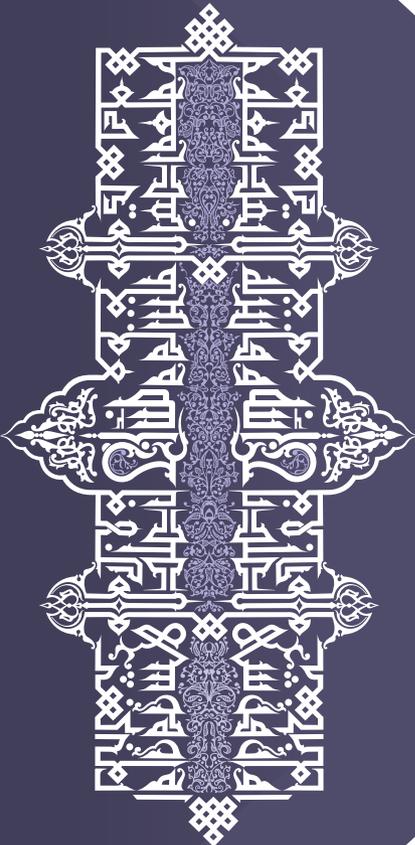


Part 3

Treasure  
of Knowledge

'Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai



# Treasure of Knowledge

*‘Ilmī Khazānah*

**Part 3**

By

‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai (S.L.)

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*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi ʿalā mannihi wa iḥsānihi!* The English translation of the third part of “*ʿIlmī Khazānah*”, i.e., “Treasure of Knowledge” is ready to be published by the grace of Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time. Like other parts in this series, it also contains five extremely important articles in which our revered teacher ʿAllāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai<sup>(q)</sup> has scattered pearls of sublime realities for the seekers of true knowledge.

As always, with the feelings of utmost gratitude, I put on record the names of my mentors Dr. Faqīr Muhammad Hunzai *ṣāḥib* and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai *ṣāḥibah* for their continuous guidance and support. I owe my deepest gratitude to them for carrying out the final editing of this translation which has immensely increased its quality.

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Nageen Fatimah owes a special mention as she took the task of preparing the indices for this book and completed it with great care. It gives us great satisfaction that the *nūrānī* youth of our organisation are performing service for knowledge as per our Ustād-i buzurgwār<sup>(q)</sup>'s wish.

*In-shā'a'llāh!* The seekers of true knowledge will find this book extremely useful in enhancing their understanding of the many key concepts of Islam.

## Dedication

*Is ʿilm-i ḥaqīqī ko samajh ganj-i Khudā hē  
Ta'khīr nah kar is kā safar tēz chalā chal*

Consider this true knowledge to be Divine treasure;  
Do not tarry in this journey, continue to walk fast

This dedication records the sponsorship of the English translation of Treasure of Knowledge Part III (*ʿIlmi khazānah ḥiṣṣah-yi siwum*) by a very committed and devoted family of Dānishgāh-i Khānah-yi Ḥikmat: Rahim Momin, Shazia Rahim, and their two Nūrānī Little Angels, Salmandad (*Salmān-dād*) and Sakina (*sakīnah*). Both Rahim and Shazia hail from Karachi, Pakistan where they attended *ʿilmī* classes of ʿAllāmah buzurgwār<sup>(q)</sup> for several years. After moving to USA in 2009, this family is now committed to the mission of disseminating the spiritual knowledge in the Houston centre, USA.

Rahim was born on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1974 in Karachi, Pakistan. He completed his B.Com. from Karachi University. He was introduced to this organisation in 1990 by his friend Nizar Merchant, son of our extremely respected Life-President Fath Ali Habib *ṣāhib*. The day Rahim attended his first *ʿilmī* class with ʿAllāmah buzurgwār<sup>(q)</sup>, he realised the importance of this spiritual knowledge and continued attending classes with regularity and punctuality. Those who know Rahim can testify to the seriousness and concentration with which he used to listen to ʿAllāmah ṣāhib<sup>(q)</sup>'s lectures. By nature, he is a very silent and hard-working person. He served in the Platinum shoe service, Karachi for several years. He used to participate eagerly in the setting up of book-selling stalls in Karachi on every occasion of Eid.

Shazia was born on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb, 1979 in Karachi, Pakistan. She was introduced to this organisation by her friend Nasreen Akbar in 1997. While in Karachi she used to participate passionately in article-reading, research workshops, index-making, proof-reading and audio books project. Prior to moving to USA, she did Masters in Education from Jinnah University for Women, Karachi in 2000. In USA, she started her career in teaching as a substitute teacher. Later on she got admission in Texas Teacher certification from EC-6/ESL/STR, which she completed and started to work as a kindergarten teacher in 2019-2020. Currently she is working as an interventionist teacher in a school. Shazia is also enrolled in Masters of Education program in the University of Houston with major in curriculum and instruction in learning design and technology. During her studies she had an assignment in which she was supposed to make a presentation encompassing all the required methods of presentation. She selected the book “A Bridge between Two Epochs” by Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai, throughout her course for that semester. She used that presentation for all her assignments related to the technology input in curriculum and instruction. Her presentation was greatly admired and praised by all her teachers.

While performing all other responsibilities, Rahim and Shazia are also fulfilling the blessed role of nurturing their two lovely NLAs and of transferring into them the zeal for acquisition and dissemination of spiritual knowledge. Salmandad and Sakina were both lovingly named by °Allāmah buzurgwār<sup>(q)</sup>. Salmandad was born on 23rd Aug, 2006 in Karachi, Pakistan. He is presently studying in 10<sup>th</sup> grade High school Sophomore. He is also skilled in Clarinet which he learned during middle school. Sakina was born on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2011 in Houston, USA. She is in Elementary school in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. She participates in various school activities and always passes all her exams with flying colours.

Let us all pray for this family for the sacrifice they have made for the publication of this book. May Khudāwand bless them with

good health to continue their services for true knowledge; may the blessings of this commendable sacrifice bring manifold physical, spiritual and intellectual bounties to this family; may He grant them every kind of peace and happiness in this world and elevated ranks in the hereafter; may these NLAs grow up to be exemplary *murīds* of the Imām of the time, *Āmin! Yā Rabba'l-‘ālamīn!*

Azeem Ali Lakhani

Karachi

11<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2021

## Important Note

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

- (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 Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful

## Words Worth Saying

By the grace of Almighty Allāh and with the physical and spiritual guidance and help of the True Prophet Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad Muṣṭafā<sup>(s)</sup> and the pure Imāms<sup>(c)</sup>, [this book] “*Panj Maqālah* Part III” is before you. The importance and usefulness of this is on the whole like my other books, however, the special subjects contained in this book in order of their topics are presented below:

Firstly in this book some wisdoms of the verse of purification (*āyah-yi taḥīr*, 33:33) are presented, which are about the noble people of the house (*ahl-i bayt-i kirām*) and the Imāms<sup>(c)</sup> from the progeny of Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup>. The glory and the exalted rank of these persons whom the Lord of the world has purified in every respect is such a reality of Islam that, by understanding it properly, numerous secrets of the true religion are revealed. For example, Qur’ānic difficulties become easy and hidden treasures of wisdoms are found as a result of accepting the reality of the purity and infallibility of the five holy persons (*panj-tan-i pāk*) and the pure Imāms<sup>(c)</sup>, as it is said: “Indeed this is a noble Qur’ān which is in a hidden Book, which none touches save the purified ones” (56:77-79). These verses clearly show that the supreme objective of the purity of the five holy persons and the Imāms<sup>(c)</sup> of *ahl-i bayt* is that these sacred personalities may reach the hidden book (*kitāb-i maknūn*), wherein the Qur’ān is protected. This hidden book, whether it is the Guarded Tablet (*lawḥ-i mahfūz*) or the practical *ta’wīl* of spirituality, in any case it is far beyond the reach of others. It means that no one can attain this rank of Qur’ānic spirituality and the wisdom of recognition, except the people of the house (which includes the pure Imāms<sup>(c)</sup>). Thus the topic of the verse of purification (*āyah-yi taḥīr*) is discussed here to draw attention [of the readers] towards such realities.

The second article is “*Khāṣifū'n-Na'l*” (i.e., mender of the shoe) which discusses the wisdoms of the prophetic tradition according to which Ḥaẓrat-i ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup> and the Imāms<sup>(c)</sup> from his offspring are the custodians of *ta'wīl*. In short, the *ta'wīl* of Qur'ān commenced in the time of the sacred personality of Mawlā ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup> and [then] every Imām presented a part of *ta'wīl* to people according to the exigencies of his time. In this way Qur'ānic *ta'wīl* continued to be revealed gradually through the Imām of the time. First, this shows that the obedience to the custodians of the Divine Command (*ulu'l-amr*) is obligatory after the obedience to God and the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, and the *ulu'l-amr* are the holy Imāms<sup>(c)</sup>. Secondly, the reality becomes evident here that the secret of Islam's evolution and progress is hidden in acting upon *ulu'l-amr*'s commands of gradual *ta'wīl* to attain the religious and worldly success of an Islamic way of life according to the exigency of time and space.

The third article is “Gradual Guidance” and its purpose is to establish that the completion of the act of the law of nature and the implementation of Islamic guidance is in gradual form. Its proof is the advent of one *shari'at* after another prior to the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, and to act upon the *ta'wīl* after the *tanzīl* in the cycle of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>. As it is clear from the *ḥadīṣ* of *khāṣifū'n-na'l* that the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s fight for [the sake of] *tanzīl* was during his own pure life and the fight pertaining to the *ta'wīl* [of Qur'ān] was to be fought later by Ḥaẓrat-i ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup> and the succeeding Imāms from his progeny.

