: Soul is such a mirror that a new manifestation of Divine beauty and majesty takes place in it every moment, as it is said: “Every day He is in a new glory” (55:29). One of the exegeses of this blessed verse is that the mirror of the spirit constantly continues to reflect the manifestations of the unseen [world]. A question arises here: Can a person with a cleansed heart see the soul? If yes, with which eye, the external eye or the inner eye? The human soul in itself is a universe, that is, it is a microcosm. The state of all the worlds, all universes and existents in the form of subtle particles exists in this tiny invisible world (soul). Soul is a self-subsistent substance. It has four immaterial (*tajrīd*) levels: imagination, dream, spirituality and intellect. Further, it has four levels of embodiment: dense particles, dense body, subtle particles and subtle body. Soul in itself is indivisible, but through the subtle and dense body it can manifest in innumerable loci of manifestation.

According to the Qur’ān, the origin and centre of soul is the world of Command (17:85), which has countless luminous shadows that reflect in the mirror of human existence. Plants and animals also have souls, but the nature of their souls is different from that of the human soul. Every soul is a compendium of different particles. Jinns and other invisible creatures like them also have a soul.

°Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai has discussed the spirit (soul) and spirituality thoroughly in his book “What is Soul?” The fountainhead of his thought is the glorious Qur’ān. This subject is extremely delicate and subtle. It is not possible to condense it in a few lines or in half an article. Those who are interested in discussions of such [spiritual] knowledge should study °Allāmah Hunzai’s book “What is Soul?”



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Important Note

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

- (s) – *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 salāmuhu/ °alaynā 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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By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Preface

The way this profound and useful book *Hundred Questions and Answers* on the most difficult subject of *What is Soul?* has been completed, is by no means the result of the efforts of this insignificant servant. Rather this book, which I consider to be a miracle of knowledge of Divine favours, is the result of the sincere prayers of many pure and innocent hearts of far and near. It is among my fundamental beliefs that the sincere and cordial prayers of *mu'mins* are the means of spiritual aid (*ta'yīd*).

It is incumbent upon this insignificant slave of the exalted Imām that he should thank his benevolent lord for his magnanimous favours, placing his forehead in prostration with thousand fold humility and submission with all the particles of his humble soul and body. Nonetheless, even if this most humble slave succeeds in attaining such a harmony of the countless particles of his soul and body, the wisdom-filled bounties of his lord are so numerous, so precious and so magnanimous that by no means is he able to duly thank him.

As always in this season of the rain of mercy, the way the heaven of Imāmat has poured the rain of blessings upon us all and the way the prime spring of spiritual delights and hopes has arrived in the gardens and meadows of the hearts of friends, definitely fills us with the ecstasy of the feelings of appreciation and gratitude, but in gratitude to all these favours, what can we present to our heavenly king? Even if we sacrifice our humble lives in his path, it cannot be a worthy deed. After all, it is he to whom our very souls belong!

The discussion of *What is Soul?* is highly interesting and extremely useful. This most exalted subject is so necessary that whatever attention the people of wisdom pay it is not sufficient. Perhaps a friend might ask: How can it (the discussion of the soul) be so

important? I would say: Is the recognition of soul not the recognition of God? As Mawlā ʿAlī^(e) says: “*Man ʿarafa nafsahu fa-qad ʿarafa rabbahu* (The one who recognises their soul, indeed recognises their Lord).” So the questioner has to definitely accept this blessed *farmān*.

It is a universally accepted fact that the greatest treasure of God’s recognition is found in the very recognition of one’s self, i.e., soul. This means that this treasure of God and Godhead is full of the secrets of soul and parables and allegories of spirituality. This treasure contains the intellect and soul of the Qurʿān and Islam, as well as the radiant light of Prophethood and Imāmat. When this precious treasure of the great and cherished secrets of God, which comprise all the realities and recognitions of pre-eternity (*azal*) and post-eternity (*abad*) is in spirituality, why should the subject of soul not be extremely important and necessary?

Now, a few words about how the questions contained in this precious book were compiled. The story is such that, on the one hand, a systematic form is given to all those questions on spirit and spirituality, which used to be raised in general terms for a long time. On the other hand, there are those questions which were prepared by Khānah-yi Hikmat at the request and desire of our very beloved president, Faḥ ʿAlī Ḥabīb and other office bearers and members. Remember that anyone can ask an ordinary and illogical question, but such a question cannot touch the heights of real and spiritual knowledge, nor can it comprehend the realities and recognitions. However, a correct question is like the proper design of a building upon which can be erected a beautiful edifice of a wisdom-filled answer.

At this point, I would like to give a necessary suggestion to my brothers and sisters in faith, friends and ʿazīzān (students), that to gain greater benefit of knowledge from this book they should also study the other books of Khānah-yi Hikmat, particularly those related to the spirit and spirituality, so that by this vast study on the one hand, the contents of this book will be clear to the readers and on the other

hand, there will be a considerable increase in their treasure of knowledge.

This *darwish*, who is worn out by the various difficulties of this world, continues his humble work under the shadow of the tree of Khānah-yi Hikmat. May God, the Exalted, keep this shady and fruitful tree and its thriving branches evergreen and eminent in both the worlds! May He bless its tasty, dainty and fragrant fruits more than expectation and may it continue to receive every morning and evening, a share from the sincere prayers of the *mu'min* men and women living on the surface of the earth.

Khānah-yi Hikmat is apparently nothing more than a small organisation of a private nature, but if you examine its importance and usefulness with justice and a view point of fostering [true] knowledge, you will be surprised at how the expedience, wisdom and luminous guidance of the Imām of the time continue their work externally and internally for the progress and strength of his beloved *jamā'at*. Praise be to God! All the members of the *jamā'at* are convinced of the fact that our holy faith is esoteric and spiritual and therefore, in addition to the external means, we also believe in the internal means of the fountainhead of the light of guidance (i.e., the Imām of the time). Hence, we constantly pray for internal grace and spiritual success and help.

Knowledge for a united humanity

The office bearers and members of Khānah-yi Hikmat are blessed with the merciful glance of the benevolent lord in that they are adorned with the ornament of ethics and faith; they possess all the virtues of humility, submission, zeal for selflessness, sacrifice and piety. Their most cherished desire and greatest happiness lie in serving in one way or another, the followers of their holy and pure Imām, by imparting to them true knowledge. They think and struggle practically in order to achieve this supreme goal.

On this occasion, how can we forget the organisation ⁶ĀRIF? This is a very dear organisation. The deeds which it has accomplished in the west to spread knowledge in the Ismaili *jamā'at*, are greatly

satisfactory and bear far-reaching benefits. Its workers have high ambition and courage. Fortunately, they have obtained the wisdom-filled permission and sacred blessings of the Imām of the time to render this selfless service.

How dear is the beautiful name °ĀRIF. Lo! it gives the fragrance of *māʿrifat*, for this name implies the concept of *māʿrifat* and is linked with the blessed *farmān* of Mawlā °Alī^(c) and based on it, namely “*Man °arafa nafsahu fa-qad °arafa rabbahu* (The one who recognises their soul, indeed recognises their lord).” Therefore, it is hoped that in future this organisation will prove to be very useful.

Khānah-yi Hikmat and °ĀRIF, in reality, are two sister organisations, Rather, they are two names of the one and the same existence of knowledge. In both the organisations the office bearers and members always yearn that the splendour of religious knowledge should spread further and further. Since the fountainhead of the light of guidance exists in this *ṭarīqah*, why should the darkness of any kind of ignorance be left there?

By the grace and favour of the living and present Imām, Khānah-yi Hikmat and °ĀRIF at this time possess altogether a hundred books. Approximately half of them have been published. All these books are on the Ismaili faith and are based on the most important topics, such as the concept of *tawḥīd*, monorealism, the wisdom and *taʿwīl* of the Qurʾān, the Supreme Name (*ism-i aʿzam*), *zīkr-ū bandagī* (remembrance and slavery of God), the sciences of Islam, the realities of Prophethood, the secrets of Imāmat, the doctrine of the Resurrection, the recognition of spirit and spirituality, the philosophy of self, religion and science, the service of *jamāʿat*, the reality of light, the proof of Imāmat, the nature of the holy Prophet’s ascension, etc., etc. These books, God willing, can be very helpful for the people of knowledge in the present and in the future.

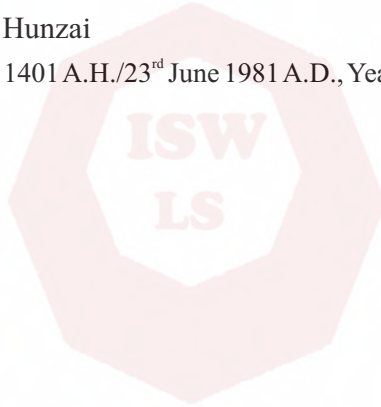
Finally, I humbly pray that the Sustainer of the world in His infinite mercy always grants the fortunate office bearers and members of Khānah-yi Hikmat and °ĀRIF, the luminous success and high

ambition to serve the faith and nation in spreading and imparting knowledge! May He grant them success and exaltedness in this world and the next! May the True Lord enrich the entire *jamā'at* with the everlasting wealth of spiritual knowledge and luminous *ma'rifat!* *Āmin!*

The most humble slave of the Imām of the time,

Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

Tuesday, 20 Sha'bān 1401 A.H./23rd June 1981 A.D., Year of the Cock.



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CHAPTER
I
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Vegetative Soul

Q.1. What is the name of the soul which is found in trees, bramble, grass and every kind of vegetation? Is there only one soul in vegetation?

A. The soul found in every growing thing is called the vegetative soul.¹ It is also called the growing soul. Yes, there is only one soul in vegetation.

Animal Soul

Q.2. How many souls are there in a non-speaking animal and where are their centres? Please tell us their names and functions.

A. There are two souls in non-speaking animals - the vegetative and the animal souls. The centre of the vegetative soul, through which the body grows, is the liver. The centre of the animal soul, which does all the work related to the senses and movement, is the heart. The animal soul is also called the sensory soul (*rūh-i ḥissi*).

Human Soul

Q.3. On how many souls does human life subsist? Which are these souls and in which organs of the body do they reside and function?

A. Human life subsists on three souls, which are the vegetative soul, the animal soul and the human or rational soul respectively. The centre or abode of the vegetative soul is the liver; that of the animal soul is the heart and that of the rational soul is the cerebrum or the front part of the brain. The vegetative soul causes the body to grow, the animal soul is

the source of feeling and movement and the rational soul is the treasure of speech and discernment.

Holy Spirit

Q.4. It is obvious that let alone an ordinary human being, in fact every rank of human being is inferior to the Perfect Man. What is the reason for this spiritual difference? Is this only greater purity of the rational soul in the Perfect Man, or does he have a higher, special and a pure soul too?

A. The reason for the distinct and unique position of the Perfect Man in the world of humanity is due to the Holy Spirit (*rūḥu'l-quḍus*), which is granted to him and by which the soul necessarily remains pure. For, the Holy Spirit has all the meanings of being pure and purifying. This Holy Spirit rests on the human or rational soul and therefore its centre is above the centre of the rational soul, i.e., the forehead, which is the highest place in the human personality and is the place of the manifestation of spiritual miracles.

Problem of the Divisibility of Soul

Q.5. Do the human soul and other small or big souls consist of particles and parts, or does each of them have such a unity due to which it is considered to be indivisible?

A. Whichever soul it may be, in itself cannot be divisible. But through the subtle body, the soul of every degree has innumerable spiritual particles and every particle has a living soul of its own kind. For instance, there are innumerable particles of the vegetative soul in the smallest of plants, however they are all approximately similar and their work too is similar. Therefore it is said that the vegetative soul is one. Or, in other words, the unity of all these particles is

called the vegetative soul. The same is true of the animal soul and the human soul.

Soul and Light

- Q.6. Is the same Supreme and Holy Spirit in the Perfect Man (i.e., the Prophet and the Imām) called light, or is light something different? Where does such a magnificent soul come from?
- A. The same Holy Spirit, which is in the Perfect Man, is also called light, for God, the Knowing, the Wise, has made it the light of knowledge, wisdom, rectitude and guidance. This light always continues to be transferred from the precursor (*sābiq*) to the successor (*lāḥiq*).²

Spirit of the Holy Qur'ān

- Q.7. Does the holy Qur'ān too, have a great and miraculous soul? If the answer is positive, the question arises: where is it? In the Qur'ān or somewhere else?
- A. Yes, the holy Qur'ān has a soul which is living and luminous, namely, light. You can see the proof of this in the Qur'ān itself (42:52), that God revealed the Qur'ān to the Prophet in the form of a magnificent living soul and then He made it a light. It is this same light which is also called the Holy Spirit, which as we have mentioned earlier, is preserved in the succession of the pure Imāms after the holy Prophet.

Divine Spirit

- Q.8. Is it true that God also has a pure, sublime and all-encompassing soul? Please also tell us in what sense was Ḥazrat-i 'Īsā^(c) God's Spirit? Was this status attainable by

Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) alone, or is it common to all the Prophets?

- A. Yes, it is true that God also has a soul which is the Supreme Soul and is in the form of perpetual light. However, it is not in the sense that God's existence depends on it, because the Divine Essence (*ẓāt-i subḥān*) is self-sufficient, pure and above everything. Rather, in the sense that in many respects the status of the soul and light of God belongs to the Prophets and Imāms. Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) is just one example of this reality, whereas in fact every Prophet and every Imām holds the status of God's soul and light.

The Soul of the Universe

Q.9. It is said that this universe has a soul which surrounds it. What is its name? Is it true that we live in the ocean of this soul as fish live in water?

- A. Yes, it is a universally accepted fact that the earth and the heavens have a magnificent soul. It has several names: the Universal Soul (*naḥs-i kullī*), the Soul of Souls (*rūḥ-i arwāḥ*), the Pedestal of God (*kursī-yi khudā*), the Guarded Tablet (*lawḥ-i maḥfūz*), etc. There is no doubt that we are immersed in the deep ocean of the Universal Soul. The question of spiritual union however, is different from this.

Soul in Everything

Q.10. It is said that nothing is without soul. Could you kindly tell us whether such things as stone and dust also have soul? If so, what is it?

- A. It is true every inanimate thing also has soul. However, such a soul remains silent and dormant in these things, because it was Divine expedience and wisdom that the soul below the

vegetative soul should remain in the sleep of death, until it is revived in the form of vegetation. This is called the generative (*takwīnī*) and mineral soul.

