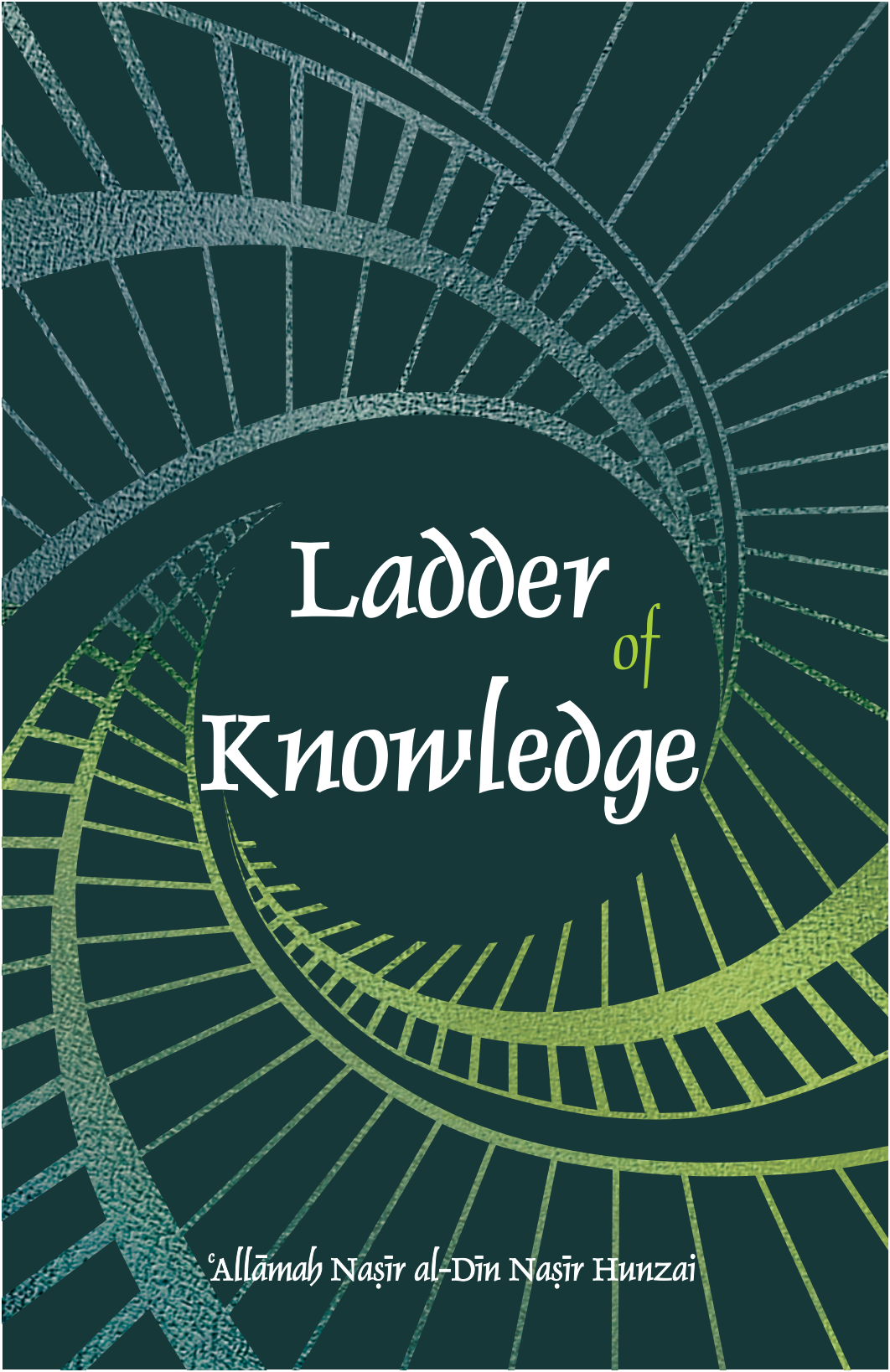




Ladder^{of} Knowledge

‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

Ladder of Knowledge

(*‘Ilm kī Sīrhī*)

by

‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

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Urooj Fatimah has prepared the Index with care and dedication and no doubt as a young volunteer she will have learnt much from this exercise.

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All the above mentioned who practically worked on this publication were of course helped enormously by the angel-like prayers of the true members of our educational and civil society organisation whose main goal is to preserve and spread the esoteric knowledge of the present spiritual cycle. They remind us of the powerful words of our 49th Imām, Mawlānā Shāh Karīm al-Ḥusaynī who, in his speech at the Parliament of Canada in 2014, said:

“... a cherished principle in Shia Ismaili culture — the importance of contributing one’s individual energies on a voluntary basis to improving the lives of others. This is not a matter of philanthropy, but rather of self-fulfilment — ‘enlightened self-fulfilment’.”

Dedication

The English translation of *‘Ilm kī Sīrhi*, “Ladder of Knowledge”, which is an addition to the existing treasure of books of Ustād-i Buzurgwār, ‘Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai, is being sponsored by the family of Al-Wā‘iz Riyaz Momin, who are an excellent model of unity, loyalty and generosity to serve the cause of esoteric knowledge of the Imām of the time.

Riyaz, the son of Dostmahommad Janmahommad Momin and Shahsultan Pirmahommad and Rozina, the daughter of Karim Noormohammad Momin and Zarina Ladji and their son Aminuddin are blessed with the unanimous understanding of the “purpose of their lives” and share the enthusiasm to serve the Imām and the faith in the field of intellectual and spiritual growth through Divine remembrance and the knowledge of certainty (*‘ilmul-yaqīn*). All three of them have a commendable record of voluntary service in the *jamā‘at*, *al-ḥamdu li’llāh!*

Riyaz served as an honorary *al-wā‘iz* and teacher from 1990 and graduated from the International Wā‘zīn Training Programme at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in 2017. He also had the opportunity to serve on the Aga Khan Education Board and with the Aga Khan Foundation. During his voluntary service with the Partnership Walk organized by the AKF, he had the memorable opportunity to brief Princess Zahra and Mr. Mark Boyden when they attended the Houston event in 1998.

Rozina too, has a commendable record of engagement with the *jamā‘at*. She also taught at a Religious Education Centre in Pakistan. Currently, she teaches Early Childhood Education in Houston. She is passionate about learning and reciting Ustād-i Buzurgwār’s poetry. Both Rozina and Riyaz are actively volunteering to teach the younger generation the esoteric aspect of our faith.

Aminuddin, who was born in January 2006 and is presently studying Computer Science at the University of Texas in Austin, having been brought up in a home where due importance is given to live by the *mubārak farmāns* of the Imām of the time, has shown great interest and commitment to learning and reciting Gināns, Farmāns and Qur’ānic verses in *Jamāʿat-khānah*. Father and son have also participated in the Global Encounters for Youth and Adults in Pakistan and East Africa respectively.