The fourth article is “The Wisdom of Sacrifice” and it is important because this type of worship (*ibādat*) is so ancient and its history is so long that there has been no time since the era of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> till today which is devoid of true and false sacrifices of various kinds. Thus it was important to present [here] some beneficial points regarding sacrifice (*qurbānī*).

The fifth article is “Three Questions from India”. In our opinion it is extremely important to answer a question and to publish it,

because generally questions arise regarding such matters of religion in which people have doubt. Thus if answers to such questions are not [satisfactorily] provided, gradually people begin to be doubtful about religion. It is also true that the answer to every question is either direct or indirect and the more appropriate among these two must be provided. If you scatter the pearls of knowledge under normal circumstances people will pay very little attention, however, if you present the discourses of knowledge in the form of debate and arguments, people will become alert and will listen to it attentively and thoughtfully. It is so because a human being always wants to see the superiority and the victory of intellect and knowledge or we can say that a human being is always eager to see competition, therefore, while responding to questions, essential knowledge should be spread. However, it is a separate matter that you are able to answer a question but you do not wish to answer it due to prudence.

If the knowledge of Ismaili religion is spread in the form of appealing books, the questions will [automatically] be reduced and this is as if you had already prepared answers to different sorts of questions in advance. One of the indications of the books which are successful is that by studying them many questions are solved and in this way the doubts and uncertainties are resolved. When doubt is clarified, certainty takes its place and such knowledge is called the knowledge of certainty (*'ilmu'l-yaqīn*).

We should thank the Lord of the universe from our heart and soul for His pure favours of knowledge, which He has bestowed upon us by His grace and provided us with all the external and internal resources to promote the mission of [spiritual] knowledge. He is the true Lord who inspired [in us] the passion for service by means of the virtuous prayers of the people of faith, and motivated many people who befriend knowledge to render extensive support for the service of knowledge. Praise be to God for His favours!

A servant for knowledge of the *jamā'at*

Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

Sunday 20 Ramaḏān al-Mubāarak 1397 A.H.

4 September 1977 A.D.

## **Wisdoms of the Qur’ān**

### **The Verse of Purification and the People of the House**

God, the Exalted, says: “Indeed Allāh wishes to remove (all kinds of) uncleanness from you, O the people of the house (of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>), and purify you as ought to be purified.” (33:33).

It is well-known that the above-mentioned verse was revealed about the Five Pure Personalities (*panj-tan-i pāk*). This event took place in the house of Umm-i Salmah<sup>(c)</sup>, the wife of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, that the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> called Ḥaẓrat-i ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup>, Ḥaẓrat-i Fāṭimah<sup>(c)</sup>, Ḥaẓrat-i Ḥasan<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i Ḥusayn<sup>(c)</sup> and put his cloak around them. He himself then entered it and said: “O my God! These are the people of my household regarding whom You promised me to remove impurity from them. O God! Keep every impurity away from them and keep them pure as it ought to be”. Umm-i Salmah<sup>(c)</sup> then asked: “O the Prophet of God! Could I be included with them too?” The holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> replied: “No, O Umm-i Salmah! [But] the glad tiding is that you are on [the path of] righteousness”.

#### **Wisdom 1:**

This sacred verse clearly and completely shows the reality that the Five Pure Personalities (*panj-tan-i pāk*) are purified at the highest rank. God, by virtue of His mercy, has kept them pure as it ought to be and has made them a model and a fountainhead of every kind of purity.

#### **Wisdom 2:**

This purity of the people of Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s household is external as well as internal; spiritual as well as physical; religious as well as worldly. They are pure in every respect and there is not even an iota of doubt in it.

### **Wisdom 3:**

This blessed verse, which is famous as “The verse of purification (*āyah-yi taḥīr*)”, mentions that the Five Holy Persons (*pañj-tan-i pāk*) are extremely pure. No other purification can be superior to it in the world of humanity as this verse uses the emphatic form to mention the purification and infallibility of the sacred personalities of *pañj-tan*.

### **Wisdom 4:**

Everyone accepts that the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> was pure from the beginning. Thus when he included himself in the action of purification of the people of his household, the concept of this purification was elevated to extreme height, which proved many realities. One of those [realities] is that the concept of the praiseworthy attributes of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> which are in the light of Qur’ān and Prophetic traditions is also the concept of sublime ethics (*akhlāq-i ‘aliyyah*) of the other noble persons of his household. This is because in this wisdom-filled verse the Lord of the universe remembers all the pure people of the household on an equal rank of purification and infallibility.

### **Wisdom 5:**

This sacred verse mentions the intention of almighty Allāh to keep the people of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>’s household pure from every kind of evil. We should know that God’s will is not contingent rather it is eternal; therefore such an intention of the Lord of the world to purify these great personalities has existed from eternity. Moreover, these personalities are eternally purified due to the Divine will and not that such an action [of purifying them] was carried out later.

### **Wisdom 6:**

Now the question remains regarding the revelation of the verse of purification (*āyah-yi taḥīr*) and holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>’s action that he called the people of his household (*ahl-i bayt*), put his cloak around them and prayed for their purification. Here it apparently

seems that the purification of these persons was carried out when God revealed this verse while the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> prayed for their purification, however, the fact is that God and Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> wanted to exhibit a practical proof of the eternal reality that the *ahl-i bayt* are pure so that people can understand it easily.

### **Wisdom 7:**

Several verses of the wise Qur'ān mention the spiritual and physical purification of the believers, which shows that the purification and infallibility of the *ahl-i bayt* is loftier. This is because the purification of the believers is through the mediation of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and the people of his household. Whenever a *mu'min* is purified, they become certain of the superiority of the *ahl-i bayt's* infallibility in the same manner as a little child used to think that the mountain peak was touching the heavens, however, when taken to the summit, the child realises that it was just his supposition that the heaven's ceiling is placed on the peaks of mountains, but the fact is that the heaven is far higher than the mountains.

### **Wisdom 8:**

At the level of humanity what greater degree of purity, cleanliness of heart and internal purity be than that of the Perfect Men whom God keeps at the supreme rank of virtuous attributes (*akhlāq-i ḥasanah*) right from the beginning! Moreover, by making them the locus of manifestation of His light of guidance, He makes them the source of all types of goodness and rectitude. Such is the rank of *nubuwwat* (Prophethood) and *walāyat* (Guardianship of the Imām of the time).

### **Wisdom 9:**

As God kept the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> pure right from the beginning in order to make him the bearer of the light of guidance, in the same way He kept the people of Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s household pure from the beginning so that the chain of guidance continues forever and there may not be any kind of impurity in it.

**Wisdom 10:**

All the allusions and mentions of the pure manners and the internal purity of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> present in the wise Qur'ān also include his *ahl-i bayt*. This special purification and infallibility of these people is with the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> so that the centre of knowledge, wisdom, guidance and rectitude may continue and be present in the religion even after [the physical demise of] the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>.

**Wisdom 11:**

Idolatry, which is of two types, i.e., external and internal, is considered impurity in the noble Qur'ān (22:30). To escape from external idolatry (*zāhiri but-parasti*) is very easy but to guard oneself from the internal idolatry (*bāṭini but-parasti*) is not possible for everyone except the *ahl-i bayt* as they are pure from every sort of evil. Internal idolatry is where one does not recognise God, accepts others as God, loves the forbidden and illegitimate and does not practise moderation in the lawful. God considers all these as impurity, from which He has purified the *ahl-i bayt*.

**Wisdom 12:**

It is a common belief in Islam that through purification of soul and cleansing of heart, the light of spirituality dawns in the heart and mind of a *darwīsh* and such a person indeed becomes as if an angel. Thus if such is the state of the internal purification of an ordinary *mu'min*, what will be the state of the purity of heart of those sacred and great personalities who are purified by God from eternity. This clearly shows that it is in this sense the *ahl-i bayt* are God's light.

**Wisdom 13:**

The holy Qur'ān mentions that the soul is from the world of command (*ʿālam-i amr*, 17:85). It means that the soul is not from the world of creation (*ʿālam-i khalq*) and therefore it is an eternal essence (*azalī jawhar*) and a light (*nūr*). It is a luminous world wherein the wonders and marvels of God's power are seen. However all these attributes of the mirror of soul are exclusively

for the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and his family for whom God has said that they are pure in their original and eternal state.

**Wisdom 14:**

One should know that the *ahl-i bayt* are firstly the Five Holy Persons (*panj-tan-i pak*) and then all the pure Imāms from the progeny of Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> and the children of Ḥazrat-i °Ali<sup>(c)</sup>. This is because *ahl-i bayt* are those persons of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s house who, in addition to having a physical relationship to him, are also close to him in the rank of heavenly knowledge and guidance. These are the ones called the people of *z̄ikr* (*ahl-i z̄ikr*), the custodians of Divine command (*ṣāhibān-i amr*) and the true Imāms (*a'immah-yi barḥaq*) and they are the ones purified by God from all types of human weaknesses, all sorts of imperfections and all kinds of evil.

## **The Wisdoms of *Ḥadīs*** ***Khāṣifū'n-Na'ī* (Mender of the Shoe)**

This prophetic tradition is famous in the books of *aḥādīs* of [both] Sunnī and Shī'ah (Isnā-<sup>c</sup>asharī and Ismā'īlī) and I have taken it from “*Ḥālāt-ū Maqālāt-i Ṣaḥābah*”:

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī says: “We were walking with the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> when the strap of his shoe broke. Ḥaẓrat-i 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup> picked the shoe up and started repairing its strap. After the repairing of the shoe he again started to walk and said: ‘O people! Indeed, there is among you one who will fight for the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān just as I fought for its *tanzīl*’”. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī says: “I came out of the group and narrated this glad tiding to 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup>, which had just been told to us by the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, but 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup> was not very jubilant and it seemed that he had already heard this glad tiding”.<sup>1</sup>

1. First of all it is proved here that the two terms *tanzīl* and *ta'wīl* are according to the wish of God and the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>. Had this not been the case its importance and occurrence would not have been mentioned in this authentic prophetic tradition and no allusion to this reality would have been made that the time of *tanzīl* was the period of *nubuwwat* and *ta'wīl* is spread in the whole period of *imāmat*.

