

Gift of Knowledge

Bi-farmūd
justan
ba-Chīn
‘ilm-i dīn rā

بے فرمود جستنِ بچسین علمِ دین را
محمد شدم من بچسینِ محمد

Muḥammad,
shudam man
ba-Chīn-i
Muḥammad

Pīr Nāṣir-i Khisraw^(a) says in his *Dīwān*

بہنر مود جستن بحسین علم دین را
مجد شدم من بحسین محمد

Bi-farmūd justan ba-Chīn ʿilm-i dīn rā
Muḥammad, shudam man ba-Chīn-i Muḥammad

The holy Prophet Muḥammad^(s) has said that one should seek the
knowledge of religion in China;
Therefore, I went to the China of Muḥammad^(s).

Gift of Knowledge

by

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*Īn sa'ādat ba-zor-i bāzū nīst
Tā na-bakhshad Khudā-yi bakhshindah*

“This bliss cannot be achieved by force of one’s actions until Allāh the Bestower does not bestow it (upon someone).”

By the grace and mercy of the Imām^(e) of the time, the English translation of °Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai’s “*Sawgāt-i Dānīsh*”, i.e., “Gift of Knowledge,” is complete. This undertaking involved numerous challenges, the greatest of which was preserving the original context of philosophical and esoteric concepts. Therefore, we want to express our deepest gratitude to Dr. Faqir Muhammad Hunzai and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai for their invaluable guidance, constant motivation, and continued patience throughout this endeavor. Furthermore, the accuracy of this book would not be possible without their iterative reviews and corrections. Words cannot adequately convey our heartfelt indebtedness to them.

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Dedication

Al-ḥamdu li'llāh! It is a happy coincidence that this book “Gift of Knowledge” has been translated by the highly committed and motivated members of our Houston Branch, Tajunnisa and Farid Momin and sponsored by a Houston family who have become the moths of love for *Imām-i zamān's bāṭinī* knowledge.

This fortunate family comprises four sisters, the daughters of Malek and Mamji Dossa Kariwal and their families, who are as follows:

Mumtaz Bahadur Kariwal and children: Karishma Mohsin Mansiya and Sanif

Salima Mushtak Badarpura and children: Alishan, Munir and Saharish

Rozina Zulfiqar Karowalia and children: Alif and Alim

Nazma Mahendi Hassanali Maknojia and son Nuren. Mahendi is the son of Mukhi Hassanali Pirji Maknojia and Mukhiani Puriben and he expresses his devotion and love for his faith through regular attendance in Global Lectures.

We are extremely gratified by such generous members of the Jamā'at who are rendering the supreme service of helping to provide spiritual knowledge to the Jamā'at and humanity at large. May they be abundantly blessed in both *Dīn* and *Dunyā*, *Āmīn*, *Yā Rabba'l-ālamīn!*

Table of contents

1.	Preface	1
2.	The Purpose of Questioning is to Promote Knowledge	5
3.	Rank of Intellect and Center of <i>Ta'wīl</i>	14
4.	Concept of <i>Yadu'llāh</i> (Allāh's Hand) in the Qur'ān	21
5.	Qur'ānic Mountain and Gems	26
6.	Five Questions from London	32
7.	<i>Ta'wīl</i> of Sūrah of Mā'ūn (<i>Zakāt</i>)	40
8.	Wisdom of Mother of the Book (<i>Ummu'l-kitāb</i>)	42
9.	<i>Ta'wīlī</i> Secrets of the Sūrah of Burūj (Constellations)	48
10.	Two Questions from America	50
11.	Sūrah of <i>Qiyāmat</i> (Resurrection)	54
12.	Theophanies and Manifestations	57
13.	<i>Kitāb-i Maknūn</i> (Hidden Book)	59
14.	Individual Soul and Communal Soul	61
15.	Relationship of Knowledge and Spirituality	63
16.	Wisdoms of the World of Dream	65
17.	One Soul, Many Bodies	69
18.	Spiritual Love is the Symbol of Unity	71
19.	One in All – All in One.	73
20.	Pleasures of Services for Knowledge.	75
21.	Ark of Knowledge	77
22.	Loud <i>Zikr</i> (Remembrance)	79
23.	Angel in Human Form	81
24.	World of Fragrances	83
25.	Important Questions from the Sūrah of Luqmān	85
26.	Wisdom of Gratitude	93
27.	Indices	97

Important Note

The following symbols have been used in the text with the names of Prophets, Imāms, *Hujjats* 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).

Preface

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

By the grace and generosity of the Sustainer of the world, and the charity of knowledge and recognition of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the Chosen, the Seal of the Prophets^(s), which is received from the Imām^(c) of the time, this book called “Gift of Knowledge” (*Sawgāt-i Dānīsh*) is presented to the esteemed readers. On this blessed occasion of joy and happiness, the heart of this humble servant yearns to shed abundant tears of gratitude like the showers of spring and to prostrate continuously in gratitude. However, it is not easy for this insignificant servant to recognize and appreciate such a bounty.

Sawgāt is originally a Turkish word which means a nice and incomparable thing, a gift, a present and a souvenir. This word is used in the Persian language and also in Urdu literature. In the context of these meanings this beloved book is called “Gift of Knowledge” so that it may prove itself to be the best gift of knowledge for *‘azīzān* (students), friends, *jamā‘at*, and the nation. God willing!

“Gift of Knowledge” consists of some different topics, whose nature and extent will become known during its study. This book also includes some topics, which although they are in the form of letters, are purely related to knowledge and thus they are extremely necessary and useful. This wisdom-filled command is mentioned in the holy *farmān* of Ḥaẓrat Mawlānā Imām Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh^(c), the gist of which is to exchange religious knowledge through correspondence.

As a whole, the fundamental and most important topics which are discussed in the series of books and writings of *Khānah-yi Hikmat* and *Idārah-yi ‘Ārif* include: knowledge of oneness, monoreality, the

concept of creation, Prophethood, Imāmat (recognition of Imām), Islām and faith, soul and spirituality, Qiyāmat and other relevant matters, the Qur’ān and its *ta’wīlī* wisdom, religion and science, concept of man, remembrance and worship, service of knowledge, true knowledge, righteousness, paradise and its bounties, etc. Additionally, there is a very important topic of questions and answers.

It is our intention and purpose to render some service for our beloved and great *jamā’at* to avoid being ashamed on the Day of Resurrection in the presence of God, the most Beneficent, that we did not benefit others from the numerous bounties of knowledge which He bestowed upon us, as the wise Qur’ān says: “Then you shall be questioned on that day about the bounties (102:8)”. The explanation of this is that those who are granted knowledge and material wealth but do not serve in the path of God will be questioned sternly on the Day of Resurrection.

Another verse in this connection is: “Those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend in the way of God, announce to them the news of painful punishment (9:34-35).” The external and internal wealth is mentioned in this Qur’ānic teaching, and as you are aware, internal wealth is knowledge, spending which in the path of God is far more important.

The third command is “Who is more unjust than the man who hides a testimony which he has received from Allāh (2:140)?” That is to say, every word of true knowledge amounts to testifying to the truth and its veracity. Therefore, if someone has necessary and useful knowledge which only benefits the people of faith, such knowledge should not be concealed. However, the principle of *taqiyyah* (precautionary secrecy) will indeed remain in its place.

The unprecedented feats rendered by our great *Pīrs* and dignitaries of religion in the past in connection with the Divine mission and the knowledge of Imāmat, are in the heaven of grandeur. We must duly express our gratitude to Almighty God, salute the honor of our *Pīrs* lovingly. Our personality is created from the dust under their

feet. That is, the leaven of our faith is created from the soil of the farm and garden of religion, in which they used to walk and work day and night. Then, how is it possible [for us] to claim any kind of greatness? And why should we?

This cherished book with the lovely name “Gift of Knowledge” before you is a collection of topics prepared before writing “Precious Treasure” in 1984. Therefore, there is a closer relationship between the “Gift of Knowledge” and “Precious Treasure” as they are both on the same rung of the evolutionary ladder.

When a good deed is accomplished according to the procedures of an organization, the rule is that it is attributed to the organization. This has three aspects: To thank the President of the organization, to mention the organization, or to thank all those people attached to it. This is the rule of a general organization. However, by Divine grace, as far as Khānah-yi Ḥikmat and Idārah-yi ʿĀrif are concerned, a special miracle of unity and oneness is found. An excellent example of this is the Gilgit branch of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat, which is progressing under the successful leadership of our very dear, wise President Ġulām Qādir. May God save him from evil eyes. The rays of light of the Imām^(c) of the time’s love are pouring on him externally and internally.

It will be a great ingratitude and disloyalty on the part of this most humble servant if he does not acknowledge the two Presidents of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat and Idārah-yi ʿĀrif, Faṭḥ ʿAlī Ḥabīb and Muḥammad ʿAbdu’l-ʿAzīz, and not appreciate the golden feats of the volunteers and members in the east and west of both institutions. Future historians will misunderstand that this entire service of knowledge was rendered by Naṣīr Hunzai alone. Therefore, how can I forget to remember all those angels who are the treasures of manifold powers for me, who are working day and night in the service of knowledge. Both are Presidents, indeed, therefore in the sense of honor and eminence they deserve the highest place in our esteem, but their humility and modesty are such that they set the chair of presidency aside and participate in ordinary services. This attitude is a prerequisite for humility (*kasr-i nafsī*).

O Lord, through Your infinite mercy, enrich our *‘azīzān* of the east and the west with the wealth of true knowledge, so that together we may better serve the exalted Imām^(c) of the time and the beloved *jamā‘at* with sincerity and well-wishing. *Āmīn!* O Lord of the worlds!

Humble servant

Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

Thursday, 16th Zū‘l-Ḥajj, 1304

13th September, 1984

Year of the Mouse

The Purpose of Questioning is to Promote Knowledge

By the Name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. And the hereafter is for the righteous. May peace and salutation be on His Messenger and his pure progeny. It is evident that questions are asked for various reasons; therefore, the background of all questions cannot be the same. In this connection, the most delightful question is the one asked by the circle of friends for the sake of the promotion of knowledge only. This kind of question and answer diffuses the fragrance of friendship, love, unity, sincerity and trust. Therefore, this humble servant necessarily thanks his *‘azīzān* and esteemed wise friends who, from time to time, send excellent and thought-provoking questions, which have not only friendly sincerity and trust, but for knowledge are extremely high and useful, such as the following three questions asked by one great, wise friend:

Question 1: The Imām^(c) of the time is indeed the treasurer of true knowledge, and through his pure knowledge he delivers people from the death of ignorance. What is the vastness of this knowledge of the Imām^(c), and by what means does He bestow it to its seekers? In addition, what is the relationship between the concepts of knowledge and salvation?

Question 2: What is existence (*wujūd*)? What is the significance of spiritual and physical existence? What and how is the relationship between them? What is the reality of non-existence to existence, and which one of them is prior?

Question 3: What wisdom is hidden in the sexual or carnal desire found in human beings? What should be our attitude to this [in the context of] changing social values? Are the restrictions imposed

by religion, relative or absolute? What would be the conduct of a *mu'min*, particularly in the [current] sexual crisis in the West?

Answer 1: There are three parts to this question. a) extent of knowledge, b) means of knowledge, and c) relationship between knowledge and salvation. Now, this most humble servant of the Imām^(c) of the time, amongst his slaves in knowledge, states with extreme humility, respect, sincerity and zeal of sacrifice, that the holy and pure Imām^(c) is indeed the treasurer of true and spiritual knowledge. The knowledge of the Imām^(c) of the time is, in reality, the knowledge of God. However, due to the exigency of wisdom, it is found in one place as well as spread out and extensive. The sense in which knowledge is brought together and is in one place is in a treasure, as mentioned in the Qur'ān (15:21) that all things are encompassed in the treasures of God. Where it is spread out from its fountainhead and treasure, its extent is equal to that of the heavens and earth, although knowledge in its substance, i.e., the Pearl of Intellect, is not like any material thing to which the three dimensions can be applied. However, given the wisdom-filled physical form it has in the book of the universe, the concept of the expansion of knowledge is absolutely correct. Thus, the following are examples or proofs of the fountainhead and expanse of knowledge:

1. There is not the slightest doubt for the people of wisdom that knowledge in its real and spiritual form is the light of God that has a single fountainhead as well as being spread out. In the holy Qur'ān this fountainhead is compared with a luminous lamp which is in a niche and the boundaries of the expanse of its light are the boundaries of the universe (24:35). Therefore, it is a fact that the fountainhead of collective knowledge (*'ilm-i mujtama'*^c) is the Imām^(c) of the time, and the extent of the dispersed knowledge is equal to the universe.
2. Paradise is created from the intellect (i.e., knowledge), soul and astral body. These three things are, in reality, in the blessed body of the Imām^(c) of the time. Thus, according to the verse (36:12), the center and compendium of paradise is the exalted

Imām^(c). On the other hand, the length and width of paradise is equal to that of the heavens and the earth as mentioned in verses (3:133, 57:21). This shows that the light of knowledge, which in another sense is also the center of paradise, is in the sacred and blessed forehead of the holy Imām^(c). This is the light which encompasses the universe physically and spiritually.

3. *ʿIlm* (knowledge) is among the verbs of *qulūb*, *ʿālim* (knowing) is its *fāʿil* (present participle), and *ʿālam* (universe) is its instrumental noun, such as *khātām* is the instrument of sealing as *ʿālam* is the instrument of knowing. However, the true *ʿālim* (knowing) is the Imām^(c) of the time after God and the Prophet^(s), who is given the knowledge of the universe and its existents in the form of the light of intellect. Thus, the fountainhead of knowledge in the true sense is the Imām^(c) of the time, and his extent [of knowledge] is the circle of the universe.
4. Knowledge is a light as the origin and fountainhead, and in its extent is a universe; similarly, without any decrease, it is in a complete heavenly book. This wisdom-filled book is the Glorious Qurʾān, whose living spirit, i.e., light, is the rightful Imām^(c) who is the true knowing and its heir.

Now, the part of the first question, “By what means does the Imām bestow knowledge upon its seekers?” has to be dealt with. In this regard, I would like to say that knowledge is the supreme bounty of God, and no faithful person will deny this reality. God’s bounties are both physical and spiritual as mentioned in the wise Qurʾān: “Do you not see that Allāh has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and has completed His favors, both apparent and hidden on you (31:20).” Several realities appear together in the light of this blessed Qurʾānic teaching which are duly understood only by the wise people. For example, it suffices to say that the Sustainer of the world has not only made the physical heavens and earth to serve human beings, but also ordered the spiritual heavens and earth to create fresh, spiritual bounties. Further, as the chain of physical bounties continues from the action of the physical heavens and earth, similarly, spiritual bounties also

continue and persist from the action of the spiritual heavens and earth. Thus, there are two means of acquiring knowledge, external and internal. Just as a human being has physical and spiritual senses, there are two paths for physical and spiritual knowledge.

Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), despite being corporeal and human, was the bearer of the Divine Spirit (i.e., the light), through which he used to spiritually impart the true knowledge to the *mu'mins* of his time. It is *mu'mins* who are always called angels from the spiritual aspect. Thus, the door of spiritual knowledge of the Imām^(c) of the time is always open for the *mu'mins*, and to obtain this everlasting wealth, every individual must progress on the path of spirituality so that they may be included in the group of angels and obtain knowledge directly from the vicegerent of God and the Prophet^(s) (i.e., the Imām^(c) of the time).

In the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), spiritual knowledge is called *'ilmu'l-asmā'* (knowledge of names), which is under the *ism-i a'zam* (Supreme Name). According to this Divine law, Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), by teaching the *'ibādat* (worship) of the Supreme Name to his angelic *mu'mins*, i.e., *ḥudūd-i dīn* (hierarchs of religion), breathed into them that Divine Spirit by which a spiritual link can be created between leader and follower. This is the Divine law (*sunnat*) which has continued in God's chosen servants (40:85), and there is no change in the Divine law (*sunnat*). Thus, according to this unchangeable Divine law, the Guide of the time (i.e., the Imām^(c) of the time) continues to give spiritual knowledge to the *mu'mins* (17:77).

If God and His chosen prophets had not appointed the Imām^(c) of every age, the master of luminous knowledge, such great importance of the recognition of Imām would not have been in numerous Qur'ānic verses and prophetic traditions. As the holy Qur'ān says: "And he who is blind in this (world) will also be blind in the hereafter, and far astray from the (right) way (17:72)," and this *Ḥadīṣ*: "He who dies without the recognition of the Imām of his time, dies a death of ignorance, and the ignorant is in the fire of hell." Here it is clear that the Imām^(c) of the time is physically

and spiritually the light of God and the Prophet^(s), the light of the Qur'ān and Islām, and the light of recognition (*ma'rifat*).

Alas, many people did not understand the meaning of “*Innī jā'il^m fi'l-arḑi khalīfah*” (2:30). The literal meaning of *arḑ* is the planet earth, and *arḑ* means all the people of the world. The *ta'wīl* of *arḑ* is the earth of spirituality. Thus, the vicegerency and representation of the holy and exalted God was with Ādam^(c) as the Spirit and Light of God, through which he used to teach true knowledge spiritually to *mu'mins*, wherever they were physically. This same rank is held by every Prophet and Imām, because in the true religion, Divine viceregency continues forever as long as the world continues and lasts through the existence of this universe. Conversely, if we deem that this viceregency is related to Ḥazrat-i Ādam^(c) only and that also in a literal sense without any *ta'wīl*, and that it is confined to the region of the Earth where Ādam^(c) used to live physically, in this state, God forbid, God's viceregency would be child's play! God Almighty is free from and above such examples.

Now, we turn to discussing the part of the question: What is the relationship between the concepts of knowledge and salvation? The answer is that man is a compendium of three things: body, soul, and intellect. Its reward and punishment also are three: physical, spiritual, and intellectual. Everyone knows that the soul is higher than the body and that the intellect is higher than the soul. Accordingly, not only is the intellectual reward the greatest, but on the other hand, intellectual chastisement is also extremely painful and great. However, the question: Which calamity is the name of intellectual chastisement? remains. The answer is ignorance, and nothing can absolve an individual from this punishment except true knowledge. Thus, the [true] knowledge is the guarantee of salvation. It is also correct to say that knowledge is the practical form of salvation because knowledge is paradise, while the fire of ignorance is its opposite. This explanation is about the relationship between knowledge and salvation.

Answer 2: This question has five parts: (a) What is *wujūd* (existence)? (b) Importance of *wujūd*. (c) Relationship of body and

soul. (d) Reality of °*adam* (non-existence) in relation to existence. (e) Which of *wujūd* and °*adam* is prior? We will first define *wujūd*, an Arabic word, the root of which is *wāw, jīm, dāl*, which means to attain something. In this context, *wujūd* means existence, and *wujūd* and °*adam* are opposites. There are three kinds of *wujūd* or existence: physical, spiritual and intellectual. A human being is a compound of these three. Physical, spiritual and intellectual things are perceived with physical senses, spiritual senses, and intellectual faculties, respectively.

What is the significance of spiritual and physical existence? The answer to this question, according to the wise Qur’ān (3:27, 39:4, 51:49), is that God, the Blessed, the Exalted, creates two opposites from one another and merges them into each other. This means that without anteriority, posteriority, beginning or end, this world and the next are always created from one another. This is particularly related to the external and internal universe. It is clear that although the superiority of the soul is universally accepted, the body has similar significance because the soul is never without matter or body. In the world of particles, the soul riding on the subtle particle flies from place to place. In this world soul is linked to the body and in the next world is given a subtle or dense, living house based on its actions (29:64). In the following, Pīr Nāṣir-i K̄hisraw^(q) addresses a disbeliever about the equal importance of body and soul:

Tū ba-kull bīnā na-ī zāngah tū bī-rāh māndah-ī
Tū ba-kull bīnā shawī jān-ū jasad yaksān-i tūst

You see only the part, you cannot see the whole,
 therefore you have gone astray,
 Had you observed the whole, body and soul would
 have equal importance

What and how is the relationship between spiritual and physical existence? This is already addressed in the importance of body and soul; however, an example is provided here. The creation and completion of human existence starts from mingled sperm (76:2) that enters the womb. The soul and body are present in it without

any anteriority or posteriority, and these two elements progress together, creating one another. The same is the case of a seed and of an egg in which the vegetative soul is hidden in the seed and the animal soul is hidden in the egg. It is clear from this example that both spiritual and physical existences are always strung together in the thread of oneness.