This dedication should end in their own words:

“We feel truly blessed and grateful to Mawlānā Ḥāẓir Imām for giving us the opportunity to gain deeper knowledge and understanding of our faith through the teachings of Ustād-i Buzurgwār. We are also grateful for the opportunity to share this knowledge with the *jamāʿat*.

We are deeply thankful to our parents for their love, guidance and prayers, which have been a constant source of strength and inspiration throughout our journey.

We hope and pray that, with the blessings of Mawlānā Ḥāẓir Imām, we can continue this spiritual journey with sincerity, knowledge, humility and dedicated service to the *jamāʿat*.”

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).

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Foreword

By the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

O my insignificant lower “I”! Merge in Him through expressing humble and ardent gratitude to God for His great favours! O ignorant heart! Never claim that you have accomplished any work of knowledge! O partial intellect! Never forget the time of indigence when the wealth of knowledge was beyond your capacity! O humble Naşîr, conceive your past and remember how the doors of knowledge and wisdom were closed and locked! Tell me, which kind Sovereign opened these doors at last! It was the holy Prophet^(s) and his true successor, who is the embodied light and the magnanimous Imām^(c)!

The Name of this Book: Respected readers! This book, “Ladder of Knowledge” is before you. Like several others, it too is a collection of some articles. Since this humble slave has accepted that this knowledge does not belong to him, but to a sacred personality, there cannot be any doubt of self-praise in introducing [the articles] related to knowledge and recognition. Thus, truly speaking, each article in this book is of itself an extremely useful book. In this sense, “Ladder of Knowledge” consists of several key books. I am absolutely sure that every wise person who will look at this collection from this viewpoint will give the same importance to it.

“Ladder”: Although apparently it is an ordinary object, nonetheless its example in the Qur’ān and Islam is full of wisdom. One Qur’ānic synonym for it is “*Sullam*” (52:38; 6:35) and another is “*Ma‘ārij* (sing. *mi‘rāj*)” (43:33; 70:3). Further, gradational ladder is mentioned everywhere in the Qur’ān.

Everything is like a Ladder: Among the three kingdoms, that is mineral, vegetative and animal, each of them with respect to genesis and creation is as if a ladder, because everything becomes

complete by progressing step by step. This is the law of nature and Islam is according to the same law. Thus, secular and religious knowledge is also like a ladder. It would be a matter of great regret if we were not sure of the fact that true knowledge too, like all other things is a ladder, which has many steps, that is, ranks or grades. Every ambitious *mu'min* by Divine *ta'yid* (spiritual help) climbs this ladder of knowledge rung by rung because the ladder is a mercy, had it not existed there would be despondency.

Path (ṣirāṭ) and Ladder: With reference to the noble Qur'ān, the light of guidance is compared with and likened to not only a path, but also to God's rope and the ladder of knowledge, because the ultimate object (*mamsūl*) of all these examples mentioned in the wise Qur'ān is only one, and that is Light (*nūr*).

The Ladder of the Throne (‘arsh): Just as the lower end of the rays of the sun is on the earth and the higher in the sun itself, similarly one end of the luminous rope of God is in His hand and the other is among the people. The same example is applicable to the straight path as well as to the ladder of the light, which is the ladder of ranks, as the Qur'ān says (40:15): “The exalter of ranks, the Lord of the ‘arsh.” This indicates that the ladder of ranks has passed through the heavens and reached the Throne (‘arsh). The purpose of the Lord of the Throne is to exalt all other ranks up to the light of the Throne behind the Prophets and Imāms, because observing in the light of this verse, we come to know that God exalts not only the big ranks but also the small ones to the Throne. Further, this is never different from merging in Allāh (*fanā' fi'llāh*) or becoming merged in the Origin (*aṣl sē wāṣil*) whereas God is not the Throne, but the Lord of the Throne. That is to say that if God's extreme proximity and merging in Him is possible, how can reaching the Throne be impossible?

Ladders (ma‘ārij): It is mentioned in verses (70:3-4): “From Allāh, the Lord of ladders, to Whom the angels and the Spirit ascend in a day whereof the span is fifty thousand years.” The *ta'wīl* wisdom of these verses is that the small *jummāl* of 50,000 is five, which means *Nāṭiq*, *Asās*, Imām, *ḥujjat* and *dā'ī* and that people reach

God's presence through this ladder, because according to the holy Prophet's saying everything has a door. Thus, God's door is the Prophet, the Prophet's door is the *Asās*, *Asās'* door is the Imām, Imām's door is the *ḥujjat* and that of the *ḥujjat* is the *dā'ir*.

Different forms of *ta'wil*: One of my esteemed Ismaili friends asked me some questions with sincerity and affection about *ta'wil*. I answered him and said: Does the Imām of the time in the position of the Teacher (*mu'allim*) of the Qur'ān teach *tanzil* (exoteric aspect) or *ta'wil* (esoteric aspect)? He replied: Imām is the owner of *ta'wil*, therefore his instructions and teachings are mostly *ta'wils*. I humbly told him: "May Allāh bless you. You have spoken the truth, because from the beginning to now the pure Imāms, by Divine command have created a world of *ta'wil*. We are used to living in this world of *ta'wil*. Therefore, we speak of *ta'wil* and we consider this our good fortune." A synonym of *ta'wil* is wisdom (*ḥikmat*). If somebody says to you or me: Do not learn wisdom, nor teach it to others, this will be contrary to the holy Qur'ān because according to it there is abundant goodness in wisdom. Moreover, the Qur'ān draws attention to different forms of wisdom:

- a) What are the inner bounties (31:20) of God? Spiritual knowledge, that is, *ta'wil*.
- b) The Qur'ān teaches us to reflect deeply on the universe and on ourselves, so what would be the name of a successful reflective result? It would be called reality, wisdom and *ta'wil*.
- c) The Qur'ān's light is hidden in the personality of the exalted Imām, if a *ta'wil* becomes clear to a *mu'min* in the illumination of that light, then he should benefit from it.
- d) At the present time, apart from the holy family of the Imām there is no *pīr* or *ḥujjat*. Nonetheless, the holy Imām has not closed the door of spiritual progress for *mu'mins*. Indeed, it has remained open as ever. This much is enough to say here in this connection.

Small Books: Some respectable people out of well-wishing tell us to publish voluminous books. We are wholeheartedly grateful for

their kind suggestion. However, we cannot resist expressing our helplessness also, that in this deluge of material progress, readers in their spare time can indeed read small religious texts one by one, but to do the same with voluminous books has a very meagre chance. This is the reason that a few years back Mr. Ghulam Haydar Bandah Ali, who was the President of the Ismailia Association for Pakistan at that time, suggested to me that I should publish small books.