2. This noble prophetic tradition also tells us that the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> is the master of *tanzīl* (*ṣāhib-i tanzīl*) and Mawlānā 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup> is the master of *ta'wīl* (*ṣāhib-i ta'wīl*). Furthermore, *tanzīl* and *ta'wīl* both contain heavenly commands and guidance. Thus it is necessary that according to the command of God and the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, the esoteric (*ta'wīlī*) guidance should commence after the exoteric (*tanzīlī*) directives so that the believers may gradually benefit from both types of guidance.

3. *Tanzīl* means Qur'ān's exoteric meaning and *ta'wīl* is its hidden reality. Thus it is evident that Ḥaẓrat-i 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup> is Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s

successor for the reason that the solution to all those problems which were going to arise due to the changes in world and time after [the physical demise of] Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, may be provided in the light of *ta'wil*, if it is not possible to solve them through *tanzil*. This is also called *istin<sup>m</sup>bāt* (deduction).<sup>2</sup>

4. The wisdom of this prophetic tradition shows that the chain of *imāmat* is to continue and remain from the time of Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> till the resurrection, because Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup> is the title of the chain of light of *imāmat* in this prophetic tradition. It means that the work regarding which it is said that it will be done by °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>, indeed it will be done by °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>, not only in a personal capacity as an individual but also through the chain of *imāmat* of his pure children.

5. This blessed saying of the true Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> mentions to perform the internal (*bāṭini*) *jihād* after the external (*ẓāhiri*) *jihād*, which the Imāms<sup>(c)</sup> will continue to do through the *zu'l-faqār* of knowledge in all times. It means that in religion there is not only *shari'at* but also *ṭariqat*, *ḥaqīqat* and *ma'rifat*, otherwise the *ta'wili* battle would have been meaningless.

6. Just as *tanzil* is limited and so is the exoteric (*tanzili*) *jihād*, *ta'wil* is unlimited and so is the *ta'wili* *jihād*. It means that the external (*ẓāhiri*) *jihād* is only done physically, but the internal (*bāṭini*) *jihād* is done spiritually and intellectually in many ways.

7. °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>, who is always present in the attire of the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time, possesses an all-embracing and far-reaching *jihād*, which is that the people of the world are compelled to modify their concepts due to the conditions of the time, otherwise they are not able to progress with the time.

8. Everyone accepts the reality that Islam is the religion of nature (*dīn-i fiṭrat*) and the best model and the finest example of nature is the human being. The manifestation of the law of nature in human beings is that they progress gradually; they change, pass through

many circumstances and step by step reach the rank of perfection. The true religion also follows the same example and *ta'wili jihād* is necessary to achieve this purpose.

9. Here it is evident that people are to be made to act on the teachings of *ṭarīqat*, *ḥaqīqat* and *ma'rifat* in the time of *sharī'at* as well as after it. If they resist, the *ta'wili* battle will be indispensable against them and it will be in the form of different difficulties caused by the worldly circumstances and times.

10. This prophetic tradition also clearly demonstrates the reality that after the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, the true Imām<sup>(c)</sup> is completely aware of all the *ta'wils* of the wise Qur'ān. Moreover, all those people who are nominated by the centre of *da'wat*, i.e., the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time for the *jihād* of knowledge also know the principles of *ta'wil* through him.

11. One should know that *ta'wil* is in three places. The first is the Qur'ān where *ta'wil* is in the form of the kernel of meaning and wisdom. The second place is the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time and his *ḥudūd* where *ta'wil* is in the form of spiritual observations and experiences. The third place is the external world where *ta'wil* takes place in the form of great revolutions and events.

12. One of the many sayings regarding *ta'wil* in the wise Qur'ān is that *ta'wil* will come gradually after the revelation of the Qur'ān. See verses 7:53 and 10:39. A question may arise here whether the *ta'wil* of the Qur'ān was not revealed along with its *tanzil*? Was not *ta'wil* revealed to the sacred personality of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>? Its answer is that indeed with the Qur'ān's *tanzil* its *ta'wil* was also present and the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> was the very first person to know the *ta'wil*. However, the third type of *ta'wil*, as mentioned above [in point number 11], had not come in the time of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> as it was to be revealed gradually with the vicissitudes of the times. It was due to this aspect of *ta'wil* that it was said that *ta'wil* has not come yet and it will come in the future. It also

alludes that the advent of the spiritual cycle, individually as well as collectively, is the advent of *ta'wīl*.

13. *Ta'wīl*, at whatever place it is, firstly it is an invitation (*da'wat*), if not accepted it takes the form of a battle. Therefore, *ta'wīl* is the invitation as well as the battle of the true Imām<sup>(c)</sup>.

## Gradual Guidance

It is a fact according to every Muslim and there is no doubt in it that Islam is the Divine religion and the religion of nature for certainly it is the only universal religion which, according to the Divine saying (61:9) is going to harmonise all the religions of the world with itself in the future. As this fact is fully understood that the chain of Islamic guidance is in accordance with God's nature according to which He created all human beings, it signifies that Islamic guidance is implemented gradually. It means that although the light of guidance is present forever but it continues to ordain fresh guidance according to the exigencies of the changing circumstances and time so that the solution to contemporary problems may be sought in an innovative manner and new difficulties may [thus] be overcome. Hence in this topic we will try to prove in the light of the wise Qur'an that on the whole Islamic guidance is in a gradual form.

**Proof 1:** "This is the nature of God according to which He created [all] human beings. There is no change in the creation of Allāh. This is the religion of *qā'im*" (30:30).

It is said in this sacred verse that people are created in accordance with the law of nature and there is neither any change in this law nor can there be any change in this creation. Also the religion of *qā'im* is the same. Thus here it is evident that Islam is the religion of nature and its guidance is in gradual form, i.e., its guidance progresses step by step and rank by rank.

**Proof 2:** In *sūrah-yi An'ām* (6:75-79) it is mentioned that Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> was made to witness the spirituality of the heavens and earth. Here the reality becomes apparent that Divine guidance is revealed to the people of the world in a gradual manner. As Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> first reflected on a star and then on the moon. Afterwards he pondered on the sun and finally he turned his

attention towards Almighty God. This is the exoteric form of this event, while its *ta'wil* is that star, moon and sun are those ranks of religion (*ḥudūd-i dīn*) through whom Ḥazrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> *khalilu'llāh* reached God's recognition. This guidance for him was in a gradual state, i.e., gradually acting upon new guidance.

**Proof 3:** It is alluded in the second *rukū'* of *sūrah-yi Baqarah* that a human being is like a traveller on the path of spiritual progress who is in need of fresh rays of light at each and every step in the darkness of night. Such a light is required for guidance that can continuously radiate fresh luminous rays. If contrarily the light is such that it appears for a while and then disappears, as the light of a thunderbolt or that of a stationary fire, the traveller will only be able to advance a few steps in such a light. This example shows that the light of guidance which the holy Qur'ān praises is the everlasting fountainhead of the gradual guidance.

**Proof 4:** It becomes evident by reflecting in *sūrah-yi Ḥadid* (57:28) that any individual or group cannot progress steadily on the straight path (*ṣirāṭ-i mustaqīm*), except in the luminosity of that light of guidance which is appointed by God and His Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>. It means that in the world, religion is like a path on which the travellers need such fresh and new light of guidance that can make everything of the surroundings clear and visible so that the travellers [on the path] of religion may not remain in darkness regarding the time and the conditions of the place and that they may advance [steadily] towards the final destination.

**Proof 5:** The sacred Qur'ān says: "Is he who was dead and We gave him life, and appointed for him a light whereby he walks among people as one whose likeness is [that he is in] darkness from which he cannot come forth?" (6:122).

The teaching of this blessed verse is that the Divine guidance and mercy which are required by an individual in order to live a religious life in this material world and to become alive in the true

sense are also required by the whole nation, otherwise there will be nothing here except death and darkness. It means that only those in this world whom God has revived in the spirit of knowledge and recognition and have connected them with His light of guidance are truly alive. By reflecting on this purport we can conclude that in this world not only the sources of darkness and the means of the death of negligence and ignorance are perpetually present, but the fountainhead of light and the source of the life of remembrance and recognition also continues eternally. Had this not been so, people would blame God on the day of resurrection, saying: “O God! There was but darkness in the world and no light [of guidance] was present there”.

Here the reality becomes evident that the light of guidance is [always] living and present in the world. It is so in order that all the stages of religious and worldly lives may be traversed with peace and safety only in its luminosity, making this journey fearless and successful in every respect. It is evident from the above-mentioned verse that the light is there so that in its luminosity one may walk on the right path, stay protected from all dangers and troubles, and reach the final destination; this is called gradual guidance.

**Proof 6:** It is said in the holy book: “Is he who walks prone upon his face better guided than he who walks upright on a straight path?” (67:22).

This noble verse mentions an example of the difference between walking on the straight path and wandering astray from it. At this place one should seriously reflect that if a person is not able to find the way to the final destination and even more adversely they cannot walk like a healthy person then how far can they reach by grovelling flat on their face? What else can they do except making unfruitful attempts and tolerating all the pain in vain? Thus deviation [from the right path] is a spiritual agony and

chastisement and contrary to it is the comfort and reward of guidance [on the straight path].