What is the reality of the relationship of non-existence and existence, and which is the prior? In this matter, it is humbly requested that for people of spiritual help (*ahl-i ta'yīd*), non-existence is not what the common people understand. In God's kingdom, according to the former, there is no absolute non-existence (*‘adam-i maḥẓ*), rather, it is another name for the world of command. The world of command is the existence which appears to be non-existence (*hasṭī-yi nāstī-numā*). An existence which in its essence or substance is indeed existence, but since it is the world of instantaneous creation (*ibdā‘*), therefore its intellectual, spiritual, and physical manifestations cannot appear without the command of “*Kun*” (Be!). Thus, the way it is accepted that existence was created from non-existence is a common concept, where there is a one-sided relationship of existence and non-existence (*‘adam*), whereas the fact is contrary, that is, existence is from non-existence, non-existence is from existence, and there is no temporal priority and posteriority, as they are both eternal like the word “*Kun*” (Be!). However, regarding honor, intellectual existence is first, followed by spiritual existence, physical existence being the last.

The Qur’ānic verses related to the creation, specifically verses which are related to the creation of pairs and contraries (such as day and night), reveal in the language of wisdom, that just as the omnipotent God, in His pure essence is without any beginning and end, similarly He always creates the world of creation and the world of command from one another without any temporal priority and posteriority, as mentioned in the noble verse: “And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth by *ḥaqq*, and when He says ‘Be,’ then it becomes (6:73).” This verse mentions the creation of the world of command from the world of creation. However, this great feat is related to the individual resurrection and the observation

of spirituality. That is, this work is such that it has been done, continues and is also going to take place because it is related to the Divine will, which transcends the physical time. The answer to the second question finishes here.

Answer 3. This question has four points: a) What wisdom is hidden in sexual or carnal desire found in man? b) What should be our attitude towards the power of changing social values? c) Are incumbent religious restrictions relative or absolute? d) What should be the role of a *mu'min* in the sexual crisis in the West?

In this connection, I would like to say that the Lord of the universe has created man the noblest of the creation in the sense that He has created him a compendium of countless faculties and abilities from the participation of body, soul and intellect, each of which is based on numerous wisdoms. However, the benefit from the wisdoms of each faculty and desire can be attained when the fortunate *mu'mins* duly obey the holy commands of God, Prophet^(s) and the custodians of the Divine command (*ulu'l-amr*). Otherwise, what is the difference between man and animal, and between *mu'min* and infidel with regards to the carnal desire? Thus, according to the Divine law and nature, every low desire transforms into a sublime desire when a wise *mu'min* progresses on the path of faith with patience and fear of God.

It is mentioned in the holy Qur'ān that piety (*taqwā*) is the most sublime quality of a faithful servant. By piety is meant that God, the Holy is with the pious (2:194); the pious is the most respected among Muslims (49:13); and the pious is the friend of God (3:76); for the pious is prepared the Paradise that encompasses the universe (3:133); every prayer, worship, sacrifice and good deed of the pious is accepted and their every desire is fulfilled (5:27). The pious will be God's guest on the day of resurrection (19:85) and for every pious person there are countless blessings of the Prophet^(s), Imām^(c), *furqān* (the differentiator between right and wrong), light, and remembrance (21:48). Here it must be remembered that piety, first of all, is related to beliefs and ideas and then to ethics. Thus, the wisdom of ethical piety is that every unlawful command of the

[carnal] soul must be rejected. Although every individual who is pious and follows the light of Islām cannot be granted prophethood in their youth like Ḥaḏrat-i Mūsā^(c), nonetheless, Almighty God alludes to bestowing a great spiritual wealth and promises to do so as mentioned [in the Qur’ān]: “and when he (Mūsā) reached his full strength and was mature (by dissolving the carnal soul), We gave him wisdom and knowledge, and thus do We reward the virtuous (28:14).” This [verse] alludes to the granting of the perfect and complete spirituality. Observing in the light of this heavenly universal law, it is clear that whatever is given to all Perfect Human Beings from the court of the merciful God, is given during their youth. There must be a great secret in youth. Indeed, there is and that is the sexual desire in which there are various aspects of wisdom. In short, it is something [given to someone] to test them and as well as to correct and analyze it. Thus, the friends of God transmute worldly love into love for the Lord (Mawlā). It is a solid fact that no elderly person can become a lover of God without attaining this bliss in their youth, nor can any child be enraptured with this wine, nor a eunuch. What, after all, is its reason? Its only reason is that without the severe desire of the carnal soul created in youth, not only does the existence of trial cease, but also spiritual progress and Divine love become impossible.

It is necessary to consider the problem of the changing social values of any non-Muslim society and to protect oneself from actions against the spirit of Islām, otherwise, while worrying about society, our own ethical, religious and spiritual values will be eroded.

The commands of religion in which there is no room for modification are permanent and unchangeable, as mentioned earlier that many things of the people of the West are their own creations, from which true *mu’mins* should keep aloof and far away. *Wa’s-salām* (Peace).

10th January, 1984

Rank of Intellect and Center of *Ta'wīl*

First, it should be understood that the body is apparent, the soul is hidden and the intellect is the hidden of the hidden. Therefore, wherever in the wise Qur'ān a grammatical form of the word "intellect (*‘aql*)" is mentioned, it refers to the hidden of the hidden, as mentioned in verse (20:7) of Sūrah of Ṭā Hā hidden is called "*sirr*" and hidden of the hidden is called "*akhfā*". Thus, the *tanzīl* of the Qur'ān descends from the intellect towards the soul and from the soul towards the body, and its *ta'wīl* ascends from the body towards the soul and from the soul to the intellect. This means that the people of *ta'yīd* find the Qur'ān first apparently or physically, then they see it in their spirituality and then observe it in the mirror of intellect (i.e., the Pearl of Intellect), as mentioned in verse (29:49): "Nay, it (the Qur'ān) is (in the form of) luminous miracles in the breasts of those who are granted knowledge." That is, the Noble Qur'ān is in the spirit and spirituality of the pure Imām^(c) as luminous miracles and the source of knowledge is the light of intellect. Thus, according to a noble *ḥadīth*, the holy Qur'ān is with the Imām^(c), and the exalted Imām^(c) is with the Qur'ān. This is in three ways: First physically (i.e., in this world) the mutual relationship between the heavenly Book and the true Imām^(c) is very strong, *vis à vis* others, because the holy Qur'ān is the inheritance of God's Prophet^(s), and the Imām of the time is his inheritor (4:54, 35:32). Secondly, in the hidden, i.e., in spirituality the spirit of the Qur'ān (42:52) and the light of Imāmat (5:15) are one. Thirdly, at the level of intellect, the Qur'ān and the light of Imām are one in the hidden Book (*kitāb-i maknūn*) (56:77-78).

The *ta'wīl* of what is mentioned in verse (12:2) of Sūrah of Yūsuf and in verse (43:3) of Sūrah of Zukhruf is that although the wise Qur'ān is physically in Arabic, its miraculous soul speaks in all languages of the entire world. In "*la'allakum ta'qilūn* (so that you understand intellectually) is an allusion to this reality, as mentioned in verse (43:3), "Indeed We have made the Qur'ān clear

and explicit, so that you may easily understand it.” If you wish, you can ascertain the various meanings of the word “Arabic” in different sources. However, in the above-mentioned verse, the word “Arabic” means clear and explicit, which means the spiritual and *ta’wīlī* aspect of the Qur’ān. There is utmost clarity and eloquence in its *ta’wīlī* aspect because its entire light is in the mother tongue of every Perfect Man.

The glorious way in which the rank of the intellect is praised in the wise Qur’ān is in two ways. In one, the word intellect is used [directly] and in the other, the word itself is not used, but it is praised indirectly through its synonyms – this explanation is infinite. In both these ways, directly as well as indirectly, the perfect Intellect is alluded to. Thus, in the entire Qur’ān the mention of the light of intellect comprises [everything] because the Qur’ān is like a wise Perfect Man whose soul encompasses the body and whose intellect encompasses the soul. Thus, there are more meanings of the Wise Qur’ān than its words, more intellectual wisdoms than its meanings.

In Arabic literature, pure intellect is called “*lubb*,” whose plural is “*albāb*.” There are sixteen places in the holy Qur’ān where the *ulu’l-albāb* (people of pure intellect) are mentioned in magnificent words, such as in verse (2:269) it is said: “He gives wisdom to whomever He wills, and whoever is given wisdom, has been given the abundant good and exhortation is accepted by those who are people of intellect.” The gist of this Divine teaching is that by receiving wisdom the entire good is received, and wisdom is linked to the intellect.

In this connection, Almighty Allāh says: “Those who listen to the [Divine] speech attentively and follow the best of it (*aḥsanahu*); those are the ones whom Allāh has guided and they are the ones who are people of intellects (*ulu’l-albāb*) (39:18).” Here, the word *aḥsanahu* alludes to put into practice the *ta’wīl* after the *tanzīl*, because the people of intellect are granted intellect, understanding, knowledge and wisdom so that their word and deed may continue to be better.

The holy Imāms^(s) are well-grounded in knowledge (*rāsikhūn fi'l-ilm*) and people of intellects (*ulu'l-albāb*), as mentioned in Sūrah of Āl-i Imrān, verse (3:7): “And nobody knows its *ta'wīl* except Allāh and those (who are) firmly rooted in knowledge; they say [i.e., the *rāsikhūn fi'l-ilm* say]: We believe in it, all (unambiguous or allegorical) is from our Lord, but none heeds (this) save those endowed with intellect[s].”

It is mentioned in verse (21:104) of Sūrah of An'biyā', “On the day of resurrection God will roll up the entire universe as a written scroll is rolled up.” However, a question arises here: How can any work of God be related to the future, whereas His work has been done (33:37), and His *sunnat*, which includes every work of God, has already passed in His special servants (40:85)? However, indeed the reason is that the way God's action is mentioned in future tense, is never related to God, but to the people who will see God's work in the future exactly as it had taken place in *azal*.

When a man observes the physical universe, all things of the heaven and earth appear dispersed, distant and inaccessible. When he begins to recognize himself or when he observes his personal world, the macrocosm shrinks in front of him and condenses into the microcosm. When he ascends towards the world of intellect, the entire microcosm enfolds into the form of a unique pearl (*durr-i yatīm*). However, this great event does not occur materially, rather, it occurs in the spiritual and intellectual form because physically, it is against the law of nature that the physical world should shrink and become a fistful.

When Ḥazrat-i Mūsā^(c) reached the sacred valley of Ṭuwā, the Lord of the world said, “O Moses! Indeed, I am your Lord, so take off your sandals. You are indeed in the sacred valley of Ṭuwā (20:12).” Its *ta'wīl* is that it was the valley of Intellect, where all the distances were enfolded for him. One allusion of removing his sandals is that his spiritual journey had come to an end. Although there is some disagreement in the meaning of the word Ṭuwā, but observing in the light of *ta'wīlī* wisdom, one can assess which meanings are correct. There are five words from the root letters *ṭā', wāw, yā'* that

are mentioned in four places in the holy Qur’ān: *Naṭwī* (21:104), *ka-ṭayyī* (21:104), *Ṭuwā* (20:12), *Ṭuwā* (79:16) *maṭwīyyāt* (39:67). Thus, it is clear that the literal meanings of these words are the same, which means ‘to enfold’ and ‘to bring distances to an end’. Its *ta’wīl* is that Almighty Allāh, through His infinite grace, unites the realities and recognitions of the physical and the spiritual things of the universe into Hidden Pearls, as mentioned: “On the Day of Resurrection the entire earth will be in God’s fist and the heavens will be enfolded in His right hand (39:67).” Verses of this nature mention the rank of Perfect Intellect and the Center of *ta’wīl* because God is free from and above the concept of hand and body, therefore, by God’s command this work is executed by that Perfect Man of God who is the locus of manifestation (*mazhar*) of His actions and attributes, His vicegerent, light of the Prophet^(s), soul of the Qur’ān, and custodian of the Divine command and the same is the original place of the Command.

A fundamental principle is worth mentioning here that Almighty Allāh Himself is not the direct agent (*fā’il*), rather He is the indirect agent because He is the Absolute King. For instance, it is not the honor and greatness of a great king that he should perform every task himself, but rather, the true meaning of being a king is that all tasks and services in his kingdom are accomplished by his command and will through representation and service. In the end, every praiseworthy task is attributed to the king because the intention or command, or project belong to him. Through this example, God willing, faithful *mu’mins* can understand the law of true kingship.

A Prophetic Tradition says: “Almighty Allāh has based His religion on the example of His creation so that evidence of His religion may be referenced from His creation, and His oneness [be referenced] from His religion.” Thus, the inference of religion from the creation is such that no nation or country of this world can traverse the stages of progress and perfection without a head, i.e., a king or a president, etc., similarly, the guidance, elevation and evolution of religion is impossible without there being the Perfect Man, who is appointed the Imām in religion by God and the Prophet. Such a person has to have the light of Universal Intellect from God because, without the

light of Intellect, religious guidance cannot be conceived, such as a worldly government cannot be run without worldly intelligence. This shows that in religion the greatest and the most sublime thing is the light of intellect, and all the values related to matter, soul, knowledge and intellect of the universe and external and internal things are gathered together in that unique Pearl, just as in the seed of a tree numerous powers gather together as well as they cause it to grow and spread.

True knowledge is the light of intellect, without which, it is impossible to understand Qur'ānic examples, as mentioned in verse (29:43) of Sūrah of °Ankabūt: “And those similitudes We strike them for the people, but none understand them save those who possess knowledge.” These Divine possessors of knowledge (*°ulamā'*) are the Imāms from the progeny of Muḥammad^(s), in whose blessed personalities there is the fountainhead of the light of Intellect. In every age, on one side there are the people and on the other side, the Book of God (Qur'ān) and the Divine possessor of knowledge (*°ālim*) who is the Imām of the time. Just as during the time of prophethood, together with the heavenly Book, there was the Divine Teacher. Thus, the means to Qur'ānic knowledge and wisdom has always been present because the light of God, which is the light of Intellect, never extinguishes and is always scattering light unsparingly.

The entire wise Qur'ān is filled with intellectual examples because it is revealed from the sublimity of the light of Intellect, which is the fountainhead of intellectual analogies, another name for which is the Divine Pen. Thus, these examples are known only to the Perfect Person whom God has granted the light of Perfect Intellect, such a person is the Imām of the time, who is the inheritor of the Prophet and vicegerent of God.

The examples in the Qur'ān are called *mutashābihāt* (allegorical verses) which are the most difficult part of the sacred Qur'ān. The person who knows the examples (*miṣāl*) also knows their meanings (*mamṣūlāt*) and *mamṣūl* is another name for *ta'wīl*. Thus, the way the verse (29:43) is mentioned above shows that the true Imāms^(s)

know the Qur'ānic *ta'wīl*. This is the explanation and verification of the blessed phrase “*Rāsikhūn fi'l ʿilm*” mentioned in verse (3:7): “While no one knows its *ta'wīl* except Allāh and those (who are) firmly rooted in knowledge.”

The light of Intellect is in perpetual intellectual motion, and demonstrates all the examples of knowledge of the heavens and the earth. It is in this sense he is the sublime example (*al-maṣāl al-ʿlā*) (16:60, 30:27). He is called the world of intellect that encompasses the spiritual world. Even the extents, parts and all the things of the world of Intellect are gathered in the Unique Pearl and confined in the Divine hand, yet it is the world of Intellect. Thus, not only the examples, but each and every thing of the Qur'ān has descended from the world of Intellect. Thus, the foundation of doing *ta'wīl* is based on the principle that Qur'ānic wisdoms be studied in the illumination of the light of Intellect.

Just as the partial intellect cannot exist without an ordinary human being, the Universal Intellect cannot be without a Perfect Human Being. Where the greatest intellect is called an angel there is also the subtle existence of the Perfect Human Being because it is the human being who, after spiritual progress, is called an angel. The angels, who are like good thoughts, angels who are like particles and majestic angels are all created from human beings. Not only that, *jinns*, satans and every kind of evil souls are from human beings.

Almighty Allāh says that on the day of resurrection, the good and bad deeds of each individual will be weighed. Related to this subject, there is verse (101:6-7): “As for him whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales, he will have a pleasing life.” However, the question is: what will the state of weight of deeds be as they do not weigh like material objects? The answer is: the deeds of servants will be measured on the balance of intellect, in which the bad [deed] will have no weight, nor any such work which is without knowledge and wisdom, because the entire goodness is in wisdom (2:269). Thus, the deeds which are done in the light of intellect will have weight, whereby the scale of *mu'mins* will be heavy.

Every wise individual in this world, when they reflect upon the profit and loss of a certain matter or observe the goodness and badness of a thing, it is the intellect which is their scale or balance, whereby they weigh thoughts and concepts intellectually.

The balance of intellect, or scale of realities, is on the height of the intellectual heaven (55:7-9), as well as being revealed with the heavenly Book to measure matters of intellect and understanding, and knowledge and wisdom. The related blessed verse [in this connection] is as follows: “Indeed, We sent Our Messengers with clear and bright miracles (*bayyināt*), and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that humankind may observe right measure (57:25).” Here, the Book means *Asās*. The *ta’wīl* of balance is the Imām of the time, who is the balance of intellect and justice, and the people mean *hujjats* who use this balance.

It is related from Ḥaẓrat-i Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir^(c) that he said: “When God created the Intellect, He interrogated it and said to it: Come forward. It came forward. Then He said: Go back! It went back. Then He said: By My honor and majesty! I did not create a creature more loved by Me than you. And I will not perfect you except in those whom I love. You alone will I command and you alone will I forbid, and you alone will I punish and you alone I will reward.”

Answers to many fundamental questions are provided in this blessed *farmān*, however, as you can see, it is important to reflect that it is the Perfect Intellect, i.e., the Universal Intellect that is mentioned in it. It is also evident that this Perfect Intellect is linked to the Perfect Man; without being with him, it has no perfection, nor has it any temporal priority. According to the above-mentioned *ḥadīṣ*, this is a matter of eternity, which occurs in the personal world of the Perfect Man.

17th January, 1984

Concept of *Yadu'llāh* (Allāh's Hand) in the Qur'ān

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

People of knowledge are well aware that *Yadu'llāh*, God's Hand, is mentioned in several verses of the wise Qur'ān. In this connection, it is also evident that [all] such blessed verses about *Yadu'llāh* are among the allegorical verses (*mutashābihāt*), the true meaning of which cannot be clear without *ta'wīl*. However, for the people of insight, the benevolent Lord, by explaining the *ta'wīl* of this wisdom-filled example, has also shed light on many such other hidden realities and on that special verse from which the light of the Divine *ta'wīl* scatters. The fundamental subject of the Qur'ān which is of key importance is God's Hand (*Yadu'llāh*) as follows: "Verily (O Prophet) those who give *bay'at* (oath of allegiance) to you indeed give *bay'at* to Allāh; Allāh's Hand is above their hands (48:10)." This sacred *farmān* of the bounteous Lord and its unique *ta'wīl*, the everlasting reality becomes clear that as the vicegerent and representative of God, the holy Prophet^(s)'s blessed hand was God's Hand not only taking physical *bay'at* from the *mu'mins* but, according to this law of vicegerency, his and his vicegerent's sacred hand is God's Hand through which is accomplished every act by God's Hand physically or spiritually. Without this example, any example of Almighty God's hand and foot is impossible.

In this blessed verse filled with fundamental wisdoms, the letter *inna*, the particle of certainty, is for emphasis, and *innamā* is the particle of limitation (*ḥaṣr*), which means the only form of affirming God's Hand and giving *bay'at* on it is through *bay'at* upon the blessed hand of the representative of God and the Guide of the time. Other than this, there is no way to do so. This is the *ta'wīl* wisdom of *innamā*.