History for Future Generations: The historical treasure of nations is their great capital. If there is a nation which has no history at all or it is incomplete, it is considered a matter of regret. The same is the case with an organisation. I therefore, sincerely suggest to the respected office-bearers of Khānah-yi Hikmat, Idārah-yi ʿĀrif and Burushaski Research Academy to continue to record all events of a historical nature, so that it may be available when needed.

The history which will be written for future generations cannot ignore or forget the invaluable services of Mr. Fath Ali Habib, Life President of Khānah-yi Hikmat, Mr. Muhammad Abdul Aziz, President of Idārah-yi ʿĀrif, who even during the storms of harsh difficulties demonstrated the mettle of manliness without any fear. If I hide the praiseworthy endeavours of such patrons of knowledge from the sight of historians and attribute every feat to my humble self, God will duly question me on the Day of resurrection. [He will say] Such a great success became possible because the office-bearers and members [of these organisations] were fully co-operative.

It is also an important part of history-making that our friends and students of the East and West have come together to build an office in Gilgit. Their work is reaching completion under the supervision of an outstanding constructive committee under the Chairmanship of Subedar Major Retired Abdul Hakim *ṣāhib*, who has rendered extremely important services. Another important member of the committee is Mr. Qurban Ali Khan *ṣāhib*. They are highly respected not only for their work on this committee, but are among those renowned representatives of the community who are ever ready to

lead and benefit the community.

Translations of some Books: There are many occasions of *giryah-ū zāri* of this *darwish* with a wounded heart, which should be described in detail some other time. Among them, one occasion is when an attractive and splendid translation of my book is read in front of me. God knows what is the secret wisdom in it. Indeed, it occurs to me that in this on the one hand is the expression of gratitude and on the other, there is an extremely humble prayer for those who, day and night working strenuously expend their blood and kindle the lamp of their mind to accomplish such a magnificent feat. These highly respected scholars who are loved by the community, have translated some books of *Khānah-yi Hikmat*. God willing! In time the world will duly appreciate their work.

Are my books difficult? Some friends have complained that my books with respect to words and meanings are difficult. Thus, they suggest that I should use very simple words. In this connection, I would like to say that most of the subjects about which I write may be difficult for beginners, otherwise, mostly I use an easy and simple style of writing. However, those of my friends who have been reading my books from the beginning, have no such complaint.

Progress in knowledge and literature is impossible without accepting some new words and meanings each time, turning the pages of authentic dictionaries time and again, adding new words day by day, listening to and speaking to some friends, teaching some and sitting in an assembly of knowledge, doing some worship at some time and praying sometimes, serving knowledge, creating enthusiasm for it, observing the praise of knowledge in the light of the *Qur'ān*, *ḥadīs* and *farmāns* and reflecting on how to progress more in knowledge. A merchant is successful in his business because he knows very well all the ways of strengthening and progressing his business. In the same way, we have to reflect more and more on how one can progress further in knowledge.

The collection of my books is a gradational “ladder”. Therefore, every wise reader is requested to climb it step by step from the

bottom to the top so that this endeavour can be estimated correctly. Come! Let us all together pray with humility in the Divine court: O our Lord! Your mercy and knowledge encompass everything, forgive us our shortcomings! Bless us much more than our expectations in this humble service for knowledge and make it useful to all! *Āmin!* O the Lord of the worlds!

Humble slave,

N. N. Hunzai,

13 Rabī^c II, 1406/26th December, 1985

A Great Question in the Heart (*qalb*) of the Qur'ān

This title means that there is a very great question, rather it should be said that there is a collection of some very important questions in the heart of the Qur'ān, that is, the *sūrah* of *Yā-Sīn* (36), to which due attention has not been given. I am deeply grateful to an esteemed Professor, who out of love for knowledge drew my attention to this wisdom-filled question by telephone on 25th March, 1985. The questions are as follows, keeping verses 36:13-22 in view:

- a) Allāh commanded the holy Prophet: Explain to them the example of the people of the town to whom three messengers were sent one after another. Regarding this Qur'ānic teaching, the first question which arises is: Why did God say: "Explain an example to them" while all the examples He Himself has mentioned in the Qur'ān are the equivocal verses (3:7) requiring *ta'wīl*? Can it be correct if we conceive and accept that this Divine Command is related to presenting an example at the station of spirituality?

First of all, the important principle of the wise Qur'ān is that if more than one messenger is mentioned simultaneously, it actually means that the messenger is only one and the rest are his *ḥudūd* and the word '*rasūl*' can be applied to them in the literal sense, just as in the time of Prophethood any of the holy Prophet's envoys, i.e., messengers used to be called *rasūl*, that is, sent by God's Messenger. See also verse (27:35) where Queen Bilqīs' envoys are called '*al-mursalūn*'. However, this does not mean that the messengers who came to the above-mentioned town were like ordinary envoys, rather, as mentioned earlier they were the *nāṭiq*'s *ḥudūd*. The explanation of this meaning is that prior to the holy Prophet's time, God had appointed an *asās* with the *nāṭiq* of every major cycle and then by the appointment of the Imām of the time

the *daʿwat* was strengthened to continue it and was made the means to reveal the hidden *taʿwīl*. Thus, the holy Prophet by Divine Command demonstrated the practical example of this fact at the place of spirituality.

- b) Which town did God send two messengers to its people, but they belied them both? There came to them a third messenger, yet they continued to belie them, although they believed in “*Ar-Raḥmān*” (the Compassionate). How was the third messenger strengthened? What kind of strength was it?

It is God’s wisdom-filled habit that He always speaks at the peak of the ranks, so that His Command may belong specially to the highest rank and generally to the subordinate ranks. This means that the town (*qaryah*) here stands for this world, where every *nāṭiq* came with the glory mentioned above. That is, the *nāṭiq* appeared first of all and then the *asās* followed by the Imām of every age were appointed. Under this town is included the town of personality because this desired example is in spirituality, which is in the microcosm, which in turn is the specimen and mirror of the macrocosm. There are many names for the former, such as the personal world, the world of particles, minor vicegerency, etc. Thus, those who are able to see in the example of spirituality, saw that first of all the *nāṭiq* manifested in the world of religion followed by the *asās* and the Imāms and how the Imām of the time verified the *nāṭiq* and *asās* through knowledge and wisdom.

- c) From verse (36:15), it is clear that the people of the town were not disbelievers, they were only belying the messengers. What was the main cause of this?