Notwithstanding God Himself condemns going astray; according to the law of justice there is no lack of the means of deviation. How is it possible that the means of a guidance that is according to God's pleasure be incomplete? Or after being completed in some time, it should be reduced? This is impossible. The gist of this description is that deviation is there right from the beginning and most of the time a new problem causes a person to go astray. Similarly, on the other side the means of guidance is also there right from the start and its essential duty is to shed the light of fresh guidance on the contemporary problems, in the same way as when a traveller who travels in a dark night does not carry the [source of] light behind, rather it is carried in front so that light may be shed on the ground before putting the feet on it and the final destination may be reached with peace and safety.

**Proof 7:** It is said in *sūrah-yi Ahzāb*: “This has been Allāh’s way with those who have gone before, and you will never find any change in Allāh’s way” (33:62). It means that the complete model of Divine habit existed in the period before Ḥazrat-i Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> and it will continue without any alteration till the resurrection. This Divine practice (*sunnat*) is that whether people accept it or not, the grace of the light of guidance will definitely continue in the world in a gradual manner so that it may be acquired according to the exigency of time and space.

**Proof 8:** We will explain in the light of *sūrah-yi Baqarah* (2:269) that if wisdom can only be attained through God’s will and if there is abundant good (*khayr-i kaṣīr*) in its acquisition, we should understand that wisdom and the abundant good are in the form of such a gradual guidance that is continuously attained according to the requirement of time and place.

**Proof 9:** A very important saying at the end of *sūrah-yi Fath* implies that God sent His Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> with perfect guidance and the true religion, i.e., Islam so that the latter may prevail over all the religions of the world (48:28). This prophecy of the wise Qurʾān completely illumines the reality that the most fundamental, the greatest and the all-embracing power of Islam is guidance and truth (as is evident in “*bi’l-hudā wa dinī’l-ḥaqqi*”, 48:28). Moreover, this spiritual power will gradually grant all the religions of the world unanimity and uniformity with the Divine religion by the fresh and new guidance from the fountainhead of the rank of Imāmat after the rank of Prophethood.

**Proof 10:** The holy Qurʾān asks the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> to follow the collective guidance of the previous prophets (6:90). This does not mean that (God forbid) the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> should leave the wise Qurʾān and follow the guidance of the previous prophets, rather its purpose is that the chief of the Prophets<sup>(s)</sup> should follow the guidance of the prophets of earlier periods in the form of the Qurʾān itself, because the guidance which God gave to all prophets collectively is not outside the bounds of *tanzil* and *ta’wil* of the Qurʾān. Thus it means that the guidance ordained by Allāh for the whole period, i.e., from the time of Prophethood till the resurrection, is in gradual form in line with the new requirements of time and space just as the guidance used to progress with the changes in the time of the prophets before Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup>.

**Proof 11:** The Glorious Qurʾān says: “He (i.e., God) said: This is the straight path which leads to Me” (15:41). This clearly reveals the purport that the true religion, i.e., Islam is the straight path through which people can reach God. Moreover, it is the only straight path on which the guidance was commenced by Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> and [then] all the prophets guided [people] on this straight path according to [the needs of] their times till the advent of the period of Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> who, in his entire pure life, guided the Muslims according to [the exigency of] his time. Furthermore, according to God’s command he appointed his

successor for the gradual guidance [of the people] in the future and this process continues till the resurrection. Thus it becomes established that the centre of religious and worldly guidance that is appointed by God for the people, spreads the light of gradual guidance according to the requirements of time and space.

**Proof 12:** The holy Qur’ān says: “O you who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger and the *ulu’l-amr* from amongst you” (4:59). This decree has been ordained keeping in view all the people of faith who are going to be born from the time of Prophethood till the resurrection. This means that God should be obeyed through the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> should be obeyed through the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time as clearly alluded by the word “*min-kum* (from among you)”. Here the reality is evident to every wise person that had it been possible for everyone to understand the Qur’ān’s guidance on their own, it would have been ordained to obey God only. Furthermore, in such a case there would not have been any mention of the obedience to the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>. Further, had there been no need of anyone else’s guidance after that of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, it would not have been ordained to obey the custodians of the Divine command. Similarly, if the chain of Imāmat and [Divine] guidance would have discontinued after the first few Imāms, or had there been no new guidance from the Imām of the time, the question: “The guidance of the present Imām is different from that of the previous Imāms, which should we follow?” would not apparently arise. In this context God would not have commanded us to obey the Imām of our time in case of such differences in guidance.

**Proof 13:** God says: “Do they wait for anything but its *ta’wil*? The day its *ta’wil* will come, those who were previously forgetful of it will say: ‘Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord brought the truth (*ḥaqq*). Have we then any intercessors to intercede for us, or shall we be returned, to do other than that we have done?’” (7:53).

This noble verse clearly means that the light of esoteric guidance of the holy Qurʾān will keep on spreading gradually through the chain of Imāmat according to the exigencies of the time and the new events taking place in the world. As a result a great resurrection of changes will take place in this world, which only those people will be able to accept ideologically who have been accepting it previously.

**Proof 14:** It is said in *sūrah-yi Yūnus*: “Nay, but they denied that whose knowledge they could not comprehend, and whose *taʾwil* has not yet come to them” (10:39). This noble verse also alludes in the language of wisdom that first Qurʾān’s *tanzil* (exoteric aspect) is completed and then its *taʾwil* (esoteric aspect) continues to manifest gradually. If the *tanzil* of each verse of the Qurʾān has one part of guidance its *taʾwil* has seventy parts of guidance. Similarly, the hidden part of the Qurʾān has infinite guidance which is not merely for one era rather it is for the whole cycle. By this the reality becomes crystal clear that the Qurʾānic guidance is continuous and gradual, both externally and internally, and that is called gradual guidance.

**Proof 15:** In the light of the plenitude of heavenly guidance pertaining to *tanzil* and *taʾwil*, the vicegerent of God and the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> is the authority in all religious matters because he has been appointed as the lord of [Divine] command by God and His Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>. It is obvious that the possessor of command (*ṣāhib-i amr*) is the one vested with authority (*ṣāhib-i ikhtiyār*) and [the word] vicegerent (*khalifah*) also signifies the same. Vicegerent means successor, i.e., “*jā-nishīn*” and here “*jā* (i.e., place)” does not mean any physical and material place rather it means rank and authority as the holy Qurʾān says: “O Dāwūd! Verily We have appointed you a vicegerent in the earth, so judge between the people with justice” (38:26).

This shows that in his time Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup> was the authorised vicegerent (*khalifah-yi mukhtār*) of God and of those prophets who

had passed earlier. If God was to decide every matter and had the vicegerent of God not been given such authority, it would never have been said [to Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup>] to decide among people with truth. This clearly proves that the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of every period, who holds the status of vicegerent of God and the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> in his time, is the authority in all religious matters and his guidance is gradual in nature.

**Proof 16:** God says: “And when there comes to them any news of safety or of fear, they spread it abroad, and if they had referred it to the Messenger and to the *ulu’l-amr* amongst them, then they, who could discover the truth, would have known it.” (4:83).

The wisdom of this Divine saying is that after the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> it is only the custodians of the Divine command who can explain the religious commands and guide people according to the exigency of time by doing deduction (*istin<sup>m</sup>bāṭ*) from the verses of the holy Qur’ān. This is the meaning of *istin<sup>m</sup>bāṭ* being specific only for the custodians of the Divine command, i.e., the pure Imāms.<sup>3</sup>

**Proof 17:** It is said in the glorious Qur’ān: “Verily, the (true) religion with God is Islam” (3:19). It also signifies that according to God the religion certainly means to always submit to the Divine command which is possible only through the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and the true Imāms<sup>(c)</sup>. It means that the religious guidance is not given at once and suddenly, rather it continues. This is the reason to name the religion of Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> Islam, a religion in which not only submission and obedience are necessary in its foundation and origin, but also the obedience to continuous guidance at all times.

**Proof 18:** God says: “But no, by your Lord, they will not believe till they make you the judge regarding the disagreement between them, then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching your verdict, but shall surrender in full submission.” (4:65). This wisdom-filled verse shows that whether the dispute is of a religious nature or a worldly matter, in any case it is required to

have recourse to the true guide. Furthermore, the decision of the true guide should be accepted wholeheartedly without which Islam and faith are impossible.

**Proof 19:** The holy Qur’ān says: “And that I may perfect My blessing upon you, and that you may be guided. As We have sent among you, of yourselves, a Messenger, to recite Our signs to you and to purify you, and to teach you the Book and the Wisdom, and to teach you that you knew not” (2:150-151).

This Divine command is sufficient elaboration that the way religious and worldly guidance continued in the time of Prophethood, it will continue without any decrease in the cycle of Imāmat. Thus it is said: “And so that I complete My bounty on you (i.e., *walāyat* and Imāmat which is the special bounty of God) and so that you may be guided (i.e., the purpose of Imām and Imāmat is but guidance)”. Then the example is given that just as the [physical] existence of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> was the source of various kinds of spiritual and physical blessings, similarly the blessings of knowledge, wisdom, guidance and rectitude will continue to be attained through the holy personality of the Imām [forever].

**Proof 20:** Among the wisdom-filled parts of the verse of light (*āyah-yi nūr*, 24:35) is: “*nūr<sup>um</sup> ‘alā nūr*”, which means ‘light upon light’. It signifies that after one Imām there will be another Imām and in this way after one cycle of knowledge, wisdom, guidance and rectitude, another cycle will continue. Thus the light of guidance that is appointed in the world by God continues in the chain of the holy personalities of Prophets and Imāms one after another. Each person of this holy chain is the true guide in his time and his obedience is incumbent upon all the people of the time. Thus it is evident that the guidance of the religion of Islam is in a gradual form.

## Wisdom of Sacrifice (*qurbānī*)

The word “*qurbānī*” is derived from the word “*qurbān*” and the latter comes from “*qurb*” which means nearness and to become closer. Thus “*qurbān*” means every such thing through which God’s closeness is sought. In common sense the words “*qurbān*” and “*qurbānī*” are for an animal that is slaughtered in God’s name.