You are aware that *bay'at* is a religious term for the pledge of obedience. However, its *ta'wīl* is hidden in the root word, which is the origin of *ta'wīl*. Thus, the literal meanings of *bay'at* are preserved in '*bay'*', meaning to buy. Thus, in the time of prophethood the *ta'wīl* of doing *bay'at* on the Prophet's blessed hand, and in the cycle of Imāmat on the Imām's, is that the *mu'mins* sell their lives and properties to Almighty Allāh, and through this blessed hand, purchase Paradise in exchange, as explained in verse (9:111) according to the principle that one verse explains another: "Verily Allāh has purchased from the faithful their souls and their properties in return for the paradise." Thus, this blessed verse is the exegesis and *ta'wīl* of the blessed verse of *bay'at* (48:10). This purchasing and selling related to the hereafter continues to take place forever between Almighty Allāh and His faithful servants and is possible only through this very God's Hand without which, no person can strike such a bargain nor is it acceptable. The practical examples of this bargain are *jihād* and *zakāt* which are so prominent that they cannot be acceptable outside the circle of obedience of God's Messenger and the custodians of Divine Command (*ulu'l-amr*).

In this regard, it is mentioned in verse (5:64) in Sūrah of Mā'idah: "And the Jews say: The hand of Allāh is tied up! Tied be their own hands, and damned be they for saying what they say! Nay, both His hands are widely outstretched, He expends as He pleases." Its *ta'wīl* is that the Jews' insolence was against the Prophet^(s), who was God's Hand due to their ignorance and benightedness. They considered him an indigent, i.e., without knowledge, and it is in this sense that they considered God's hand to be incapable of spending treasures of knowledge. As a result, they remained ignorant, deprived and paupers from the wealth of knowledge, and driven away from the fountainhead of mercy.

In the spiritual world, the two hands of Almighty Allāh are the Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul, and in the physical world, they are the *Nāṭiq* and the *Asās* and in the cycle of Imāmat, the *Asās* and the Imām. Both of His sacred hands are open to grant knowledge and wisdom, and Almighty Allāh bestows pearls of intellect and knowledge with His blessed hands on whom He wills.

Both God's hands are the light of Prophethood and the light of Imāmat, which, in reality, is one light. Just as both hands in action and its purpose are one, to accept God's light, one is a fact and two is a metaphor and an example. If someone does not understand this wisdom, it can be extremely perplexing, while it is the sacred and wisdom-filled habit of Almighty Allāh, that He, the Knowing and the Seeing, strikes every kind of example to explain the reality of His sacred light (17:89, 18:54), such as: "Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth; His light is as a niche in which is a lamp" (24:35). This means God's light encompasses the universe and existents, and is also centered in its special place. This same example applies to both God's hands that they are absolutely open without any inaccessibility (5:64). It clearly means that God's hand reaches and encompasses all external and internal things. Thus, it must be known that God's light and His hand are two names of one reality.

According to the clear purport of the verse of Light (*Āyah-yi Nūr* 24:35), it is correct to say that all things of the heaven and the earth are immersed in the light of God. An intellectual, spiritual and practical example of this fact is that at the place of the eye of certainty (another name of which is resurrection), the entire universe is in Almighty Allāh's Fist (21:104, 39:67).

To draw attention to some very important Qur'ānic universals, it would not be out of place to ask the following questions: Is not everything encompassed in the manifest Imām (36:12)? Are all things not enumerated in one Book (78:29)? Is the concept of the treasures of all things not in the holy Qur'ān (15:21)? Is it not mentioned in the holy Qur'ān that God's pedestal (*Kursī*) has encompassed all of the heavens and the earth (2:255)? Has the Lord not encompassed everything (universe and its existents) in the circumference of mercy and knowledge (40:7)? Is this not a universally accepted reality that everything is in the Guarded Tablet, and that God has encompassed everything in the domain of knowledge (65:12)?

The common and single answer to this or these questions is: Yes,

why not? Indeed, these are the Qur'ānic teachings. There is not an iota of doubt in them. However, this affirmation never means that, as all these names and examples are separate physically, their realities are also separate in spirituality and at the place of oneness. Rather, truly speaking, it is only one light of God for which numerous examples are given here. Just as God is one but He has several names and attributes, the holy Qur'ān is one, but it has several names and the blessed personality of the holy Prophet was one, but his sacred names and attributes are many. And it is a fact that the abundance of names of a thing does not disintegrate its oneness.

Now, there is another question. On the day of resurrection, i.e., at the place of spirituality, why does God take the entire universe and enfold it in His Fist, and what is the wisdom in it? In that state, what will be the shape and form of the universe, and what will happen to its statistics?

The answer is that this event is intellectual and is related to the resurrection of knowledge. The chain of the infinite wisdoms of God's Godhead continues to take place in it, and hence no one can count them. The shape and form of the universe become like a unique pearl in God's Fist. The parts of the universe and its numerous objects will be transformed into this unique pearl, as mentioned in the Qur'ān (72:28), "And He (Allāh) has encompassed and counted them." *Ta'wīl*: Allāh counted all things (i.e., the universe and everything in it) by making it the unique pearl. According to this verse, the exalted God creates things in such a way that He counts them in the unique pearl. Remember the *ta'wīl* of the pearl is hidden in the original meaning of the word "*aḥṣā*."

In this connection, there is another verse which is (19:94): "Verily, He has encompassed them and has enumerated them as ought to be enumerated." *Ta'wīl*: Indeed, He has kept them in the higher world by making them the pearl and has counted them as should be in the same unique pearl. You should contemplate on the following wisdom-filled verse related to the above-mentioned verse, which is: "And on the day all of them become present near Him by

becoming a single person (19:95)”, which is mentioned in (31:28): “Your creation and reviving (after death) is but like a Single Soul.”

The precious thing in God’s blessed hand is grace (*fazl*) (3:73; 57:29). There are several most comprehensive words in the wise Qur’ān. One of them is grace (*fazl*), which contains everything. Another such word is good (*khayr*) (3:26). Good is in God’s hand, in which are gathered together all goodnesses and virtues (*khayrāt*). Another name for grace (*fazl*) is good (*khayr*). The third name is *Mulk*, i.e., kingdom (67:1), that is the spiritual kingdom and that of the Hereafter, which is in the sense of granting by the hand of God. The fourth name is the kingdom of things (36:83), that is, the world of the intellect and soul of all things, which is in God’s Fist. The fifth name is wisdom, and the sixth name is the light of intellect. Thus, that precious Pearl has innumerable names.

The self-sufficient and sublime God, [who is] the Sovereign and Master of Command, is not a direct agent. Therefore, every work of God which is related to [His] hand is being accomplished by the hand of God [i.e., the Prophet or the Imam], as mentioned in this article and as is clear from the holy Qur’ān that when the holy Prophet takes *ṣadaqah* from the *mu’mins* it is tantamount to God taking *ṣadaqah* (9:103-104); the holy Prophet purifying the people of faith is God purifying them (9:103; 24:21); receiving *ṣalawāt* from the Prophet is receiving *ṣalawāt* from God and the angels (9:103; 33:43); the Prophet throwing is God’s throwing (8:17); obedience to the Prophet is God’s obedience (4:80) and obedience of the Imām of the time is obedience of the Prophet and God (4:59). Obedience is to act upon each and every command of religion. And I have no power except by Him (11:88).

24th January, 1984

Qur'ānic Mountain and Gems

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Just as physical gems are hidden in the hearts of mountains of this material world, similarly, religious gems are hidden in the Qur'ānic and spiritual mountains. Qur'ānic mountains mean those which are mentioned in the wise Qur'ān and in reality, they are the mountains of religion and spirituality, as God says in verse (7:143): “Thus when God manifested [His] theophany on the mountain, it was smashed into smithereens and Moses fell down unconscious.” Every word of the Divine speech comprises many meanings and here it should be understood that the spiritual life of a Perfect Human Being is a chain of spiritual and intellectual manifestations. However, these manifestations have two centers: the center of spirit and the center of intellect. Thus, first the Divine light manifested on the mountain of soul and fragmented the frozen soul and when the appropriate time came, the same light fragmented the mountain of intellect into pieces. Since the Intellect is indivisible, the meaning of its fragmenting is that although it is one, it can represent multiplicity in every way. Ḥazrat-i Mūsā^(c) was extremely bewildered at both places, his bewilderment is likened to unconsciousness. According to its wisdom-filled habit, the Qur'ān mentions together the spiritual and intellectual manifestations. Also, note that in this world when an earthquake occurs in a mountain or a volcano erupts, it results in their breaking up and being demolished. Contrary to this, the fragmenting of the mountain of soul is a source of mercy, that as an example all souls are created from one soul and thus the personal world becomes prosperous. This same example is also that of the mountain of intellect where one intellect represents all intellects.

The holy Qur'ān repeatedly draws attention to the reality that nothing is without a pair. Thus, there is an external mountain, which is an example (*miṣāl*), and an internal mountain that is its reality (*mamṣūl*). Just as physically, there are two types of mountains:

one comparatively less beneficial and the other, very beneficial, similarly, internally there are two types of mountains: spiritual and intellectual. It is well known that the soul is better by many degrees than the body, and the intellect ranks higher than the soul.

One *ta'wīl* of the mountain is *Hujjat*, as said to Ḥaẓrat-i Abraham^(c) in Sūrah of al-Baqarah, verse (2:260): “Take four birds and cause them to incline unto you (cut them up into pieces), and then place a part of them on each mountain and then call them; they will come to you running.” The *ta'wīl* is for Ḥaẓrat-i Abraham^(c) to exert influence upon all the *Hujjats* of all the islands through the collective spirituality of the four closest *Hujjats*, and for each of them [*Hujjats* of islands] to be present at the place [of resurrection] with the army of souls of every mountain. Thus here, the four birds mean four closest *Hujjats* and the mountains *Hujjats* of islands.

It is mentioned in the glorious Qur'ān that the mountain was suspended over the children of Israel (7:171, 2:63, 2:93, 4:154). This means the rising of the mountain of soul and intellect above their heads. However, it is not necessary for every individual of the children of Israel to see this inner miracle with their physical eye, because this event is related to spirituality and the world of particles in which all of the children of Israel were unconsciously present in the form of particles.

It is mentioned in Sūrah of Ḥaṣhr, verse (59:21): “Had We sent down this Qur'ān on a mountain, you would have certainly seen it humbled and rent asunder for fear of God. These examples are mentioned for people to reflect upon.” The word “*mutaṣaddi*” means that which splits or divides in two. Thus, it is a fact and reality that the demonstration of the above-mentioned example of the light of the Qur'ān takes place on the mountain of the soul and intellect of the Perfect Man because practical *ta'wīl* is impossible without this.

In human existence, bones are like mountains, particularly the head, which is the highest part of the body is the mountain of the personal world. Thus, the bones of every Perfect Man during the individual

resurrection, i.e., spirituality, recite *tasbīḥ*, as mentioned about Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd^(c) (21:79, 34:10, 38:18), that the mountains and birds were reciting *tasbīḥ* with him. Here, mountains mean bones, and birds are souls. With this magnificent echo and harmony, the Divine remembrance, which becomes automatic, rises towards the head.

It is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān in verse (16:81): “And God has made for you the shadows of all creatures and has made places to hide in the mountains and has made for you such shirts to protect you from the heat and such shirts to protect you from war.” A *mu’min’s* soul is not confined in the present body. It being simple (*basīṭ*) is everywhere, particularly those *Hujjats* of twelve islands, who are mountains where there are *aknān* for the *mu’mins*, i.e., places of refuge. Thus, the upper end, i.e., the Higher ‘I,’ of a *mu’min’s* soul is in the Imām^(c) of the time and *Qā’imu’l-Qiyāmat*^(c). The Imām^(c) of the time protects from the fire of ignorance and Ḥaẓrat-i Qā’im^(c) safeguards from the spiritual war.

It is mentioned in Sūrah of Mursalāt, verses (77:25-27): “Have We not made the earth a receptacle for the living and the dead, and placed therein high mountains and given you sweet water therein to drink?” There are two types of people in the earth of spirituality: some of them have the soul of faith and some who do not. Similarly, some are alive and some are dead. The lofty mountains on earth mean the *Hujjats* of twelve islands, who live in astral body and are treasures of knowledge of Imāmat (15:21), the sweet water of knowledge of Imāmat comes from these same living mountains.

In Sūrah of Mu’minūn, verse (23:20), God says: “And (We created) a tree [of olive] that springs forth from Sinai that grows with oil and relish for the eaters.” Ṭūr means a mountain, and Sayna’ or Sīnīn mean beautiful, splendor. Therefore, Ṭūr-i Sīnā means beautiful and splendid mountain, which means the mount of Pearls which, being the Light of Intellect, is extremely beautiful and splendid. Further, the Olive tree is at this place, that is, the luminous body (*paykar-i nūr*) in the oil, whose Words (*kalimāt*), are the source of light and the complete nourishment of intellect and knowledge.

In Sūrah of Maryam, verse (19:52) God says: “And We called him [Moses] from the right side of the Mount (*aṭ-ṭūru’l-ayman*) and We made him closest for communion.” Here, the word *aṭ-ṭūru’l-ayman* is polysemous, i.e., it has more than one meaning: 1) The mountain of the right side or the right side of the mountains. 2) The blessed mountain. Although here three mountains are mentioned together, i.e., the physical mountain, the blessed head of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c), and the mount of Intellect, nonetheless in the true sense ‘right side’ cannot be applied to the physical mountain; it is rather used for the human head. Similarly, it is also true that the blessed is the Mount of Intellect whereas the physical mountain is simply an example.

Almighty God says in verse (50:1): “By *Qāf* (Mountain) and by the glorious Qur’ān.” In this verse, the Lord of honor swears by the Mount of Intellect, which is the spiritual Mountain of *Qāf*, as well as the *Qāf* of the Pen. Then He swears by the Guarded Tablet, in which is the glorious Qur’ān, as mentioned in verses (85:21-22): “Nay! It is the glorious Qur’ān [written] on a Guarded Tablet.” Another name for Pen is Universal Intellect, and the Universal Soul is the Guarded Tablet.

Just as the word *Qāf* means ‘mountain’, it is also the name of a letter: ق. Now, there should be a relationship between ‘mountain’ (*Qāf*) and the letter *Qāf* (ق). That relationship is at the place of the mountain of *Qāf*, i.e., the Mount of Intellect, all those words of the wise Qur’ān are mentioned which end with the letter *Qāf* such as: *ḥaqq*, *ṣīd*, *falaq*, *raqq*, *zahūq*, *waraq*, *‘atīq*, *saḥīq*, *Ishāq*, *sābiq*, etc, and extremely great wisdoms are hidden in such words.

An example of the above-mentioned words is in verse (17:81): “And say: Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Verily, falsehood has to vanish.” You can see in this wisdom-filled verse that the last letter of the word *ḥaqq* is ‘*Qāf*’ and on the other hand, the last letter of the word *zahūq*, which is a name of falsehood, is also ‘*Qāf*.’ Thus, having ‘*Qāf*’ at the end of these words alludes to the reality that the affirmation of the *ḥaqqu’l-yaqīn* i.e., the truth of certainty and the vanishing of falsehood, happens at the place of the Intellect, which can be observed today as well as tomorrow.

Another example is mentioned in verse (67:3): “Who (God) created the seven heavens corresponding one to another, you do not see any difference in the creation of the Compassionate (*al-Raḥmān*).” In this sacred verse, there are three words which end with the letter *Qāf*. From this allusion, it is clear that these are the seven heavens of the world of Intellect and they are like one another, none smaller or larger than the other. This means that they are one only, but the seven instantaneous (*ibdāʿī*) manifestations are the seven heavens. The correct meaning of the word *ṭibāq* is correspondence instead of one above the other.

A huge mountain and a small stone have the same meaning for the sake of analogy and parable of the world of intellect, because it is the place of true equity and oneness. Thus, in the time of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c), the sacred stone from which twelve springs gushed forth is the mount of Intellect. This was Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c)'s greatest intellectual and spiritual miracle that by striking the mount of Intellect with the staff of the Supreme Name, he caused to flow the twelve ranks of springs of knowledge and wisdom, that is, his twelve *Hujjats* were the twelve springs of spiritual knowledge (2:60, 7:160, 26:63).

It is mentioned in Sūrah of Baqarah, verse (2:74): “Among rocks are those from which streams flow; and there are those which split asunder and water gushes forth; as well as those that fall down for fear of God.” The Pearl of Intellect is addressed in three ways in this blessed verse. First, at the level of truth of certainty, from it (the Pearl of Intellect) flows the canals of paradise, which are controlled by the Divine Word. Secondly, at the level of the eye of certainty, spiritual knowledge is attained from the demonstration of this Pearl. Thirdly, in this physical world, every *mu'min* who harbors the fear of God in his heart is benefiting from the mount of Intellect in the form of the knowledge of certainty. A symbol of knowledge at this level is of precious gems tumbling from the mountain of gems.

What can be said about the universal grandeur and eminence of Intellect, which Almighty Allāh, by making it His Pen, appointed

it the fountainhead of Divine knowledge, oriented all the similes and parables of the wise Qur'ān towards it, spread its subject and discourse in the entire heavenly book (Qur'ān)! He made it the axis of the recognition of the oneness of God (*tawhīd*), made it the standard of reality and the balance of justice. Thus, it is the Intellect which is the rotation of the heavens; the radiation of the sun, moon and stars; the final fruit of the effort of all human beings; the essence of the universe and existents; the unique Pearl of the unbounded ocean of existence.

Countless wisdoms are hidden at the sublimity of the spirit and spirituality and at the center of knowledge, and in a way in which the Intellect by Divine power manifests and the concept of the beginning and end of creation ceases by the repetition of its manifestations. The concept of the eternal circle becomes evident instead of *azal* and *abad*. There is nothing beyond this domain.

31st January, 1984

Five Questions from London

At the end of ʿAbdu’r-Raḥmān’s letter dated 14th January, 1984, there are five questions:

Bāpā, with mixed feelings of fear and happiness, I would like to ask you a few questions.

Question 1: How does ʿIzrāʾīl seize the soul?

Question 2: Mawlā-yi Rūm has often mentioned Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c). You have written an article about Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c). Would you kindly shed some light on Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c)’s life?

Question 3: ... Please provide us with some material regarding the Ismāʿīlī concept of education.

Question 4: It has been explained that the soul can adopt different forms similar to water, which, in addition to its own form, can become ice, steam, etc. Would you kindly explain how the soul transforms from the subtle body into the dense one?

Question 5: Would you kindly tell us more about the ascension of the soul? Is this a gradual ascension, i.e., from vegetative soul to angelic soul? This question has arisen from a dream in which I saw a green tree full of buds. As long as I was looking at the tree, the number of its buds continued to increase. The characteristic of trees is that only one bud can blossom at a time. Was this an example of the progress of the soul at the level of the vegetative soul? Will I see a similar dream afterwards related to the animal soul? Or am I wrong in my assumption?

Please forgive me *Bāpā* if my questions are asked improperly. From the bottom of my heart, I will ever remain grateful for the answers you provide.

These are the five questions that were sent by my very dear spiritual brother and beloved friend, °Abdu'r-Raḥmān, in one of his sincere letters. First of all, I would like to consider myself the dust under the feet of *mu'mins* and express my hopelessness in knowledge so that, the exalted God may have mercy on my condition and help me through the embodied light, i.e., Imām^(c) of the time from the progeny of Muḥammad^(s), so that this humble servant who is extremely poor may receive charity and alms from His sublime court; and the prayers of the people of faith are needed to receive this bliss.

Answer to question 1: Ḥaẓrat-i °Izrā'īl^(c) by Divine Command gradually seizes the soul by reciting a Supreme Name, and there is another Supreme Name through which he can instantly seize the soul. The soul generally cannot leave the body by any other way except through the upper part of the head. During a higher stage of special worship (*°ibādat*) and the spiritual journey, sometimes °Izrā'īl^(c) demonstrates the seizing of the soul for several days in various ways; at times the soul leaving the rest of the body centers in the head and sometimes it is seized and lifted towards the higher world from the top [of the head]. However, every time the lower end is linked to the top of the head. During a person's lifetime the lower end of the soul can never be absolutely separate from the head.

°Izrā'īl^(c) is a chief angel under whom there are numerous angels who seize the soul, as mentioned in the sacred *farmān* of the Lord of the worlds (6:94): “With hands outstretched, the angels (will say): Yield up your souls.” The angel's hands mean remembrance (*zīkr*) and *tasbīḥ* (purifying God from attributes) because angels do not have a body; therefore, their hands are not like human hands nor do they have wings like physical birds. They are souls, their grasp and flight are through the different names of Almighty Allāh. Incidentally, it is worth pondering that the soul is not something material which can be grasped by physical hands. It is a simple power which can only be controlled by a name of God. Therefore, °Izrā'īl^(c) repeatedly recites a Supreme Name of God in the left ear

of the person whose soul God commands to seize, whereby the soul centers in the head before leaving the body, and the angels do this through the circle of remembrance (*zīkr*).