The people of the town (world) never denied God’s existence, but they were not able to recognise their Prophet and other *ḥudūd*. If they had recognised themselves, they would have been able to recognise their Messenger and would not have made his human appearance a subject of contention, but they could not do this. The only reason for this was that they were

trying to test the Perfect Human beings by the touchstone of their immature and imperfect humanity. How can an imperfect human being possibly test and assess a Perfect Human being?

- d) When they belied the messengers, they neither showed them a miracle nor did they present an argument, they only said: “Our Lord knows that we are indeed sent to you.” What is the secret in this?

The most useful miracle for people is knowledge and wisdom, therefore the Messengers by saying: “Our Lord knows that we are indeed sent unto you” is an indication to knowledge. Had those people not been ignorant and had they been wise, they would have recognised the Prophets and obeyed them and would have thus benefitted from them.

- e) On this occasion why did they consider the messengers inauspicious? And why did they say: “If you do not desist continuing this *da‘wat*, we will surely stone you, and grievous torture will befall you from us?”

People in this world are being tested by calamities and sufferings of which they themselves are the main cause. However, the disbelievers due to their ignorance have even ascribed these to the Messengers and their ominousness. Stoning means to overpower in discussion and debate and the *ta‘wil* of grievous torture is intellectual torture. That is, the ignorant ones conjectured that it would be easy to afflict the Prophets with intellectual torture by defeating them in debate, even though they themselves were afflicted by the torture of ignorance.

- f) Here, this point is really amazing: “And there came from the uppermost part of the city a man running. He said: O my people! Follow the messengers.” Who was this person? What can be the *ta‘wil* of his running? Who informed him that his people were suffering loss?

The person who came with speed from the uppermost corner of the town was the *Imām-i mutimm*, dressed in the *ibdāʿī* shirt, therefore he came like lightning. He belongs to the uppermost corner of the city of corporeality, i.e., his position is at the end of the physical *ḥudūd*. Note that the astral body or *ibdāʿī* shirt is specific to the seventh Imām. Thus, the uppermost corner of the city means the subtle body, that is, the astral body, which is the miraculous attire of Ḥaẓrat-i Qā'im^(c).

- g) What wisdom is hidden in the person who reached there with the speed of lightning and the way he strengthened the Divine *daʿwat* by his own nature? Can we say that he was the owner of the *ibdāʿī* shirt?

That person who is perfect himself and perfects others, became present with great rapidity from the extreme end of the city of corporeality was the *Imām-i mutimm*, i.e., Ḥaẓrat-i Qā'im^(c), who verified the true *daʿwat* by establishing his *ibdāʿī* origination as the greatest miracle of the Divine religion. Yes, he always has the *ibdāʿī* shirt as mentioned in verse (30:24): “And among His miracles is that He shows you the lightning (i.e., the luminous body) as a fear and hope.” The same subject is also in verse (13:12). If someone sees the luminous body, they will definitely fall in the perplexity of fear and hope. Ask your own heart why should it be so? If a U.F.O. were to appear when someone is alone, obviously not only would there be fear, but also hope that it should be subjugated to them!

Those verses of the *sūrah* of *Yā-Sin* about which questions were asked have been sufficiently answered. Now, it is necessary to see in what sense did the holy Prophet give this title to it as he says: “Everything has a heart and the heart of the Qurʾān is *Yā-Sin*”?¹ The wise people know that the importance and praise of the *sūrah* of *Yā-Sin* is due to its meaning, knowledge and wisdom. Indeed, there must be some secret, or a key or some indication to a central

¹ Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā Tirmizī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Tirmizī* (Riyadh, 1999), p. 645, *ḥadīṣ*: 2887

power such as a heart in it. Yes, it is absolutely correct that the universal position of the manifest Imām is mentioned in it. The wisdom-filled Divine guidance (36:12) is: “Verily We revive the spiritual and physically dead.” There are two kinds of the dead: one is those who die spiritually before the physical death, in which there is great [spiritual] progress and the other is those who die physically. “And We write down what they sent forward and what they have left behind. And We have encompassed everything in a manifest Imām (*Imām-i mubīn*).”

Another name of the manifest Imām is the world of particles in which God, by establishing the resurrection, revives the dead and the religious and worldly deeds of people are also recorded in it. This means that the intellectual, spiritual and physical essence of the universe and the creatures is centred in the personal world of the exalted Imām. There is now a bright fact for you, that just as the omnipotent God enfolds the heavens and the earth, i.e., everything in His hand, the observation of this miracle also takes place in the personal world of the pure, manifest Imām. In short, there is no verse in the wise Qur’ān in which there is no mention of the particles of the soul and thus may not be linked to the above-mentioned subject.

One has to correctly reflect on the example of the human heart in order to understand properly the wisdom of the Qur’ān’s heart. The human heart not only causes the waves of life to run through the blood in the human body, but also centres life again through the circulation of blood so that it may be renewed. Similarly, the Qur’ān’s heart, the manifest Imām by Divine Command on the one side spreads the spirit of *ta’wīl* in the entire Qur’ān and on the other hand, enfolds it [within himself], so that the spirit of the Qur’ān according to the law of nature always remains fresh.

The holy Prophet in this example of the Qur’ān’s heart is alluding to the centrality of the heavenly Book, who in the time of Prophethood was he himself, that is, the light or the spirit of the Qur’ān (42:52), which is a universally accepted reality.

27th March, 1985

Luminous Movement

1. For the subject of “Luminous Movement” it is important first to describe the external or physical light, followed by the internal or spiritual light so that the object (*mamsūl*) may be recognised through its example (*miṣāl*). Thus, in this connection, it is essential that according to the plan of Divine wisdom, an example of the luminous lamp be borne in mind so that the realities and recognitions may be clear in the light of the holy Qur’ān, since in it the light of God and His Messenger is compared and likened to a ‘*miṣbāḥ*’ (24:35) and ‘*sirāj^{an}*’ (33:46) respectively. It is obvious that both these words mean a ‘lamp’ and numerous wisdoms are hidden in this example.

2. Reflect well and understand that the luminous lamp is based on five ranks, which are: a vessel of the lamp, oil, wick, flame and scattered light. Similarly, both the words *miṣbāḥ* and *sirāj^{an}* also consist of five letters, such as *mīm*, *ṣād*, *bā’*, *alif* and *ḥā’*, and *sin*, *rā’*, *alif*, *jīm* and *alif* respectively. This is the symbol of the five spiritual *ḥudūd* and five physical ones, which are the Pen (*Qalam*), Tablet (*Lawḥ*), Isrāfīl, Mikā’īl and Jibrā’īl, and *nāṭiq*, *asās*, Imām, *ḥujjat* and *dā’i*. This means that wherever in the Qur’ān the word light and its synonyms occur there is necessarily the example of the lamp in all of them as well as the wisdom-filled mention of the above-mentioned *ḥudūd*. This is because all the verses of light have one centre of meaning and metaphor, in which setting aside the sun which is the source of all physical light, the metaphor of a household lamp has been used for the Divine light.