In the holy Qur’ān, the sacrifice related to the time of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> is mentioned in these words: “And (O Prophet!) recite unto them the true story of the two sons of Ādam, when they each offered a sacrifice, and it was accepted from one of them and was not accepted from the other. The one said: ‘I will surely kill you’. The other replied: ‘Allāh only accepts from those who are righteous’” (5:27).

From the above the reality is crystal clear that not only is piety the foremost prerequisite for [the acceptance of] sacrifice, but also every virtuous act that is without piety is absolutely unacceptable in the Divine court.

It is narrated that Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> had two sons Hābīl and Qābīl. Their story is that Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> wanted to make Hābīl his legatee (*waṣī*) by giving him the Supreme Name (*ism-i a‘ẓam*) on account of his piety and capability. When Qābīl heard this, a fire of envy and jealousy flared up in his heart. He insolently said to his father: “I have the right to vicegerency”. In order to settle the dispute Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> said to them: “Both of you present your sacrifices in the Divine court, the one whose sacrifice is accepted will be rightfully entitled to this position”. Thus Hābīl took a sheep and kept it on the mountain and Qābīl took some ears [of corn] from the field and kept them there. Then, according to the usual custom a flame of fire descended from heaven and ate Hābīl’s sacrifice while Qābīl’s sacrifice was left untouched. Seeing this Qābīl became even more jealous, consequently he killed Hābīl.

Since here only the wisdoms of sacrifice (*qurbāni*) are being sought, so we do not wish to discuss this story in detail.

The most glorious and the greatest lesson of sacrifice is in the blessed personalities of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā'īl<sup>(c)</sup>. A very concise but comprehensive mention of this story is in *sūrah-yi al-Şaffāt* (37:101-107). A few wisdoms of this exemplary act of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> are being elucidated below:

### **Wisdom 1:**

Since Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> was Allāh's friend (*ḵhalīl*), therefore, from the example of the sacrifice of his extremely beloved son God demonstrates to people that those who have real love for and true friendship with Him, do not hesitate to present the greatest of sacrifices to fulfil God's wish.

### **Wisdom 2:**

Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> was not only an honourable and exalted prophet of his own time but simultaneously he was also a glorious and noble Imām (2:124). Therefore God intended to draw the attention of all the people of the world towards the reality that the pure personalities of Prophets and Imāms are blessed with the attribute of sacrificing even their lives without any delay if there is such a Divine order.

### **Wisdom 3:**

It is mentioned in the holy Qur'ān (9:111) that the Lord of the universe has bought the lives and the properties of Prophets, Imāms (*awliyā'*) and believers of all periods and in return they would get paradise. Thus through his resoluteness and determination to sacrifice his beloved son, Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> presented the practical evidence of the reality that indeed Allāh has bought everything from the believers whether their souls or wealth.

#### **Wisdom 4:**

As mentioned earlier, God's clear guidance for people is that He, the Glorious, by giving examples from the Prophets' virtuous character shows every good action. Hence except for God's love there was no other love in Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>'s heart because he was a man of pure faith (*ḥanīf*) and the greatest believer in one God (*muwahḥid-i a'zam*) of his time. However, it was probable that along with God's love, love for his own son Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā'īl<sup>(c)</sup> would gradually develop. Therefore Divine law ordered to remove the source which was creating a love other than God's love in Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>'s heart, so that people may learn that if worldly love increases in a *mu'min's* heart, God's love decreases to the same extent.

#### **Wisdom 5:**

Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> was the progenitor of Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> and was [thus] the first founder of the religion of Islam. Therefore according to Divine law it was necessary for him to leave the exemplary tradition of such a sacrifice for all the Muslims who were going to be born till the resurrection, so that in its light all the followers of Islam may create in themselves zeal to render great sacrifices.

#### **Wisdom 6:**

Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā'īl<sup>(c)</sup> is remembered as *Zabiḥu'llāh* by all the Muslims even though he was not actually sacrificed. However, he deserves this title due to the firmness and determination of his heart and soul [with which he offered himself] to accomplish the Divine command and the glory with which he earned God's pleasure. This is a clear proof of the reality that some true *mu'mins* despite being alive, are truly called *shahid* because the same eagerness and virtues of obedience exist in them, which are the characteristics of martyrs.

### **Wisdom 7:**

When the great father and son were all set in every respect for this lasting sacrifice, God, by His mercy, pardoned the sacrifice of life and instead accepted their monetary sacrifice with the same grandeur and excellence. This means that if God wishes He can, in His wisdom, give the same reward and rank to the true *mu'mins* for their financial offerings as is given for sacrificing their lives.

### **Wisdom 8:**

Since sacrifice (*qurbāni*) signifies the means of God's closeness and in this regard the greatest sacrifice is the one which is not limited to one or a few people but one which can become a means of God's proximity for the whole of humankind. Thus the greatest sacrifice of Ḥazrat-i Ismā'īl *Zabiḥu'llāh*<sup>(c)</sup> is that the sacred chain of holy Imāms continued in his pure progeny and later on the blessed personality of *Khātamu'l-an'm biyā'* Ḥazrat-i Muḥammad Muṣṭafā<sup>(s)</sup> manifested in this pure genealogy. Then after the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> the pure Imāms from the progeny of Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> and the children of <sup>c</sup>Alī<sup>(c)</sup> continued forever [from this very lineage]. Now it is evident that the sacrifice made by these personalities in their sacred lives, through which countless people of the world of Islam attained the guidance on the right path and God's closeness, was in reality far greater than the sacrifice of Ḥazrat-i Ismā'īl<sup>(c)</sup>'s physical life. Thus this is one esoteric interpretation of “*wa fadaynāhu bi-zibḥin cazīm* (i.e., And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice, 37:107)”.

### **Wisdom 9:**

*Qurbāni* is such a comprehensive word that all virtues and goodness are included in its meaning and no good deed can remain outside its scope. This is because sacrifice is a means of [attaining] God's closeness and every virtuous deed is itself such a means. This shows that sacrifices are of many types, however nobody knows what type of sacrifice is being currently demanded of a person by their religion. Only the lord of [Divine] command [i.e.,

the Imām of the time] knows this better, which is why his obedience is essential and incumbent [upon all believers].

### **Wisdom 10:**

Regarding this sacrifice, the wise Qur’ān says: “Indeed it was a clear trial” (37:106). It means that through this sacrifice God’s intention was to try and test Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā‘īl<sup>(c)</sup> and for this trial Qur’ān uses the word “*balā’* (i.e., trial, affliction, calamity)”. Although generally the word *balā’* is considered very bad, however here the reality is clear and evident that every *balā’* is a trial and every trial is a sacrifice and [thus] a means of God’s closeness.

### **Wisdom 11:**

Every sacrifice, whether small or big, is in the form of a trial of its own kind and a trial is also known as a calamity. Thus it is evident that every hardship is itself a trial and every trial, if successful, is a sacrifice and a means of closeness to God. Study the following three verses regarding test and trial: “And We will most certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give glad tidings to the patient ones, who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we belong to God, and to Him we return. These are the ones on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord, and these are the truly guided” (2:155-157).

There are many other wisdoms and *ta’wils* of sacrifice other than those mentioned above, however this short article does not have more room than this. If you wish you may study further wisdoms of sacrifice in *Wajh-i Dīn* and other *ta’wīlī* books.

Salutations!

## Three Questions from India

**Question 1:** Did the revelation of *wahy* to the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> take place through Jibrā'il<sup>(c)</sup> or was it the spiritual power of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> himself?

**Question 2:** Which verses of the noble Qur'ān were revealed about Ḥaẓrat-i 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup>? Also please tell us where these verses were revealed?

**Question 3:** Why did God create this world? If we say that God created the world so that He may be known and recognized, then [the subsequent question would be] haven't our souls attained God's recognition from the pre-eternity (*azal*) as God has said: *alastu bi-rabbikum* (Am I not your Lord?), to which our souls had responded: *qālū balā* (Why not!). Please explain this.

**Answer 1:** Yes, the revelation of *wahy* to the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> used to take place through the angel Jibrā'il<sup>(c)</sup> as this is the decision of the holy Qur'ān. See [the verses] in the Qur'ān: 2:97, 16:102, 26:193 etc.

It is also essential to know that the angels are not outside the spiritual powers of the Perfect Man. It means that the numerous spiritual powers of the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> are in the form of angels. Thus their power of knowledge is the angel Jibrā'il<sup>(c)</sup>, the faculty of comprehension is Mikā'il<sup>(c)</sup>, the power of speech is Isrāfil<sup>(c)</sup> and the faculty of imagination is 'Izrā'il<sup>(c)</sup>. Additionally, it is also a reality that these powers of the Perfect Man (which are angels) manifest in the form of different persons because the angels do not have their own image. This is why the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s Jibrīlic power (*quwwat-i jibriliyyah*, i.e., the faculty of knowledge) used to work in the form of Ḥaẓrat-i Salmān Fārsī<sup>(c)</sup>. Thus this reality has many aspects: It is true that Jibrā'il<sup>(c)</sup> is an archangel; furthermore, it is also correct that the faculty of

knowledge of the Perfect Man is Jibrā'il<sup>(c)</sup>. Moreover, it is also right that the soul of a true *mu'min* of a sublime level is given the rank of Jibrā'il<sup>(c)</sup>, as is the example of Salmān Fārsī<sup>(c)</sup> mentioned above.

**Answer 2:** It is extremely difficult to count all those verses of the holy Qur'ān and recount their places of revelation which are revealed in the glory of the Chief of the believers (*amīru'l-mu'minin*) Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>. If such a work is undertaken then it would require extensive research and [as a result] a very huge book could be written, however we do not have any such plans. Thus you may consult those books which are written in praise of Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>; for example, *Kawkab-i Durri*, *Arjaḥu'l-maṭālib* etc., and first read the exegesis [of the holy Qur'ān] written from a *shī'ī* perspective.