Soul of *Īmān* (Faith)

- Q.11. Which is the soul of *Islām* (submission) and *Īmān* (faith)? Where does it reside? Is it speaking or silent?
- A. The soul of *Islām* and *Īmān* is the same soul of the Qur'ān. It dwells in the True Guide. For, it is his Holy Spirit which is full of luminosity (42:52).

Dreams and Soul

- Q.12. Where is a human being's soul in the state of sleeping? Where do dreams occur, in the body, or in the soul? That is, where is the world of dreams?
- A. When human beings sleep, the soul does not leave the body completely, rather its grip over some of the senses is loosened and it continues to attend to itself. Thus, in dreams we do not go anywhere rather, we see them within our own soul. (See: *Studies in Spiritualism and Dreams*).

Zikr (Remembrance) and Soul

- Q.13. What is the cause of the pleasant effect upon the soul during *‘ibādat-ū bandagī* and what is the cause of the sadness of heart due to negligence and disobedience?
- A. The pure and sincere remembrance of God and His sacred slavery and obedience are the paradise of hope and certainty for a *mu'min's* soul. Contrary to this, negligence and

disobedience are the hell of fear and ignorance. This sheds light on the two opposite states of why happiness can be attained in the former state and why sadness is experienced in the latter.

Entrance of the (Animal) Soul

Q.14. Through which path does the sensory or animal soul enter the foetus of an animal or a human being and once the child is born and starts to suckle its mother's milk, how does the animal soul enter it? Does this become complete in a few days or a few months, or is it a long process?

A. When an animal or human child is in the mother's womb, the mother's blood enters it through the navel as nourishment and with it the animal soul continues to come. However, when it is born the navel cord is cut off and it starts to suck milk, then the animal soul starts to enter through the mouth. The process of nourishment which continues throughout life is for the completion and repair of the animal soul.

Fountainhead of Speaking (Rational) Soul

Q.15. From which sources does the speaking soul, which is the human soul, come into the child and through which path does it enter the brain? Does it come all at once (as a complete soul) or does it become complete gradually?

A. The fountainhead of the speaking soul of the child is those members of the household who mostly converse with it, such as its mother, sister, father, brother, etc. Thus with this conversation, the speaking soul continues to enter the brain of the child through the ears and becomes complete gradually.

Order of Souls

Q.16. What is the order of souls entering the human being? That is, which soul comes first, the higher or the lower? Tell us which comes first, the intellect or the speaking soul?

A. Basically, in a human being the vegetative soul comes first, which exists in a drop of sperm, then the animal soul, then the human soul and finally the intellect. From this, the order is clear that first the lower soul comes and then the higher. It is also evident that first the speaking soul comes and then the intellect.

Nafs (Soul) or *Rūḥ* (Spirit)?

Q.17. What is the difference between *nafs* (soul) and *rūḥ* (spirit)? How many ranks of the human soul are there in the Qur'ān?

A. What people think is different from the reality. So, in reality, *nafs* and *rūḥ* mean the same thing. Thus, when we say *nafs-i ammārah* (the carnal soul), its meaning indicates a lower level and when we say *nafs-i muṭma'innah* (the satisfied soul), its meaning indicates the higher level of the soul. The same is true of the *rūḥ-i ḥaywānī* (animal soul) and the *rūḥ-i insānī* (human soul). This shows that whether it is *nafs* or *rūḥ*, it has levels. There are three stages of the human soul in the holy Qur'ān: *nafs-i ammārah* (the carnal soul) (12:53), *nafs-i lawwāmah* (the censuring soul) (75:2) and *nafs-i muṭma'innah* (the satisfied soul) (89:27).

Soul and the Gift of Blood

Q.18. When a person donates blood to a sick person, which souls are transferred into him with that blood?

- A. With this blood are transferred only a small number of the particles of the vegetative soul and the animal soul, but no part of the human soul. For, the human soul is not transferred through blood, but through conversation. Thus, it should be remembered that within a *mu'min*, the higher soul which is the Holy Spirit, is formed through the discourse of knowledge and wisdom.

Levels of Souls

- Q.19. Minerals, vegetation, animals and humankind are major levels or major divisions of creatures. However we would like to ask: does each of these levels have sub-levels too? If so, this means that the vegetative soul, the animal soul and the human soul each has numerous levels. Please explain this.

- A. Yes, there are various levels or grades amongst minerals, vegetation and animals. Also human beings with respect to ethics, piety and righteousness are on many levels. This reveals the reality that there are innumerable levels or grades in each of the vegetative, animal and human souls.

Soul of *Ma'rifat* (Recognition)

- Q.20. If the recognition of soul is the recognition (*ma'rifat*) of God, tell us which soul is this?

- A. The recognition of God is impossible without the Holy Spirit. Therefore in this connection, first of all one has to attain the Holy Spirit and adopt it, because it is the recognition of soul which is considered to be the recognition of God. This soul can be attained through the Perfect Man. This means that the Perfect Man can also perfect others.



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II
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Innumerable Souls

- Q.21. When does the animal soul enter the foetus? Does it not exist from the very beginning at the starting point of the creation of the body, when according to modern research in medical science the particles of animal soul in every drop of sperm, as a whole, exceed even billions?
- A. The discovery of medical science is absolutely reasonable and correct. It confirms and substantiates spiritual observations, in the light of which it was said earlier that there are innumerable spiritual particles in the soul of every degree, which live in conformity with that soul. It should be known for certain that in such a sub-division, multiplicity and abundance of every soul, there are also abundant Divine wisdoms and blessings. However, since movement in the foetus becomes conspicuous after four months, in this respect it is said that the animal soul comes to the foetus at the end of the fourth month.

How many times is the word “*Rūḥ*” mentioned (in the holy Qur’ān)?

- Q.22. How many times is the word *rūḥ* (spirit) mentioned in the Qur’ān? Which is the key verse among the verses related to the subject of *rūḥ*? Please explain with proofs.
- A. If we study the Qur’ān deeply, from the beginning to the end it is full of the mention of *rūḥ*. In addition, *rūḥ* apparently has numerous synonyms too. However, since here the question is only about the word *rūḥ*, it is sufficient to say that the word *rūḥ* is mentioned 24 times in the Qur’ān and the basic and key verse regarding it is: “(O Prophet!) They ask you concerning *ar-rūḥ* (the Spirit). Say: the *rūḥ* (Spirit) is from (the world of) Command (*amr*) of my Lord and you have been vouchsafed very little knowledge” (17:85). Thus it should be known that

this Qur'ānic teaching concerning the *rūḥ* is of fundamental and key importance. For, whatever the mode of this question, it is understood in the sense of the Supreme *rūḥ*, because the word *ar-rūḥ* (the Spirit) is mentioned in it. Further, in order to indicate its realities and recognitions, the word 'Be (*kun*)' and the world of Command are alluded to, in order that the people of wisdom may have spiritual recourse to these means of the recognition of soul.

Special Form of Soul

- Q.23. Is it true that the forms of the soul are as different and as numerous as those of the creatures in the entire universe? Among all these forms, is there any specific form of the soul also? If so, which is it?
- A. Yes, it is absolutely true that the Universal Soul, with all its beauties has a form and resembles the universe and this is mentioned in the description of paradise (57:21). Further, particular souls also resemble the shape and form of the parts of the universe and creatures. Nonetheless, the most special form of the soul is the human form, more specially that of the Perfect Man, which is the Form or Image of the Compassionate (*ṣūrat-i Raḥmān*).

Spiritual Observation

- Q.24. Are the particles of soul that you have been mentioning quite often, in the light of spiritual observation and *ma'rifat*, or based on Qur'ānic knowledge only? If the observation or vision (*didār*) of soul is possible, through which eye is it possible, the external or the internal eye?
- A. It is not possible to describe the particles of soul without spiritual observation, *ma'rifat* and Qur'ānic wisdom, nor is it

possible to obtain spirituality and Qur'ānic wisdom without the spiritual help (*ta'yīd*) of the Imām of the time. The vision of soul is related to the inner eye. However, later on there also comes a time when the external and internal senses together become one. [Then it is possible with the external eye also].

Exchange of Soul

- Q.25. According to what you say, the same one soul, for instance the human or rational soul, is a compendium of innumerable souls. If so, tell us: Do all these souls during one's entire life remain captive and imprisoned in the human body, or is there an exchange of souls and do they come and go?
- A. There is no doubt that innumerable souls under the name of the same one soul dwell in the human body. However, it is true that on various occasions there is such an exchange of them and they come and go that, except for the people of spirituality, nobody knows about this. For instance, during sleep some souls leave the body and some new souls enter it (39:42).

Renewal and Freshness (of Soul)

- Q.26. If this is so, we would like to renew and refresh our total spirituality. That is, we would like the polluted and worn out particles to leave and the fresh ones to take their place. What should we do to achieve this?
- A. This can be achieved through successful *ibādāt-ū bandagī* in obedience to the Lord of the Command (*ṣāhib-i amr*), the service of *mu'mins* and the adoption of humility. God has created this system of exchange for the spiritual progress of the people of faith.

Since when does soul exist?

Q.27. Since when does soul exist and how long will it subsist? In other words, when did God create the soul and for how long?

A. According to Qur'ānic verse (17:85), which has already been explained, the soul is from the world of Command (i.e., it is not from the world of creation). This means that the soul has always been there and will remain forever. This is the supreme attribute of God that in His kingdom things are eternal (*qadim*). For, whatever belongs to the world of Command, is eternal and whatever to the world of creation is contingent (*hādīs*).

Single Soul

Q.28. It is absolutely true that the Supreme Soul, according to one example is the 'ocean of souls' and according to another example, 'the soul of souls'. Further, we would like to know if it has a Qur'ānic name also, so that its understanding may be clearer. Can you tell us something from the wise Qur'ān in this connection?

A. There are many names of the Supreme or Universal Soul mentioned in the Qur'ān. One of them is *nafs-i wāḥidah* (the Single Soul) (31:28), in which all souls are gathered together. From one aspect, all people were created simultaneously and together in the *nafs-i wāḥidah* and they will be resurrected in the same way.

Supreme Name

Q.29. The study of the Qur'ān (4:171), reveals that Ḥazrat-i 'Īsā^(c) was the Word of God which was inspired in Ḥazrat-i Maryam^(c) and was a special Soul (*rūḥ*) from God. The

question here is how was he the Word (of God) and which Word was he? Further, what is the relation between the Word and soul and which was this soul?

- A. The wisdom of this is that Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) was the Word of God, which is the Supreme Name in spirituality both before and after his physical birth, which was given to Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c). The relation between the Word and the Soul is that the Supreme Soul, which is the Holy Spirit, is hidden in the Supreme Name (Word). This Supreme Name or the Word was given to Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c) and it is in this sense that God breathed the Holy Spirit into her.

Breathing of Divine Spirit

- Q.30. It is said in the Qurʿān (32:9), that God breathed His Holy Spirit into Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c). Was the breathing of the Spirit of God in the same way as the teaching of the Supreme Name, or was it breathed in a different way?
- A. We have discussed this in detail in the book *Pir Nāṣir-i Khusrāw and Spirituality* that God, the Lord of Honour, breathed His Spirit into Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) through teaching him the Supreme Name, in which is also hidden the knowledge of all other names.

Why is the Word *Arwāḥ* not mentioned (in the Qurʿān)?

- Q.31. Wherever *rūḥ* (spirit) is mentioned in the holy Qurʿān, it is mentioned in the singular form, i.e., *rūḥ*, but nowhere is it mentioned in the plural form, i.e., *arwāḥ*. What is the secret in this? For instance, in the verse: “The angels and the Spirit (*ar-rūḥ*) descend therein” (97:4) apparently it necessitates that not only one Soul but many souls should descend as the

angels descend on the occasion of the night of “power”.

- A. The expedience, wisdom and secret in not mentioning *rūḥ* in the plural form is that countless souls are gathered in one great and chief *rūḥ*. Therefore, the very descent of one great Soul is the descent of many souls, and its mention is the mention of all of them, as it is said: “The angels and the Spirit ascend unto Him in a day which is equal to fifty thousand years” (70:4). It would be very strange if we were to think that in the lengthy period of fifty thousand years only one soul is able to reach the sacred presence of God. This is not so. The fact is that the chief *rūḥ* or Spirit (such as the Holy Spirit of the Perfect Man) is only one, but the souls of the entire universe are contained in it.

Army and Chief of Angels

- Q.32. In addition to having understood many realities in what has been explained from the beginning until now concerning the soul, we have also learnt the principle that there are numerous souls within a soul of every level. We would also like to know if angels too work in the same way under a chief angel?

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- A. Yes, this principle is also true of angels. There is a chief angel for every task and under that angel there are many other angels who work with him, according to the Divine command. As it is said about Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Izrā’īl^(c): “Say (O Prophet): The angel of death (*malaku’l-mawt* = ‘Izrā’īl) put in charge of you, will take your souls” (32:11), and about the angels under Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Izrā’īl^(c), it is said: “Those whose lives the angels take in a state in which they are pure. They say: Peace upon you” (16:32). This clearly shows that many subordinate angels work under each of the Archangels: Jibrā’īl^(c), Mikā’īl^(c), Isrāfīl^(c) and ‘Izrā’īl^(c).

Soul and Angel

Q.33. What is the relation between soul (*rūḥ*) and angel, and what is the relation of an angel to light? Can there be many separate lights or is it only one?

A. Sometimes soul is called an angel and an angel is called soul. In this case there is no difference between them. Nonetheless, there is a difference between the two, which is that among the souls there are good ones and bad ones, but the angels are all good, that is, they are obedient to their Lord (16:50). Thus, souls who have reached the apex of perfection in obedience have become angels. For, it is the souls of *mu'min* men and women from which the angels come into being. As for the relation of the angel to light, if the angel is a great one he is light, as a great soul is also called light. The moons and stars of the light (of religion) can be separate but they are one, not only in the fountainhead of the light, i.e., the sun of religion, but also in the light which is spread through them.

Advanced Soul

Q.34. The statement that certain souls who obey God, the Prophet and the *ṣāḥib-i amr* (the one who is the custodian of the Divine command), are in the position of angels, or tomorrow they are going to become angels, is extremely important. The statement that “every developed soul is an angel” needs more elaboration so that it may be understood more clearly.