3. A *ḥadīṣ* is quoted here about the five spiritual *ḥudūd*, in which it is reported: “The holy Prophet used to get the *wahy* (inspiration, revelation) from Jibrā’īl, who used to get it from Mikā’īl, who received it from Isrāfīl, who used to receive it from the *Lawḥ* (Tablet), who used to get it from the *Qalam* (the Pen).”¹ Similarly, there are five physical *ḥudūd*, through whom the light of *ta’wīl* can

reach the *mu'mins*. They are *nāṭiq*, *asās*, Imām, *ḥujjat* and *dā'ir*.

4. The gist of what is mentioned in verses (21:104; 39:67) is that on the day of Resurrection, God will roll up the heaven and the earth in His blessed hand. If looked at from one aspect, this means that nothing of the existents and creatures is wasted, rather the Divine hand takes everything of the universe in its wisdom-filled fist. Thus, this command is applicable not only to the personal world but also to the world of religion that all its *ḥudūd* during the cycle of Resurrection will merge in the Imām^(c) of the time. That has actually happened today. However, if you want to see the Resurrection from a physical and collective aspect, it is a great and lengthy age, which has started. However, as far as the 'knowledge of *ḥudūd*' is concerned, it is necessary for every wise *mu'min* because just as the knowledge of history is based on the personalities of the past, the knowledge of *ta'wil* depends on the *ḥudūd* of religion (*ḥudūd-i dīn*). In other words, the knowledge of *ta'wil* is linked with the 'recognition of *ḥudūd*'.

5. Now, let us consider the movement of material light: what is its state? Everybody can see that the lamp's oil has no movement by itself, but it can move forth by means of the wick and flame and transform into light becoming sublime and ever-spreading. This is an example of the fact that all true *mu'mins* can progress by following the Imām^(c) of the time and reach a place where there is only light. When they merge in it, the great secret is divulged to them that they were eternally merged in it.

6. The oil of the lamp constantly merges in the lamp through the wick and the flame, which too, constantly continues to merge in the scattered light. Had it been possible for the scattered light to remain in every part of the house, it would not be necessary to light the lamp again. However, the law of nature does not allow the scattered light which severs from its fountainhead to remain intact and illumine the surroundings. Therefore, it is necessary to

¹ Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-Zīnah*, ed. Ḥusayn al-Hamdānī (Sanaa, 1994), p. 324

keep the flame intact so that the rays of light emit every moment from this luminous fountain. This example is not limited only to the lamp of a house but is applicable to every source of light, including the fountainhead of the sun. This means that the workshop of light, whether it is physical or spiritual, is in constant movement. It always scatters light constantly without any pause or delay. Just as the powerhouse of a highly advanced city works day and night and the people's comfort lies in this very state that it constantly continues to work.

7. The vessel of the lamp exemplifies the *dā'ir* and the olive oil the *hujjat* and the wick in it, the Imām, who really is the means of guidance, the flame is the symbol of the *asās*, it is he whose rank is active light (*nūr-i fā'il*) and the scattered light is the rank of the *nā'iq*, because he is the mercy for the world.

8. No Muslim can have any doubt in the Qur'ānic fact that God sent the holy Prophet as a mercy for all the worlds (21:107). However, every seeker of reality has a question hidden in their heart as to which worlds was the holy Prophet sent to in the magnificent rank of universal mercy. Can it be correct to say that these worlds, which are in thousands are related to the minerals, vegetables and animals? No, this is not the correct answer, because the Compassionate and Merciful's mercy is extremely special, therefore we should say that this mercy according to the law of honour and preference (17:70) is specific to the children of Ādam. Thus, the worlds mean Ādam and the children of Ādam, among whom those who are special are actual personal worlds and those who are common are potential personal worlds. The gist of this statement is that the holy Prophet's sacred light in the personal world of every Perfect Human Being as a 'mercy' actually surrounds [every person].

9. In verses (33:45-46), there is very important and wisdom-filled Divine guidance: "O Prophet! Verily We have sent you as a witness and a bearer of glad tidings and a warner and as one who invites to God by His permission and as a luminous lamp (*sirāj^{an} munirā*)." Some wisdoms of this blessed guidance follow as under:

- a. The luminous lamp mentioned at the end of the two above-mentioned verses is directly linked to the sacred verse full of extremely magnificent and sublime wisdoms, “Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth ...”, in which Allāh’s light is compared with a luminous lamp (24:35). Wise people by this verse become absolutely sure that undoubtedly Allāh’s light is the light of the Prophet and the Prophet’s light is Allāh’s light. These are the relationships of the same light, sometimes it is related to God and sometimes to the Prophet.
- b. The luminous movement of the ‘luminous lamp’ is extremely rapid. When the luminous lamp is embodied in the subtle body and where it is conceived in luminous conception (*nūrī taṣawwur*), there it traverses all distances of time and space in the blink of an eye and faster than a single moment reaches the place of *azal* and *abad*. Thus, in the Qur’ān “*rajul^{un} yas^{cā}*” (28:20; 36:20) is mentioned, which is about the *ibdā’ī* human being, and also the way “*yas^{cā} nūruhum*” (57:12; 66:8) is mentioned, it is about the spiritual light. Rapid movement of light is mentioned in the *ta’wīl* of these verses.
- c. The lamp of guidance is needed at three places: the place of the body, which is apparent (*zāhir*), place of the soul which is hidden (*bāṭin*) and the place of the intellect, which is hidden of the hidden (*bāṭin* of *bāṭin*). Thus, the wise Qur’ān in its special *ta’wīlī* allusion says that the purpose of appointing light is that *mu’mīns* may continue to walk in these places and progress in every place (*tamshūna bi-hī* (57:28)) ‘so that you may be able to walk in the illumination of this light’).
- d. The holy Prophet was the luminous lamp of advice, guidance, knowledge and wisdom. He was able to illumine the hearts and souls of the people through the gradual teachings of the *da’wat-i haqq* or the true *da’wat*. Thus, those who accepted Islam were naturally ahead and different with respect to the levels of light. There cannot be any surprise if in this connection, God and His Messenger perfect an individual (i.e., complete his light) so that the Divine bounties may be

complete for people.