Moreover, we can minimize this extensive work by referring to the following saying of Mawlā °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>: “Qur'ān is revealed in four parts; so its first quarter is about us, the second quarter is regarding our foes, the third quarter contains stories and parables; and the last quarter comprises of orders and commands. And the noble verses of the Qur'ān (*karā'imu'l-Qur'ān*) are about us”.<sup>4</sup>

While explaining this saying of Mawlā, I can say that along with the first quarter of the Qur'ān, which is clearly about Mawlā °Alī<sup>(c)</sup> [as stated by him], the other three quarters are also in his praise.

We can prove this by quoting a saying of the true Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>: “O Allāh! Befriend the one who befriends him (i.e., °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>) and be the enemy of the one who is his enemy”.<sup>5</sup> This makes it evident that the [second] quarter of the sacred Qur'ān which mentions the foes of God and the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>, indeed mentions the foes of Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup> and the Imāms from his progeny. Thus, wherever the holy Qur'ān censures such adversaries it is esoterically the praise of Ḥaẓrat-i *Amīru'l-mu'minin*<sup>(c)</sup>.

The [third] quarter of Qur'ān that narrates stories and parables are either directly or indirectly related to the prophets; and the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> has said: “O °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>! You were present with all the prophets secretly and with me you are apparent”.<sup>6</sup> This shows that Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup> is not only with all the prophets but he is also the focus of all the stories related to them.

All Qur'ānic examples explain the wisdom of all the ranks of the reality of realities (*ḥaqīqatu'l-ḥaqā'iq*), some in a positive sense and some in a negative. Thus God says: “Nay, but We hurl the truth against the falsehood, and it breaks its head and lo! It vanishes” (21:18). This statement not only tells us that the Qur'ān mentions special realities in examples, but it also tells us that the final decision between truth and falsehood lies in these very examples. This is why the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> said: “The truth is with °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>”.<sup>7</sup> From this it becomes evident that truth and reality are with Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup> and since these realities are mentioned in the Qur'ānic parables, then definitely this part of Qur'ān, which mentions the examples of the ranks of the reality of realities (*ḥaqīqatu'l-ḥaqā'iq*), is also about Ḥaẓrat-i °Alī<sup>(c)</sup>.

Now remains the last quarter of the Qur'ān, which specifies orders and commands. In this connection we submit that following these orders and commands is known as God's obedience but such an obedience to God is performed through the Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and the Custodians of Divine command (i.e., the true Imāms). This is because it is only they who explain God's orders and commands to people according to the exigencies of time and space. As God says: “O you who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger and the *ulu'l-amr* from amongst you” (4:59).

Since we now know that the graceful mention of Mawlānā °Alī<sup>(c)</sup> is also present in this [last] part of the Qur'ān which [apparently] mentions orders and commands, we will state that there is not a

single verse in the Qur'ān in which ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup>, i.e., the light of Imāmat is not mentioned in one way or another. So this is a comprehensive answer to your second question.

**Answer 3:** Certainly this world was created so that souls by coming here may attain practical recognition of God. Had the recognition of the event of *'alast'* been sufficient and lasting forever, all the people would have been *'arifs* by birth. It is evident that the recognition attained by us mentioned in the Qur'ān (7:172) was in the world of particles (*'ālam-i zarr*, i.e., the world of particles of souls) and even before that a comprehensive recognition was attained, however souls were required to come to the world for the renewal of those recognitions. Thus all the people came to this world and were tested, in which only a few of them succeeded whereas all the others failed.

The reply to this question may also be given in a different way that the process of creation is from eternity and will continue forever. It does not have a single objective rather it has numerous objectives, and each of them is important. Thus the collective intention is the manifestations of souls and it is only our souls which need all these things and not God.

## Address (*sipās-nāmah*)

In the honour of  
Respected al-Wā'iz °Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

From  
The Pak Ismailia Hunza (Shinākī)  
Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd., Karachi

Respected Sir!

There is no limit to the religious, worldly, spiritual and physical happiness and joy of the Shinākī Ismaili *jamā'at* on the blessed and fortunate historic occasion of the establishment of a branch of 'The Ismailia Association for Pakistan' for the Ismaili *jamā'at* of the state of Hunza and Gilgit, and on your appointment as its Officer in-charge. On this occasion, first of all, we are deeply grateful to the Lord of universe and the existents (*Mawlā-yi kā'ināt-ū mawjūdāt*), that He, by virtue of His infinite mercy, has given us the opportunity to receive and welcome a religious dignitary like you who is eminent due to exalted attributes of knowledge, wisdom and recognition and distinguished by the virtues of honesty, purity, kindness and piety. Secondly, we are also very grateful to you that you accepted our humble invitation despite paucity of time and a multitude of activities.

Respected Sir! This little ceremony has neither been organized for any formal introduction nor does your personality need it. Rather, on this great historic occasion, which is a milestone in the spiritual and intellectual progress of the Ismaili *jamā'at* of Hunza, Gilgit, Punyal, Ishkoman, Yasin, Kuh-i Ghizer, in fact, entire central Asia, we want to acknowledge, congratulate and express our gratitude for your sincere, tireless and historic services which you have rendered in all the aspects of life during the last quarter-

century to spread the true *da'wat* of the living and present Imām and for the spiritual progress and worldly success of the Ismaili *jamā'at* despite facing diverse problems and difficulties. You have left no stone unturned to preach and spread the true religion. From the hardships of imprisonment to the complaints of friends and foes, you endured these and all other difficulties with patience and calmness. Furthermore, the fact is that today we remember the lives of our great devoted *dā'īs* of the past who sacrificed all their belongings for the sake of the happiness of the Imām of the time, for the protection of religion and faith, and for the progress of wisdom and philosophy, and eventually, with the prayers and benedictions of the Imām of the time and with their tireless efforts, they left such everlasting imprints in the field of knowledge and wisdom and the pathway of religion and faith, which can never be erased.

Respected Sir! Your noble personality is a living image of those honourable *dā'īs*, which radiates and emanates [the light of] knowledge, wisdom, *ta'wīl* and realities. It has been a distinction of Ismaili *dā'īs* that with the help of the wisdom and advice of the complete, living, dynamic, natural and universal religion of Islam, they could preach in the customary philosophical and scientific language and terminologies of their time so that the beginners (*mustajibān*) [on the path] of *da'wat* could accept the reality of Islam wholeheartedly in the light of knowledge and wisdom and thus the prominence and supremacy of religion and spirituality over absurd worldly matters could be proven to them in the light of knowledge and wisdom, which is the essence of the teachings of all the religions of the world.

If we analyse in the light of this great objective, your preaching services are extremely commendable and their correct review can only be done after diligently and repeatedly studying your outstanding books like *Silsilah-yi Nūr-i Imāmat*, *Mizānu'l-Ḥaḳā'iq*, *Miftāhu'l-Ḥikmat*, *Pir Nāṣir Khisraw*<sup>(q)</sup> *awr Rūḥāniyyat*, *Darakht-i Tūbā* etc. In these books, you have explained and elaborated

extremely difficult topics like the perpetuity of the light of Imāmat, holy secrets of Imāmat, spiritual grace of the Imām of the time and spiritual progress through it, mutual relation between materiality and spirituality, and superiority of spirituality over materiality etc., in the language and terminologies of wisdom and science in such a way that the people of intellect are compelled to admire.

Respected Sir! In this revolutionary period every field of knowledge and art has experienced rapid material development resulting in new discoveries, especially the advent of unbelievable events like the subjugation of the moon and the [discovery of] artificial human being. These events have resulted in upsetting customary beliefs and concepts regarding the universe and human beings, such as the geocentricity of the Earth and the rank of humanity etc., due to which intellectuals, particularly religious scholars, are worried by the diverse and insolvable problems arising from this, where the majority of the world's population gives utmost significance to the material aspect [of life] due to the onslaught of materialism. However, [on the other hand,] equipped with the universal and all-embracing *ta'yidi* knowledge of the living and present Imām and riding on the horse of wisdom you are at all times alert with the swords of tongue and pen in defending spirituality against all the conceptual and doctrinal attacks of materialism. You are always prepared to give satisfactory answers to every imminent issue, be it philosophy or science or religion, there is not a single question for which you do not have an instant answer. It is your magnificence in knowledge that you provide answers to every difficult and challenging question with poise and ease. Especially when you speak about Qur'ānic wisdom and secrets of spirituality, your arguments and proofs have such satisfying miraculous powers that even a non-believer who listens to it, cannot resist admitting the greatness of religion and spirituality, whether willingly or unwillingly. On such occasions, the intellect gets really awestruck by the depth of your knowledge and the believers have utmost certainty that this is

indeed the result of the *ta'yid* of the ever-living Imām, by virtue of which every individual can perform the miracles of the Messiah.

Respected Sir! Numerous seekers of knowledge and recognition from the east to the west have benefitted from your verbal and written teachings. You have served Ismaili religion in various capacities and different forms and one of these great services is the feat of founding *Dāru'l-Hikmat*. This achievement deserves to be written in golden letters in Ismaili history. This is because in the current era, in a short span of time and without [significant] material resources, this institution has produced such precious books on Ismaili religion in the form of original works and translations, which are commendable for both their quality and quantity and these [books] are according to the requirements of the present times.