A. Nobody can doubt that Ḥazrat-i Jibrāʾīl^(c) is an angel (*firishtah* in Persian and *malak* in Arabic). You can see in the Qurʾān that Jibrāʾīl^(c) is a *malak* (angel (42:51)) and you can also see that Jibrāʾīl^(c) is the Holy Spirit (16:102) and the Trustworthy Spirit (26:193). Not only in these, but in many other Qurʾānic verses, the word *rūḥ* (soul) is used in the sense of an angel.

Take this verse for instance: “Then We sent unto her Our Spirit (Jibrā’īl) and it assumed for her the likeness of a Perfect Man” (19:17). From this it is completely clear that every advanced soul is an angel. In addition to this, we would also like to mention that in verses, such as (16:2) in which a special spirit (*ar-rūh*) is mentioned with many angels (*al-malā’ikah*), there are two aspects of the reality: one, by angels (*al-malā’ikah*) are meant angels and by the Spirit (*ar-rūh*), the great angel. Secondly, by angels are meant souls and by the Spirit, the chief Soul. It should always be noted that the more facets the Pearl of Reality (*gawhar-i haqiqat*) has, the more value it has.

Special Soul

Q.35. It is true that the word *rūh* is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān 24 times in total. By reflecting on all these places, one comes to know that in all of them the special soul and not an ordinary one, is mentioned. Special in the sense that mostly, the noun *rūh* is mentioned in the definite form, *ar-rūh* and very rarely is it used in the indefinite form, *rūh*. Moreover, even where it is mentioned in the indefinite form, by attributing it to God, in reality it has been made definite, such as: “*Wa ayyadahum bi-rūhⁱⁿ minhu* (and has helped them with a spirit from Him)” (58:22). In this verse, *bi-rūhⁱⁿ* (with a spirit) is used as a common noun, but *minhu* (from Him) has in a sense, made it special or definite. Nonetheless, in saying “*rūhⁱⁿ* (a soul)”, there is also some sort of literal and metaphorical generality. Is there any wisdom hidden in this?

A. Yes, there is a great wisdom hidden in *rūh* being used as a proper noun on the one hand and as a common noun on the other. That is, every rank in religion, whether it is that of Jibrā’īl^(c) or any other, it is in two positions: in one it is a pre-eternal and post-eternal rank and in the other, in every age a great personality and a Holy Spirit succeeds to this lofty

rank. Thus, where the eternal position is meant, proper nouns such as *ar-rūḥ* (the Spirit) or *rūḥu'l-gudus* (the Holy Spirit) are used. Where it is intended to indicate the personality or the spirit which holds that rank, common nouns such as “*rūḥⁱⁿ* or *rūḥ^{an}* (a soul)” are used and then they are attributed to God so that the requirement of wisdom may be fulfilled.

Wisdom of the word “*Zurriyyat*”

Q.36. We would like to have some deeper knowledge about the word *zurriyyat*, as it is mentioned in verse (36:41). There are two different translations of the word in this verse. Could you tell us which one is correct? (a) “And a sign for them is that We bore their children (*zurriyyat*) in the laden ship” (36:41); and (b) “And a sign for them is that We bore their ancestors (*zurriyyat*) in the laden ship (of Nūḥ)” (36:41).

A. *Zurriyyat* here means neither children nor ancestors, for the ship which is mentioned here is the Ark of Ḥazrat-i Nūḥ^(c). Thus, how could the children of the people of the time of the holy Prophet be carried there? Again, it is also not true to say that *zurriyyat* means ancestors. Rather, in reality *zurriyyat* here means *zarrāt-i rūḥ*, i.e., particles or atoms of soul. That is, the spiritual particles of these people were contained in the loins of the *mu'mins* carried in the Ark of Ḥazrat-i Nūḥ^(c). It is a sign i.e., miracle of God that these people were there (i.e., in the Ark) in the form of particles and were observing the dreadful scene of the deluge. For further elaboration on spiritual particles, see *Recognition of Imām*, Part One, under the heading ‘The Imām of the Righteous’.

Ḥazrat-i Nūḥ^(c)'s Ark and the Particles of Soul

Q.37. You have said that the spiritual particles in the loins of the *mu'mins* carried in Ḥazrat-i Nūḥ^(c)'s Ark had seen the scene of

the deluge. Here the question arises, how did it become possible for them to do so while they had no consciousness?

- A. All the people living on the planet earth today were before now spiritual particles in the loins of the children of Ādam^(c). The Lord of the world took them from there and brought them in the spirituality of a personality where the Divine light was illumining the realities and recognitions. Then, God asked those particles: “Am I not your Lord? They said: Yes, verily” (7:172). This shows that where the Divine light illumines things, not only do the spiritual particles receive consciousness, but also all the inanimate particles speak out. As the Qur’ān says: “They will say: Allāh gave us speech Who gives speech to all things” (41:21). Thus, the light of Prophethood and Imāmat was illumining the spiritual particles in Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ^(c)’s Ark and all souls, in a way, were observing this great deluge.

**Were we before Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) or
was he before us?**

- Q.38. From the order in the description of this blessed verse: “And We created (*khalaqnākum*) you, then (*summa*) formed (*ṣawwarnākum*) you, then told the angels: Prostrate yourselves to Ādam” (7:11), it appears that a great secret is hidden in it. Otherwise, if we look at it literally, many difficult questions arise. The question in this verse is that the contextual links in the Qur’ānic verses are in their respective order. That is, an event which is prior in the order of context is also prior in the order of time. This is particularly so when “*summa* (then)” comes after the description of a thing, in order that it may be known that the thing which has been described first in the context, is really first in the order of existence. Also tell us: Did people exist before Ādam^(c)? Further explain: Does not “*khalaqnākum* (We created you)” fulfill all the meanings of creation, or does it not contain all

the meanings of creation, so why was it necessary to add “*summa ṣawwarnākum* (then We formed you)?”

- A. Indeed, a great secret is hidden in this blessed verse. Here, by the grace of God, we will try to explain its wisdom so that, by God’s command, all the related questions of our ‘*azizān* (students) may be solved and their knowledge may increase considerably. The great wisdom is as follows: “*Wa laqad khalaqnākum* – And We created you (before the *Ādam* of this cycle as should be created physically).” “*Summa ṣawwarnākum* – then We formed you spiritually, (that is, a spiritual period passed over you).” “*Summa qulnā li’l-malā’ikati’sjudū li-Ādam* – Then We told the angels to prostrate themselves to *Ādam* (i.e., at that time you were also in the form of the particles of soul and in the position of the *jamāli* or potential angels).” It should be known that in “*khalaqnākum* (We created you)” are contained all the meanings of the physical creation and in “*ṣawwarnākum* (We formed you)” spiritual perfection is mentioned. For the physical body of human beings is related to the world of creation, which is this world and their subtle form (i.e., the soul) to the world of Command, which is the spiritual world, in which they reach the apogee of perfection in shape and form, beauty, lustre and luminosity. For they, in reality, are the Form or Image of the Compassionate (*ṣūrat-i Raḥmān*).

People before Ḥazrat-i Ādam^(c)

- Q.39. In this series of questions on the recognition of soul, you have presented a very revolutionary concept that there were people even before *Ādam*^(c). Would it not be more appropriate if you were to kindly cite one more Qur’ānic verse on this subject?
- A. God, may He be exalted, says: “(previously, all) People were one community, then God sent (unto them) Prophets as

bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed with them the Book” (2:213). This shows that there were people before the cycle of Prophethood and they had the same one path. Then began the cycle of Prophethood in which God conferred the crown of vicegerency and Prophethood, first of all, on Ḥazrat-i Ādam^(c).

Ṣūr (Trumpet) of Resurrection

Q.40. In verse (36:51), God says: “And (when) the ṣūr will be blown they will (come out) from their graves and will hurry unto their Lord”. Several questions arise from this verse. First, what is the nature and reality of ṣūr-i Isrāfil and what is its wisdom? Secondly, is the soul buried in the physical grave or is there *ta’wil* of this? Thirdly, what will be the state of their existence when people will be hastening unto their Lord? Will they be in a physical state or a spiritual one? Fourthly and lastly, since these souls have to be in the presence of God, where will He Who is free from and above time and place manifest Himself?

A. a) *Ṣūr-i Isrāfil* is a magnificent event and a highly mysterious voice at the place of spirituality. It is neither a horn nor a bugle, in fact it resembles a unique, melodious, extremely touching and fascinating hautbois (*shah-nāy*) and a flute. This is the *da’wat-i haqq* (invitation to the truth) of the final stage. This is the melody of true love from which the Prophets and friends of God can duly benefit. On the one side of it, there is *fanā* (merging) and on the other, there is *baqā* (lasting life). This angelic melody is extremely soul-nourishing and highly soothing, so that by listening to it the people who are infatuated with this world, may finally be sure of the realities and recognitions of spirituality. Thus, there are so many wisdoms in *ṣūr-i Isrāfil* that it is impossible to describe them all.

- b) It is an irrefutable reality that souls are not buried in the physical grave, hence there are *ta'wili* (esoteric) wisdoms hidden in the teachings of the Qur'ān and Prophetic Traditions related to the physical grave. Thus, according to *ta'wil*, the grave and graveyard are the live body of a human being, in which are buried so many souls that, except God, nobody knows their number. Is it not true that a human being is the microcosm, i.e., the world of spirituality? If you accept this, then it means that all that exists materially in the macrocosm exists spiritually in the microcosm. Thus, in this microcosm there are certainly graves also. For, when death occurs to a person and the soul leaves the body, it is buried in the physical grave and the soul becomes buried in a spiritual grave, which is a living personality. In Chapter 19 of *Wajh-i Dīn* is mentioned the Prophetic Tradition: "Between my grave and pulpit there is a garden from among the gardens of paradise." Thus the blessed grave of the Prophet was his legatee, namely Mawlā [°]Alī^(c), his pulpit the *qā'imu'l-qiyāmat*^(c) and the garden, the *da^cwat-i haqq* (the true mission).
- c) When *ṣūr-i Isrāfil* is blown and the people hasten unto their Lord, they will not be in this present body. They will be in a spiritual state and attached to the particles of the subtle body which, in addition to this series of questions and answers, has been mentioned in our other writings too.
- d) There is no doubt that God is free from and above space and spacelessness, but His holy light is ever present in this world and it is this light which is His presence. Thus, it is obvious that, Isrāfil^(c) will blow the *ṣūr* where there is the Divine light and the people flying in the form of spiritual particles will hasten unto this voice and this exalted court.



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Portrayal of Soul

Q.41. In one of your works *Treasure of Knowledge Part IV*, under the heading of ‘An important part of a reply to a letter’, you have written excellent points regarding the soul, the main part of which is as follows:

“Soul is a reality, a simple substance, a subtle life, a great world, an inner awareness, a real awakening, an unprecedented thing, a hidden treasure, an everlasting kingdom, a luminous existence, a Divine image, an eternal essence, a unity of attributes, a pattern of life, a subtle universe, a mirror of miracles, a fountainhead of blessings, a compriser of (Divine) signs, a compendium of states, a centre of favours, an expanse of paradises, an exaltation of ranks, etc., etc.”

In these 22 phrases, the attributes of soul have been portrayed in the most excellent way. However, we would like to have further elaboration of the last eight phrases, so that it would facilitate the recognition of soul more and more.

A. Indeed soul is a subtle universe, in which each and everything exists in a subtle form; it is such a mirror that all the pre-eternal, post-eternal, spatial and non-spatial miracles of God, the Lord of Honour, are observed in it. It is the fountainhead of Divine blessings, in which all the Divine signs are gathered; it is the compendium of the states and events of the past and the future. God has made the soul the centre of His favours. By the grace of God, the soul itself is the paradise. The expanse of paradise, which is mentioned in the Qur’ān (57:21) is, in fact, the expanse of soul and it is the soul in which there are all the ranks and grades of honour from the beginning to the end.

Is Soul Perceptible or Intelligible?

Q.42. Please tell us whether the soul is among the perceptibles or the intelligibles? Please explain your view concerning this in the light of proofs.

A. Soul, as such, is intelligible. That is, it cannot be recognised by the external senses, rather only by the intellect. However, when it is linked with the subtle or the dense body, then in a sense, it can also be called perceptible particularly in the form of the subtle body. That is, when our soul is dressed in the attire of the celestial body, we can see it with the physical eye with all its beauties, we can hear its conversation, we can smell its fragrances, etc. When the Holy Spirit appeared before Ḥazrat-i Maryam^(c), it was in the form of a Perfect and Complete Man (19:17). Sometimes, by God's command, angels also appear dressed in the human attire (11:69-81). In short, where the small souls appear in the form of particles, the great souls which are angels appear in the perfect human form.

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Rawḥ and Rūḥ

Q.43. You have mentioned earlier that the word *rūḥ* (soul) is mentioned in the Qur'ān 24 times. However, we see that the word *rawḥ* is also included three times in this number. Does this mean that *rawḥ* also has the same literal meaning as *rūḥ*, or is it its *ta'wīl*?

A. First of all, *rawḥ* and *rūḥ*, in reality, are one, namely they are the same word. Secondly, even if we consider *rawḥ* a separate word from *rūḥ* and then look for its *ta'wīl*, we come again to the same conclusion. In any case, the word *rawḥ* is used for the *rūḥ*, for they have the same root and meaning. For instance, reflect upon this blessed verse carefully (according to which) those who are nearest (to God) receive *rūḥ* (spirit)

and *rūḥāniyyat* (spirituality) from God in the very life of this world in which there are all kinds of spiritual flowers and fruits: “*fa-ammā in kāna minā'l-muqarrabīna fa-rawḥim wa rayḥān*” ^{un} *wa jannatu nā'im* ⁱⁿ (Thus if he is of those nearest (to Allāh) then there is (for him even in this life, the real) spirit (*rūḥ*) and the fragrant flowers and a garden of favours)” (56:88-89).

In another place, the word *rawḥ* is used in this way: “*wa lā tay'asū min rawḥi'llāh*... (And despair not of the Spirit of Allāh. Lo! none despairs of the Spirit of Allāh save the disbelievers)” (12:87). In this verse, it is also possible to read *rūḥ* (instead of *rawḥ*). These Divine words: “Despair not of the *rūḥ* (Spirit i.e., mercy) of Allāh” were uttered by the tongue of Ḥaḏrat-i Ya'qūb^(c) about Ḥaḏrat-i Yūsuf^(c), who was the Spirit of Allāh, a Prophet and an Imām.