10. Human imagination, whether more or less illumined, can move with extreme rapidity. It can in a moment reach not only the east and the west but also the heights of heaven. Conceptually in a way, it can fly up to the supreme Throne in the blink of an eye. For instance, the moment someone pays attention to the story of the ascension (*miʿrāj*), their imagination reaches the Throne. Thus, imagination in human beings is that spiritual flight by which they can instantly traverse all distances of space and time. According to another example, imagination is an amazing Divine mirror which can at once present anything heard, observed or known to the human mind. However, this capacity in an ordinary person, due to its being immature and incomplete works in the darkness of doubts, suspicions and ignorance. From these examples, a wise *muʿmin* can estimate what the status of the all-encompassing and ever-reaching of the blessed and sacred personality whom Almighty God has made the luminous lamp of the light of guidance be and how easily it can surround the heaven and earth of the personal world.

11. All individuals have within themselves their personal and individual world, which is made from the external world. Two reliable witnesses of its existence are dream and imagination. This personal world is mentioned abundantly in the Glorious Qurʾān and in it are hidden the resurrection and the world hereafter. If you and others, as a result of knowledge and action see your own spiritual world illumined and resplendent and observe its heaven and earth, whose light is it which has illumined it? It has to be Allāh's, because He is the light of the heavens and the earth (24:35), it has to be the Prophet's, because He has sent him as a luminous lamp (33:46). It also has to be the Imām's, because it was this rank [of the Imām] in which was arranged the guidance of the future in the time of Prophethood (57:28), and this is also the people of the faith's light because the complete result of the true obedience of Allāh, the Prophet and the *ulu'l-amr* [i.e., the Imām] is received in the form of light (57:12; 66:8). Thus, it is light which is everything!

12. It was intended to provide only a few points and allusions

regarding luminous movement, whereas the details of this subject can be quite lengthy. In any case, the subject of light is extremely important from every aspect, because all the purports of the Qur'ān are centred on this subject and from here, they spread throughout the Qur'ān, just as the entire universe is gradually gathered together in the fountainhead of the sun and then turns into light and simultaneously it continues to spread again. Thus, the real and universal movement of light is circular.

26th June, 1985

Luminous Relationships

1. Relationship is of two kinds: physical and spiritual. Another name for a spiritual relationship is a luminous relationship. This heavenly relationship, which is higher and more sacred than every kind of external and physical relationship, first of all and on the most sublime levels, links the Prophets and Imāms to one another. The pearls of these sacred personalities are threaded in the necklace of unity like a unique pearl, i.e., the Single Soul (6:98; 31:28) and are accommodated in a single bodily attire. If this fact is observed with the inner eye, the exemplary act which the true guides have collectively presented to all the communities will definitely become known, so that they, according to the guidance of their time, may walk on the straight path and become attached to the thread of light (*rishtah-yi nūr*).

2. The literal meaning of *rishtah* is thread and the relationship among human beings, such as parents and children is called *rishtah* because of the fact that it is like the thread of a rosary (*tasbeḥ*), which keeps the beads linked to one another, or a necklace of pearls strung together or the string which keeps a garland of flowers intact. Here, the point should also be remembered that the wise Qur'ān has not left any subject or any example outside the domain of its description. Thus, the Qur'ānic example of the string of luminosity is 'Allāh's Rope' (3:103), and it is also mentioned in the same verse that Muslims are spiritual brothers. You are aware that Islam's door is open to the people of the entire world (7:158). Thus, the people of every *ummat* can merge in the unity of the luminous rope by holding fast to God's rope.

3. In the time of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) and Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā^(c), those people who had entered the circle of Religion had held fast to God's rope once, but most of them let loose the hand of knowledge and action, which is why when they were tested, they let go of the string of luminosity and their luminous relationship was severed.

Alluding to this, we Muslims are commanded by God: “And hold fast together Allāh’s rope and do not scatter into groups.” (3:103). However, the present state is visible to all.

4. Just as the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) is the foundation of all Qur’ānic stories, similarly the subject of the luminous thread also starts from it. Thus, the wise Qur’ān mentions ‘*bani Ādam*’ and ‘*zurriyyat* of Ādam’ in (7:26, 27, 31, 35, 172; 17:70; 19:58; 36:60), and the translation of these two terms is children (*awlād*, pl. of *walad*). If I ask the question: According to the holy Qur’ān who are Ādam’s children? Someone may instantly answer: All those people who are sovereign over other creatures [i.e., human beings] are Ādam’s children. Although this answer is correct for the common people, it is not so for the chosen ones, because according to the wise Qur’ān, many people have fallen down from the status of humanity and are included among the cattle (7:179; 25:44). This condition of theirs is due to disobedience. It is the Divine law that every disobedient person be excluded from the luminous relationship, even if it is Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ^(c)’s son. Thus, in reality, Ādam’s children are none other than five groups or classes, who are the Prophets, the Truthful ones, the Witnesses, the Righteous and the obedient ones. It is they, who due to being Ādam’s children in a true sense, have the luminous relationships. That is, on the one side their luminous relationship is from Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) and on the other, among themselves (4:69).

5. Question: What is the secret that Ādam and Ḥawwā are considered the parents of people in the wise Qur’ān, despite the fact that they are their great parents (7:172)?

Answer: Some may attribute this to the custom of the Arabic language, but its reality is other than this. That is, with the passing of time, the physical relationship becomes more and more remote, but conversely, the spiritual (luminous) relationship remains forever intact, because according to ‘light upon light’ (24:35) Ādam’s light is in the Imām^(c) of the time and Prophets and Imāms are like a Single Soul.

6. Question: The holy Qur'ān describes Hābīl and Qābīl as “*Ibnay Ādam*” (the two sons of Ādam, 5:27). There is no doubt that in the beginning, Qābīl was among Ādam’s sons, but where is the mention of his being severed from the luminous relationship?

Answer: Jealousy is a very bad thing, due to which Qābīl killed his brother Hābīl and according to Divine command became among the losers (5:30). His greatest loss was that he did not remain among Ādam’s children. When his hand of obedience was severed from God’s rope, his relationship with the light also ceased. Therefore, every *mu’min* should save themselves from jealousy, lest it may incite to the loss of a *mu’min* brother. Do not think that Qābīl was bad from the very beginning, he had many good deeds. However, when jealousy was created in his heart, it devoured all his good deeds as fire consumes wood. It is in this meaning that he became among the losers. All this exposition regarding deeds is hidden in the word ‘losers’ (*khāsirūn*, 5:30).

7. Question: Why is the word ‘light’ not mentioned in Ādam’s story? Did he teach the “knowledge of names” (*‘ilm-i asmā’*) to angels physically or spiritually? What was the angels’ relationship with Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c)?