Respected Sir! Apart from this, that period was also very significant during which you served in the centre of Ismailia Association for Pakistan as a researcher and a teacher of spirituality and esoteric knowledge and rendered precious services in the form of writings and speeches. Thus, one of the important research articles of that very era has been published as “*Pir Nāṣir Khisraw<sup>(q)</sup> awr rūḥāniyyat*”, in which you have encompassed the over-flowing ocean of spirituality into a pitcher! The consequence of your verbal teaching is that after learning a handful of points of spiritual knowledge from you, others' arguments, no matter how intellectual and philosophical, appear like the arguments of school-going children, and why not? This has been the glory of Ismaili *dā'is* in every period and this is our real heritage. Thus, Sayyidnā Pīr Nāṣir Khisraw<sup>(q)</sup> says:

*Chūn man zi-ḥaqā'iq sukhan kushāyam* <sup>8</sup>  
*Suqrāt-ū Falāṭūn sazaḍ 'iyālam* <sup>9</sup>

If I speak openly about the [hidden] realities; Socrates and Plato deserve to be like children before me.

He also says:

*Wa ān band-hā kih bast Falāṭūn bi-pīsh-i man  
Mūm ast-ū sust pīsh-i kihīn pīsh-kār-i man*<sup>10</sup>

And the knots that Plato had tied before me; are as soft and tender as candle wax even for the least of my subordinates.

The noble listeners [and readers] should also note that this claim of Ismaili *dā'is* is not mere poetic boasting, rather it is an exact reality and it is that special knowledge for which °Allāmah ṣāhib himself says:

*Khāṣṣah °ilm ast kih har jā rasad wa kam na-ṣhawad  
Zānkih ṣabtash ba-sar-i ṣafḥah-yi °aṣr-ū zaman ast*<sup>11</sup>

Particularly the knowledge which reaches everywhere and does not diminish; whose inscriptions are on the page of time and age.

And for Ismaili *dā'is*, the fountainhead of this all-embracing and universal knowledge (as mentioned earlier) is the Imām of the time, without whose help, friendship, love, admiration and reverence, this knowledge cannot be attained. As Sayyidnā Pīr Nāṣir Khisraw<sup>(q)</sup> says:

*Marā juz ba-ta'yid-i āl-i rasūl  
Nah taṣnīf būd-ū nah qāl-ū nah qīl*<sup>12</sup>

Except for the *ta'yid* (spiritual help) of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>'s progeny; I had neither writings nor speech.

Pīr ṣāhib also says:

*Kay ṣhudī īn nafs-i man bar asp-i ḥikmat-hā sawār*<sup>13</sup>  
*Gar nah mamdūham sawār-i duldul-i ṣhabbāstī*<sup>14</sup>

How would my soul be the rider of the horse of wisdom; had not the rider of the ash-coloured Duldul been the subject of my praise.

Similarly, ʿAllāmah ṣāhib also declares that the source of this knowledge is to beg at the sacred door of the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time:

*Nasīr gukhār̄cum akóogan khok áqale láale barīn  
Duḥānumiñ áqaliñe sultáane baré gadáa un baa* <sup>15</sup>

O Naṣīr! Do not [ever] consider that these ruby-like words of the intellect are yours; the fact is you are but a beggar for the words of the Sultān of the perfect intellects.

Respected Sir! Apart from these general services, you also possess a unique and special status in the history of the state of Hunza since you are the spiritual forerunner of the amazing and speedy development of the underdeveloped area of Hunza. This progress, as the wise people know, started with the *farmān* of Ḥaẓrat-i Mawlānā Sultān Muḥammad Shāh<sup>(c)</sup>, which he delivered from radio Delhi on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1940: “I send my salutations and benevolence for the Ismaili *jamāʿat* of Hunza and Badakhshan. Be certain that the light of my love and affection will rise upon the *jamāʿat* of Hunza like the sun”.<sup>16</sup> There is no doubt that you have proved to be the most efficient soul in the acquisition of beneficence from the light of love and mercy of the sun of Imāmat. This is because the spiritual and intellectual progress, which is the real measure of the progress of any nation, started in this region with your soul-nourishing poetry, which was given the status of *Ginān* by Ḥaẓrat-i Mawlānā Shāh Karīm al-Ḥusaynī<sup>(c)</sup>. You have inspired an invigorating soul in [everyone,] men and women, children and adults, and youth and elders of this area by incorporating in your poetry the knowledge of *tawḥīd*, the praise for the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup> and his pure progeny, and Ismaili philosophy. Your poetry is in Urdu, Persian, Turkish, as well as in Burushaski, the local language of Hunza. It is not only easy to understand but it also encompasses a spiritual world in it. While listening to your poetry the true lovers of the light of the Imām of the time go beyond the boundaries of space (*makān*) and instantly reach spacelessness. Your spiritual gatherings (*majālis*) are like the

laboratory (*ma<sup>c</sup>mal*) of spirituality, where the devotees of the light of the living and present Imām<sup>(c)</sup> practically benefit from the experience and observation of spirituality.

Sir! There is neither enough space, nor [do we have] the ability to encompass your diverse services in this short address. In brief, you are a great sign from among the signs of the miracles of knowledge of the Imām<sup>(c)</sup> of the time. Your books of prose and poetry, and your spiritual gatherings (*majālis*) are the irrefutable proof of this *farmān* of Ḥaẓrat-i Mawlānā Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh<sup>(c)</sup> in which he says: “Ismaili religion is the throne of spirituality”.

We pray in the end, may the branch of Ismailia Association for Pakistan, which has been established under your supervision, prove to be the true successor of our Ismaili *da<sup>c</sup>wat* of the past; may it produce such resourceful missionaries (*du<sup>c</sup>āt* and *wu<sup>c</sup>āz*), who are equipped with knowledge, wisdom and spiritual upbringing and who can serve Islam in the correct way in the light of the holy guidance of the living and present Imām and, just like the *dā<sup>c</sup>is* of the past, they may create a tumult of knowledge, wisdom and the reality of Islam, not only in this area but in the whole world. We also pray that may the Lord of honour grant you utmost success in the great cause for which you have been appointed for this important position.

11<sup>th</sup> June, 1972

Seekers of prayers,

The President and the members,  
The Pak Ismailia Hunza (Shinākī) Multipurpose Cooperative  
Society Ltd. Karachi

## Glossary

### Ā

*āyah-yi nūr* - the verse of light (24:35)

*āyah-yi taṭhīr* - the verse of purification (33:33)

### Ā

*Ālam-i amr* - world of command

*Ālam-i khalq* - world of creation

*Ālam-i zarr* - world of particles

*Ārif* - a person who has attained God's recognition

### A

*a'immah-yi barḥaq* - true Imāms

*ahl-i bayt* - people of the household of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>

*ahl-i bayt-i kirām* - noble people of the house of the holy Prophet<sup>(s)</sup>

*ahl-i zikr* - people of *zikr*

*aḥādīs* (sing. *ḥadīs*) - prophetic traditions

*akhlāq-i Āliyyah* - sublime manners

*akhlāq-i ḥasanah* - virtuous attributes

*alast* - the event of *alastu* (Am I not?, 7:172)

*amīru'l-mu'minīn* - the Chief of the believers

*awliyā'* (sing. *walī*) - God's friends

*awṣāf-i ḥamidah* - praiseworthy attributes

*azali jawhar* - eternal essence

### B

*bāṭinī* - pertaining to *bāṭin*; hidden; spiritual; internal

*bāṭinī but-parastī* - internal idolatry

*balā'* - trial; affliction; calamity

*but-parastī* - idolatry

### D

*dā'ī* - the one who summons; Technically, a religious propagator

*darwīsh* - a person who is unaffected by worldly things

*da'wat* - invitation

*dīn-i fiṭrat* - religion of nature  
*du<sup>c</sup>āt* (sing. *dā<sup>c</sup>i*) - religious missionaries

## F

*farmān* - pronouncement; command; decree; saying. Technically, an order or speech of the Imām

## H

*ḥadīṣ* - prophetic tradition  
*ḥanīf* - a man of pure faith  
*ḥaqīqat* - reality; the path followed by the Ismailis  
*ḥaqīqatu'l-ḥaqā'iq* - the reality of realities  
*ḥaqq* - truth  
*ḥudūd* - see *ḥudūd-i dīn*  
*ḥudūd-i dīn* - religious hierarchy; Technically, various ranks in the hierarchy of Ismaili *da<sup>c</sup>wat*

## I

*imāmat* - Imamate  
*ism-i a<sup>c</sup>zam* - the Supreme Name  
*istin<sup>m</sup>bāṭ* - deduction (For more details see endnote 2)

## ʿI

*ʿibādat* - worship  
*ʿilmī* - related to knowledge  
*ʿilmī jīhad* - a struggle that is carried out for the sake of [spreading] religious knowledge  
*ʿilmu'l-yaqīn* - knowledge of certainty  
*ʿirfānī* - pertaining to recognition

## J

*jā-nishīn* - vicegerent; successor  
*jamā<sup>c</sup>at* - community. Technically, the Ismaili community  
*jīhād* - struggle; holy war that is fought for the sake of religion

## **K**

*karā'imu'l-Qur'ān* - the noble verses of Qur'ān  
*kitāb-i maknūn* - hidden book

## **Kh**

*Khāṣifū'n-Na<sup>c</sup>l* - mender of the shoe; A title of Mawlā ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup>  
*Khātamu'l-an<sup>m</sup>biyā'* - the Seal of Prophets; A title of the holy Prophet Ḥazrat-i Muḥammad Muṣṭafā<sup>(s)</sup>  
*khalifah* - vicegerent; successor  
*khalifah-yi mukhtār* - authorised vicegerent  
*khalil* - friend  
*khalilu'llāh* - Allāh's friend; A title of Ḥazrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>  
*khayr-i kaṣīr* - abundant good