Answer to question 2: My very dear friend, the sincerity and confidence with which you have raised this question about Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c), requires that I should write an article about him. If it is possible, it should be written separately. However, it is not a promise. Only a few points are explained here:

Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) in his time was an entrusted (*mustawda^c*) Imām. In the beginning, he saw a luminous dream in which eleven stars, the sun and the moon were prostrating to him. The *ta'wīl* is that Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c), who at that time was the twelfth star, had to become the Imām to succeed his illustrious father, Ḥaẓrat-i Ya^cqūb^(c). Therefore, at the opportune time, Yūsuf's^(c) brothers, i.e., the eleven *Hujjats*, obeyed Yūsuf^(c), and this is the *ta'wīl* of the prostration of the eleven stars to him and then the sun. That is, by the command of God, Ḥaẓrat-i Ya^cqūb^(c) submitted the Imāmat to Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c), and the light which at that time had come to his son, therefore he started to obey him. Finally, the moon prostrated to him, that is, the supreme *Hujjat (Bāb)*, obeying the previous Imām to the ultimate end, obeyed the appointed Imām (12:4) after the designation. You can see this order in the verse (12:4) that first the eleven stars are mentioned, then the sun and finally the moon. After carefully studying the verse (12:4-6), we look at the verse (12:6), we come to know that this is the choosing of the Perfect Human Being by Almighty Allāh and this is the way *ta'wīl* is granted, and it is in this form that each and every Divine bounty is attained perfectly.

According to the spirit of the Qur'ān, the reality is clear that the Sustainer of the worlds has made every Prophet and every Imām the master of the treasures of the knowledge of *ta'wīl*. Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) is an example of this reality because he was a Prophet as well as an Imām and *ta'wīl* is not something external, rather it is a Supreme Soul of the heavenly Book and its universal spirituality, which sometimes is called the Spirit of spirits, sometimes the

Universal Soul and sometimes the Guarded Tablet. In short, in this [God-given] *ta'wīl*, there is no mention of bookish and education *ta'wīl*, rather it is full of luminosity, which is the real light and the speaking Book encompassing the subtle particles of everything, the souls of all things and all intellects.

If the question is asked that since the twelve *Hujjats* reside in twelve different islands (*jazīrahs*) of the earth, how did it become possible for Ḥaẓrat-i Ya'qūb's twelve sons to reside at their homes and still be considered the *Hujjats* of twelve different islands? The answer is that the real system of the hierarchs of religion is in the subtle body, just as *jinns*, that is, *parīs*, are in the subtle body and among whom there are both good and bad; similarly, the *Hujjats* of night and day work in their respective islands through subtle bodies.

Answer to question 3: This question can also be answered in the form of a detailed and complete article; nonetheless, for the sake of your interest, some important points are also explained here. The Ismaili concept of education is truly the Islamic concept of education, and Islām is the religion of nature. Therefore, our concept in its real form is in harmony with the Qur'ān and spirituality on the one hand and on the other, it accepts the demands of time and place. This means religious education should be filled with spiritual wisdoms, and worldly education should be in the light of modern principles because the purpose of knowledge is spiritual and worldly wellbeing and success of the individual and nation; if this purpose is not achieved, education becomes meaningless.

What should the nature of secular education be for the new generation? This is not a specific issue, as every day newer methods and increasingly useful principles will continue to emerge. While the nations of the world engage in this collective struggle, they may benefit from science to improve teaching and learning methods continuously. However, the issue is concerning religious and spiritual education. It is true that there are thousands of ancillary issues in this education. Yet the Ismailis have such a unique means (*wasīlah*) before whose blessed personality let alone issues, difficulties, too, vanish. Nevertheless, in this regard, it is

necessary to reflect properly, know and act courageously to benefit completely from the means of light.

“Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth” (24:35). This means that there is nothing in the universe or existents which does not receive this light automatically according to their degree and necessity. For example, minerals, vegetation, animals and angels always receive this light automatically according to their degree and needs. However, the human case is different from all of them due to free will. Therefore, the higher light of the intellect, knowledge and soul, which they need, can be only through obedience to God, the Prophet and the *ulu 'l-amr* (custodians of the Divine command). Thus, in the Ismaili faith, the door of Qur’ānic and spiritual knowledge is always open.

Answer to question 4: Yes, the soul can adopt different forms, and the example of its transference from the subtle body to dense body is like that of the concept of creation, which is not like a straight line but rather a circle. This means that creation has neither a beginning nor an end. In short, it is an eternal circle which is not contingent in any way. There are numerous examples of this in the world, such as the heavens, every planet, wind, water, vegetables and animals. Each of them continues to rotate around a circle, such as the creation of a tree from a seed and a seed from a tree, in which neither the tree nor the seed precedes the other; both are on a circle without any end. Similarly, the creation of an egg from a hen and the creation of a hen from an egg, likewise, the creation of human beings from their parents and then themselves becoming parents, etc. It is clear from this explanation that everything rotates on its circle, and all subsidiary circles are on the supreme circle just as the supreme circle of the heavens rotates together with all circles within itself.

One important teaching of the holy Qur’ān is that we must ponder and reflect upon the signs of the book of universe with intelligence and knowledge so that we may be able to understand the hidden secrets of the law of nature. For instance, we see certain insects in which there is the example of the ascent and descent of the soul. In

this connection, it is worth mentioning that the silk worm, which is born from a butterfly or a moth, again becomes a moth. Although the life of a moth is superior to that of a worm it cannot make silk, as this is the work of the worm only. Therefore, to create a valuable thing such as silk, it has to adopt the form of a worm again and again. It is clear that the moth itself does not descend in the form of a worm, but in the sense of representation it is true to say that its circle is in the form of ascent and descent as a tree, human body, etc., which also rotate in the form of representation.

If souls, angels and astral bodies are compared with moths, which granting an impossibility, never die and human beings with silk worms, the transference of the soul from subtle body to dense body will be easier to understand. You can reflect carefully upon this matter that is contrary to the belief in metempsychosis and free from its impurity because the fountainhead of the soul, according to the Qur'ān (17:85), is linked with the Word "Be" which can never be separated from there, nor can ever come to this material world leaving its own place. However, it is indeed true that its numerous living pictures appear in the subtle and dense bodies. Thus, our present physical body is a living shadow of our higher "I", hence this shadow continues to come and go again and again but the center of the soul lasts forever at its place in the world of Command, such as the sun which remains forever in the center of the universe and cannot leave its place, and only its light is spread over the surface of the earth. All things cannot be equal in the acceptance of the rays of the sun; it is reflected only in things such as a mirror or in limpid water. This is an example of the human soul. The sun is an example of the fountainhead of the soul, the picture is the subsidiary soul (*aks*), and the mirror is the body.

The example of the transference of the soul from subtle body into dense body can be given by a film. That is, when a person is filmed and is shown his picture, a secondary personality is created without any decrease in his original one. If this motion picture had soul and intellect, it would have recognized the original person from whom it was made and from whom it was separated.

Answer to question 5: This question is about the ascension of the soul. Had it been about the higher “I”, I would have answered without any delay that the higher “I” is always at the summit of ascension and has never descended, just as the sun has already been cited as its example. However, you have obviously asked about the lower soul. In this regard, first we have to think about what the real concept of ascension is: Is it circular, similar to the concept of creation, or is it linear? Here, I would say that ascension and evolution are not linear but circular, and it is the concept of creation which is indeed the concept of ascension, as mentioned in the holy Qur’ān (3:140), “And it is these days which We continue to alternate among the people.” This wisdom-filled verse is related to the circle of ascent and descent and the habit of Allāh. It mentions not only the rotation of time of the physical world and the rise and fall of nations, but also those great days of God, the duration of each of which is 50,000 years (70:4). And in one such day, a perfect soul (Single Soul 31:28) becoming the intellect of all souls and angels (70:4) ascends to the Divine presence, as ascension and *in^mbi^cāṣ* should duly take place.

Note: According to this, one week equals 350,000, and 1 year is equal to 18,000,000 of the physical year.

It is also necessary in this regard to know the system of oneness and integrity of this world: that is, the soul of minerals is the vegetative, the soul of vegetables is the animal, the soul of animals is common human being, the soul of common human beings is a chosen human being, and the intellect and soul of the chosen human being is the Perfect Man. In the practical ascension [of the Perfect Man] everything ascends potentially and to reach this ascension actually, the mineral should merge in the vegetable, vegetable should be effaced in animals and the animals should be sacrificed for human beings and it is obligatory for every human being to duly obey the Perfect Man so that they may attain their original “I”.

In a luminous dream in which there were glad tidings of spiritual progress and in which you had observed the vegetative soul in the form of a tree with numerous buds, its *ta’wīl* is the copies

of the vegetative soul. One of the buds represents the central or original vegetative soul. As we have written in the book *What is Soul?* in each of the vegetative, animal and human souls there are countless souls of its own kind. So, it should be understood that in the vegetative soul is hidden the world of vegetables, in the animal soul is hidden the world of animals, and in the human soul is concealed the world of human beings. Therefore, with the soul of every level, there are countless souls of their own kind.

It is my hope and humble prayer too that, God willing, you will not only observe the animal soul, but as a result of great worship such as utmost humility, wisdom-filled love for the Imām, and service of true knowledge for the *jamā'at* you will also recognize your own soul so that together we may be able to spread the light of the knowledge of the holy and pure Imām throughout the entire world. *Āmīn!*

14th February, 1984

Ta'wīl of Sūrah of Mā'ūn (*Zakāt*)

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

In Sūrah of Mā'ūn, verses (107:1-7) state: “Have you seen he who belies the day of Judgement? That [unfortunate] is he who repels the orphan and does not urge the feeding of the needy. Woe unto those praying ones, who are heedless of their prayers; who make a show and refuse to give *zakāt* (religious due).”

Ta'wīl: The day of Judgement, i.e., resurrection, is linked to *Ḥaẓrat-i Qā'im*^(c). Therefore, to reject *Qā'im* 'l-*Qiyāmat* amounts to belying the day of judgement, and he who belies the resurrection in this way, repels the exalted Imām^(c) who is the unique pearl, whereas the Imām, in the form of the light of knowledge, starts to rise upon them externally and internally. It is obvious that in such individuals, the yearning for the spiritual nourishment of *Ḥujjat* (*miskīn*) cannot be created so that they may eat themselves or persuade others to do so. Thus, ‘woe to’ those performers of prayers who are heedless of the *ta'wīl* wisdoms of the meanings and parts of their *ṣalāt* (*namāz*), which they perform to show off. That is, they don't understand the esoteric [meaning] of their *ṣalāt*, and they don't give *zakāt*, that is, they cannot become pure intellectually and spiritually.

The *ta'wīl* of orphan (*yaṭīm*) is the true Imām because it is only the Imām^(c) who is the unique pearl; whereas *yaṭīm* means alone, unprecedented and pairless. Also used as *durrat^{um} yaṭīmah*, meaning a precious or unique pearl.

The *ta'wīl* of *miskīn* is *Ḥujjat*, in whose knowledge is satisfaction for *mu'mins*, and *ṭa'ām-i miskīn* means the knowledge of the *Ḥujjat*, which is intellectual and spiritual nourishment. *Miskīn* also means a beggar in the sense that the *Ḥujjat* continues to always beg at the blessed door of the holy and pure Imām^(c). In this sense, the urging to feed the poor (*miskīn*) means that *mu'mins* should obey

the Imām with ardent love and affection so that their souls, which are poor in a sense, may receive intellectual and spiritual food.

There are two aspects, negative and positive, to this wisdom-filled *sūrah*. The positive aspect is that *mu'mins* [must] affirm the spirituality of the Imām^(c) of the time and the rank of *Qā'imū'l-Qiyāmat*^(c) so that the unique pearl may enter their hearts and spirituality be enriched by the wealth of knowledge of the *Hujjat*, for his prayer (*namāz*) to be practical and real, that is, they may be aware of the wisdoms of their prayer, and having been purified may continue to give the *zakāt* of knowledge. This is the combined wisdom of *Sūrah* of *Mā'ūn*.

By His grace and benevolence!

8th March, 1984

Wisdom of Mother of the Book (*Ummu 'l-kitāb*)

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

In Sūrah of Ra'ḍ, verse (13:39) it is said: “Allāh effaces what He wills and He affirms what He wills, and with Him is the Mother of the Book (Guarded Tablet, i.e., the light of Imāmat).”

Also, God says in verses (43:1-4): “*Hā Mīm*. By the speaking Book, We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān, so that you may understand. And verily it (the Qur'ān) is in the original Book (Guarded Tablet, i.e., the light of Imāmat) with Us, sublime and wise.”

The *ta'wīl* secrets of the first verse:

To recognize Qur'ānic subjects there are keys, and also similar keys for separate and important verses. Therefore, the recognition of *Ummu 'l-kitāb* is necessary not only to understand the meanings of the above-mentioned related verses but also thereby opens a huge door of deep wisdoms of the sacred Qur'ān. In this regard, first of all it must be understood what *Ummu 'l-kitāb* is. All its original lexical meanings are correct. All these meanings have a central meaning, which is the Guarded Tablet (*Lawḥ-i maḥfūz*, 86:22) which has several names such as manifest Imām (*Imām-i mubīn*, 36:12), hidden Book (*Kitāb-i makhnūn*, 56:78), Honored Books (*ṣuḥuf^m mukarramah*, 80:13), etc. However, the people of recognition and the people of wisdom know that the *Ummu 'l-kitāb* or the Guarded Tablet (*Lawḥ-i maḥfūz*) is a living and speaking Light because the sign and symbol which it has are specific to it, and not found in any other thing. And that this characteristic is God's nearness or closeness (*'indiyyat*), attainable only by the Perfect Man. The reason for this unique closeness is the special mercy and providence of God, Who ranked the light of the holy Prophet^(s) with [His] Pen, and that of the light of the exalted Imām with the Tablet (*lawḥ*).

Without this concept, it is not correct to consider any inanimate or irrational thing close to God in the sense of the Pen or Tablet, because the meaning of Divine closeness is in an intellectual and spiritual sense. This is applied [only] to the Perfect Man because it is he who possesses the most perfect Intellect and the most pure and sacred soul. On the contrary, had Divine closeness been available to material objects, gold, silver, and other inanimate and irrational gems would have been considered ‘the cream of creation’ only due to their material beauties, however everyone acknowledges that that is not the case. When it is a fact that human beings are the most noble of everything in the universe and existents, it has to be accepted that only they are capable of being close to God because of their nobility and excellence, whereas all inanimate and irrational things are deprived of this bliss.

From this explanation, it is clear that the light of prophethood acts as the Divine Pen in the non-spatial world and the light of Imāmat holds the rank of Guarded Tablet, the other name of which is *Ummu'l-kitāb*, as the holy Prophet^(s) says: “*Ummu'l-kitāb* is exoterically the name of *sūratu'l-Fātiḥah*, and esoterically it is Murtaẓā ‘Alī^(c) because by the book is meant the Imāms, and concerning spiritual reproduction, *Asās* is the mother of the Imāms, and *Nāṭiq* is their father.”¹

At this point, the intellect asks: The relationship of every heavenly book with the *Ummu'l-kitāb* is obvious, however, it is not known what the relationship of the book of the universe and the book of the soul is with *Ummu'l-kitāb*. The answer is that where *Ummu'l-kitāb* is Universal Soul, the fact is clear that the book of the universe and the book of the soul are also from the same origin, and God’s effacing of a thing is related to these three books. For instance, Almighty Allāh continuously destroys and creates the stars of this physical universe, and He also destroys and creates humankind. If we also accept that the cycles of numerous Adams which have elapsed prior to the Ādam of our great cycle, this concept clearly means that God has erased the materiality of those countless cycles,

¹ See *Wajh al-Dīn*, Discourse 19.

as mentioned in verses (55:26-27): “Everyone that is on it (earth or the personal world) is perishable, there remains but the face of your Lord, the Majestic, the Bounteous.”

The *ta'wīl* secrets of the second verse:

Hā Mīm: *Hā* = 8, and *Mīm* = 40, and their sum is 48, and their decimal (*uqūd*) is 4 with 8 remaining. The *ta'wīl* is four fundamentals, i.e., Universal Intellect, Universal Soul, *Nāṭiq*, and *Asās*, 7 Imāms, and the vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of *Hazrat-i Qā'im*^(c). By these hierarchs and by the Speaking Book (light) we have not made the book of spirituality Qur'ān in a foreign language, but in Arabic (i.e., in your mother tongue) so that you may be able to understand easily and indeed, it is sublime and wise with us in the rank of *asāsiyyat*. In other words, it is °Alī^(c) [who is] (sublime) and *Hakīm* (wise).

A specific translation of *kitāb-i mubīn* as the speaking Book is correct. And for the correlation of this translation, see verse (43:18) in Sūrah of *Zukhruf*. On this basis, it is also correct to translate “*Imām-i Mubīn*” (36:12) as the speaking Imām, that is, the Imām who does the *ta'wīl*. It is because not everything can be confined in the circle of *tanzīl* rather, it is the expansion of the *ta'wīl* in which all intellectual and spiritual things are confined, as Almighty Allāh says (75:19): “Then its *bayān* (i.e., *ta'wīl*) rests upon Us.” You should also carefully read the verses preceding this noble Qur'ānic verse, which mentions the recitation of the Qur'ān (i.e., *tanzīl*) and subsequently mentions the *bayān-i Qur'ān* (i.e., *ta'wīl*). Another great wisdom in this connection is that just as the wise God has made the holy Prophet responsible for the *tanzīl* and recitation of the holy Qur'ān, similarly He has not made him responsible for its *bayān* but He has Himself taken its responsibility in the future and has said that the *ta'wīl* is going to come (purport 7:53). So, this means the holy Imāms were to work on the *ta'wīl* by the command of God and His prophet.

It is a fact among the tremendous miracles of the wise Qur'ān that where it is in the *Mashāf* it is in Arabic; where it is in the book of universe, it is in creative and synthetic writings; where it is in the Guarded Tablet, it is in spiritual writing; [similarly] in the

command of ‘Be,’ in a most comprehensive word, in the Divine Pen, in intellectual movements; in the Perfect Words, in all-embracing meanings; in the Supreme Name, in the light of remembrance; in the previous heavenly scriptures, in spirit and spirituality and where it is in the form of practical *ta’wīl*, there it is necessarily in the spiritual state and personal language because the Qur’ān itself says in the language of wisdom that its *ta’wīlī* spirit and spirituality for a *mu’min* is not in a foreign language [rather in the personal language].

Had there not been this relationship between the holy Qur’ān and Mawlā °Alī^(c) in God’s presence, the Prophet^(s) would neither have said that “The Qur’ān is with °Alī and °Alī is with the Qur’ān,” nor would he [the Prophet^(s)], linking the Imām from the *ahl-i bayt* with the Qur’ān according to the *Ḥadīṣ-i Saqalayn*, appointed them his successors. This shows that the Qur’ān and the Imām are attached to each other externally and internally.

Three kinds of things are found in God’s Godhead: intellectual, spiritual and material. These things are in two places: the external world (*āfāq*) and the internal world (*anfus*). The best model of the internal world is the personality of the exalted Imām^(c) after the holy Prophet, that is, his blessed personality is the world of particles, which is the Guarded Tablet of the world of particles. Then there it is his higher soul that has the rank of Soul of Souls, Supreme Soul, Universal Soul and universal Guarded Tablet. The unity and integrity of these two tablets is like that of the sun and its reflection (which reflects from a clean mirror), but which in reality are one.

It is very strange that human beings have the concept of spiritual progress and the most sublime ranks of paradise, but they do not understand the grandeur of the Perfect Man, who, on behalf of God, is not only the model of spiritual ascension and elevation, but is also the means of guidance. For example, they believe in the *ḥadīṣ* that “The heart of a faithful servant is the throne of Almighty Allāh” but they do not think that the practical example of this reality is the Imām. This also implies that where it is possible for an ordinary *mu’min* to become the throne of God, there, by Divine

mercy and favor, the exalted Imām is already the Guarded Tablet. In this regard, how appropriately Mawlā-yi Rūmī has said: “The Man of God, i.e., the Perfect Man himself, is the Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul. Do not think that the throne (*‘arsh*) and pedestal (*kursī*) are separate from him [somewhere else].”