“*Ar-Rūḥ*” as the Name of the Imām

- Q.44. Although the Imām has numerous names, what is his name in the language of the science of spirituality? What is its proof?
- A. One blessed name of the holy and pure Imām (in the language of spirituality) is “*ar-rūḥ* (the Spirit)” or the Spirit of Allāh (*rūḥu'llāh*). One of its proofs is that since the Imām is light (*nūr*) he is the Spirit, for the light is in the form of a living spirit. Thus the Light of Allāh and the Spirit of Allāh have the same meaning and there is not the slightest difference in their meaning. The second proof is that Mawlā 'Alī^(c) has said: “*Anā amru'llāhi wa'r-rūḥu* (I am the command of God and the Spirit, i.e., His Spirit)”, and the Qur'ān says: “*Qulī'r-rūḥu min amri rabbī* (Say: (O Muḥammad) that Spirit is from the command of my Lord).” The third proof is also based on the *farmān* of Mawlā 'Alī^(c): “*Man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu* (Those who recognise their soul (Imām) indeed recognise their Lord).” As mentioned earlier, there are many

souls in a human being: vegetative, animal and rational, but unless the fourth soul, namely, the Holy Spirit is attained and recognised, the recognition of the Lord is impossible. It is obvious that the fourth soul is the light of the Prophet and the Imām, which is also the real soul of human beings. Thus the Imām is our real soul, namely the Holy Spirit and this is the purport of the above-mentioned saying of Mawlā ‘Alī^(c).

Lovers of the Soul

- Q.45. Ḥaẓrat Mawlānā Sultān Muḥammad Shāh^(c) has said about certain dignitaries of religion (*buzurgān-i dīn*): “They were the lovers of their own soul.” Which soul is meant by this soul? Please explain clearly.
- A. What is the point of being a lover of the soul which is generally found in all human beings! One should adore the soul which is in the True Guide (i.e., the Prophet and the Imām). It is the soul which is common between the beloved and the lover and therefore unites them both. Thus, in the past the soul which the dignitaries of religion adored was the soul of the True Guide, which in turn was their own soul containing within itself a world of theophanies. How could they resist being the lovers of such a soul!

Holy Spirit

- Q.46. The above explanation appears to be a matter of belief which we accept. However, it requires a proof which should have more rational weight. Can you furnish such a proof which would draw the attention of the intelligentsia?
- A. God, may He be exalted, through His perfect power and consummate wisdom has placed the soul of elevation and development of the minerals in the vegetation. Thus

whatever particles of soil are dissolved and annihilated in vegetation, the Divine Law necessarily grants them the vegetative soul, namely, the soul of growth. Similarly, the soul of the development of vegetables is placed in animals. The pre-requisite of attaining it is that the vegetables should sacrifice themselves for the sake of the nourishment of animals, so that they would eat and assimilate them with their animal soul. Then it is the turn of animals. The destination of the elevation and the higher soul of animals, which are lawful (*ḥalāl*), is in human beings. The one and only way of attaining this higher soul is that they should sacrifice their lives to help human beings to attain the purpose of their lives and at the same time, they would be revived in a way in the human soul. This chain does not discontinue here, it goes further. Among human beings those who are fortunate submit themselves to the Imām of the time in a religious and spiritual sense and merge their *nafs-i ammārah* or carnal soul in their complete devotion to and sincere obedience and perfect love for him. As a result, the Imām unites such devoted servants to his Holy Spirit. Thus, in the light of this Divine law, it becomes evident that the Perfect Man is the highest and ultimate soul of humankind.

Wisdom
and
Luminous Science
Knowledge of **Celestial Body** Humanity

- Q.47. In many places of your writings, you have mentioned names, such as, *jism-i falakī* (celestial body), *jism-i laṭīf* (subtle body), *jussah-yi ibdā'īyyah* (*ibdā'ī* body), astral body, etc., etc. What do you mean by such names? Is such a thing mentioned in the Qur'ān, or is it confined to secular knowledge? If such a thing does really exist, please explain how?
- A. Celestial body means a body whose substance is different from the elements of the planet earth, for it is celestial substance. The subtle body too, is the same celestial body, which is distinguished from the terrestrial or physical body,

owing to its subtlety and purity. Astral body is also the same thing.

As for the *jussah-yi ibdā'iyah*, essentially it is the same thing, but its meaning is greater and higher. For *jussah* means body and *ibdā'iyah* means pertaining to *ibdā'* (instantaneous manifestation), which is the result of the Word “*Kun* (Be)!” Thus, by the *jussah-yi ibdā'iyah* is meant such a miraculous body, in which there is the rule of “*kun fa-yakūn* (Be! and it is)” and the sway of the world of Command. The same is the throne of paradise and is everything. Yes, it is mentioned in the Qur'ān in many ways. The Qur'ān says that for human survival, in addition to this body there are some other bodies too. For instance, let us reflect on this Qur'ānic verse carefully: “And He made for you shirts which protect you from the heat and shirts which protect you from the attack of weapons” (16:81). These are certainly not the shirts of this world, which are made by humans of cloth or of any other material. It is also absolutely impossible that such external material shirts would protect us from all kinds of heat and from the consequences of all kinds of war, except the subtle bodies, which are spiritual shirts and which God, may He be exalted, has made with His powerful Hand.

Faculty of Jibrā'il^(c) (*Quwwat-i Jibrīliyyah*)

- Q.48. What is the faculty of Jibrā'il^(c) and in which rank of a person is this faculty found? Does this faculty itself perform the duty of the angel Jibrā'il^(c) or does Jibrā'il^(c) work through it? Have you written anything regarding it? If so, in which book?
- A. *Quwwat-i Jibrīliyyah* or the faculty of Jibrā'il^(c) is the name of the human intellect which, in the most perfect form is found in the Perfect Man. From one side Jibrā'il^(c) is linked to it and from the other, the soul of a real *mu'min*. For details, see the article “Three Questions from India” in one of my books

Resemblance of Soul and Body

- Q.49. You have said in answer to question 42 that, “when our soul is dressed in the attire of the celestial body we can see it with all its perfect beauties with the physical eye, can hear its conversation and can smell its fragrances, etc.” Here the question is whether every individual and his soul resemble each other in shape and form, or do they differ? In which language does the soul speak? Do all souls have a common language? What is the fragrance of soul like?
- A. Yes, in the lower stages the soul of every person is as his spiritual picture, but in the final stages, where there is the pre-eternal and post-eternal unity of many realities, it is not so. There the soul appears in the form of the Perfect Man. The language of every individual and that of his soul is the same. That is, the mother tongue of each individual is the tongue of his soul also. Souls do not have a common language. In spirit and spirituality indeed fragrances have great importance to the extent that in spirituality even nourishment is given in the form of various kinds of fragrances. The usual food, which is taken in morsels and chewed, does not exist there.

***Ta’wil* of Bird and Fruit**

- Q.50. We have attained tremendous pleasure and happiness in reading one of your books *Pearls of Knowledge*. In this book, you have written about the *ta’wils* of the Higher Reality. For instance, the *ta’wil* of birds and fruits is unique and extremely soul-nourishing. Would you add any other interesting important point to it?
- A. The *ta’wil* of the verse (27:16), according to which, Ḥazrat-i

Sulaymān^(c) knew the language of the birds, is that he used to converse with all souls which consist of the souls of jinns, humankind, beasts and birds. The soul is called bird in the sense that it comes and goes freely, flying over us in the form of subtle particle. If there is meat in paradise, it is only that of birds. Why, because soul is compared to a bird. The *ta'wil* of eating birds' meat in paradise is to adopt a fine, pleasant and a higher soul and to make it a part of one's existence. The purpose of eating worldly good things is also the same that by eating them the physical existence may survive. The holy Qur'an repeatedly says that in paradise food will be given in the form of fruits. In this also an allusion is made to souls, for in the universe and existents the soul of everything is called its fruit. Just as all the characteristics, beauties, faculties and tastes of the tree are gathered in its fruit, similarly all the sweetness and happiness of knowledge and wisdom are contained in the soul of things. Remember well that paradise abounds in intellectual and spiritual bounties.

Seeing of this World by the Deceased

- Q.51. When someone dies, this world becomes invisible to their eyes, because they no longer have the eye with which they used to see this world. Nevertheless, if they want to see this world or at least the members of their family and want to help them in some ways, is it possible or not for them to do so?
- A. First, we have to see whether the deceased person is in paradise or in hell? For the question of paradise is different from that of hell. That is, in paradise the fulfillment of every desire is possible. See the Qur'ānic verse (50:35): "In it (paradise) they have all that they desire and there is more (than that) with Us", (whereas in hell it is not so). The *mu'mins* in paradise will be able to see this world in many ways: for instance, with the spiritual eye in the illumination of the Divine light; paying attention to the external world in

the *ibdā'i* body, etc. As for the question of helping someone, it is somewhat different from this; for this would be interference in the law of free will and trial. However, if it is approved by God it is also possible to help, provided the soul is on the angelic level. Regarding the help of angels to a *mu'min*, it is said: "We are your friends (helpers) in the life of this world and in the Hereafter" (41:31). Here it should also be remembered that, by God's command, whatever help angels can give is only spiritual, religious and [pertaining to] knowledge and never related to worldly things.

Zu'l-Qarnayn^(c) and Gog and Magog

Q.52. What was Zu'l-Qarnayn^(c)'s rank? What was the nature of his journey? What type of creatures are Gog and Magog and what is the reality of the Alexandrian Wall? Please explain some important realities in this connection.

A. Zu'l-Qarnayn^(c) was the Imām of his time. His journey, as mentioned in the Qur'ān (18:83-98), was spiritual. Thus he had traversed all spiritual stages within himself. (On his journey), the place where the sun sets (*mağrib al-shams*) means the two physical principles (*aşl-i jismāni*), namely, *Nātiq* and *Asās*, who are the setting place (*mağrib*) of the light of knowledge and wisdom. ^c*Ayn*^m *hami'ah* (muddy spring) means the personalities of the physical *hudūd* (ranks), namely, the Imām, *hujjat* and *dā'i*, who are attached to the *Nātiq* and *Asās* and their chain continues like a fountain. At this place Ḥaẓrat-i Imām Zu'l-Qarnayn^(c) saw the souls of all the people of the world and mentioned the authority which God has given him over the affairs of the people of the world. The place where the sun was rising (*maṭli' al-shams*), means the two spiritual principles (*aşl-i rūḥāni*), namely, the Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul, who are the rising place of the light of knowledge and wisdom. At this place, the exalted Imām saw the huge

gathering of souls and angels upon whom the sun of light was shining without any veil. These were the souls of the people of unity (*tawhīd*).

Gog and Magog have several *ta'wils*. See also one of my books *Recognition of Imām*, Part Three, Keys 14 and 15. Gog and Magog are a kind of souls which spiritually cause harm as well as benefit. However, the harm is temporary and the benefit permanent. In one respect, there are three great cycles. One, which has elapsed long ago, the second is the present one that is extended to the Resurrection and the third is going to begin after the Resurrection. Thus, Ḥaẓrat-i Imām Zū'l-Qarnayn^(c) saw the souls of three levels related to these three great cycles. The souls of the first level were in the east of the light, they belonged to the cycle which had passed and they had attained the eternal salvation. The souls of the second level belonged to the present period, which he had already seen in the setting place of the sun. The souls of the third level or Gog and Magog he saw in a valley which was between the east and the west. The *ta'wil* of this is that they were receiving guidance neither from the spiritual *ḥudūd* nor from the physical *ḥudūd*. This was the reason they did not know the language of religion. So their nature compelled them to come out from their valley and start a great revolution, so that the third great cycle, which belonged to them, may begin in the world. But no work is appropriate before its time, therefore, Ḥaẓrat-i Zū'l-Qarnayn^(c) barred them (from coming out) by erecting a strong wall of spirituality, which is called the Alexandrian wall. [This wall should be called “Zū'l-Qarnayn^(c)'s wall”, but some people erroneously call it the Alexandrian wall, considering Imām Zū'l-Qarnayn^(c) to be Alexander the Great, which is a grave mistake!]

Spiritual Nourishment

- Q.53. It is said in verse (5:66): “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.” Does this verse contain any spiritual wisdom or does it only have this literal meaning? Is it possible that the obedient ones may have more worldly nourishment and the disobedient ones may die of hunger?
- A. Spiritual nourishment is mentioned here. Even though apparently it seems to be the mention of physical food, if we look into it with insight we will come to know that in reality it is spiritual nourishment which is mentioned here. It should be known that human beings have many examples. One of them is a tree, for they also have the soul of a tree (namely, the vegetative soul). The nourishment of the tree is in two ways: through the roots and through the branches. Similarly, at the higher stages of spirituality, the heavenly souls related to nourishment enter through the head and the earthly souls through the feet. In this it is also alluded that the vegetative souls of dietary strength and energy enter through the feet and the animal and human souls through the head. Further, the subtle or spiritual nourishments which are received through the head are again of two kinds. One goes down through the throat and is not chewed, for it is subtle and extremely minute. This should be considered as part of the animal soul. There are many others which are given in the form of fragrances. These should be considered as part of the human soul.

Manifestation of Soul

- Q.54. When a fortunate *mu'min* reaches the stages of the manifestation of the spirit and spirituality, in the light of the

true guidance and teachings of the religion of Islam and the True Guide, in what forms do the soul or souls appear before him? Please tell us some essential points in this regard.

- A. First of all, the spirit appears before the eye of the heart in the form of a luminous silent world based on moving pictures. After some time, by the mercy and favour of God, the door of complete spirituality opens. Then the perfect manifestations of the spirit begin to take place and the spirit comes in the form of subtle particles with voice and without voice, in names and words, in voice and sound, in subtle images, in dreams, imagination and wakefulness, etc., etc.

Purpose of the Manifestations of Soul

- Q.55. What is the main purpose of so many manifestations of the spirit and in order to attain this purpose, what should be done or what are its conditions?
- A. The supreme purpose of the spiritual manifestations is knowledge and recognition, in order to attain which there are two conditions: the knowledge of certainty and good deeds. That is, such a knowledge that makes every teaching of religion certain and such a deed that comprises all deeds in religion.