## **L**

*lawḥ-i mahfūz* - Guarded Tablet

## **M**

*majālis* (sing. *majlis*) - gatherings. Technically, spiritual gatherings  
*makān* - space  
*ma<sup>c</sup>mal* - laboratory  
*ma<sup>c</sup>rifat* - recognition; God's recognition  
*Mawlā-yi kā'ināt-ū mawjūdāt* - the Lord of universe and the existents  
*mu'min* - believer  
*mukhtār* - the one having the authority  
*mustajibān* (sing. *mustajib*) - those who respond; the neophytes on the path of *da'wat*  
*muwahḥid-i a<sup>c</sup>zam* - the greatest believer in one God; A title of Ḥazrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>

## **N**

*nubuwwat* - Prophethood  
*nūr* - light

## P

*panj-tan-i pāk* - the five pure personalities (Namely: Ḥazrat-i Muḥammad Muṣṭafā<sup>(s)</sup>, Ḥazrat-i ʿAlī<sup>(c)</sup>, Ḥazrat-i Fāṭimah<sup>(c)</sup>, Ḥazrat-i Ḥasan<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥazrat-i Ḥusayn<sup>(c)</sup>)

## Q

*qānūn-i ilāhi* - Divine law

*qurb* - nearness; closeness

*qurbānī* - sacrifice; a thing that is sacrificed to seek God's closeness; an animal that is slaughtered in God's name

*quwwat-i jibriliyyah* - Jibrilic power

## R

*rukūʿ* - the action of bowing

## S

*sipās-nāmah* - laudatory address; an address or a formal writing to acknowledge someone's favours and to express gratitude to them

## Ş

*şāhib-i amr* - lord of command

*şāhib-i ikhtiyār* - lord of authority

*şāhib-i ta'wīl* - master of *ta'wīl*

*şāhib-i tanzīl* - master of *tanzīl*

*şāhibān-i amr* - custodians of Divine command

*şirāt-i mustaqīm* - straight path

## Sh

*shahīd* - martyr; one who embraces death for the sake of religion

*shariʿat* - law; the religious law prescribed by a *nāṭiq*

## T

*ta'wīl* - the esoteric meaning of the Divine message

*ta'wīlī* - esoteric; pertaining to the *ta'wīl*

*ta'yīd* - Divine help

*ta'yīdī* - pertaining to or acquired through Divine help

*tanzīl* - the exoteric aspect of the Divine message

*tanzīlī* - exoteric; pertaining to the *tanzīl*

*tawhīd* - God's oneness

## **T**

*ṭariqat* - the spiritual path; the path followed by the *ṣūfis*

## **U**

*ulu'l-amr* - custodians of the Divine Command

## **W**

*wahy* - revelation

*walāyat* - Guardianship of the Imām of the time

*wu'āz* (sing. *wā'iz*) - those who preach and advise. Technically, the religious missionaries or preachers who deliver orations

## **Z**

*Zabiḥu'llāh* - one who is sacrificed in God's name; A title of Ḥazrat-i Ismā'īl<sup>(c)</sup>

*zīkr* - remembrance

*zu'l-faqār* - Ḥazrat-i 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup>'s sword

## **Z**

*zāhiri* - external

*zāhiri but-parastī* - external idolatry

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad Idrīs al-Anṣārī, *Ḥālāt-ū Maqālāt-i Ṣaḥābah* (Ṣādiqābād, 1974), pp. 76-77; Ḥāfiẓ Abū Na‘īm al-Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’ wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā’* (Beirut, 1996), Part I, p. 67. For another but complete version of this ḥadīṣ, which is found in many authentic sources, see “*The Holy Ahl al-Bayt in the Prophetic Traditions*” by Dr. Faqir Muhammad Hunzai and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai (Karachi, 2020), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> For further explanation of “*istinbā‘*”, see “*Qurratu’l-‘Ayn*” by ‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai (Karachi, 1991), pp. 14-20; translated into English as “*Coolness of the Eye*” by Dr. Faqir Muhammad Hunzai and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai (Karachi, n.d.), pp. 8-12. Also see “*Hazār Hikmat*” by ‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai (Karachi, 1996), pp. 555-556; translated into English as “*A Thousand Wisdoms*” by Dr. Faqir Muhammad Hunzai and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai (Karachi, n.d.), pp. 510-511.

<sup>3</sup> See endnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Ubaidu’llāh Ṣāhib Bismil Amritsarī, *Arjaḥu’l-maṭālib* (Lahore, 1899), p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> *The Holy Ahl al-Bayt in the Prophetic Traditions*, pp. 6-8.

<sup>6</sup> Shaykh Ḥusāmuddīn al-Bidlīsī, *Tafsīr al-Bidlīsī* (Beirut, n.d.), p. 445.

<sup>7</sup> *The Holy Ahl al-Bayt in the Prophetic Traditions*, p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> The word written in the *Dīwān* is “*gushāyam*”.

<sup>9</sup> Sayyidnā Nāṣir-i Khisraw, *Dīwān*, ed. Sayyid Naṣru’llāh Taqawī (Tehran, 1367 solar / 1988), p. 302; hereafter cited as *Dīwān-i Nāṣir-i Khisraw*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 346.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai, *Kārnāmah-yi Zarrin, ḥiṣṣah-yi awwal* (Karachi, 1994), p. 135; Sayyid Munīruddīn al-Riẓwī al-Badakhshānī, *Guldastah-yi Falsafah* (Karachi, 1958), p. ii.

<sup>12</sup> *Dīwān-i Nāṣir-i Khisraw*, p. 256. In *Dīwān* the correct version is: *Nah taṣnīf būd-ū nah qīl-ū nah qāl*.

<sup>13</sup> In *Dīwān* the correct version is: *Kay shudastī nafs-i man bar asp-i hikmat-hā sawār*.

<sup>14</sup> *Dīwān-i Nāṣir-i Khisraw*, p. 441.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai, *Dīwān-i Naṣirī awr Bihishtē Asquriṅg* (Karachi, 2001), p. 65.

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<sup>16</sup> The city, date and the text of Imām's *farmān* here do not match with those in other authentic sources. However, we have not changed the information here and have done the exact translation of what was written in the original version of this article. The *farmān* was actually made via Radio Bombay on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1940. Also for the correct version of the *farmān*, see “*Hikmat-i tasmiyah awr asmā'-yi ahl-i bayt*” by °Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai (Karachi, 1989), p. 1.

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## Index of Aḥādīṣ

1. “O my God! These are the people of my household regarding whom You promised me to remove impurity from them. O God! Keep every impurity away from them and keep them pure as it ought to be.”  
 . . . . . 5
2. “O people! Indeed, there is among you one who will fight for the *ta'wil* of the Qur'ān just as I fought for its *tanzil*.”  
 . . . . . 10
3. “O Allāh! Befriend the one who befriends him (i.e., <sup>c</sup>Alī<sup>(c)</sup>) and be the enemy of the one who is his enemy.”  
 . . . . . 29

4. “O ʿAlī(ʿ)! You were present with all the prophets secretly and with me, you are apparent.”  
 ..... 30
5. “The truth is with ʿAlī(ʿ).”  
 ..... 30

## Index of Sayings

### Imām ʿAlī(ʿ)

1. “Qurʾān is revealed in four parts; so its first quarter is about us, the second quarter is regarding our foes, the third quarter contains stories and parables; and the last quarter comprises of orders and commands. And the noble verses of the Qurʾān (*karāʾimuʾl-Qurʾān*) are about us.”  
 ..... 29

### Imām Sultān Muḥammad Shāh(ʿ)

1. “I send my salutations and benevolence for the Ismaili *jamāʿat* of Hunza and Badakhshan. Be certain that the light of my love and affection will rise upon the *jamāʿat* of Hunza like the sun.”  
 ..... 37
2. “Ismaili religion is the throne of spirituality”  
 ..... 38

## Index of Verses of Poetry

### Pir Nāṣir Khisraw<sup>(q)</sup>

*Chūn man zi-ḥaqāʾiq sukhan kushāyam*  
*Suqrāt-ū Falāṭūn sazaḍ ʿiyālam*

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*Wa ān band-hā kih bast Falāṭūn bi-pīsh-i man*  
*Mūm ast-ū sust pīsh-i kihīn pīsh-kār-i man*

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*Marā juz ba-ta'yīd-i āl-i rasūl  
Nah taṣnīf būd-ū nah qāl-ū nah qīl*

..... 36

*Kay shudī in naḥs-i man bar asp-i ḥikmat-hā sawār  
Gar nah mamdūḥam sawār-i duldul-i shahbāstī*

..... 36

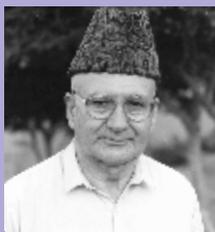
**°Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai<sup>(9)</sup>**

*Khāṣṣah °ilm ast kih har jā rasad wa kam na-shawad  
Zānkih ṣabtash ba-sar-i ṣafḥah-yi °aṣr-ū zaman ast*

..... 36

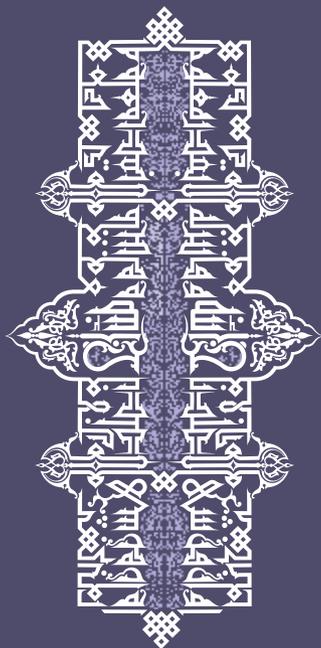
*Nasīr gukhārcum akóogan khok áqale láale barīn  
Duchānumīn áqaliñe sultáne bare gadáa un báa*

..... 37



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

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



وَأَنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ الْإِعْدَادِ نَاخِرَاتٍ  
وَمَا نُزِّلَهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ

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