The [lexical] meaning of *Ummu'l-kitāb* as the Guarded Tablet is indeed correct; however, the question is about its state and capacity: What kind of Tablet is it that it can preserve all things in their intellectual, spiritual and material form? A tablet which is without intellect and soul cannot encompass all intellects and souls. It can be done only by a great soul that can attach to itself material things on one side and intellectual ones on the other. Its example can be found from the partial soul, which has preserved innumerable particles of body and souls and countless words of intellect within itself.

Just as in the science of existence, number two is necessary after one because it is the intermediary between unity and multiplicity, similarly in Islām, which, after the affirmation of one God, there is the concept of two great personalities, the Pen and the Tablet. An example of this reality in the macrocosm is the sun and the moon, in the microcosm, it is the intellect and the soul, in the plane of existence, the hereafter and this world, in the major cycle, it is the *Nātiq* and the *Asās*. The same Pen and the Tablet are also two great angels, the Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul or the Throne and the Pedestal, whose manifestations (*mazhars*) in the physical world are the Messenger^(s) and the Imām^(c).

It is true that exoterically *sūrah of Fātiḥah* is the Mother of the Book (*Ummu'l-kitāb*). However, in this example, the exoteric difference between the *Ummu'l-kitāb* and the Qur’ān is not hidden. Therefore, if a person superficially observes *al-Ḥamd*, he will see only its external form and will find materially no room for the complete Qur’ān in it, but a wise person with their keen eye becomes sure that the holy Qur’ān is contained in it, in its all-embracing comprehensiveness and most extensive *ta’wīlī* state. This is a bright and excellent example of the reality that Mawlā

‘Alī^(c) is esoterically and spiritually the *Ummu ’l-kitāb*.

As an example, every individual gives birth to their record of deeds. In this sense, it is a irrefutable fact that every individual is the mother of their personal book (i.e., book of deeds) as the Qur’ān says in verse (17:14): “Read your book. You are sufficient as reckoner against yourself this day.” This event is not such that the spiritual book, i.e., the book of deeds, is received after the physical death, but it is also given to any individual who dies spiritually during their lifetime to the carnal soul. This is an example and a proof that the speaking Book, namely *Asās*^(c) is on the whole, the *Ummu ’l-kitāb*.

17th March, 1984

***Ta'wīlī* Secrets of the Sūrah of Burūj (Constellations)**

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

1) By the heaven with constellations, 2) and by the promised day, 3) and by the witness and witnessed. Namely, the Universal Intellect, the Universal Soul, *Nāṭiq*, and *Asās*.

Burūj (constellations) mean strong forts, palaces and the twelve heavenly constellations: and the heaven with constellation means the Universal Intellect because in his substantial existence are strong forts, beautiful palaces of intellect, knowledge and wisdom and the twelve constellations of the hierarchs, such as *Mustajīb*, limited *Ma'zūn*, absolute *Ma'zūn*, limited *Dā'ī*, absolute *Dā'ī*, *Hujjat* of *jazīrah* (island), supreme *Hujjat* (closest *Hujjat*), Imām, *Asās*, *Nāṭiq*, Second and First.

Promised day is the Second, that is, the Universal Soul, because the existence of time externally and internally is due to him. This is the resurrection whose existence is heavy in heaven and the earth since it encompasses them (7:187). *Nāṭiq*^(s) is the witness as Allāh says: “O Prophet! Truly We have sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner, and as a *Dā'ī* (an inviter) to Allāh by His permission and as a luminous lamp” (33:45-46). By the witnessed is meant the *Asās* as God says: “And thus (O Imāms!) We have made you a justly balanced group, so that you may be witnesses over humankind and so that the Messenger may be a witness over you” (2:143).

The above-mentioned verse follows the verse (85:4): “The infidels were slain as the people of the ditch were destroyed.” That is, they were destroyed by spiritual perdition. 5) The fire was abounding in fuel. 6) When they sat around it (fire). That is, they were engaged in

mischievous and malicious activities. 7) And in front of them, they were witnessing what they were doing to the believers. 8) And they did not find any fault with them save that they believed in Allāh, the Mighty, the Praiseworthy. 9) He to Whom belongs the kingdom over the heavens and the earth. This alludes that the people of faith will be granted the spiritual kingdom. God is witness over everything. That is, every reality is observed in the Divine light.

10) Those who persecuted the believing men and women and then never repented shall suffer the scourge of Hell and the torture of burning. That is, they will remain in the fire of ignorance, potentially in this world and actually in the hereafter. 11) Those who believed and did good deeds, will have those gardens wherein streams flow. That is the great triumph. That is, they will have the numerous bounties of intellect, soul and subtle body. 12) Indeed, the grip of your Lord is very severe, that is, the external and internal Divine grip in individual and collective conditions, because His power encompasses intellect, soul and body. 13) It is He Who originates for the first time, and it is He Who revives, that is, as He did *ibdā'* for the first time, He will repeat it again. 14) And He [the Great] is Forgiving and Loving. The miracle of His forgiveness is such that, as a result, He loves the believers.

15) He is the Lord of the glorious Throne. In this verse the rank of Intellect is praised and attention is drawn to it. 16) He does what He likes. His liking is very organized and filled with veracity and justice. 17 & 18) Has there come to you the story of the hosts of Pharaoh and Šamūd? That is, this has been demonstrated spiritually. 19) Nay, those who disbelieve [persist] in belying. That is, they are ignorant. 20) And Allāh surrounds them from all sides, that is, the intellect, soul and body are in His power. 21 & 22) Nay, but it is a glorious Qur'ān written in the Guarded Tablet. That is, where the Qur'ān is in the Guarded Tablet, there it (Qur'ān) is greatly honored with living and intellectual miracles.

Two Questions from America

My very dear Noordin, may Khudāwand grant you honor in both worlds!

With true love of the heart and soul, I say Yā °Alī Madad to you and other °*azīzān* and pray abundantly as a *darwīsh*. May the Lord accept them, *Āmīn!*

I wish to be sacrificed numerous times after witnessing you °*azīzān* progressing spiritually and in knowledge in a short period in a country like America with its tempestuous material progress. My humble heart says that the holy and pure Imām is very happy with you; the various signs of it are obvious. For example:

- 1) You are granted a special feeling and awareness that you should endeavor more and more for knowledge and °*ibādat* and to progress further using humility and modesty.
- 2) You have been successful in every aspect in the search for means of knowledge, and now the only thing left is to store the wealth of knowledge.
- 3) Divine favor has bestowed upon you [the ability] to perform the best service which you have been performing. You have become a devoted friend and helper of those who spread the light of true knowledge on this earth and who are such friends that they love you like their own soul or even more.
- 4) With each day, your interest in knowledge and °*ibādat* is increasing and you await all the time to receive a fresh fruit or flower of knowledge and wisdom or such a letter, article or book in which there are the secrets of the exalted Imām.
- 5) You have received Divine favor in the form of love for religion and an eagerness to attend the house of the holy Lord and to take advantage of the great wisdoms of the communal soul. In addition, remain connected to the sources of special knowledge. Praise belongs to Allāh, all these characteristics are

found within you.

My dear Noordin, the dream which you mentioned to my very dear °Azīz Muḥammad, President of °Ārif, is a luminous dream which alludes to the beginning of spiritual progress because spiritual ascension is based on the four souls: vegetative, animal, human and the holy Spirit. Yes indeed, the observation of spiritual progress begins with the vegetative soul. Related to this destination, the wise Qur’ān mentions about Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam^(c): “And He made her grow with a graceful growth.” (3:37).

The *ta’wīl* of this is that during her initial progress in *baytu ’l-khayāl*, she used to see beautiful things such as gardens and flower beds growing in her dream and thoughts. This is a sign of traversing the destination of the vegetative soul. However, one thing to remember is that such scenes can be seen in future as well because things initially appear in an order and then everything is observed as desired, which is the law of paradise (50:35).

In this regard, I am sending you my °azīzān a copy of another article “Five Questions from London”, which I may not have sent you previously, so that you may take advantage of this as well. Among these questions, one is asked by my dear °Abdu’r-Raḥmān about a luminous dream which is similar to yours. I hope you °azīzān will be happy by Divine mercy.

I have received another question from you which is about the verse (2:28): “How can you disbelieve in God, when you were dead, then He gave you life. Then He causes you to die, then He shall again give you life, then unto Him you will be returned?”

The above question is not complete because, as far as I understand, the fundamental question is indeed hidden in “*kuntum amwāt^{an}*” meaning ‘you were dead.’ What is the wisdom in saying ‘you were dead’, although generally it is deemed that a human being was nothing before the present life? Had this concept been correct, the wise Qur’ān would have said ‘you were nothing. However, when the word ‘*kuntum*’ which is ‘you were’ is mentioned in a wisdom-

filled book like the Qur’ān, it becomes incumbent to reflect upon and ask about it because the Arabic language and that of the wise Qur’ān have no kind of constraint in the expression of meanings. We can express this question in this way as well, that when a man dies physically, people say ‘so-and-so died’, or they say ‘he died’. This is exactly like “*kuntum amwāt^{an}*,” meaning “you were dead” because when a human being dies, concerning his original existence he is both ‘dead’ and ‘was’ because the proof of death is the body which perishes in the future and that of ‘is’ or ‘was’ is the soul which exists but is separated from the body.

However, the answer to this question is that human beings always travel without a beginning or an end between merging and surviving in such a way that, at times, they are called dead and sometimes alive. These two statements are correct in many senses. However, in this statement, death and merging do not mean absolute ‘nothingness;’ in fact, there is a fixed timespan for the life of every living creature. Similarly, for human life and survival, there is also a limit. Thus, if someone is below this limit, he is dead in the sense of being an animal, and if he has advanced beyond this limit, he is dead in the sense of becoming an angel, as it is said in [a *Hadīṣ*]: “Die before death.” Moreover, in verses (55:26-28) merging in God (*fanā’ fi’llāh*) and survival in God (*baqā’ bi’llāh*) is mentioned. Thus, the death mentioned in “*kuntum amwāt^{an}*” was not absolute death but rather such a life of the world of Command in which there is soul but no knowledge.

There is another *ta’wīlī* aspect to this noble verse which is “Oh *mu’mins*, how can you be ungrateful to Allāh even though you did not have the soul of remembrance, worship and the knowledge of true religion. Then He gave you this soul and revived you. Then will come to you the destination of ‘Izrā’īl, in which there is the death of the [carnal] soul. He will revive you by the light of knowledge and wisdom, and then as a result, you will reach God.”

Dear Noordin, please convey my Yā ‘Alī Madad to your dear friends. I hope this letter related to knowledge will be read in the circle of friends. Also, its copies will be sent to the headquarters and all the

branches of Khānah-yi Hikmat and °Ārif. It is our principle that our letter is in the form of an article related to knowledge, therefore some time has been spent on it and it is written with responsibility. Eventually, these very letters will become a part of a permanent book. Hence, this letter is related to knowledge and is historical.

Praying for you,
Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

Sūrah of *Qiyāmat* (Resurrection)

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

1) Nay, I swear by the Day of Resurrection (i.e., spirituality); 2) and nay, I swear by the censuring soul (that *in^mbi^cāṣ* is true). 3) Does a human being think We shall not put his bones together (after decaying)? Bones mean the subtle particles which, by being together, become the subtle body (*jism-i miṣālī*). 4) Indeed, We can remold his phalanges. There are twenty-eight phalanges in both hands, which represent twenty-eight *Hujjats*. Four phalanges of the two thumbs are examples of the four closest *Hujjats*. The remaining twenty-four phalanges exemplify the remaining twenty-four *Hujjats* of day and night to whom the twelve islands belong because the relationship of the human spiritual life, survival and individual resurrection is with the subtle particles, *Hujjats* of day and night and the exalted Imām.

5) Yet, a human being wishes to do evil during the time in front of him. 6) He asks: When will the day of resurrection be? 7) So when the eyes will be dazzled. That is, the eyes will be dazzled by the intense light of spirituality. 8) The moon will be eclipsed, that is, the position of the spiritual traveler, which had started to shine like the full moon, will be dimmed once again, as has already been mentioned that first there is spiritual birth, then the death of the carnal soul and finally there is *in^mbi^cāṣ*. 9) And the sun and the moon will be brought together, that is that, at that time, the ‘I’ of the spiritual traveler (*sālik*) will merge in the holy and pure Imām, having reached the supreme *Hujjat* on the ladder of the hierarchs of religion. The very same is his *in^mbi^cāṣ*. 10) On that day, a human being will say: “Where to flee?” That is to say, *in^mbi^cāṣ* is related to the soul and ‘I’; however, as long as the body is alive, it has to undergo severe kinds of difficulties, the example of which can be found in the pure lives of the Prophets^(s). 11) No, indeed, [there will be] no refuge. 12) On that day, recourse shall be to your Lord. That

is, temporary salvation from physical calamities and afflictions in this life and lasting salvation after death can be attained in the presence of God.

13) On that day man will be told of what he has sent before and left behind. 14) Nay, man will be aware of his own state, that is, in conscious resurrection, everything will be divulged from the record of deeds, which is the speaking Book. In this sense, man can see all of his states with his inner eye. 15) Even though he may offer his excuses.

16) (O Prophet), do not move your tongue with it, [i.e., the revelation to memorize it quickly] to hasten it. In this verse there is also guidance about the holy Prophet's *ism-i a'zam* and remembrance of the heart. 17) Indeed, its collection and recitation [in your heart] is Our responsibility. That is, the holy Prophet^(s) recited *ism-i a'zam* with his spiritual tongue, not the physical one, and this tongue in reality is the angelic tongue in which the Qur'an was revealed to him. 18) So, when We recite it with *Jibrā'il's* tongue, follow its recitation. 19) Then the explanation of [its *ta'wil*] is also Our responsibility. That is, in every age there will continue to be the Teacher of the Qur'an who will be the *mu'awwil* (= one who does *ta'wil*) on behalf of God and the Prophet^(s).

20 & 21) Nay, but you love this fleeting life and leave the hereafter. That is, neglect the principle of spirituality. 22 & 23) On that day, faces will be resplendent looking towards their Lord. That is their greatest happiness because of the fact that, in a way, they will be able to see their Lord of Honor and recognize Him. 24) And on that day, faces will be scowling. 25) Thinking that some back-breaking calamity will be inflicted upon them. This alludes to the indigence in knowledge and recognition.

26 & 27) Nay, when it reaches the throat, and it is said, who is an enchanter? 28) And he thinks that it is the parting. This [verse] mentions both the spiritual and physical deaths. 29 & 30) And due to the agony of death, one leg is intertwined with the other, and on that day unto your Lord shall be the driving.

31) For he neither affirmed (the Book of God) nor prayed. Affirmation is through the most truthful one (*Asās* = °Alī^(c)), and affirmation means to follow the *ta'wīl* of the *Asās* and the *ta'wīl* of *namāz* is the relationship with the pure Imāms, 32 & 33) but he denied and flaunted the faith, and he arrogantly went to his household. 34 & 35) Yes, woe to you! Again, woe unto you, yes, woe! 36) Does man think that he will be left to wander aimlessly? That is, even if a person is destroyed in the fire of ignorance, the law of mercy will still revive him. 37 & 38) Was he not an emitted drop of sperm? Then he was a clot of blood, then He created and perfected him. This verse not only mentions physical creation but also spiritual completion. 39) and then He made of him a pair of male and female. That is, from the same one light, He originated the Universal Intellect and Universal Soul. Also, from the same light *Nāṭiq* and the *Asās* were brought into existence. 40) Is He not able to revive every kind of dead? That is, it is certain that God will revive all the intellectual, spiritual and physical dead because He is omnipotent, Almighty Allāh.

Explanation: The wise Qur'ān frequently mentions such a resurrection which, on the one hand, is individual and on the other collective, because consciously it is the resurrection of one individual and unconsciously that of everyone. This means that resurrection takes place in the world of particles, where there is an extremely tremendous gathering in the form of particles of all the dead and the living ones. However, people are unaware of this [event] as mentioned in the Qur'an (6:94): "And indeed you have come to Us one by one as We created you at the first." In this wisdom-filled verse, leaving aside the collective resurrection, the individual resurrection is mentioned, and it is substantiated that as people come to this world one by one, similarly, they return to Almighty Allāh one by one at the highest level. A bright example is evident by the coming and returning of the Prophets and Imams at different times, one by one and separately. Peace.

5th April, 1984

Theophanies and Manifestations

For the beloved service of the *‘azīzān* of Khānah-yi Hikmat, Karachi:

May the Holy Lord grant peace in both worlds to all the *‘azīzān* of the east and west, *Āmīn*.

I am writing this letter at this time, from my village of Ḥaydarābād (Hunza). Yesterday after Khānah-yi Hikmat had an important meeting which lasted until 12:00, I was given more time during it. I was extremely pleased to meet the *‘azīzān* here. Why not? All of my *‘azīzān* are living flowers of the holy Imām’s spiritual gardens. Such superb and pleasant flowers, which are filled with the colors and fragrances of intellect, knowledge and wisdom and whose companionship illumines the eyes and aromatizes the mind. This is how the story of light and joy and theophany of Mount Sinai begins.

My extremely dear friends! The endless treasures and everlasting wealth which is in the sacred love and recognition of the exalted Imām^(c) should be remembered like the perpetual arrival of spring, in fact more than this it creates the happiness of the numerous manifestations of light.

We should reflect profusely in the illumination of the light of reality regarding the meaning of verse 55:29: “Every day He is in a new glory”, just as days never end similarly His glories and manifestations are endless. Here [glories] mean manifestations which are of three types: intellectual or *‘ilmī*, spiritual and physical. We should discuss among ourselves the differences between intellectual, spiritual and physical manifestations.

For the people of wisdom, the recognition of God, which is associated with manifestations, is a universally accepted reality.

These diverse theophanies and manifestations are related to the attributive names. As mentioned above, every attribute has three facets, three manifestations and three places of manifestation. As an example, one of the names of Almighty Allāh is *an-nūr* whose manifestation is on three levels: world of intellect, world of spirituality and world of humanity. Each position has several subsidiary ranks and collectively, the higher and lower ranks are respectively called heaven and earth.

One attribute of God is *rabb*, meaning sustainer, who nourishes humanity intellectually, spiritually and ethically. The observation of theophanies is extremely important to a traveler on the path of spirituality (*sālik*), ardent lover (*‘āshiq*) and the one who has attained Divine recognition (*‘ārif*) because according to the law of recognition, a detailed observation is necessary. The purpose of all the guidance of the sacred Qur’ān is to observe the names (*asmā’*) which begins with one specific name (*ism*) of God, which is closer and easier for the fortunate people. [This is because] Allāh desires all kinds of ease, not difficulties, for His servants. The name of the sustainer of the world is the Imām^(c) of the time which, in the language of the wise Qur’ān, is *aẓ-ẓāhir*. This very name which is *ẓāhir* is also living (*ḥayy*), as well as everlasting (*qayyūm*). It is also the locus of manifestation (*mazhar*) and the one who manifests (*muẓhir*) just as it is manifest (*ẓāhir*). The meaning of *muẓhir* and *mazhar* contains a mirror of attributes and manifestations, as well as the light of God.

God is one, therefore His Supreme Name is also one, however there are multiple manifestations. The numerous names of God are various manifestations of the Supreme Name. There is no doubt that the supreme and living Name of God is the Imām^(c) of the time.

15th April, 1984

Kitāb-i Maknūn (Hidden Book)

May Mawlā protect my very dear President of Khānah-yi Hikmat, Fath °Alī Ḥabīb and our heavenly daughter Gulshakar.

With thousand-fold well-wishing and with utmost sincerity, I say Yā °Alī Madad to you and all °*azīzān* of the east and west. I remember you in every humble prayer, may the Holy Lord accept it. *Āmīn!*

It is very pleasant and full of truth and which should be repeated that both of you are like my own children, students deserving pride and °*ilmī* children, my senior office bearers and very dear children, aware of my intellectual secrets, my protectors, a fruit-bearing tree of my Khānah-yi Hikmat, whose lovely branches are its people and institutions, filled with flowers, fruits, fragrance and sweetness.