Transference of Light

- Q.56. How was the Spirit or Light transferred from the Prophet^(s) to Mawlā^c Ali^(e)? How does the Light go from the Imām to his successor? Can any light from the light of the Imām come to the *murid* (follower), if so, how?
- A. In this regard, first of all it is necessary to know that the term *kalimah* (Word) is the key to all realities and recognitions.

Kalimah has four letters: *kāf*, *lām*, *mīm* and *hā'*. Similarly, it implies four kinds of meaning, namely, command (*amr*), spirit (*rūh*), Supreme Name (*ism-i a'zam*) and teaching (*ta'lim*). For instance, the holy Qur'ān says that God breathed His Spirit into Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c) (66:12). Its *ta'wil* is that the Prophet or the Imām gave the Supreme Name to Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c). Also you can see in the wise Qur'ān, that Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c), as the Word of God and His Spirit, is sent into the forehead of his revered mother. For the place of light is the forehead (4:171).

Similarly, the Prophet^(s) gave Mawlā 'Alī^(c) the Word of God, which is the Command of God, His Spirit, the Supreme Name and the heavenly teaching at the same time. Every Imām transfers his light to his successor in this way. The followers can receive the light from the holy light of the Imām in general as well as in a special way. The way of giving light to the followers by the Imām is not different from the law of giving light to his successors. The followers are the spiritual children of the Imām and in this spiritual relationship there is their well-being in both the worlds.

End of Kinships

- Q.57. “And when the *ṣūr* is blown there will be no kinships among them that day, nor will they ask of one another” (23:101). The question here is, why will the kinships come to an end on the Day of Resurrection and particularly when the *ṣūr* is blown?
- A. A great revolutionary secret of religion and spirituality is hidden in this verse. It is difficult to divulge it and again it is difficult if I do not do so. Nevertheless it is necessary to allude that the answer to this question lies in a verse in which the blowing of the *ṣūr* is mentioned and in addition to other words, there is a word whose root is *nūn*, *sin* and *lām*. In addition to this (allusion), I may also talk to you verbally.

When mentioning the three great cycles earlier in this book, we have alluded to this great secret. The wise *mu'mins* can understand these special secrets. May the Lord of the world grant success and high ambition to all *mu'mins*! *Āmīn!*

Speech of Birds or the Language of Angels?

Q.58. According to the Qur'ān (27:16), Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c) knew the speech of birds. In its *ta'wīl*, in answer to Q.50, you have said that Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c) knew the language of souls, for by birds are meant souls. Indeed, we accept this *ta'wīl*, but in it the sub-question arises, whether he knew the speech of physical birds too? Further, we would like to ask regarding the verse: "Allāh ... gave speech to everything" (41:21). When and where did this miracle take place, while we see that creatures other than human beings are always speechless and incapable of speaking?

A. There is no doubt that Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c) knew not only the language of souls, but also the speech of external and physical birds. All the noble Prophets and pure Imāms are equal in this miraculous and spiritual knowledge. The Perfect Men are bound to the Divine light therefore they have the same kind of knowledge and *ma'rifat*. It is obvious that you are neither a Prophet nor an Imām, but suppose God in His infinite mercy, grants you the light of *ma'rifat* and you follow the Messenger of God and the Imām of the time on the path of spirituality, there will be a new world of marvels and wonders and miracles of the light of Prophethood and Imāmat in front of you at every step. At that time you will observe and study innumerable supernatural events and during these experiences, you will also converse with the souls of the living and the dead and be able to understand the speech of birds. Without such spirituality, there is neither complete *ma'rifat* nor is there any path other than this. Yes, Allāh gave speech to everything. That is, He by His Perfect Power

showed the miracle of the speech of everything, the practical proof of which is always at the place of spirituality. In short, every inanimate and speechless thing speaks miraculously in two ways: In one way it is the soul of the thing which converses and in the other, although the thing (i.e., animal etc.) is physically before that viewer, it is in reality the Holy Spirit which manipulates it. Therefore, at the place of your spirituality, if an inanimate or animate thing says something, it is not necessary that it should be aware and conscious of its own speech.

Spiritual Hoopoe

Q.59. We accept your statement that Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c) knew the language of both the spiritual and physical birds. However, from this arises another question: Was the Hoopoe, which is mentioned in connection with the Qur'ānic story of Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c) and the Queen of Saba (Bilqīs), in a spiritual and *ta'wili* sense or in a material sense? Whatever work the Hoopoe did, such as bringing the news of the Queen of Saba to Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c) or conveying his letter to her and other events in this regard, are they spiritual matters or external miracles?

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A. It should be known that this Hoopoe was not in a physical sense. It was rather in a spiritual sense and its entire work was esoteric and spiritual. The story of the Queen of Saba has two aspects: One is exoteric and the other is esoteric and *ta'wili*. *Ta'wil* too is of many kinds. One of them is that in this story the enquiring soul (*rūḥ-i tajassus*) is called the 'Hoopoe'. For Sulaymān^(c)'s kingdom is in reality a spiritual kingdom, in which all the administrations of the Divine kingdom are available.

The army of Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c), which consisted of jinns, humans and birds, was in the form of souls (27:17); wind,

which was subjugated to him is also a matter of a spiritual miracle (34:12). In spirituality, the jinns, in addition to many other works, used to also do spiritual painting (34:13). The *ta'wil* of throne (*arsh*) here is the subtle form and spiritual existence of a human being (27:23), for their “I” or “self” is on the throne of their soul and the soul, in reality, is a subtle luminous picture.

On this occasion, it would be better if we mention here (the *ta'wil* of) the Divine Throne too. The Divine Throne also is in human form. Thus, when you observe the luminous existence of the holy and pure Imām with the eye of heart on the highest level of your spirituality, this will be the place of the Divine Throne. In verse (27:23) of the wise Qur’ān, where the throne of the Queen of Saba is mentioned, in verse (27:26) the Supreme Throne (*al-^carsh al-^cazīm*), namely the Throne of the Divine King is also mentioned, so that the wise people may reflect on this.

Which Characteristics belong to which Soul?

- Q.60. The vegetative soul, animal soul and rational soul are together in human beings in such a mixed and compound existence, how would one know which characteristic and which act belongs to which soul?
- A. The principle of knowing such matters is that, first of all, we should see the difference and distinction between a tree, an animal and a human. Or, in other words, we should think about the respective characteristics of the tree and animal, so that by doing so, we would be able to recognise the characteristics of the vegetative soul and animal soul in human beings. Now whatever characteristics are left in them, they obviously belong to the human or rational soul.



CHAPTER
IV
Institute for
Spiritual Wisdom
and
Luminous Science
Knowledge for a united humanity

Lamp and the Flame of the Lamp

Q.61. You have already explained to us that the Spirit of God and the Light of God are one and the same reality, as it is said in the Qur'an in (42:52), which implies that the Spirit that was revealed to the Prophet^(s) was considered a Light. As a result, can we say that Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c), who was the Spirit of God, was also His Light, even in the womb of Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c)? Further, is it true to say that when Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c) was born, Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c) became devoid of God's Light, since only Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c) was the Spirit of God? Please elaborate in this regard.

A. God has compared His Holy Light with a lamp. The lamp consists of two things: one is the vessel, which contains oil and wick and the other is the flame, which radiates light rising from the edge of the vessel. Similarly, even though Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c) was attaining his physical perfection in the womb of his mother, his light was shining from the forehead of Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c). Further, light has many dimensions hence it is also true to say that the light belonged to both the holy personalities. When Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c) was born, only body separated from body, but the light (spirit) is simple, therefore it was not possible for it to be separated. So, even though the centre of light was Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c), a perfect copy of it was left in the blessed forehead of Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c).

Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c)'s Mother

Q.62. Did Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c)'s mother have any Prophetic position? If not, how did she receive revelation, as mentioned in the Qur'an (28:7)? Was her spirituality the same as that of Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c)? Further, was Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) also the Spirit of God in his own time?

A. The mother of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) was neither a Prophet nor an

Imām, for it is not the expedience of God that a woman should be a Prophet or an Imām. However, internally and spiritually both man and woman can merge with the light. The revelation which the mother of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) received was not a revelation of a Prophetic nature, but it was a revelation of a personal nature, which is also called inspiration (*ilhām*), which is the result of the closeness to the Prophet and the Imām. Yes, the mother of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) and Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c) seem to be alike with respect to spiritual virtues, for the radiation of heavenly guidance is alike on both of them. Even though there is no open commendation of the mother of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) in the Qur’ān as that of Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c), nonetheless her entire commendation lies in her receiving revelation. Yes, Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) was also the Spirit of God in his time.

Subordinate Angels

- Q.63. We believe in the principle of spirituality that there are innumerable souls in the soul of every rank, including the Holy Spirit. In this connection, we would like to ask: If, during the time of Prophethood, the Holy Spirit (Jibrā’īl^(c)) used to come in the form of Salmān-i Fārsī, in what forms did those innumerable angels, who accompanied Jibrā’īl^(c) come?
- A. It is the law of spirituality that whereas the soul of an exalted *mu’min* performs the duty of Ḥaẓrat-i Jibrā’īl^(c), the souls of many other *mu’mins* (whether dead or alive) work as subordinate angels. The form of the soul is the same as the one to whom it belongs.

Flight of *Mu’min*

- Q.64. “I saw Ja’far (bin Abī Ṭālib) in Paradise flying with angels” (Prophetic Tradition). Is this higher honour confined only to

Ḥaẓrat-i Ja^cfar or is it common to all *mu'mins*? Do angels fly like birds or in any other state?

- A. The honour of flying with angels in Paradise is not confined only to Ḥaẓrat-i Ja^cfar-i Ṭayyār. But, it is certain that in this honour, he is an example and a model for all *mu'mins* and this honour is for everyone to attain. The flight of angels is entirely different from that of birds. This is spiritual flight, which is possible only on the wings of the remembrance of God. As it is said in the Qur'ān: "The maker of angels as (His) messengers having wings two, three and four" (35:1). This means that the *zīkr* of two, three or four names continues in the angels simultaneously.

‘Ibādat in Paradise

Q.65. Is there *‘ibādat-ū bandagī* in Paradise? If not, how is the flight of angel possible with the remembrance of God? Is *‘ibādat* not enjoined until death comes, according to the Qur'ān (15:99)?

- A. There is no *‘ibādat* of hardship in Paradise, such as we do today considering it the slavery of God. Nor is there the *‘ibādat* which is done out of fear of hell or to covet Paradise. Nonetheless, there is certainly special and higher *‘ibādat* in Paradise, which is done without any hardship, with extreme happiness, love and friendship of the Lord. Such *‘ibādat* or *zīkr-i ilāhī* (remembrance of God) takes place in Paradise on the height of spirituality. It is the *‘arīfānah* (related to recognition) and angelic *zīkr*, which starts automatically by will and indication (*ishārah*) only and contains spiritual and intellectual pleasures, delights and joys. It is like the food of the intellect and soul. This kind of *‘ibādat* is to see the treasures of knowledge and recognition hidden in the Names and Words and the marvels and wonders in spirituality. As the Prophet says: "*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā bi'llāhī'l-*

‘aliyyi’l-‘azīm (There is no power and strength except by Allāh, the High, the Great) is a treasure among the treasures of Paradise”. This means that the other treasures of Paradise are also Names and Words such as these.

‘Ibādat is not enjoined until death comes, for the purpose of it is not that death should come and one should die; its purpose is the final level of certainty, i.e., *ḥaqqu’l-yaqīn* (the truth of certainty), which is the highest certainty. Thus, in the above-mentioned verse (15:99), it is certainty (*yaqīn*) which is mentioned and not death.

How is Flight in Paradise?

Q.66. If it is accepted that Paradise, which is the next world is in a non-spatial state and in which there are no material distances such as in this world, how is it possible for there to be flight like that of birds?

A. It is true that Paradise is in a spiritual and non-spatial state and there are no material and spatial distances. Therefore, the flight of angels and spiritual entities is entirely different from physical and worldly flight. In spiritual flight, the infinite chain of the marvels and wonders, manifestations and epiphanies of Paradise is linked with the remembrance of God. Thus the varying manifestations and various types of the favours of Paradise continue to appear automatically with the remembrance of God and with the mention of the Names. The other aspect of our answer is that in the world of dreams, although it is non-spatial, we sometimes fly from one place to another. This shows that in the non-spatial world there are the subtle and non-material examples (such as flying) of the spatial world also. Further, this point should also be remembered here that when the angel or the spirit is with subtle body or the subtle particle, then certainly it also flies physically as a flying saucer flies mysteriously

Flying Saucer

Q.67. What type of a creature is a flying saucer? Is it a developed human from another planet, or an angel, or a jinn? What is the purpose of its coming to the earth? Please furnish us with some useful information in this connection.

A. Nowadays in the west, a flying saucer is called UFO, namely, Unidentified Flying Object, that is, a flying object which has not yet been recognised. Whatever we have written in answer to Q.47 can furnish you with enough information in this connection. Also see one of my books “*Balance of Realities*” pp. 62-66. I am convinced that flying saucers are the same supernatural living shirts to subjugate the world, which are mentioned in the Qur’ān (16:81): “And Allāh made for you shade out of things He created and made for you caves from the mountains and made for you shirts to protect you from heat and (also such) shirts which protect you from (the damage of the weapons of) war. Thus He perfects His favour unto you in order that you may surrender (unto Him).” We can also call this mysterious living shirt, celestial body, subtle body, *ibdā’i* body (*jussah-yi ibdā’iyyah*), astral body and also a developed human from another planet, angel, jinn, etc. for this is the place of *ibdā’*. They come to the earth by God’s command to bring about a spiritual revolution in the world and to unite the nations of the world.

Throne or Soul

Q.68. Before bringing this world into existence, when the Divine Throne was upon an unfathomable ocean (*wa kāna ‘arshuhu ‘ala’l-mā’*) (11:7), where was the human soul?

A. At that time, the human soul was in the shape of the Supreme Throne. This Throne was neither square nor rectangular nor circular in shape. Nor was it made of rubies and pearls, nor of

gold and silver, nor of any other lifeless material. Rather, it was the fountainhead of intellect and soul and an endless treasure of knowledge and wisdom. Therefore, it was also called the Light and the Pen. It was the greatest Angel, but in the form of the Perfect Man. Further, the ocean upon which the Divine Throne was resting was not of material water but of Divine knowledge. The teaching of the wise Qur'an that: "Divine Throne was upon the water" is full of *ta'wili* wisdom. Therefore, it does not necessitate that before that time the universe (with) the existents (in it) was not manifest in its present form. However, undoubtedly the Benevolent Lord has kept in this concept a great trial of knowledge and recognition for the people of religions and the schools of thought, to see if they understand the wisdom of "Throne" and "water" or not. It should be known that the allusion of the Throne is to the Divine kingdom, which has neither a beginning nor an end and it is the kingdom in which there is everything. The second wisdom is in the word "water". The *ta'wil* of water is knowledge (*'ilm*), which is in the present form and state of the universe (*'alam*), without which *'ilm* (knowledge) does not come into existence. If we accept water in the literal sense without *ta'wil*, the question arises: What was that throne made of, if with the exception of water, there was nothing else? Who had made the Throne, while no king makes his own throne, rather orders someone to make it?