Answer: Although the word ‘light’ is not mentioned in Ādam’s story, its meaning is mentioned in the words “*Rūḥī*” (My soul, 15:29) and “*Rūḥihi*” (His soul, 32:9), because God’s soul is His light. Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) had taught the angels in the personal world which is the spiritual world. Their relationship with Ādam was a luminous relationship because they were the souls of the *mu’mins* of that age. Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) had illumined the souls of *mu’mins* with luminous knowledge thus establishing the relationship of light.

8. In Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ^(c)’s Qur’ānic story there are clear examples of God’s rope and the luminous relationship. One of them is Canaan, who was his physical son, but due to disobedience he was severed from the spiritual chain and luminous relationship and was cast afar and Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ^(c)’s intercession could not spare him because his

conduct was not righteous (11:46). Another example is that several *mu'mins* due to their obedience by entering the luminous house were called the People of the Prophet's house (*ahl-i bayt*) and their luminous relationship there became extremely strong (71:28). The third example is that although some people had not entered the house of spirituality yet through their faith, they were attached to the luminous relationship (71:28).

9. The holy Qur'ān representing Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c), says: "So whoever follows me, he is surely of me." (14:36). This verse mentions all the relationships of light, such as luminous child, luminous parents, brothers, sisters, etc. Its explanation is such that Ḥaẓrat-i Ismā'īl^(c) followed Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) and so became the son of the light and then he himself became the light, and then he became the father of the light. This happens in the world of religion. There are examples of this in the personal world as well, such as Salmān-i Fārsī who became the son of the light, then gradually he became the light himself and thereafter in the personal world, the light told him: Now I am your son. In this sense, he became the father of the light. This is the extreme favour of the light.

10. God says: "Verily Ibrāhīm was an obedient *ummat*" (6:120) and (in his personal world) he was absolutely single-minded. The wisdom of this verse is that the earlier and the later souls were gathered together in his personal world. Among them the closest ones had become his "I" (*anā*). It is in this sense that he had become an *ummat*, which is the final rank of the luminous relationship.

11. It can be seen in the Qur'ān (8:28; 63:9) that worldly wealth and children are a trial and a cause of forgetting Divine remembrance. If this is the case, why did Ḥaẓrat-i Ya'qūb^(c) shed tears for Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c)? This case is not related to the physical relationship, rather it is the story of the luminous relationship because according to the Divine command the Imāmat had transferred from Ḥaẓrat-i Ya'qūb^(c) to Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c). Therefore, the father was shedding tears for the sake of the *didār* of the light of Imāmat. When the exalted Imām's father does not raise his head with pride, but bows down in front of the light of Imāmat with humility as in the case of

Ḥaẓrat-i Ya^cqūb^(c) (12:100), can there be a greater grandeur of the light of Imāmat?

12. God casts heavenly love on every Prophet and Imām from His special presence. If a fortunate person receives this love for the Messenger and the Imām, [only] then as a result his relationship is established with the holy light. An example of this in the noble Qur’ān is Āsiyah, the Pharoah’s wife. The splendour of the lightning of true love from Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c)’s side shone on her heart (20:39), due to which God graced her to utter this prayer: “O Lord build for me a house near You in paradise.” (66:11)

13. Just as numerous closest souls being merged in Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) had become his “I”, similarly true *mu’mins* merge in the light of the holy Imāms and in this merging is their paradise and spiritual kingdom, as according to the Qur’ān Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) said to his people: “O my people! Remember the bounties of Allāh upon you, when He made Prophets from among you and made you kings [i.e., as a result of merging He made you Imāms] and gave you what He has not given to anyone in the world.” (5:20)

14. Remember well the fundamental principle that every Qur’ānic Prophet, in his many attributes, represents all the other Prophets and Imāms. Thus, Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Īsā^(c) being the Word of God (3:45) proves that every Prophet and every Imām, in his time, is the “Word of God”, that is the Supreme Name. The same applies to his title “*Masīh*”, which literally means “He who strokes with the hand”. Technically it means that he used to heal the ill by stroking with his hand. The *ta’wil* of this is that every Prophet and every Imām in their subtle body can reach the *mu’mins* to cure their spiritual diseases so that they may be able to merge in the light. To achieve this the conditions are God-fearing (*taqwā*), knowledge and abundant Divine remembrance (*ẓikr*).

15. It is mentioned in verse (2:146; 6:20) that “Those whom God had given the Book used to recognise the holy Prophet as they used to recognise their own sons.” Its *ta’wil* is that among the *ḥudūd-i dīn* those who were observing and studying the spirituality of the

heavenly Book, also knew that the luminous birth of the holy Prophet^(s) had taken place in their personal world. It is in this sense that he was their son and that the heavenly Book which was before them in the luminous state (*nūrāniyyat*) is the holy Prophet^(s)'s. It is evident from this subject that light attaches people to one another in relationships of many kinds.

16. If by the Qur'ānic phrase “*Banī Ādam*” (children of Ādam) we mean “the spiritual children of Ādam”, two facts will become clear. First, that the system of vicegerency and *da'wat* is intact in its place up to now, and this has become possible only through the chain of the Prophets and Imāms. Secondly, in every time there continues to be a successor to Ādam, by whose spiritual relationship *mu'mins* are called “*Banī Ādam*” (children of Ādam).

17. Question: The way you have presented the concept of the children of Ādam means that all his children are the people of bliss, who, in addition to salvation, also have ranks. However, in verses (36:59-64) we see that they are punished for worshipping satan and they are commanded: Enter the hell! How would you explain this?

Answer: The way the concept of the children of Ādam has been presented is absolutely correct and it is a fact that in it are included the Prophets, the Truthful, the Witnesses, the righteous and the obedient ones, that is, Prophets, *Asāses*, Imāms, *Hujjats* and the *Dā'is* together with the *mu'mins* and the covenant is taken from them according to their rank. Not worshipping satan in this covenant is related to the lowest rank. It should be remembered that nobody worships satan knowingly, but that worship is in the sense that some from among the people of faith accept the views of the adversary (satan) of the True Guide [i.e., the Imām^(c) of the time] and go astray and this very same is the worship of satan.

18. In verse (33:6) God says: “The Prophet (in his luminous relationship) with the *mu'mins* is closer to them than their own souls and his wives are their mothers.” Its *ta'wili* wisdom is that the “Real I” of the *mu'mins* is in the higher world, to which the holy Prophet^(s) is so close that it is not possible even for their own (lower) souls.

The Prophet is linked to the higher world, due to his being the spiritual father [that is, the Prophet being linked with their higher or real ‘I’ is closer to them than their own lower or shadow-like ‘I’], and his *hujjats* are their spiritual mothers as the holy Prophet^(s) said to his Supreme *Hujjat* (=Bāb, namely Mawlā ‘Alī^(c)): “O ‘Alī! I and you are the (spiritual) parents of the *mu’mins*.”