It is a great fortune for people associated with Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi °Ārif that they collect precious gems of knowledge and wisdom from the exalted treasures of the Qur’ān and spirituality, so that they may offer the best °*ilmī* service to the lovely *jamā’at*. Indeed, the secrets of the holy and pure Imām^(°) are amazing, which only the blessed people know. These secrets are great favors of Almighty Allāh in which are hidden great honor and eminence for *mu’mins*.

Another example in this connection is that the exalted Imām^(°) is the Hidden Book in which is concealed the wisdom of the wise Qur’ān. This implies that the Imām’s °*ilmī* status is hidden from people. Furthermore, the light of Imām also works in the spirituality of believers. It is also correct that the Hidden Book is the Book of Intellect, that is, the light of intellect, which is the ultimate rank of spirituality. In all these meanings there is the praise of the Imām of the time.

The Hidden Book, which contains the Qur'ān, cannot be touched save by the purified ones (56:77-80). This means that utmost purity, i.e., every kind of purity is necessary to acquire knowledge and recognition from the sublime rank of the holy and pure Imām. However, this purity, as mentioned in the Qur'ān, is through the Command of God, the most benevolent Prophet and the Imām of the time.

Although the Qur'ān is physically before us, its great secrets are concealed within the Hidden Book. If you comprehend the Qur'ānic secrets at the level of the knowledge of certainty, this is a great fortune for you and your "I" is pure. Otherwise, this virtue cannot be attained.

Indeed, the exalted Imām is the Hidden Book and to reach his holy personality, which is 'to touch' in the language of the Qur'ān (*mas* 56:79), is completed at three levels. First is physically, second is in spirituality and third is at the level of the intellect. Just as touching any silent book is to read it, similarly, to touch a speaking book means accessibility and extreme closeness so that the Imam's own personality of knowledge and recognition continues to recite to make you listen and learn.

Believers attain extreme closeness to the Hidden Book (the light of Imāmat) in a resurrection, i.e., spirituality. This Book runs along their front and right sides (57:12) and all wisdoms are gathered in this act.

Qur'ānic words and sentences are intrinsically related. Therefore, the Hidden Book and the Hidden Pearl have the same meaning. Similarly, the pearl is associated with treasure and treasure is linked with key (*miftāḥ*) which in turn is related to victory (*fath*). Thus, the domain of collective meanings expands greatly.

Dust under the feet of *mu'mins*
19th April, 1984

Individual Soul and Communal Soul

My very dear child, President Muḥammad °Abdu'l-°Azīz and dear daughter, Yasmin may the merciful Lord grant you well-being in both worlds.

May my prayer of Yā °Alī Madad filled with sincerity, spiritual love and truthfulness reach you. I also remember all other °azīzān with such heartfelt prayers, such remembrance becomes the source of expressing gratitude. Praise be to Allāh for His favor.

The valuable services and unique sacrifices which you offer to preserve and spread true knowledge are delightful and exhilarating like evergreen gardens and flower beds. You are devoted students for the cause of knowledge and moths of the lamp of recognition (*ma°rifat*). You are very dear to me because you are parts of my soul. We are separate from one another in individual souls but one in the collective soul. Praise belongs to Allāh!

One person's soul is called the individual soul, that of the community (*jamā°at*) is the collective soul. Every *mu'min* who sincerely renders beneficial services for the *jamā°at* can be revived in the *jamā°atī* soul. The soul expands as much as the service is great and far-reaching.

Each one of you has only one soul but its particles are as numerous as the people of the entire world, rather more. This law of soul is such that every individual who serves the *jamā°at* may revive in the communal (*jamā°atī*) soul, in the sense that a group of the particles of his soul represents the community (*jamā°at*). That is, a particle represents an individual, or an individual transforms into a particle and begins to speak. Thus, the soul of the entire *jamā°at* is merged in you.

Just as it is true that everything and every individual has a soul, it

is also true that every nation and every community has a national and a communal soul. As Almighty Allāh says in verse (16:120): “Verily! Abraham was a community (*ummat*) obedient to Allāh, monist (*hanīf*) and he was not of the idolaters.” Among the ranks of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) mentioned in this holy Qur’ānic verse is the one in which he had become the pure soul of the entire community. That is, all the individuals of the community were revived in the particles of his soul. Thus, the soul of the community was hidden in his personality.

There is no doubt that there is a national and communal soul just as there is an individual and *jamā’atī* soul. There is also a Universal Soul called a Single Soul (*naḥs-i wāḥidah*) mentioned in both the Qur’ān (31:28) and *ḥadīṡ*. The noble *ḥadīṡ* is: “Indeed *mu’mins* are brothers [and sisters], and Prophets are like a Single Soul (i.e., Universal Soul).” The gist of these words is that every *Nāṭiq* and his *Asās* are the spiritual father and mother of their *mu’mins*, and at the rank of Universal Soul the *Nāṭiq* and *Asās* of our cycle, but also all the *Nāṭiqs* and *Asāses* are like a Single Soul and *mu’mins* of every *ummat* (community) are brothers [and sisters]. Here it is said that *mu’mins* following in the footsteps of their spiritual parents will eventually merge in the Single Soul (*naḥs-i wāḥidah*) because the Single Soul is not related to a single individual only and eventually all of them one by one are going to merge in the Single Soul (*naḥs-i wāḥidah*). It is mentioned in verse (31:28): “Your (spiritual) creation and resurrection (*in^mbi^cās*) are like a Single Soul.” That is, one individual is spiritually created, then he through the particle of his soul represents the creation of all people, and when his resurrection (*in^mbi^cās*) takes place, the representation of all takes place in it too . It is in this sense that the spiritual creation and resurrection of all takes place like a Single Soul from time immemorial and every soul undergoes this event.

Sincerely ^c*ilmī* servant of ^c*azīzān*,

22nd April, 1984

Relationship of Knowledge and Spirituality

May the Lord grant success and eminence of both worlds to my very dear Naşru'llāh, Vice President of Khānah-yi Hikmat, and to my beloved daughter Amina!

I say Yā °Alī Madad to you from the depth of a heart which has seen innumerable wonders, marvels and countless miracles of the light of Islām. Both of you °*azīzān* are my God-given children.

One child hardly performs beneficial work for the religion and the world after thousands of hardships taken by its parents. Another child is granted by the infinite grace of the Sustainer of the world. Such a child is granted from the heaven without any hardship. According to me this concept is a solid fact because I uphold not only the relationship of souls, but also see their unity very closely.

In every skill and profession of this world, the teacher and the student are like father and son because the soul of the skill which is created in the student is derived from the teacher, particularly the soul of knowledge is a living reality. Therefore, undoubtedly a teacher and a student love each other like a father and a son. This relationship which is unbreakable is very dear.

Our spiritual relationship with the true Imām^(c) is the most supreme and unique and no other relationship can be compared with it. Nevertheless, in the beginning [of this relationship], minor things appear in which there is Divine expediency and wisdom.

The relationships which we, the *murīds* have with the light of Imāmat, are not all apparent today. Only some of them are apparent. Among them one special relationship is that the Imām^(c) is our light and soul (57:12, 17:85). The exalted Imām^(c) is the light of *mu'mins* in the sense Allāh has said: “*Nūruhum*” (57:12, i.e., the light of *mu'mins*). This is not a common relationship, rather it is a special

one, in order to understand which, it is necessary to reflect upon the above-mentioned noble verse. The Imām^(c) is our own soul because of the fact that this very light is the soul with which our relationship is mentioned. Further, the proof of the Imam being our own soul is that the vegetative soul is the soul of minerals, therefore it should be transferred to the vegetables. The higher soul of vegetables is the animal soul and therefore it is necessary to merge in the animals. The higher soul of an animal is the human soul and in order to merge in it, it is necessary for it to be sacrificed. The supreme soul of human beings is the Perfect Man, and in order to be merged in him, the two necessary things are true knowledge and good deeds.

According to the language of wisdom of the Qur’ān and the hidden knowledge of spirituality, the Imām is the heart of a *mu’min*. The heart means the soul and the Higher ‘I’. Through this key concept, many secrets of the Qur’ān and *ḥadīṡ*, can be disclosed which are special for *mu’mins*.

“They were the lovers of their own soul.” These are the wisdom-filled words of a blessed *farmān*. This means that the Imām is the supreme soul of *mu’mins*. In this meaning, the love for the Imām by our dignitaries of religion was the love for themselves. As Pīr Nāṣir-i Khisraw has said:

*“Pas-ū pīsh-ū nihān-ū āshkār ūst
Shināsā-yi khwud-ū parwardagār ūst”*

He (the human reality) is the last, the first,
the hidden and the manifest.

He is the recognizer of himself
and the recognized one.”

24th April, 1984

Wisdoms of the World of Dream

Dream is an internal world which is different from the external world and is full of wonders and marvels. Why not, when from one side it adjoins the world of imagination and on the other the spiritual world? Or in short, events and observations of imagination, dream and spirituality become alike and one in the Perfect Human Beings. This means that imagination and dream of an ordinary person is a journey on the spiritual path, whose desired destination is spirituality and the Hereafter.

The dream of God's friends (*Awliyā'*) abounds in spirituality and luminosity. It is not like the dream of an ordinary person that can be disregarded. It appears as a reality of which there are several examples in the wise Qur'ān. That is to say that Prophetic dream is a part of revelation (*wahy*), and Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) resolved to sacrifice his beloved son, Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā'īl^(c), on the basis of [such] a dream and Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā'īl^(c) accepted it as a Divine Command (37:102).

The dream of *mu'mins* is of two kinds: sometimes it is of a higher level and sometimes of a lower level. The good dreams of the people of faith take place under the name *bashīr* (bringer of glad tidings), and bad dreams under the name *nazīr* (warner). These two names of the light of Prophethood are actually there in spirituality.

The goodness and the badness of a dream depend on human beings' deeds, because a dream is a minor resurrection which occurs daily in the state of sleep, so that they can reflect on their readiness or not for a great and decisive resurrection, as the Qur'ān mentions in verse (75:14): "Nay, man is a witness against himself (*nafsihi*)."
Baṣīrat or *mushāhadah-i bātin* is the name for the vision of the heart. This implies that human beings can see their own soul and all of its conditions prior to physical death and a minor example of it is a dream. The word *nafs* in this noble verse means soul. In

spirituality or at least in a dream, whatever individuals observe is their soul and 'I'.

There is a standard to determine the legitimacy of the current currency in this world. For example, scientists have fixed various gauges in machines such as motor cars to collect information about speed, heat and fuel, etc. How is it plausible that Almighty Allāh praises human beings' creation, yet does not have a touchstone to evaluate their good and bad deeds? Truly speaking, the wise Creator has assigned a criterion (*furqān*) in the exoteric aspect of religion but also within the human being, as mentioned in verse (8:29): "O you who believe, if you fear God, He will assign for you a *furqān*." *Furqān* is exoterically the holy personality of the exalted Imām^(c) and esoterically it is his light.

Dream is an example of the spiritual world since it transcends time and space. In other words, the world of dreams is independent of this material world. The time in the world of dreams is not connected to the days and nights of this world, rather it is like the time of the hereafter and it is related to the miracles and manifestations of the law of 'Be' (*kun*), such as a season, a thing, a person, or a place which you wish to see in your imagination. Initially there is very little light or it is like a false dawn, but eventually the real dawn appears.

Allāh says in verse (78:9): "And We made your sleep [a cause of] repose." That is, for the masses sleep, and for the chosen ones, spirituality because *nawm* at the lower ranks can be the sleep of negligence, as well as at the higher ranks it is spirituality because the reason for this is that the sleep of the friends of God becomes spirituality.

It is also mentioned in Sūrah of Furqān, verse (25:47): "It is He who made the night a covering for you and made sleep repose and made the day for rising." It is said to the people of spirituality, i.e., hierarchs of religion, that in the beginning the *bāṭin* was made a covering for you in which you attained the perfection of spirituality and then you are granted a chance to manifest yourselves through

spreading knowledge.

It is said in Sūrah of Rūm, verse (30:23): “And of His signs is your sleeping by night and day, and your seeking of His grace. Verily there are signs in this for those who listen.” Sleep at night means the initial spirituality, which is hidden in the internal veil. Sleep by day means final spirituality which manifests in the form of knowledge. At this time, it becomes necessary to search for knowledge and wisdom from the grace of God, that is the treasure of intellect. There are only miracles in this for the listeners with the ears of understanding.

It is said in Sūrah of Zumar, verse (39:42): “Allāh seizes the souls of people at the time of their (physical and spiritual) death and [the soul of] those who have not died, (He seizes) during their sleep; Then He withholds those on whom He has decreed death, and sends the others back for an appointed period. Verily, there are signs (miracles) in this for those who reflect.”

The *ta'wīlī* wisdom of this is that the *mu'min* who dies completely with respect to the carnal soul through worship and spiritual discipline, gets rid of the body and enters paradise. The satisfied soul enters paradise whether the person is alive or dead (89: 27-30), however, the *mu'min* remains alive in a new soul whereas the person who dies by the physical death, dies. Thus, God retains both kinds of souls in the hereafter and those people who have not died in any manner, their souls are seized during sleep or in the initial spirituality and then they are sent back. And this process continues until an appointed time.

It is solely one's own soul in the dream which becomes a universe and appears before it. There is everything in this soul. There is resurrection, record of deeds, paradise, hell, angels, hope, fear, light and darkness. In short, Almighty Allāh has made the world of dream a model of spirituality and the hereafter so that the prudent *mu'mins* may benefit from its countless wisdoms.

The interpretation of dreams that is mentioned in common books

has no importance at all, because the *ta'wīl* of dream is something divine. It is included in God-given knowledge (*'ilm-i ladunnī*). Nonetheless, many of its allusions are such that they are easily understandable, whereby human beings can estimate well their good and bad deeds. Therefore, it is correct to say that the world of dream is full of wisdoms. It is a living and speaking book, which guides people of every rank according to their level of understanding.

Dust under the feet of *mu'mins*
26th April, 1984

One Soul, Many Bodies

My very *‘azīz*, dear friends, Rafiq Jannat Ali and Amin Abdul Malik, may you always remain happy and prosperous!

With everlasting love and brimful of truth, I say Yā *‘Alī Madad* to you both and all other *‘azīzān*. May the Holy Lord accept this pure prayer for the sake of all the devotees. How lovely were your letters! and so was my expectation; I am extremely happy. May the Lord of honor grant you all superiority of knowledge. You always serve Khānah-yi Hikmat, offering sacrifice and devotion. Similarly, Al-Amin and Arif are also very devoted. My purpose is to beautifully mention all four secretaries of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi *‘Ārif* who are working together unitedly and with mutual affection, and with respect to unity and harmony, the office bearers and members of both sacred organizations are unique.

According to most prescriptions of Greek medicine, several medicinal herbs are crushed together in a mortar for an extended period. It is very difficult, rather impossible, to analyze the color, smell, taste and efficacy of such a compounded medicine. More than this example, we have become one soul in the mortar of monoreality. Even though physically our individuality appears to be there but internally this individuality has transformed into unity.

For example, each one of us is a medicinal herb and all medicinal herbs (i.e., our souls) are made one (a powder) by pulverizing them. This powder that contains all the medicinal herbs is then packed in a small bag and given to each of us. Thus, in every bag there are samples of all medicinal herbs. That is to say that in every soul there are the particles.

Second example: There are 1000 bottles, each one filled with a [different] fragrance extracted from 1000 different flowers. Then this fragrance is mixed together in a large container and re-placed

into each bottle. Now each bottle contains the fragrance in which 1000 samples have become one. This is an example of the soul which represents all souls.

Third example: The sacred Qur'ān draws attention to the amazing Divine signs in the making of honey by honeybees. The bees miraculously make countless fruits and flowers which are different in color, fragrance and taste into one sweet honey in their abdomens. With this background in mind, if this honey is divided into a thousand portions, each portion will have the same narrative, such as the same garden, flower-bed and fruit and the efficient work of the innumerable honeybees will be identical. This is an example of the uniformity of the state of the soul.

The wise Qur'ān mentions everywhere the spreading and gathering of souls, such as *nashr* (spreading) and *hashr* (gathering), as God says in verse (17:104): “And after this We said to the children of Israel: Dwell peacefully in the land, but when the promise of the hereafter (spirituality) comes, We shall bring you all enfolded [in one].” When the religion of Prophet Mūsā^(c) was everywhere, it was said to the *mu'mins* of the children of Israel that they should disperse to the twelve islands (*jazīrahs*) of the earth through the hierarchs of religion, and then when the time comes God would bring them enfolded together (17:104).

30th April, 1984

Spiritual Love is the Symbol of Unity

My very dear Ġulām Rasūl M.H., Vice President, Khānah-yi Hīkmat, Gilgit Branch, accept my cordial Yā °Alī Madad and many other prayers. Similarly, I pray for all the other °azīzān: May God by His infinite mercy keep them and the entire *jamā°at* in peace and safety!

By the prayers of all of you I reached home in Karachi safely the same day at 9 pm. By the grace of Mawlā, there is all sorts of safety here. The office bearers and members of Khānah-yi Hīkmat are preparing to celebrate a birthday. They may have written to the Gilgit branch.

I was extremely delighted and pleased there (Gilgit) and in Hunza with the companionship of all of you. When I am in such *majālis* (assemblies), it is the finest time of my life. Only I and my °azīzān know the great secret of the extreme love for them. In fact, this secret is the reward of a great gift from the Divine treasure of the Lord, instead of the heavenly punishment for [certain] people who create hatred and enmity in their hearts [against *mu'mins*] whereas it is a mortal sin to bear enmity against them. We must be grateful [to God] that He has kept us away from the disease of mutual discord. Praise be to Allāh for His grace and favor!

In addition to the zeal for service you have many other moral virtues within yourselves. Now you must progress more and more in knowledge. I am certain that your progress everywhere is due to knowledge and worship, nonetheless its main reason is God's mercy that He wants to make our °azīzān render some service to the *jamā°at* because the final and the highest rung of the ladder of purposes is service to the *jamā°at*.

When prudent *mu'mins* conceive about *azal*, they find all souls in the fountainhead of life, although today they apparently appear

to be innumerable. However, the question arises here: Is *azal* the name of an extremely remote past? No, not at all. It is rather the name of the rank of Intellect, i.e., the place of Intellect, which comes after the stages of spirituality. This means that we in *azal*, i.e., the place of Intellect, which is the *bāṭin* of the *bāṭin* are one or [in reality] is one. The concept of communal (*jamā'atī*) soul is presented to explain this very reality. Thus, how amazing and wisdom-filled with delights will be paradise when we will all be revived in the communal soul, rather will become one in the Single Soul. Therefore, O friends! consider the *jamā'at* your scattered soul and serve it eagerly.

You have now understood that the soul comprises of particles, but the question is why! Why are there innumerable particles of the Single Soul? It is because initially, everything is in a potential state and then becomes actual. Therefore, every individual's soul is potentially a universe today and tomorrow will be a universe actually. An example of this reality is the grain of wheat, which at present is only one grain but with such a capacity of multiplying that after sowing for a few years it can encompass the entire surface of the earth.

The greatest attribute of the soul is that it comprises both multiplicity and unity. Multiplicity in the sense that in itself and its particles can represent all and unity because in reality, it [soul] is one. So how excellent is that point that the soul is a picture of Divine unity as well as the luminous (*tanwīr*) reflection of the world of multiplicity. Therefore, it can be said that the soul is everything.

Sincerely, dust under the feet of *mu'mins*
9th May, 1984

One in All – All in One

My dear °azīz President, Faṭḥ °Alī Ḥabīb. May the Lord of honor grant you success and eminence in both worlds! *Āmīn*, O Lord of the worlds!

There is a meaningful allusion to a remarkable and magnificent opening of spirituality and knowledge in your blessed name (Faṭḥ °Alī). Praise be to Allāh! Your soul is certainly an angel of victory and succor for me. This Divine favor makes it incumbent upon me to repeatedly prostrate in gratitude.

How greatly blessed are we all that the sapling which you had planted has started to thrive well and the seeds of flowers which were sowed, by the grace of God, have become a beautiful world of color and fragrance. This is an example of those °azīzān who are [now] in full vigor as a result of your fundamental and practical efforts and great sacrifices. Each of them is an orchard of the fruit of knowledge as well as a flower-bed of the flowers of wisdom. Not only this, but due to your sagacity and continual efforts you have also created several prudent patrons and discerning office-bearers. For all these great favors I am grateful and indebted to you.