Standing up of Hair (Goose bumps)

- Q.69. Standing up of hair or shivering is mentioned in the Qur'an (39:23) and sometimes we also observe it in ourselves or in others. Is there any spiritual cause for it other than the external cause? If any, please explain it.
- A. Yes, the state of hair standing up also has a spiritual cause. However, first we would like to say a few words about the external or physical causes of it. The hair on the skin of a

human stands up and he shivers when his skin is affected by severe cold or he feels an intense fear. This is caused by all those innumerable particles of the animal soul with which the entire body is filled. These particles when they face this unbearable and unpleasant condition become disturbed and restless, therefore they wake up from their peaceful sleep and move in their own place, resulting in hair standing up or shivering. If this event is in spiritual form, the cause of it is all those innumerable particles of the human soul, which are in the entire existence of a human. When a fortunate *mu'min*, in the light of true guidance, performs abundant *zīkr-ū bandagī*, the particles of human soul receive strength and happiness due to the radiation of the rays of the Holy Spirit, awakening them and creating a yearning for union in them, which result in the standing up of hair or shivering.

Relation of Jinns and Humankind

- Q.70. Would you kindly tell us some basic points regarding jinn, *parī* (fairy) and *Shayṭān* (devil)? Do they have any relation with humankind or are they different creatures? What is the difference between *Iblis* and *Shayṭān*?
- A. Jinn is an Arabic word and *parī* is its Persian translation. That is, jinn has all those qualities and characteristics which are related to *parīs*. Jinn means hidden creatures. Hidden in the sense that they are subtle or spiritual (*latīf*) and not dense or physical (*kaṣīf*). Jinns are both male and female. It is an injustice that some people have described jinns as being ugly. This is wrong. They are very handsome and beautiful for they have the subtle body. The Lord of the world has commanded us to study and think, not only in the Qur'ānic verses but also in His powers and wisdoms in the signs of the physical world and the spiritual world. Thus, in this connection we come across a small living thing. It is a worm, which after a certain time becomes transformed into a moth and again worms are

born from the eggs of this moth. The wisdom-filled allusion in this is that on the arrival of the spiritual cycle, the dense creature becomes transformed into a subtle creature. This means that humans, who are in a dense body today, will be in a subtle body tomorrow. Subtle body has varying degrees, such as angel, jinns and devils. The angels are all good; the devils are all bad. But among the jinns, there are good as well as bad. *Iblis* is the name of the chief of devils. Praise be to God, in this description full of allusions, I have furnished a complete answer to your question.

Telepathy

Q.71. What is your belief regarding telepathy or illumination (*ishrāq*)? Is it possible that it will progress in the future? Is it related to religion or to science?

A. I have full conviction in telepathy or illumination, for God has endowed humans with many higher qualities. If they are developed and used, they can perform many astonishing deeds. In the future the progress of telepathy is certain. I believe in the mingling of proto religion and proto science. Telepathy is common to both. Today the wall which stands between religion and science is one of words, terms and language. Alas! If only the scientists had known the language of Qur'ānic wisdom and had understood spirituality! Alas! If we were able to utter what is in our heart! Alas! If all the people knew the secrets of the Perfect Men! Reflect on this wisdom-filled verse: "He inspired it (soul) with its debauchery and its righteousness" (91:8). The *ta'wili* wisdom of this verse is that God did not do this work Himself, for He is free from and above teaching someone sinfulness and debauchery. Therefore, this work was done by the *muzill* (misleading Satan) who is the source of evil. Again, God is also free from and above teaching righteousness, standing in opposition to the *muzill* (misleader). Therefore, He, the Absolute King,

gave this power to the True Guide to be the source of good and to inspire people with righteousness.

Means of Spirituality

Q.72. Once you said that spirituality is a means that brings the speaking soul, luminosity and the living realities of the period of Prophethood to the future and joins the *mu'mins* of the present and the future with the Prophet. Could you kindly elaborate on this view in the light of the holy Qur'an?

A. My *‘azizān!* This view is absolutely true and real. The explanation of this is that the holy Prophet is that pure light which God has linked forever with the Qur'an (5:15), so that the *mu'mins* may continue to act upon the Qur'an in the illumination of this light of guidance. Thus, today the holy light of the Prophet exists and is present in the chain of Imāmat (*silsilah-yi imāmat*). The Qur'an has openly said that "Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth, the similitude of His light is like a niche in which is a (luminous) lamp" (24:35). Then it is said that the luminous lamp is the Prophet (33:46). Further, where God's light has been mentioned, the understandable concept of Divine light as "light upon light" (24:35) has also been mentioned, which means that the vicegerent and successor of light can be only the one who himself has already become light. In short, the holy light of God and the Prophet is in the Imām of the time. Now in order to reach this light, we need the means of spirituality to enter thereby the city of knowledge and the house of wisdom and observe the miracles of knowledge and recognition of the light of Prophethood with the inner eye and see the speaking holy Spirit and Light and the living realities of the time of Prophethood. In future, in a *majlis* we will tell you such a marvellous and pleasant wisdom in *sūrah-yi Jumū'ah* (62:2-3), which will assure you that we can recognise the rank of Prophethood by means of the light of Imāmat, which contains

all allusions.

Importance of “Two”

Q.73. One day, in your discourses of knowledge, you said that the importance of “two” after “one” is alluded to in the holy Qur’ān. We would like to know where this allusion is made in the Qur’ān and how and in what sense?

A. In this connection, first of all we would like to say that God, may He be exalted, is One and also above the one and then to discuss the two. As for the “two”, (it should be known that) whatever exists other than God (*zāt-i subhān*) is in pairs (36:36). This world and the next are two (2:201); jinn and human are two creatures for the worship of God, (51:56); good and evil are two means for the trial of human beings (21:35); also the wisdom in this is that the fruits of Paradise will be given in pairs (55:52); spiritual wisdom is taught where two rivers join each other (18:60); east and west are in pairs (55:17). Heaven and earth are two (24:35); light and darkness are two (35:20); life and death are two (67:2); day and night are two (17:12); the souls of the creatures will be in pairs (81:7), etc.

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There are many wisdoms in the number “two”: it is between unity (*wahdat*) and multiplicity (*kasrat*); it is the means of beginninglessness and endlessness; pairs are contained in it; opposites are made out of it so that there should be recognition of each other; in it lies the wisdom of negation and affirmation; it is the example of the balance of justice. Finally, there is nothing among creatures which is devoid of the wisdom or the law of “two”. Thus the souls of creatures are also in pairs. That is, the soul has two ends, namely, we have two “I’s”, the “higher I” and the “lower I”.³

There is no Past and Future with God

Q.74. I do not remember exactly whether I read it in Mawlā-yi Rūmī's *Masnawī* or in one of your books, that there is neither past nor future in the presence of God. There is only the present. Is it a matter of spirituality or that of the Hereafter? How is it possible for there to be neither the past nor the future at a certain place, but just the present?

A. Past is related to someone for whom the events of time and place have elapsed or he has no information of the past at all because of the long duration and the far distance. The future also belongs to such a person to whom the forthcoming events have not reached and he is unable to reach them. But God Who encompasses time and space through His light has no past and no future. In His eye every absent is present and every past and future is present. It is His light which preserves all the events and states of the Universe and the existents in their real form. By the presence (*ḥuẓūr*) of God is meant spirituality, which is the place where both the past and future are in the form of the present (*ḥāl*). That is, if you pass through spirituality you will see the events of Ādam and those of the Resurrection in the very present. Thus, this state is spirituality as well as the Hereafter.

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Circle of Subtle and Dense Cycles

Q.75. The holy Qur'ān says that before humankind, God created jinns from fire (15:27), but according to your *ta'wil* in answer to Q.70, angels, jinns and devils are created from humankind. Please explain how it is possible.

A. In the background of your question, two words are important: One "before" and the other is "fire". So it should be known that in this world, like day and night, there are two great cycles, which rotate one after another. One is the subtle

(spiritual) cycle and the other is the dense (physical) cycle. If you observe the entire circle, then neither of them is before or after. However, while you are living in the physical cycle, it is correct to say that the spiritual cycle is before the physical cycle.

As for the question of fire, it means subtlety (*laṭāfat*). That is, when the spiritual cycle comes those who are the highest in knowledge and good deeds become angels in varying ranks, those who are in the middle, become jinns in different grades and those who are wicked become devils. The example of the creation of jinns and humans is as though a sage says: “Worm is created from density (*kaṣāfat*) and before worm, moth was created from subtlety (*laṭāfat*)”. From this an intelligent person can understand that this subtlety of the moth emerged from the worm and the density of the worm from the moth. Ḥazrat-i Ādam^(c), Ḥazrat-i Ḥawwā^(c) and their innumerable companions were in the dense body before going to Paradise, but in the process of going to Paradise, they became subtle (*laṭīf*). Again when they were sent down from Paradise, they were transformed into the dense body and again they became subtle when they returned to Paradise.

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- Q.76. At the end of the answer to Q.72, you had promised to explain to us a marvellous and pleasant wisdom in *sūrah-yi Jumū'ah* (62), which will assure us that we can recognise the rank of Prophethood by means of the light of Imāmat. Would you kindly explain that wisdom to us.
- A. Yes, this is in continuation to what we have already said in the beginning of Q.72, that it is the means of spirituality which joins *mu'mins* of the present and the future to the true Prophet^(s). The innumerable mercies and favours of God, which were granted to the *mu'mins* of the time of Prophet-

hood, are mentioned in verse (62:2), such as the recitation of God's verses to them by the Prophet, to purify them and to teach them the Book and Wisdom. All these in fact belong to spirituality.

In verse (62:3), is mentioned “the others (*ākhīrīn*)”, i.e., the *mu'mins* who were not yet born in the time of the Prophet^(s) [who] will meet the *mu'mins* of the time of the Prophet^(s) through the light of guidance and spirituality, despite being born in the future. All this is in the language of wisdom, the proof of which, at the end of the verse, is “*al-ʿazīzū'l-ḥakīm* (the Mighty, the Wise)”. That is, since He is the Mighty, the Wise, He can do so. In verse (62:4), it is alluded that this guidance and spirituality is the bounty of God, Who grants it to whom He likes. God is the Lord of the great bounty.

An Extremely Great Secret

- Q.77. “He created you from a Single Soul, then from it He made its spouse” (39:6). Although I have been reflecting on this verse for a long time, I cannot make sense of it. For if we consider here “Single Soul” to be Ḥazrat-i Ādam^(c), the creation of children from one single person and thereafter the creation of spouse is something impossible. Please kindly explain the secret in it.
- A. By God's favour and help and putting my trust in Him, I say that there is really a great secret hidden here. The secret is that the Universal Soul is mentioned in this verse, in whose background the Universal Intellect is also necessarily mentioned. Universal Intellect and Universal Soul, in the language of religious wisdom, are called the “Simple Pair” and the spiritual Ādam and Eve. Thus, from the “Single Soul” (i.e., the spiritual spouse of the Universal Intellect) were created all the souls of the previous great cycle and at the end of that cycle, the Universal Soul ascended to the rank of the

Universal Intellect. The *ta'wili* example of this is that since this great angel, who was like the mother in the previous cycle, now became the father of the souls of the coming cycle, hence God made his spouse from him. That is, one great *ḥadd* from among his *ḥudūd*, was raised to the rank of Universal Soul, so that a new world of souls may come into existence by their spiritual marriage.

Souls of Stars

- Q.78. If every small or big thing has a soul and if this great universe has a Universal Soul, does this mean that the planet earth, moon and stars also have souls? If so, please furnish a cogent proof of this.
- A. I wonder why this question appears very pleasant and beautiful to me. Hopefully there is some Divine favour in it. My *ʿazizān!* Everything in the universe is immersed in the encircling ocean of the Soul of souls and so are all the planets and stars, externally and internally. Therefore, a spiritual form of each one of them becomes determined. For instance, the spiritual form of the planet earth is exactly like the earth, as if a great angel, by God's command, has made a wisdom-filled and living film of it. This is a cogent example of the soul of the earth. The air itself has no fixed form, but if it is in the water-skin it assumes the shape of the water-skin; if in a bottle, it is like a bottle and if it is in a tyre, it is like a tyre. The same is the case of the spiritual form of everything and every star. However, a very great difference between the two is that the spiritual form is a living and speaking soul, while the air, wherever it may be, is devoid of spiritual qualities. The Lord of the world, in His Mighty Book, has sworn by the falling of the stars (56:75). These are the souls of the stars, which fall upon a *mu'min* in individual resurrection and they are only in the form of particles.

Circle of Worm and Moth

Q.79. The example of the worm and moth which you have presented in order to reflect on the dense creature (present humankind) and the subtle creature (angel, etc.) is a living sign of the book of nature. We can understand a lot from it. In addition, we would like to request you to make us understand it further in the light of the holy Qur'ān.

A. God created the universe in six days. That is, He completed the world of religion in the times of the six great prophets. Similarly, God created and completed the present human body in six stages: quintessence of clay (*sulālah*), sperm, a clot of congealed blood (*‘alaqah*), a little lump (*muzḡah*), bones, flesh. By this, the human became complete in the dense body and lived the worldly life. God then created “another creation (*khalq-i ākhar* = subtle body)” (23:12-14). As He says “So blessed be Allāh, the best of creators” (23:14). In this verse, an allusion is made to the reality that “another creation (*khalq-i ākhar*)” is the supreme creation. It is the creation of *jussah-yi ibdā’iyyah*. Had it not been so, allusion would not have been made here to His numerous blessings and the beauties of His creatorship.

It should be remembered that the principle of the contextual meaning of the holy Qur'ān is extremely wisdom-filled. Therefore, we want to see the explanation of “*ansha'nāhu* (We created it)” in the verse “*summa ansha'nāhu khalq^{am} ākhar* (then We created it another creation)” (23:14), and in another verse, which is: “*innā ansha'nāhunna inshā^{am} fa-jā'alnāhunna abkār^{am}*” (We created them (*hūris*) as ought to be created. Then We made them virgins” (56:35-36)). That is, first We created them in this world and caused them to pass through the different stages of life. Then We made them virgins, i.e., We gave them the subtle body. This shows that the worldly body remains in this world and the subtle body is for the Hereafter.

Two Ends of Soul

Q.80. How are the two ends of our soul and in what sense do the souls have pairs?

A. Remember well that the main source of our soul is in the world of Command and paradise. Therefore, we have come to this world not in total but in a partial sense, just as the rays, light and heat of the sun constantly reach the surface of the earth while the sun itself is in its own place. If we place a mirror or a pot containing water in the light of the sun, we will see a dim reflection of the sun in it. This is a beautiful and cogent example of our two-end existence of spirituality and materiality. In this sense, it is said that our soul has two ends or we have two “I’s”.

The wise Qur’ān (6:98) implies that when all human beings were created from the Universal Soul by the Divine command, each of them was granted two souls: one *mustaqarr* (permanent) and the other *mustawda^c* (transitory). The *mustaqarr* remained in the world of Command and the *mustawda^c* came to this world. Thus, in this world those who obey God, the Prophet and the Lord of the Command as it ought to be and attain the recognition of their soul, will meet their permanent soul (*rūh-i mustaqarr*). The holy Prophet^(s) in his last time, alluding to this reality, had prayed to meet the “Companion on High (*rafiq-i a^clā = rūh-i mustaqarr*)”. In this statement we have sufficiently answered your question.



CHAPTER
V
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Physical Body is not Everlasting

Q.81. God raised Ḥaẓrat-i Idrīs^(c) to paradise with this physical body (19:57), Ḥaẓrat-i Khizr^(c) became everlasting in this world with his physical body and God raised Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) to the heaven with this body. Are these allegories or realities? Whatever may be the case, please explain them clearly.

A. These are allegories of wisdom, and reality and wisdom lie in understanding them. Thus it should be known that God showed Ḥaẓrat-i Idrīs^(c) the paradise of spirituality and made it known to him in the life of this world, just as His Prophets, friends and the righteous servants have always been observing it (in this life) by His mercy (47:6). This shows that God had raised Ḥaẓrat-i Idrīs^(c) to the place of spirituality. Then, when the appointed time came, he entered the eternal paradise leaving the physical body in this world. Since numerous difficulties are attached to the physical body, therefore it cannot remain in the eternal paradise even though selected servants of God can observe, experience and recognise the paradise of spirituality in this body before death.

If there is any sound tradition or an allegory regarding the ever living state of Ḥaẓrat-i Khizr^(c), the *ta'wil* of it is that he had become immortal spiritually (and not physically). For, God does not like His selected servants to carry the burden of the physical body more than the appointed time. This explanation also answers the question regarding Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c). For details, study the article 'Is Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) Soul or Body?' in *Treasure of Knowledge Part II*.

Recognition of Paradise

Q.82. You have just mentioned about the recognition (*maʿrifat*) of paradise. Our heart is yearning to hear more about the

recognition of paradise. Would you kindly add to our knowledge?

- A. *Ma'rifat* (recognition) is the supreme and extremely comprehensive term in the religion of Islam, therefore all attributes and realities are gathered in its meaning. The first example of it is that all the exoteric commandments of Islam are within the circle of *shari'at*; with all these beauties of the *shari'at*, *ṭariqat* is its kernel; *ḥaqīqat* is the core of the *ṭariqat* and *ma'rifat* is the spirit and light of the *ḥaqīqat*. Thus the entire living spirit of religion is contained in *ma'rifat*.

The second example is that *ma'rifat* in reality means the recognition of God. This recognition is not possible without the *didār* (vision) of God in the manifestations of His attributes. This supreme felicity and bliss is attained when the *mu'min* recognises his own soul and the place where the recognition of soul and the Divine vision are attainable, is paradise. The path of paradise is hidden in the excellent example of the holy Prophet^(s), to which only the Imām of the time can successfully guide.

May we be sacrificed for the wisdom-filled Qur'ānic words! Numerous realities are gathered in each wisdom-filled word! Thus all the above mentioned realities and recognitions are gathered in “*arraḥāhā lahum* (He made it (paradise) known to them” (47:6). This explanation shows that *ma'rifat* which is paradise, is everything. The condition of attaining it is that *mu'mins* should carry out such important services as those of the martyrs of the past, who sacrificed even their lives for the sake of the protection and progress of religion.

***Nūr-i mun'akis* (Reflecting Light)**

- Q.83. *Nūr* literally means light, but we would like to know what the state and quality of the reflecting *Nūr* (light) is when God

illuminates the souls of the people of *ma'rifat* by His Perfect Light? Are the spiritual light and physical light alike or is there a great difference between them?

- A. It is true that *Nūr* lexically means light, but with respect to humankind it means the perfect and supreme guidance. Guidance is of three kinds: guidance of the intellect, guidance of soul and guidance of body. The guidance of the intellect is in the form of knowledge and wisdom and awareness of the secrets of the physical and spiritual worlds; that of the soul is in the form of aptitudes, such as yearning for *bandagī*, *zīkr*, religious zeal and success in doing good deeds. The guidance of body is in the form of the demonstration of physical abilities and virtues, such as patience, high ambition, bravery and courage.

Light in the lower stages is full of astonishing colours and in the higher stages it is either moderate or free from colour and form. The name of this colourful and colourless state is called “*ṣibḡatu'llāh* (the colour of Allāh)” (2:138). External light is an allegory (*miṣāl*) and internal light is the object or meaning of it (*mamṣūl*). Therefore, material light in comparison to its meaning is very trivial, lifeless and unreal, while the internal light is adorned with the perfect qualities of intellect and soul. “*Chih nisbat khāk rā bā 'ālam-i pāk* = So low (it) bears no comparison to the high.” Read also ‘The state and reality of light’ in the book *The Ascent of Soul*.

‘Izrā’īl^(c) and the Seizing of Soul

- Q.84. When it is time for a person to die, how does his soul leave the body? Does it go out by itself or is it seized by Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Izrā’īl^(c), the Angel of death? How? Is there only one ‘Izrā’īl^(c) or are there more than one? Where is the exit of the soul?

- A. At the time of death, the soul does not leave the body by itself,

rather it is seized by Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Izrā’īl^(c). The state of seizing the soul is that Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Izrā’īl^(c) enters the dying person’s ear and continuously recites a great name of God and with his miraculous voice the particles of soul start to move towards the head. As a result the process of death starts from the feet and the soul gradually leaves the body through the upper part of the head. Some people think that the soul goes out with the last breath. However, this is not so. It is only the sign that the soul has left the chest and is centred in the brain. However, how long the soul remains in the head is a different question. ‘Izrā’īl^(c) by God’s command, can seize a person’s soul all at once, even with a single cry. With respect to the principal rank, ‘Izrā’īl^(c) is one, but in his army there is an ‘Izrā’īl^(c) for every person.

Spiritual Death and Physical Death

- Q.85. If it is true that religion also commands: “*Mūtū qabla an tamūtū*” (Die spiritually before dying physically), does the personal or individual Resurrection occur to a *mu’min* in accomplishing it? If so, how does he observe the events of the Resurrection which are related to the people of the entire world? Further, is it true that there are two angels, called *Nakir* and *Munkar*?
- A. Yes, a real *mu’min*’s success lies in the spiritual death through the purification of soul before dying the physical death. It is also true that his individual Resurrection takes place in this spiritual death and despite the fact that it is his individual Resurrection he can observe all the states and events related to the collective Resurrection. This is because there is also a world of particles (*‘ālam-i zarr*) with God, in which not only do the people of all times exist in the form of particles, but also each and everything of the universe and existents. Thus the *mu’min* who observes the individual Resurrection passes through all the states and events of the collective Resurrec-

tion. Yes, it is true that there are two angels called *Nakir* and *Munkar*. However, remember that the one and the same thing has several names and several functions in spirituality. Therefore, it is not necessary that these angels should come only with these names.

[°]*Ālam-i Zarr* (World of Particles)

- Q.86. What does [°]*ālam-i zarr* mean? Where is it? Is it physical or spiritual? If it is physical, why cannot everybody see it?
- A. [°]*Ālam-i zarr* means the world of particles, that is, the particles of souls. It exists in this world and is a compound of the subtle body and soul. There is a great wisdom hidden in its being so. It can be seen only after the eye of the heart opens, therefore everybody cannot see it. It was the [°]*ālam-i zarr* in which God had asked the souls of the people to confess His Lordship (*rubūbiyyat*): “Am I not your Lord?” and the souls said: “Yes, verily” (7:172).

Spiritual Wisdom Luminous Science

Spiritual War

- Q.87. The Qur’ānic verse (6:112) implies that devils are not only from the jinns but also from humankind. They whisper plausible discourse through guile in the hearts of people, so that by deceiving them through such discourses they may cause them to go astray. The gist of the same subject is also in the verses (114:4-6) that, *khannās* (sneaking whisperer) who is from among jinns as well as human beings can whisper directly in the hearts of people. The question which arises here is: Cannot the souls of *mu’mins*, who are on the opposite side in this spiritual war, do anything? If not, does this mean that in the spiritual war the hands of evil are free but those of the good tied tightly?

- A. Yes, the physical and spiritual devils can do all this, but despite all this there is not the slightest despondency about the spiritual abilities of *mu'mins*. For they are the army of God (*ḥizbu'llāh*) and it is God's army which eventually becomes victorious (5:56). The Qur'ānic example that *mu'mins* are the army of God is full of spiritual wisdoms. The most important wisdom which it implies is that, by His grace, the spiritual forces of *mu'mins* are greater than the satanic forces of the devils. This is why God's army always becomes victorious in spirit and spirituality. Reflect also on how the army of Satan (*ḥizbu'sh-shayṭān*) in verse (58:19) are the losers.

Army of God

- Q.88. The example of God's army is certainly very faith-illuminating and soul-nourishing. Now, God willing, we will reflect on all those verses related to His army. Yet, please tell us: Since *mu'mins* are God's army, what is their relation to His army as mentioned in *sūrah-yi Fath* (48)?

- A. In this connection, the first verse of *sūrah-yi Fath* is: "He (God) it is Who sent down peace (of spirituality) into the hearts of *mu'mins* that they may add faith to their faith; and to Allāh belong the armies of the heavens and the earth, and Allāh is Knower and Wise" (48:4). In this verse, heaven means the spiritual world and its plural "heavens" signifies spiritual ranks; the earth means the physical world. Thus in this verse, the spiritual and physical armies of God (i.e., the souls of *mu'mins* and their persons) are mentioned, because of the fact that by God's command, it is the chief of God's army (i.e., the Prophet and Imām) and the army who are the means through which the spiritual peace descends upon every *mu'min* according to his knowledge and practice. As we have mentioned earlier, at the place of *wahy* (revelation) the Holy Spirit does not come alone, rather it is accompanied by

its entire army, which consists of angels as well as souls. Thus, here the way the armies (the spiritual and physical) of God are mentioned, their relation to *mu'mins* is that it is they who in their souls and bodies are God's armies. It is they who are spiritually in the heavens of spirituality and physically on the earth of corporeality. The second mention in this connection is in verse (48:7), the blessed words and implications of which are also the same as mentioned above, that God uses the hosts of *mu'mins* as His army spiritually and physically.

What Weapon is the Satan afraid of?

- Q.89. One important question in connection with spiritual war is: What among *mu'mins'* weapons is the best weapon, of which the Satan is afraid and what tricks does he use to overcome it?
- A. The best and the most powerful weapon of *mu'mins* of which the Satan is in constant fear is the remembrance of God. Therefore, he always tries to cause *mu'mins* to forget God's remembrance, so that he may attack them (58:19). The *ta'wili* wisdom of this verse is that the Name of God and His remembrance are the Imām of the time, who is the fountainhead of all *mu'mins'* physical and spiritual powers. Therefore, the physical and spiritual devils (6:112) always chase those *mu'mins* who are weak in faith and knowledge to cause them to loosen their grip of the blessed hem (*dāman*) of the pure and holy Imām. A *mu'min's* greatest spiritual weapons are remembrance and knowledge and this is the *ta'wil* of forgetting the remembrance of God because of Satan.

Barren Day

- Q.90. There are hundreds of names of the Resurrection in the

Qur'ān, which can be estimated from a Qur'ānic Index and in every name several wisdoms can be hidden. However, here we would like to know only what is the *ta'wil* of “Barren Day (*yawm^{in c} aqīmⁱⁿ*)”, which is used for the Day of Resurrection?

- A. My *aziz!* Resurrection is called Barren Day (22:55) because at that time the generations of all people will be terminated, except that of the progeny of the Prophet^(s), who are the Face of God on earth, as mentioned in the Qur'ān (55:26-27). See also the answers to the questions 52 and 57 in this book and pp.38-39 of *Hundred Questions*, Part I.

Four Birds of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c)

Q.91. If the *ta'wil* of bird is soul, as you have explained in the answer to Q.50, what is the *ta'wil* of the four birds of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) (2:260)? Further, what is the importance of the number four?

- A. The four birds of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c), which came to him being revived are the souls of his four closest *hujjats*. The same four souls were his Jibrā'īl^(c), Mikā'īl^(c), Isrāfīl^(c) and 'Izrā'īl^(c), as we have already said, bird in the language of *ta'wil* signifies soul or angel. The importance of number four is because of the fact that the closest angels are four, as well as the *huẓūrī hujjats* (the ones who are in the spiritual presence of the Imām) are also four, as mentioned above.

Whether it is a *mustajīb* or a *ma'zūn*, potentially he is a bird (soul=angel). Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c), by the command of God, selected four such ranks and took covenant for special upbringing and [in order to be given] spiritual secrets. This is the *ta'wil* of the slaughtering of the four birds by Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c). To cut and to beat means to try in knowledge and spirituality. To place on the mountain symbolises spiritual elevation. After doing all this, when Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) called

them in his spirituality, they presented themselves in the above mentioned four ranks to give him spiritual help. God's miracle that He resurrects *mu'mins* from the death of negligence and ignorance and grants them the life of the closest angels on the heights of spirituality, is far greater than to resurrect a physical dead person.