You are the highly respected President of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat and its senior patron. Therefore, entire success of this reputed organization rebounds to your credit. Whatever may be the good service of an organization, the central position is held by its President and particularly when you are its patron as well. The patron of every successful organization is like its affectionate and kind father and you have in fact rendered services and sacrifices like a great father and many dear office-bearers and devoted members are following your footsteps.

I am certain that God, the Prophet^(s), and the Imām^(c) of the time are very pleased with you and Gulshakar, your angel-like wife. The

bright proof of this is that the service which is granted to you is unique because it is the service of knowledge and it is boundless and ever-reaching and can encompass space and time.

A question arises here: Why does Islam command to serve others? The true answer is that to serve others means to serve oneself because in paradise after attaining the rank of unity (*martabah-yi wahdat*) it becomes clear that in this world our soul was the compendium of all people and all people were particles of our soul. The same concept is that of the holy Qur'an in verse (2:213): "All people were one community" (that is, they were spiritual particles of one person). A clear example in the Qur'an is that of Ḥazrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) (16:120): "Indeed Ibrāhīm (in his spiritual particles) was a community obedient to God."

Similarly, all the people of the world had become one in the holy personality of the Prophet Muḥammad^(s), as God says in verse (110:2): "And when you see the people entering the Religion of God in groups." The word *nās* or people here means the souls of the people, and 'the religion of God' is the holy Prophet^(s). This means that all the people of the world had unconsciously entered the blessed personality of Prophet Muḥammad^(s), in the form of particles. This is referred to as "All in One, One in All."

Your well-wisher,
13th May, 1984

Pleasures of Services for Knowledge

O very dear to my heart and soul Muḥammad °Abdu'l-°Azīz, patron of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat and President of Idārah-yi °Ārif, may the Lord fulfil your wishes in both the worlds.

I say Yā °Alī Madad from the core of my heart in the light of the recognition of the Imām. May it be accepted. My °azīz! May this humble servant [of the Imam] be sacrificed for his beloved spiritual children such as yourself, who are the lovers of true knowledge, who continue to acquire it from one side and disseminate it from the other. These angelic, pure human beings continue to receive various kinds of pleasures and delights from spiritual knowledge. Indeed, you and your fortunate wife, whose soul is miraculous, are in the first rank of such *mu'mins*.

You have done so many favors for me and my humble pen, which I can neither encompass or show adequate gratitude for, except humbly pray: O Lord! It is not hidden from you that I am an utter pauper and I cannot give anything to my °azīzān. O the Lord of infinite treasures! In Your boundless mercy grant them success and eminence in religion and in this world. *Āmīn!*

The secret relating to the pleasures of intellect, knowledge and soul is that their apprehension and feeling are based on piety (*taqwā*). Thus, one has pleasure and delight in intellect, knowledge and soul in proportion to one's piety. It should be remembered that the sweetness and happiness from knowledge is not only limited to listening to it, but in fact there is far greater pleasure and happiness in rendering services and sacrifices for it.

Just as external material pleasures are enjoyed only by a healthy human being and an ailing person is deprived of it, similarly the inner and spiritual pleasures are enjoyed by the virtuous, and those who are unrighteous being sick, are unable to enjoy the inner and

spiritual pleasures.

The wise Qur'ān mentions the pleasures of paradise in three places (43:71, 37:46, 47:15). All these pleasures are subtle, of an inner nature and pertain to the soul and the intellect. It is because the astral body is granted in paradise, consisting of a pure soul and a perfect intellect. Therefore, the pleasures of the subtle body are superior to all worldly pleasures, and the pleasures of the Holy spirit and perfect Intellect are even more superior.

About the pleasures of the astral body, namely the subtle body, it is said in verse (43:71): “And in it (paradise) there are all those which the souls desire.” Regarding the spiritual pleasures, it is said (43:71): “And those things from which the eyes will have pleasure.” Here the word soul alludes to the astral body and the word ‘eye’ (*ʿayn*) means the inner eye, by which is meant the soul.

Similarly, about intellectual pleasures God says: “A goblet filled with running wine is brought around for them and [the wine] will be white, delicious to those who drink it” (37:45). Here the demonstration of the act of the Intellect is compared to the rotation of the goblet of wine; running of the wine is the example of the fountainhead of the Intellect and the color white is a symbol of recognition.

Dust under the feet of *jamāʿat*
14th May, 1984

Ark of Knowledge

Very dear to my heart and soul and soul-like dear Naşru'llāh, Vice President of Khānah-yi H̄ikmat, may the Lord grant every kind of success and peace to you!

Accept my Yā ʿAlī Madad with utmost sincerity, pure heartedness and spiritual love! My cordial and intimate friend Naşru'llāh! The literal meaning of your name (Naşru'llāh) clearly mentions Divine help. However, we are aware that practically and in true sense this is more conspicuous in Khānah-yi H̄ikmat because not only have you become the Vice President in this organization, but you are also its patron. Therefore, you have practically become a “divine helper” for this organization. Praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.

When God wants to give success to a humble *mu'min* in [rendering] an all-embracing service, He makes all his friends angels of goodness so that they may help him in this sacred service. Abundant gratitude to the Lord of the world that you are among my great angels.

“*Sālī kih khwushast az bahārash paydāst* – If a year is prosperous, its sign is from the very spring.”

A few years back our religious friendship started with great confidence. I should be grateful to respected Faṭḥ ʿAlī Ḥabīb for this great bounty.

I know that you and my ʿazīz daughter Amina appreciate spiritual knowledge highly. Hence, you make great sacrifices to spread this knowledge. You know that to spread the light of knowledge is the greatest good deed and the greatest reward according to a *ḥadīṣ*, the holy Prophet says: “Four things are compulsory upon every prudent and intelligent individual of my *ummat*: listen to knowledge, retain

it, act upon it and spread it.”

The holy Prophet further said: “Verily, the status of my *ahl-i bayt* among you is like Nūḥ’s^(c) Ark, the one who embarks on it is saved and the one who lags behind drowns.” Another saying is: “Acquire knowledge from the *‘ālim* [= *rāsikhūn fi’l-‘ilm*, i.e., Imām of the time] of my *ahl-i bayt* or from that person who learned knowledge from the *‘ālim* of my *ahl-i bayt* so that you may be saved from the fire.”

This holy *ḥadīṣ*, in the language of wisdom, describes *ahl-i bayt* of the holy Prophet, that is, the Imām^(c) of the time as the Ark of Nūḥ not only in the time of prophethood, but also for all times because the deluge of ignorance is ever-present. Therefore, the meaning of embarking in the Ark of Nūḥ and attaining salvation is to attain knowledge from an *‘ālim* (Imām^(c) of the time) of *ahl-i bayt*, or from those appointed by the Imām^(c) to teach in order to attain salvation from the fire of ignorance.

Here the former *ḥadīṣ* is explained by the latter one from which it is quite clear that the deluge which is found in every age is that of ignorance and deviation. The means to save oneself from it is the Ark of salvation of knowledge and guidance, the fountainhead of which is the Imām^(c) of the time. Thus, in the light of true knowledge, attachment to the exalted Imām^(c) is the surety for every kind of salvation.

Dust under the feet of *mu’mins*

14th May, 1984

Loud *Zikr* (Remembrance)

My cordial and spiritual friend Muhyiddin, patron and Vice President of Idārah-yi °Ārif, may God grant you success in both the worlds! *Āmīn!*

I say Yā °Alī Madad with extreme sincerity and *darwīsh*-like humility. May the Lord accept such prayers for all °*azīzān*. One special favor of the Lord of honor [bestowed] on this dust-like servant is that well-educated individuals like you pay complete attention to this religious knowledge and cooperate fully in publicizing it.

My angelic friend! You are fortunate to have an environment filled with spiritual knowledge, the deep wisdoms of the wise Qur’ān, conversation of spirituality and recognition (*ma°rifat*) and *zīkr-ū tasbīh*. This everlasting wealth is granted to you and your wife as a heavenly gift. Such spiritual prosperity in any *mu°min*’s house is a tremendous blessing from God.

From Ḥaydarābād village of Hunza, your esteemed grandfather, Qadir Shah Sahib, was a very pious and saintly individual. In his circle, he represented the Pīr because he was acquainted with the required education of that time and region. He was engrossed in worship and he had established a circle of loud *zīkr*, like *šūfīs*, often performed with *rubāb* and *daf* in the morning and night. My dear uncle Qadir Shah also participated in it along with my esteemed father and many other dignitaries.

I recall a narrative I heard in China about loud remembrance (*zīkr-i jalī*). There was a dispute among a few *šūfīs* over the question of loud *zīkr* which reached a point where they started to use cudgels against each other, although there was no need to be upset over loud *zīkr* because it is permitted in the following verse: “Allāh does not love loud speech of evil except by someone who has

been wronged” (4:148). This means that, if necessary, it is only permissible for the one wronged so that he may complain, cry and shed tears so he may be released or justice may be done. Indeed, there is also another form of injustice. Man is often a transgressor against himself. Justice and cure for this is also loud *zīkr* and *gīryah-ū zārī* and recognizing ourselves as the offender to our beloved soul, as Ḥazrat-i Ādam^(c) and Ḥazrat-i Ḥawwā^(c) cried and shed tears (*gīryah-ū zārī*). They said, ‘Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You will not forgive us and have mercy on us surely we are among the lost’ (7:23). This shows that the salient part of repentance of Ādam^(c) and Ḥawwā^(c) was loud *zīkr* and crying and shedding tears (*gīryah-ū zārī*).

It is essential to have respect, humility, modesty, harmony and a melodious voice in loud *zīkr* and *gīryah-ū zārī*. This *zīkr*, with all its excellent qualities, may be miraculous, and the participants can submerge themselves in the ocean of inability and humility because there is no benefit from *zīkr* which is unwieldy, cacophonous, dry, superficial, harsh and unpleasant.

Dust under the feet of *mu’mins*
15th May, 1984

Angel in Human Form

Very *‘azīz* to my heart and very dear Khan Muḥammad *ṣāhib*, patron and Chief Adviser! May the Lord of Oneness grant you the successes and securities in both the worlds!

May the sacred and wisdom-filled prayer of Yā ‘Alī Madad be accepted from the depth and loftiness of the heart and the soul and may you receive many such prayers from the great angels of the heaven of spirituality. Respected Khan *ṣāhib*! The precious services you have rendered for the existence and advancement of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi ‘Arif are becoming part of a great history. You are among the robust pillars of our workshop of knowledge, which has been established by Divine grace as a service to the *jamā‘at*. The office-bearers and members of both of our organizations are extremely impressed by your extraordinary capabilities, pure habits and various services for the beloved *jamā‘at*, and these *‘azīzān* always praise your unique hard work and high ambition.

It is a fact that regardless of whether anyone acknowledges it, that true *mu‘mins* like you are potential angels in human form and tomorrow, they will transform into actual angels because everything is first potential and then becomes actual. Everyone knows that vegetables come into being from the minerals, animals come into being from vegetables, human beings from animals and angels from human beings. This is an explanation of the gradual progress in the macrocosm, that of the microcosm is more easily comprehensible. That is, God created the human being from the quintessence of the entire universe. Thus, in its existence at the lower level there are minerals, which after dissolving are transformed into countless vegetative souls, from their dissolving is created the animal soul, which is a compendium of countless living particles and by its purification is created the human or rational soul, which consists of innumerable particles and from its further purification becomes

an angel. This purification takes place through true knowledge and virtuous actions. This is one angel but constitutes all the angels.

How a *mu'min* becomes an angel through true knowledge and good deeds is mentioned by Ḥaẓrat-i Imām Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh^(c) in his *farmāns*. Wherever the purity of *mu'mins* is mentioned in the wise Qur'ān, there is an allusion to them becoming angels. Furthermore, wherever there is direct mention of angels *mu'mins'* souls are also mentioned.

These are the characteristics of angels: they are humble in God's worship, they do not weary of His worship (*ibādāt*), they do *tasbīḥ* day and night and do not stop (21:19-20); they prostrate to Him and continue to fear their Lord and fulfill whatever is commanded (16:49-50). In addition, a characteristic of an angel is to learn true knowledge as mentioned in the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) (2:29-33) because their personality is incomplete without this knowledge. Therefore, those fortunate *mu'mins* who are close to angels in the above-mentioned characteristics are potential angels today and will be actual angels tomorrow.

The Perfect Human Being is an [actual] angel because the special sign of an angel is proximity to God (16:49) which is granted to him more than the closest angels, the proof of which is the event of the holy Prophet's ascension (*mirāj*) in which Jibrīl^(c) was left behind. Moreover, all angelic attributes are encompassed in the Perfect Man and God's Supreme Names are continuously repeated and speak day and night within his blessed personality and the recitation of *tasbīḥ* of pure souls always continues.

Dust under the feet of *mu'mins*

Note: Nutrition we consume in the form of various vegetables (fruit, greens) and animals (i.e., meat) is first of all at the level of minerals and then its evolution begins.

World of Fragrances

My very cordial and spiritual friend Al-Amin, Joint Secretary of Khānah-yi Hikmat, may God grant you honor and eminence of both the worlds. *Āmīn!*

With utmost sincerity and affection, I say the sacred and wisdom-filled prayer of Yā °Alī Madad to you and your dear family. I also pray for all the rest of the °*azīzān*. May the Lord of Majesty accept it!

My very dear Al-Amin! My angel-like friend in knowledge! Indeed, you greatly appreciate knowledge and recognize the reality. You are among those great servants of our beloved *jamā°at* who with great devotion render service day and night in the field of knowledge. You spend a part of the precious time of your valuable life in the path of knowledge. Praise belongs to Allāh! This is all a great favor of Allāh.

The subtle knowledge which comes into existence and the way it is spreading throughout the world is due to the collective services and valuable sacrifices rendered by the individuals of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi °Arif. By the Divine grace its importance and beneficence are very great. Since this true knowledge belongs to the exalted Imām, its light is reaching far and wide and the circle of its access continues to expand.

Every flower and fruit in this physical world has its own fragrance. Furthermore, there are many medicinal herbs and other substances, each of which possesses a separate, hidden treasure of fragrance. From this explanation it is evident that within one world there are many subsidiary worlds, and among them is the very subtle, extremely alluring and soul-nourishing world of fragrances.

The holy Prophet^(s) appreciated fragrance and in this lies a great

secret. The physical sustenance of paradise (spirituality) is in the form of fragrances because people of paradise possess an astral body for which subtle sustenance, i.e., fragrances, is assigned.

A wise person reflecting on the wise Qur'ān can accept the fact that the sustenance of the people of paradise is not a complete fruit, only its extract, which means its fragrant vegetative energy. The holy Qur'ān referring to the sustenance of the people of paradise, says: "Sustenance from the fruit (*min samaratⁱⁿ rizq^{an}*)" (2:25) that is, the whole fruit is not required, only its extract or soul. This denotes that first the raw and unripe fruit exists then develops the aromatic vegetative soul, similarly, the vegetative souls of fruits, flowers, etc. with their subtle distinctive features can exist without orchards and gardens. This is the reality (*mamsūl*) of this verse.

Another name for spiritual knowledge is knowledge of the reality of things. In the light of practical experience, research has been done that after the Prophets and the Imams, the true *darwīshes* are also blessed with receiving fragrances without fruits and flowers. This is the physical bounty of paradise whereas the bounties of soul and intellect are more sublime and subtle. Also, it must be remembered that it is vital for *mu'mins* to recognize paradise while they are in this world as the Qur'ān says in verse (37:41): "Those are the people who already know the sustenance of paradise." Moreover, verse (47:6) says: "And He will admit them into paradise, which He has made known to them." There is no doubt the Imām^(c) of the time is the paradise of *mu'mins* with all its meanings and the real and fundamental recognition is of this holy personality and all subsidiary recognitions are available through the center and fountainhead of this light.

Important Questions from the Sūrah of Luqmān

My dear and respected friend, Nuruddin Rajpari, resides in America and loves religious knowledge greatly. He, with his dear friends, study the Ismaili teachings regularly and with yearning. According to him during this atomic era, it is particularly important for every *mu'min* to have true knowledge especially in a great country like America where a storm of varied material advancements has occurred. For this reason, he and his friends occasionally send written questions and this time they have asked essential questions from Sūrah of Luqmān (31).

In this regard, the humble servant, Naṣīruddīn, who considers himself dust under the feet of *mu'mins*, seeks success and spiritual help (*ta'yīd*) from the sublime court of the true Lord. May He, the Omnipotent help this indigent servant. *Āmīn!* O Lord of the worlds!

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Question 1: Please explain the *ta'wīl* of *Alif Lām Mīm*

Answer: *Alif Lām Mīm* are among the disjointed letters (*hurūf-i muqatta'āt*) of the holy Qur'ān. Almighty Allāh has sworn by His sacred and glorious names in these letters. Thus, He has sworn in *alif* by the First (the Pen), in *lām* by the Guarded Tablet (*lawḥ-i mahfūz*) and in *mīm* by the written (*marqūm*). Thus, the *ta'wīl* of *alif* is the First, i.e., the Divine Pen which is the Universal Intellect, by the *lām* is meant the Guarded Tablet which is the Universal Soul and the *ta'wīl* of *mīm* is written (*marqūm*), which is also called *raqīm*, meaning that spiritual writing which is recorded in the Guarded Tablet. The Lord of honor has sworn by His three great names. The principle should be remembered that the manifestation of the Divine Pen (the First) is *Nāṭiq*^(s), that of the Guarded Tablet (*lawḥ-i mahfūz*) is *Asās*^(c) and that of *raqīm* (*marqūm* = written) is

the Imām^(c). For further *ta'wīl* of *alif lām mīm*, see the booklet “Pīr Nāṣir-i Khisraw^(q) and Spirituality.”

Question 2: What are the special *āyāt* mentioned in the second verse of Sūrah of Luqmān? What is the *ta'wīl* of the Wise Book?

Answer: Those verses (*āyāt*) in the world of spirituality are Pen, Tablet and *raqīm* and in the physical world they are *Nāṭiq^(s)*, *Asās^(c)* and Imām^(c), as mentioned above. The Wise Book is the Imām^(s) of the time, who has the rank of God's speaking Book.

Question 3: Please expound on the word guidance (*hidāyat*), mercy (*rahmat*), and piety? Furthermore, please explain why guidance and mercy are associated with piety.

Answer: Guidance is among the fundamental and crucial matters of religion. Therefore, this is related to the Divine Law (*sunnat*), which is unchangeable. That is, Allāh's guidance is always acquired through the true Guide, the Imam of the time, for which first there is the chain of prophethood and subsequently the chain of Imāmat and such a guidance is mercy because it is certain and free from and above differences, doubts and suspicions. This means it is essential to have a living guide in every age for the sake of guidance from God, the merciful, the compassionate, so that he may be the light of Qur'ān and the Guide of the time. Guidance and mercy are related to the beneficent because they are obedient individuals, who are beneficent to themselves and to others. Thus, guidance and mercy are for such people.

Question 4: Kindly tell us the lexical and technical meaning of *ṣalāt* and *zakāt*. What is the *ta'wīl* hidden in having belief in the hereafter (*ākhirat*)?

Answer: The lexical meaning of *ṣalāt* is prayer, benediction and following and its technical meaning is *namāz*. Lexically *zakāt* means purity and technically it means that amount of wealth which is obligatory to pay. The *ta'wīl* of *ṣalāt* is to establish a true mission (*da'wat*) and the *ta'wīl* of *zakāt* is to give knowledge. The *ta'wīl*

of believing in the hereafter is to accept the spiritual rank of the Imām^(c) of the time and to then have certainty of this reality as the eye of certainty or the knowledge of certainty.

Question 5: Is guidance equally for all creatures, or is it gradual? What is the clear meaning of achieving success (*falāḥ*)?

Answer: Guidance is not equal but it is gradual. That is, it is according to the different categories of human beings, animals, vegetables and minerals. In other words, guidance is most common as well as most special. The bliss or felicity of a group lies in receiving God's most special guidance. *Falāḥ* means success which is attained through the purification of the carnal soul and which requires special guidance.

Question 6: Regarding the purport of verse ten, some say that Allāh established the heavens without pillars whereas others state that He created them on unseen pillars. What are your thoughts on this?

Answer: The latter opinion is correct and the purport of the Qur'ānic verse is that God has created this universe on pillars invisible to us because its particles, subtle or dense are overlapping and contiguous and there is no region of the Universal Body which is devoid of a body, i.e., matter. The entire expansion of the encircling sphere is filled with every kind of matter and the sun is the center of this physical universe.

Question 7: Please tell us what is the rank of Ḥaẓrat-i Luqmān^(c) in the light of the way he is described in the Sūrah bearing his name.

Answer: Qur'ānic reality is very clear about Ḥaẓrat-i Luqmān^(c) that he was among the perfect (*kāmil*) and perfecter (*mukammil*) human beings because God bestowed him with wisdom, which is the capital of intellect and knowledge, that is, the abundant good granted after achieving this wisdom. It is in the light of wisdom that all those bounties start to appear which the Benevolent Lord has created for human beings. Hence the gratitude incumbent on wise Luqmān^(c) alludes to the people of wisdom to show gratitude.

Question 8: It is obvious that Ḥazrat-i Luqmān^(c) recognized God and he was a monist (*muwahhid*) thus, he advised his son against polytheism (*shirk*). The question is in what sense is polytheism tremendous wrong (*zulm*)?

Answer: There are two kinds of rights: the rights of God, and the rights of servants. If ideologically any individual removes Godhead and the kingdom from the true Lord and associates them with someone else, this concept is tremendous injustice. It is obvious that from this great injustice, they will be unjust to themselves as well as to others. Conversely, recognition of God and *tawhīd* (believing in one God) holds the status of tremendous justice.

Question 9: There is no obvious difficulty in comprehending the literal meaning of verse fifteen of the same sūrah. However, when we discuss spiritual parents based on the *ta'wīl*, the question which arises is: How is it possible for the spiritual mother and father to command any of their children to be polytheistic (do *shirk*)?

Answer: This is an opportune and important question but there are certain subtleties of spiritual secrets which mean that rather than a written answer we will leave it for a later time more appropriate for an oral answer. God willing, we can discuss it when I meet any of you.

Question 10: In verse sixteen, what does the mustard seed signify? Are Qur'ānic examples among the possibilities or impossibilities? If you state that whatever work the omnipotent God shows in the domain of possibilities is performed in any form, then please explain to us how He brings forth a thing equal to a mustard seed from rocks, heavens and the earth?

Answer: In this sacred verse, the mustard seed is an example of the particle of soul. Whatever examples are mentioned by the holy Qur'ān as the concept of possibility are among those which are going to happen externally or internally (physically or spiritually). It is in this way that the entire wisdom of the wise Qur'ān is hidden in such examples. Therefore, the *ta'wīl* purport of the Qur'ānic

verse is that on the day of resurrection, God will bring forth the souls of all things in the entire universe in the form of particles. Here, rock is prominently mentioned because people deem rocks as lacking soul, however there is a type of hidden soul which is frozen. There is a wisdom-filled verse of Allāh (17:50): “Say: Be you stones or iron.” Although God has said this command through the holy Prophet^(s), this *farmān* is an exegesis and an explanation of the verse 36:81: “Be! It is” (*kun fa-yakūn*). It is clear from this that just as the human soul can ascend to [*aḥsani taqwīm*], it can descend too towards the lowest of the low (“*asfala sāfilīn*” 95:5).

Question 11: How has Allāh subjugated all things of the heaven and the earth for humankind? In what sense are God’s physical and spiritual bounties complete for human beings? Also, please explain the meaning of knowledge, guidance and luminous book, the way they are referred to here.

Answer: All human souls have an ultimate and extremely exalted, common soul which has numerous names, such as Soul of souls, Single Soul, Universal Soul, etc. It is the essence and soul of the entire universe whose manifestation is the Perfect Man. Therefore, all those *mu’mins* who merge with the Universal Soul through the *mazhar* (locus of manifestation) will experience that the entire universe has been subjugated to them and in this merging, they attain the external and internal Divine bounties without the slightest decrease.

Here knowledge means *dā’ir* because he has the rank of the knowledge of certainty. Guidance means *hujjat* who is at the rank of the eye of certainty. The Luminous Book is the Imām^(e) of the time who has the rank of the truth of certainty. He is the fountainhead of light and the one who spreads light.

Question 12: Please explain the *ta’wīl* of *al-urwatu’l-wuṣqā* in verse 22.

Answer: In some matters of Islam, it is obligatory and necessary to turn the countenance towards God’s House and to keep the

countenance of the soul towards God at all times is more obligatory and necessary and to submit it, that is, the Higher “I”, to the unique Essence (*zāt-i yaktā*) is the greatest work. This is the most special meaning of submission hidden in the word ‘Islam’. According to the Islamic concept, the meaning of this submission is that the higher end of the human soul is forever linked with the Divine light, similar to the sun’s rays being always linked with the sun. Therefore, the one who submits their soul’s countenance to Allāh in this sense and in addition they are beneficent, they have held on to a very strong handhold and this very strong handhold is the *walāyat* of the Imams of guidance.

Question 13: Please explain a special wisdom of verse twenty-five.

Answer: Reflecting upon this blessed verse, it appears that the disbelievers belie that there is God and that He has created the heavens and the earth, but the main cause of their disbelief is ignorance because most of them do not know.

Question 14: “If all the trees on this earth were pens; and [encircling] ocean (i.e., the water of the entire world) with seven more of such oceans help it were ink, the Words (*kalimāt*) of Allāh could not be exhausted.” What is the meaning of *kalimāt* in this verse?

Answer: These Words mean the perfect words (*kalimāt-i tāmmāt*), particularly the Word “Be (*kun*)”, which although it is one, its manifestations are countless. This is because in every Perfect Human Being there is not one manifestation of the word “Be!” but there are numerous manifestations and one universe of knowledge and the chain of such universes has neither a beginning nor an end. It is in this sense that the Divine words never cease and in which are hidden universes of intellect and soul.

Question 15: Please explain the wisdom-filled verse of 31:28: “Your creation and resurrection (*ba‘ṣ*, i.e., *in‘m̄bi‘āṣ*) is but like a Single Soul.”

Answer: a) Each of the Prophets and Imāms^(c) is the Single Soul

of their respective time. Within himself he is one but [unifies] the souls of all creatures within himself, whereas in his spiritual creation, completion and *in^mbi^cās* (resurrection) they are with him in an unconscious state. b) The wisdom of the above-mentioned Qur’ānic verse is that whatever state of an individual, consciousness or spiritual birth or spiritual death or resurrection, it will be like that of the Single Soul. c) This means for all the people the path of spiritual progress is the same and that is the straight path (*ṣirāt-i mustaqīm*) on which great souls have already advanced.

Question 16: The wise Qur’ān repeatedly draws our attention to the Divine Law that He, the Omnipotent, creates two contrary things from one another and causes them to hide in one another, just as night enters into the day and day into the night (31:29). What is the special purpose of drawing attention to this law?

Answer: The purpose is tremendous, which is that we should thoroughly understand the law of opposites: How the state of existence is hidden within non-existence and how existence is hidden in the potential of non-existence; how the hereafter is created from the world and how the world comes into existence from the hereafter. In addition, we also need to reflect upon the many wisdoms of the Qur’ān which carry both negative and positive aspects. If one aspect is apparent, the other is hidden.

Question 17: What is the *ta’wīl* of the sun (*shams*), moon (*qamar*), an ‘Appointed Term’ (31:29) and ark (*fulk*, 31:31)? In addition, please explain the meaning of this holy verse: “Verily Allāh! With Him is the knowledge of the Hour” (31:34).

Answer: The *ta’wīl* of the sun and moon, is first the *Nāṭiq*^(s) and the *Asās*^(c), then *Asās*^(c) and *Imām*^(c) and finally *Imām*^(c) and *Hujjat*. That of the ‘Appointed Term’ is Ḥazrat-i Qā’im^(c), and the ark, which sails in the ocean of spirituality, is the light of the *Imām*^(c) of the time which is the living Supreme Name and the light of remembrance.

The meaning of the verse: “Verily Allāh! With Him is the knowledge

of the Hour” (31:34) is that those Perfect Human Beings who have attained the special closeness of Allāh attain the practical knowledge of the resurrection.

Dust under the feet of *mu'mins*

7th June, 1984

Wisdom of Gratitude

May Almighty God bestow every kind of success and eminence on our esteemed President Faḥ °Alī Ḥabīb and his angel-like Begum Gulshakar.

I say special *salām* of Yā °Alī Madad with my original soul and real “I” and with the same zeal of well-wishing, I pray with utmost humility for all my °*azīzān* of the east and the west. May it be accepted! May the Lord of the worlds be extremely merciful upon all *mu’mins*. *Āmīn!* O the Lord of the worlds!

Prior to leaving for Hunza, my wife °Ā’ishah Begum Naṣīr repeatedly requested me to thank you, from the bottom of her and my hearts, all the devoted and angelic office bearers and members of *Khānah-yi Ḥikmat* and *Idārah-yi °Ārif*. The sincerity and love with which they helped my family in every manner is unprecedented and unforgettable. It is true that my wife is extremely impressed by the filial cooperation of all °*azīzān*. She especially can never forget the repeated hospitality and the various favors by Gulshakar Faḥ °Alī and Yasmin Muḥammad. She persistently mentioned all of the angelic attributes of these God-given, dear daughters.

I have informed respected °Ā’ishah Begum in detail about where these °*ilmī* letters and other °*ilmī* articles are disseminated, and with what yearning and zeal they are read by our °*azīzān*, who are a victorious detachment of holy Mawlā’s army of knowledge. She was greatly astonished by this and also the feelings of the expression of gratitude. She expressed that it was a great mercy of our true Lord that all of my very beloved students are always ready to attain knowledge and to render the sublime services of imparting knowledge to the beloved *jamā’at*. She added that the way I had followed the path of patience during extremely harsh afflictions and distress, indeed became the cause of Mawlā’s pleasure. Therefore, he has helped me magnificently through these purehearted earthly

angels. In saying so she was undoubtedly right. As a result of this realization of Divine bounties, we offered our gratitude to Him for His blessings and mercies.

An important point to remember is that in a *mu'min's* life, there are first occasions of patience and subsequently, opportunities to express gratitude. Gratefulness is one such *‘ibādat* which contains the possibility of experiencing and perceiving happiness and pleasures on the condition that this *‘ibādat* is in the light of knowledge and wisdom. Although, there is a miraculous soul of pleasure and happiness hidden in every *‘ibādat*, however, gratitude and appreciation are the *‘ibādat* of the people of paradise. Therefore, when the light of gratitude, filled with knowledge and recognition radiates on any bounty, it appears in the concept with all its intrinsic beauty, elegance and value of meaning. This is a brief answer for a seeker of knowledge who asks why so much pleasure and happiness are attained from the expression of true gratitude.

From Sūrah of Luqmān, verse (31:12) it is clear that the greatest Divine bounty is in the form of wisdom, rather it is the compendium of all sublime bounties. Secondly, we understand that wisdom is a light without which due gratitude and appreciation for intellectual, spiritual and physical bounties is not possible. Therefore, after bestowing wisdom to Ḥazrat-i Luqmān^(c), the Lord of the world says that its [wisdom] purpose is to be grateful to Him. Hence, whoever accomplishes the obligation of gratitude in the light of wisdom attains its benefit.

It is mentioned in Sūrah of Sabā’, in verse (34:13): “O children of Dāwūd! Do good deeds in gratitude. Verily few of My servants are grateful.” It is irrefutable from this sublime command that absolute gratitude is in practical form. That is, practical and real gratitude is to benefit others through whatever means: material, physical, intellectual and knowledge (*‘ilmī*) bounties available to one.

The purport of the children of Dāwūd^(c) is quite extensive, because this is similar to the Family of Ibrāhīm^(c). The main reason for this is that Ḥazrat-i Solomon^(c) was the entrusted Imām and the Lord

of the Throne of spirituality, a rank that continues in his progeny as well. Therefore, the chain of the Family of Dāwūd^(c) performed true gratitude of their great spiritual kingdom by helping the people of faith to advance from one destination to another in the light of guidance. This was their practical expression of gratitude. This is how the duty of gratitude is performed by the Prophets and the Imāms^(c).

Wherever there are verses about gratitude in the wise Qur’ān, they all mention the extremely great bounties as it is mentioned in the verse (2:56): “Then We revived you after your death, so that you might be grateful.” This does not pertain to physical revival after physical death; rather this is about the miracle of *in^mbi^cās* which you may have read about in an article.

In another verse is mentioned: “And He gave you ears, eyes and hearts that you may give thanks” (16:78). In this Divine *farmān* are mentioned the spiritual (*bāṭin*) ears, eyes and heart for which gratitude is intended.

Further, God says: “Then fear Allāh; that you may give thanks” (3:123). This alludes to being pious so that one may receive the supreme bounties of Almighty Allāh and thereby, ultimately be grateful. From this [discussion] it is evident that the stage of gratitude comes at the end.

The purport of Sūrah of Ibrāhīm, verse (14:5) is “And remind them of the days of God (i.e., the spirituality of the six great Prophets). Verily, in this are signs for every patient and grateful one.” This demonstrates that first comes patience and then gratitude.

It is said in Sūrah of Zumar, verse (39:66) “Nay, but worship Allāh alone and be among the grateful.” It is obvious from this that gratitude is a special worship (*‘ibādat*) which comes after the common worship (*‘ibādat*).

It is mentioned in Sūrah of Banī Isrā’īl, verse (17:3) “O you, the offspring of those whom We bore [in the ark] with Nūḥ; verily he

(Nūḥ) was a grateful servant.” This alludes to and draws attention towards the spirituality of Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ^(c) because Perfect Human Beings express gratitude at the place of spiritual and intellectual bounties.

The purport of the holy verse (7:58) is that the Lord of the worlds displays numerous verses to those who are grateful and appreciative, i.e., He explains by utilizing numerous such examples whose meaning (*mamṣūl*) is one.

That one meaning (*mamṣūl*) is the Imām^(c) of the time who has numerous examples and various names. Thus, it is he who is the living and luminous Supreme Name of Allāh, and he himself is the manifestation (*maẓhar*) of His holy light. Praise belongs to Allāh for His grace and favor.

Dust under the feet of *mu'mins*
11th June, 1984

Note: There is an allusion to the sublime bounties in the Qur'ānic subject of gratitude, and such bounties are specifically for the *mu'mins*.

INDICES

Index of Qur'ānic Verses

2:25	84	7:143	26
2:28	51, 52	7:160	30
2:29-33	82	7:171	27
2:30	9	7:187	48
2:56	95	8:17	25
2:60	30	8:29	66
2:63	27	9:34-35	2
2:74	30	9:103-104	25
2:93	27	9:111	22
2:140	2	11:88	25
2:143	48	12:2	14
2:194	12	12:4-6	34
2:213	74	13:39	42
2:255	23	14:5	95
2:260	27	15:21	6, 23, 28
2:269	15, 19	16:49-50	82
3:7	16, 19	16:60	19
3:26	25	16:78	95
3:27	10	16:81	28
3:37	51	16:120	62, 74
3:73	25	17:3	95, 96
3:76	12	17:14	47
3:123	95	17:50	89
3:133	7, 12	17:72	8
3:140	38	17:77	8
4:54	14	17:81	29
4:59	25	17:85	37, 63
4:80	25	17:89	23
4:148	79, 80	17:104	70
4:154	27	18:54	23
5:15	14	19:52	29
5:27	12	19:85	12
5:64	22, 23	19:94	24
6:73	11	19:95	24, 25
6:94	33, 56	20:7	14
7:23	80	20:12	16, 17
7:53	44	21:19-20	82
7:58	96	21:48	12

21:79	28	38:18	28
21:104	16, 17, 23	39:4	10
23:20	28	39:18	15
24:21	25	39:42	67
24:35	6, 23, 36	39:66	95
25:47	66	39:67	17, 23
26:63	30	40:7	23
28:14	13	40:85	8, 16
29:43	18	42:52	14
29:49	14	43:1-4	42
29:64	10	43:3	14-15
30:23	67	43:18	44
30:27	19	43:71	76
31:1	85	47:6	84
31:2-4	86	47:15	76
31:5	87	48:10	21
31:10	87	49:10	22
31:12	94	49:13	12
31:13	88	50:1	29
31:15	88	50:35	51
31:16	88	51:49	10
31:20	7, 89	55:7-9	20
31:22	89	55:26-27	44
31:25	90	55:26-28	52
31:27	90	55:29	57
31:28	25, 38, 62, 90	56:77-78	14
31:29	91	56:77-80	60
31:31	91	56:78	42
31:34	91, 92	57:12	60, 63
33:37	16	57:21	7
33:43	25	57:25	20
33:45-46	48	57:29	25
34:10	28	59:21	27
34:13	94	65:12	23
35:32	14	67:1	25
36:12	6, 23, 42, 44	67:3	30
36:81	89	70:4	38
36:83	25	72:28	24
37:41	84	75:1-12	54
37:45	76	75:13	55
37:46	76	75:14	55, 65
37:102	65	75:15-18	55

75:19 44, 55
75:20-30 55
75:31-40 56
76:2 10
77:25-27 28
78:9 66
78:29 23
79:16 17
80:13 42
85:1-6 48
85:7-20 49
85:21-22 29, 49
86:22 42
89:27-30 67
95:5 89
101:6-7 19
102:8 2
107:1-7 40
110:2 74

Index of *Aḥādīs*

1. “He who dies without the recognition of the Imām of his time, dies a death of ignorance, and the ignorant is in the fire of hell.”
.....8
2. “The holy Qur’ān is with the Imām^(c), and the exalted Imām^(c) is with the Qur’ān.”
.....14
3. “Almighty Allāh has based His religion on the example of His creation so that evidence of His religion may be referenced from His creation, and His oneness [be referenced] from His religion.”
.....17
4. “The Qur’ān is with ʿAlī and ʿAlī is with the Qur’ān.”
.....45
5. “I am leaving two important things among you: the Book of Allāh and my progeny (*ʿitrah*), the people of my House. If you hold on to both of them you will never go astray, for they are not going to separate till they will come to me at the Pond.”
.....45
6. “The heart of a faithful servant is the throne of Almighty Allāh.”
.....45
7. “Die before death.”
.....52
8. “Indeed *mu’mins* are brothers [and sisters], and Prophets are like a Single Soul.”
.....62
9. “Four things are compulsory upon every prudent and intelligent individual of my *ummat*: listen to knowledge, retain it, act upon it and spread it.”
.....77-78

10. “Verily, the status of my *ahl-i bayt* among you is like Nūḥ’s (c) Ark, the one who embarks on it is saved and the one who lags behind drowns.”
78
11. “Acquire knowledge from the *‘ālim* of my *ahl-i bayt* or from that person who learned knowledge from the *‘ālim* of my *ahl-i bayt* so that you may be saved from the fire.”
78

Index of Sayings

Ḥazrat-i Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir(c)

1. “When God created the Intellect, He interrogated it and said to it: Come forward. It came forward. Then He said: Go back! It went back. Then He said: By My honor and majesty! I did not create a creature more loved by Me than you. And I will not perfect you except in those whom I love. You alone will I command and you alone will I forbid, and you alone will I punish and you alone I will reward.”
20

Ḥazrat Mawlānā Imām Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh(c):

2. “Seek knowledge of religion by means of correspondence with each other...”
1
3. “They were the lovers of their own soul.”
64

Index of Verses

Pīr Nāṣir-i Khisraw ⁽⁹⁾

Tū ba-kull bīnā na-ī zāngah tū bī-rāh māndah-ī
Tū ba-kull bīnā shawī jān-ū jasad yaksān-i tūst

.....10

Pas-ū pīsh-ū nihān-ū āshkār ūst
Shinasā-yi khṡud-ū parwardagār ūst

.....64

Mawlā-yi Rūmī:

°Aql-i kull-ū Nafs-i kull mard-i Khudāst
°Arsh-ū Kursī ra ma-dān ka'z way judāst

.....46



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'ān. He has written both prose as well as poetry. He is the first person to have a *Dīwān* of poetry in Burushaski, his mother tongue, which is a language isolate and is known as “*Bābā-yi Burushaski*” (Father of Burushaski) for his services to it. He has composed poetry in three other languages: Persian, Urdu and Turkish. He coined the term “Spiritual Science” and his contribution to it is widely recognised. His works include “The Wise Qur'ān 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.