Salmān - the Gate of Paradise

Q.92. "Salmān is a gate from among the gates of paradise". Please tell us some wisdoms of this blessed Prophetic Tradition.

A. It should be known that (in the time of Salmān), the living paradise of spirituality and luminosity in human attire on earth were the *Nāṭiq* (Prophet Muḥammad^(s)) and *Asās* (Mawlānā °Ali^(c)). This is why the blessed gates of paradise were also in the form of living and speaking persons. One of these blessed gates was in the person of Salmān-i Fārsī. Otherwise, where in this world's gardens and meadows are those beauties that possess the soil of intellect and soul and the elements of knowledge and wisdom, which are evergreen with the flowers and fruits of the delights of Divine secrets and the fragrances of unity! The holy light of Muḥammad^(s) and °Ali^(c) in the person of the living and present Imām is that living garden of paradise which words fail to duly praise and describe.

Salmān-i Fārsī was a gate of the living paradise of this holy personality in the sense that he was a means of the *da'wat-i ḥaqq* (invitation to the truth), a path of light, an example of real love, a treasure of Imām's knowledge, a treasure trove of *ma'rifat* and a mirror of spirituality.

The Qur'ānic verse (29:64) implies that the home of the Hereafter, whether it is in paradise or hell, is living. This implies that some highest *ḥudūd* in religion, namely

Universal Intellect, Universal Soul, *Nāṭiq* and *Asās*, as each of whom has two positions, are the eight paradises. The *ḥudūd* next to them, hold the positions of the gates and the *ḥudūd* of the third grade are the people who will enter paradise through these gates. For details, see *Wajh-i Dīn*, Discourse V.

Idea of Creation

Q.93. If the Islamic idea of creation, as Ḥazrat-i Mawlānā Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh^(c) says is ‘a perpetual and constant event’, it implies that the infinite succession of creation continues in the form of a circle. Would you kindly furnish a clear proof from the holy Qur’ān in this connection?

A. The holy Qur’ān, after presenting the example of the constant rising and setting of the sun and the moon and the continuous rotation of day and night, alludes to this greatest secret of the law of nature: “And they all swim in a circle” (36:40). The holy Qur’ān contains a subject which should be called the “Universal Law (*qānūn-i kull*)”, for it mentions the universals (*kulliyāt*) of the universe and existents. One general indication of the verses related to this subject is the word “*kull* (all)” mentioned in them. The above mentioned verse is therefore a universal (general rule) of the Universal Law according to which, everything including soul rotates on a circle. However, it is a different question why and how.

In addition to the Qur’ānic verses, the cosmic signs on which the Lord of the world has commanded us to reflect, also reveal that the infinite journey of everything continues in a circle (2:164), such as, the constant coming and going of the day and night, the repeated passing of the ships on the rivers and the seas, the continuation of rain, the revival of the dead earth every year, the revival of the big and small animals from year to year, the constant rotation of air and constant creation

of clouds from the ocean and their continual merging with it returning in the form of rivers.

Spirituality of the Holy Qur'ān

Q.94. If the holy Qur'ān has a great soul, which has a luminous and radiant world of knowledge and awareness, what should we do to attain its favours and blessings? This question is related to what you have said about the spirit of the Qur'ān in Q.7 and Q.11.

A. In this connection, see the answer to question 15 concerning where and how the rational (speaking) soul comes to a baby? It is a clear fact that the rational or speaking soul comes to a child from its parents and members of its family. In the same way, the speaking soul of the Qur'ān is attained from the house of your spiritual father. This means that you should not claim that spiritual knowledge can be acquired from any Tom, Dick or Harry. Rather, you should be a child of the pure, spiritual house of the Prophet, namely, the Imām of the time, so that by the affectionate conversation of your spiritual parents, the Qur'ānic soul will gradually enter you. For after the Prophet the Qur'ān's Spirit can be attained only from the Imām of the time.

Another example in this connection is that, by removing the rust of negligence and the dust of ignorance from the mirror of your heart, you purify it to such an extent that the light of the Qur'ān may start to shine in it. Verily, this purity of heart too is possible only through the blessed hand of the exalted Imām, just as during the time of Prophethood it was only the holy Prophet who used to purify *mu'mins*, as mentioned in several verses of the Qur'ān.

Ḥazrat-i ʿĪsā^(c)'s Miracle

Q.95. What is the *ta'wil* of when Ḥazrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) used to make a figure of a bird from clay, then used to breathe something into it, it used to become a bird by the permission of God?

A. Dust and clay, which in Arabic are called *turāb* and *ṭīn* respectively, signify two ranks of *mu'mins*. One is the rank of belief (*ʿaqidah*) or faith (*īmān*) of an elementary nature, which has essential importance for the people of *daʿwat* – which is exemplified by dust. The other is that of the faith with some knowledge, which is exemplified by clay. Thus the *ta'wil* of Ḥazrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) making a bird's figure from clay, is that he used to appoint a *mu'min* with faith and some knowledge to the rank of *ma'zūn*, at which time the latter was nothing but a silent figure of that rank. However, when Ḥazrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) breathed something into this figure it used to become a bird by God's permission. This means that, step by step, Ḥazrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) was breathing the soul of knowledge of *ta'yid* (spiritual help) into this *ma'zūn* and he was becoming a spiritual bird, i.e., a soul or an angel. The holy Prophet^(s) had given Mawlā ʿAlī^(c) the title of *Abū Turāb* (the father of dust). The *ta'wil* of this title is that after the holy Prophet^(s), Mawlā ʿAlī^(c) was the spiritual father of the faithful men and women, for dust means the people of faith as mentioned above.

Light on the Tree

Q.96. Is it an allegory or a reality that, as soon as Ḥazrat-i Mūsā^(c) went in search of the fire he suddenly found God? Did he observe the light of God with the external eye or with the internal eye? If this event is related to *ta'wil*, what is the *ta'wil* of the tree (on which was the light)?

A. In this story of Ḥazrat-i Mūsā^(c), the allegorical aspect is prominent. Here the fire means the light; and the tree, the

Supreme Name (Word = Tree (14:24)). As for the observation of light, it did not happen all of a sudden in one day, rather Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) was already travelling on the path of spirituality. He was receiving the spiritual upbringing in Egypt long before his migration. His spiritual mother in Egypt was one of the *dā'is* of Ḥaẓrat-i Shu^cayb^(c). After migration, he was also receiving spiritual training directly from Ḥaẓrat-i Shu^cayb^(c).

The light of God is observed with the internal or the spiritual eye and not with the external or the physical one. Even when the external and internal senses become one, the external observations are also considered internal events. This means that the internal senses of the Prophets and the friends of God dominate their external senses.

Heavenly Fire

- Q.97. On page 41 of *Treasure of Knowledge Part III*, it is written that: “Thus Hābīl took a sheep and kept it on the mountain and Qābīl took some ears of corn from a field and kept them there. Then, according to the custom (of that time) a flame of fire descended from heaven and ate Hābīl’s sacrifice.” Was this fire the same material fire which is known to everybody in this world, or a different one? Can there be such a holy and miraculous fire in spirituality? Does this sacrifice have a *ta’wil*? If so, what is the *ta’wil* of sheep? How long did the miracle of this heavenly fire continue?
- A. Qur’ānic stories as we know are full of the wisdoms of *ta’wil*. Is there the understanding in the worldly fire to only accept the sacrifice of the righteous and to testify to his truthfulness? It was thus not a material fire but the holy and miraculous fire of spirituality, which is among the spiritual miracles of the Prophets and Imāms (3:183). The *ta’wil* of sheep is the animal soul. Ḥaẓrat-i Hābīl^(c) had offered the sacrifice of his animal

soul, which is always done by the friends of God. A simple example of this great spiritual miracle is that sometimes you or some other *mu'min*, burn internally under the pressure of knowledge, *ibadat* and good thoughts. In such a case, the burning is neither intellectually nor spiritually (i.e., with respect to the rational soul), but only with respect to the animal soul, whereby he or she is purified. Thus, the spiritual miracle of the heavenly fire has always existed and continues forever.

***Malakūt* - Spirituality**

Q.98. What does *malakūt* mean and which world is this? Is it mentioned in the Qur'ān, where and how? We need some essential information in this connection.

A. *Malakūt* has several meanings, such as greatness, power, predominance, grandeur, kingdom, etc. and it means the world of souls and angels. *Malakūt* is mentioned in the Qur'ān in verses (6:75; 7:185; 23:88 and 36:83). It is said: "And thus We showed Ibrāhīm the *malakūt* (spirituality) of the heavens and the earth so that he may be of those possessing certainty" (6:75). He was observing this spirituality with his spiritual eye within himself. This is the place of *aynu'l-yaqīn* (the vision of certainty), whose goal is *haqqu'l-yaqīn* (the truth of certainty).

On one side there are internal and spiritual things of the heavens and the earth and on the other the external and physical things. The Lord of the World has mentioned both these things in the same verse, so that the wise people should have the concept that the *malakūt* is different from the *nāsūt* (the world of human beings) and vice versa. Reflect well on verse (7:185)!

Verse (23:88) indicates that the spirituality (*malakūt*) of

everything is in the Hand of God and protection and salvation are only in the recognition of this spirituality. The wisdom of verse (36:83) tells us that the One (God=*Subhān*) in Whose powerful Hand is preserved the spirituality of everything is Himself free from and above everything. Therefore, in every respect, *malakūt* or spirituality is only for *mu'mins*. All things in their physical form are *nāsūt* and in their spirituality they are *malakūt*.

Worlds

Q.99. What does *nāsūt* mean? What are *jabarūt* and *lāhūt*? Which is the higher world (*‘ālam-i ‘ulwī*) and where is the lower world (*‘ālam-i sifli*)? Please explain some realities regarding the world of Command (*‘ālam-i amr*) and the world of creation (*‘ālam-i khalq*).

A. *Nāsūt* is derived from the word *nās* (people), which means this [physical] world in which people live. *Malakūt* is the world of the spirit, spirituality and angels as mentioned above. *Jabarūt* is the world of Divine power and grandeur. *Lāhūt* means the Godhead of God. The higher world is the spiritual world and the lower world is the physical world.

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The world of Command, as the kingdom of God, is eternal (*qadīm*) where all things always exist without any beginning or end. Therefore, there is no room for creation. There the manifestations of things take place with just the command and in no time. In other words, there the absent things appear only by will and attention. These matters are with respect to the servants of God and not with respect to God Himself, because for Him appearance and concealment, present and absent, are all equal.

The world of creation is opposite to the world of Command. It is the external world which is not eternal but contingent and

in which nothing can remain forever. Things come into existence and then become extinct at different times. This world is the workshop of creation. Remember that there are only two worlds, that is, this world and the Hereafter. The numerous words found in this connection are either their different names or they indicate their ranks or levels.

Wisdom of the Hand of Allāh (*Yadu'llāh*)

Q.100. This is the last question and perhaps the most important one: What is the *ta'wil* of the “Hand of Allāh”? What does it allude to say that *mulk* (67:1) *malakūt* (36:83) and *khayr* (3:26) are in Allāh’s Hand? Do all things exist in the Guarded Tablet (6:59) or do they exist in the Manifest Imām (36:12)? Is not everything encompassed in a Book (78:29)?

A. The *ta'wil* of Allāh’s Hand is Divine power, authority, control, disposal, i.e., to give and take, to use things for oneself and for the sake of others, to gather, to provide and keep things ready, etc. The most comprehensive *ta'wil* of God’s Hand is the exalted Prophet and the pure Imām. Therefore all the *ta'wils* of God’s Hand are related to these holy personalities, since to do *bay'at* (oath of allegiance) on their blessed hand is to do *bay'at* on God’s Hand (48:10).

The meaning of *mulk* (sovereignty), *malakūt* (spirituality) and *khayr* (good) being in God’s Hand is that they are in the custody of the Prophet^(s) of Islam and the true Imām^(c), for these two Supreme Angels in human form are God’s Hand as well as His treasures (15:21).

The Guarded Tablet, the Manifest Imām and the Book are all the same one reality. All things are thus gathered in one place and that is the place of spirituality, which holds the status of God’s blessed Hand. That is, the holy light of Muḥammad^(s) and ‘Alī^(c), in which there is everything, the *mulk* as well as the

malakūt.

Praises be to God for His favours!

Saturday, 17th Sha^cbān 1401 A.H./20th June, 1981



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End Notes

- ¹ Regarding the vegetative soul, it is said in the Qur'an: "And Allāh has caused you to grow as a vegetable from the earth" (71:17).

Further, regarding the benevolent function of the vegetative soul, which was in the pure personality of Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c), God says: "He made her grow a goodly growth" (3:37).

- ² *Sābiq* means every previous Perfect Man and *Lāḥiq*, the one who succeeds him. The chain of *sābiq* and *lāḥiq* used to continue before Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) also, since there is no change in the fundamental principles of religion. They, in accordance with the Divine Law, are unchangeable (17:77).

- ³ For details of "higher I" and "lower I", see "*Balance of Realities*" pp.47-48.

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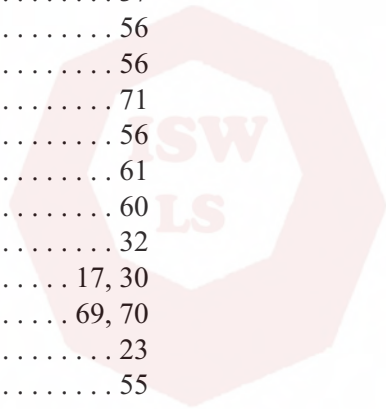


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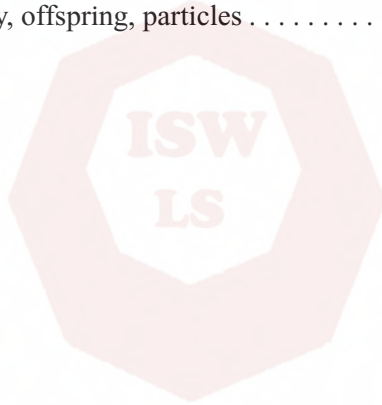
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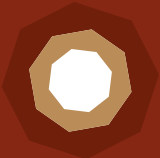
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In his 100 years life, overcoming all odds such as lack of secular education in the isolated mountain fastness of Hunza, Northern Areas of Pakistan, he has left a legacy of over a hundred books related to the esoteric interpretation of the holy Qurʾān. 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 Qurʾān 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.



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