19. The holy Prophet^(s) also said: “Indeed ‘Alī is from me and I am from him.” That is, ‘Alī’s light is from me and my light is going to continue firm and established in ‘Alī and in the chain of Imāms from his children.

20. Question: It is mentioned in the verses of the wise Qur’ān (4:1; 6:98; 7:179; 39:6) that God created us from a Single Soul and then from it He created his pair (wife). Please explain to us how was it possible to be born from a single father and then the mother was born later on.

Answer: In the beginning, innumerable souls are created as spiritual particles in the loins of a man, in which a woman does not participate. Then this man has a wife, who from one aspect is created from her husband since the attribute of being wife and mother is due to the husband. This is only an example of the first stage of physical creation. Similarly, in the case of spiritual creation and completion, in the beginning, the initial existence of *mu’mins* is created from the *nātiq’s tanzil*. At that stage, it is as if they were the particles of soul in the father’s loins, but they could not be called children because they had not yet been transferred to the mother’s womb. Then according to the verse: “Then from it created its mate.” (39:6) the rank of the *Asās* becomes complete from the spirituality and teachings of the *Nātiq* and the *mu’mins* come into the *Asās*’ charge so that by his *ta’wil* their final existence may be completed. This complete entrusting is such that the human seed enters the mother’s womb for the sake of physical creation and completion. This explanation without doubt clarifies the fact that human creation, whether it is physical or spiritual, becomes complete in two stages. The first stage is the father and the second stage is the mother. Yet in this connection, the fact that the role of

the mother is paramount is not hidden from anyone.

21. In verse (22:5), it is said: “Allāh causes what He wills to remain in the wombs for an appointed time.” Its *ta’wīlī* wisdom is that there are many *mu’mins* still lying spiritually in the mother’s womb. That is, as yet they are not born spiritually. This state can be considered as Divine will or the human beings’ own negligence and laziness, nevertheless it is a fact in its own place. However, they cannot remain in the mother’s womb forever, therefore one day or another, they will be born spiritually.

22. The noble Qur’ān in its numerous verses draws attention to the natural law that other than God, everything is in a pair. How then is it possible in Islam, which is the religion of nature, that there should not be a religious and spiritual father and mother, when all the examples in the wise Qur’ān are to help people to understand the true state of religion? This explanation makes the fact absolutely certain that the Prophet and Imām are our spiritual parents.

23. In the personal world, intellect and soul are examples of Ādam and Ḥawwā’. Here by Ḥawwā’ is meant Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c)’s *Bāb*, that is, the Supreme *Hujjat*. They are also examples of the *Nāṭiq* and the *Asās*. Thus, wise people understand that it is from the intellect that the *mu’min’s* soul has the second creation, just as from Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c)’s knowledge his *Asās* (supreme *Hujjat* = *Bāb*) was born and similarly from the holy Prophet^(s)’s luminous teachings the rank of his *Asās* (‘Alī) was completed. Thus, the realities of these three examples according to the law of nature are similar.

8th July, 1985

Note: Check the references of every Qur’ānic verse in all the books and articles so that [your] study may be more and more useful.

The World of Imagination (*‘ālam-i khayāl*)

1. *‘Ālam* means ‘the world’ or ‘state’, and *khayāl* means ‘opinion, imagination, a picture or image of an external thing in one’s heart and mind, whether it is in wakefulness or dream, an immaterial figure, reflection of something in a mirror; a frightening object, for example, a scarecrow.

2. Each of the human beings who lives in this external world or macrocosm has a microcosm, which can be called the personal world. The personal world includes four states: wakefulness, imagination, dream and spirituality. This topic is about the world of imagination. Wherever there is partial information written about imagination, it will have been estimated that it is not sufficient, because initially, human beings do not have a specimen or an example through which they can understand the state and nature of spirituality and the hereafter. However, there are two good practical examples to understand this. They are imagination and dream, which [to give an analogy] are two names of the same river or ocean. However, there is indeed a conspicuous difference in that in the case of imagination one has control over it, therefore you can enjoy swimming and diving in it according to your wish and skill. [Further], if this diving is for the purpose of bringing up pearls, it becomes more praiseworthy as well. On the contrary, in the case of dream, either one drowns in the water or its flow takes them far away because they are helpless during it. Reflect well on this point.

3. Numerous kinds of questions [relating to this subject] were posed in many circles of knowledge in the East and the West and by Divine grace they were answered satisfactorily. One of the questions was asked repeatedly every time and in every place: “How can one rid oneself of bad thoughts which occur during *zikr* and *‘ibādat*? Its detailed answer is given in the book “Divine Remembrance” (*Zikr-i Ilāhi*). Nonetheless, the tremendous importance of the

world of imagination remains, because when a religious person makes necessary progress in knowledge and action, their 'world of imagination' gradually transforms into the world of spirituality. Simultaneously, their state of dream also becomes spiritual.

4. Satan, who is a *mu'min's* enemy, cannot enter the strong fortress of the personal world on his own, but he has a spy within this fortress who sometimes becomes successful in bringing him inside, or as though he represents Satan by a kind of wireless. All people know this dangerous and destructive spy who represents Satan is the *nafs-i ammārah* (the soul which persistently commands to do evil), because the wise Qur'ān has exposed him and his insinuations (50:16). However, he cannot be trampled or defeated by ordinary struggle until a 'major *jihād*' is waged so that devilish thoughts may end and once again the luminous imagination may hold sway.

5. The Pen and the Tablet are two extremely great angels, after whom there are three great angels, whose names are: *Jadd* (Greatness = Isrāfīl^(c)), *Fath* (Opening = Mikā'il^(c)) and *Khayāl* (Light of Imagination = Jibrā'il^(c)). Although angels in their different manifestations can be confined and centred and can also have bodies and images, in reality, they are a simple substance (*jawhar-i basīt*), as from [the meaning] of the name of Jibrā'il^(c), it is evident that he is the 'Light of Imagination'. That is, the light which extends over the length and breadth of the world of humanity. However, people's disobedience becomes a veil over this light. Had this not been the case, an utter dark imagination cannot be an attribute of Jibrā'il^(c). This means that were all the people of the world capable of observing the Light of Imagination (*mushāhadah-yi khayāl*), by Divine command, he would have easily illuminated the hearts and minds of all of them, without coming and going from somewhere because he is simple and therefore everywhere.

6. Where the holy Qur'ān, in connection with the Divine *da'wat* teaches *tawhīd*, the doctrine of one God, there it emphatically condemns idolatry, which is of two kinds since the idols can be external and internal. Among them, the group of external idolaters

has an externally organised temple for the idols. The other group is the one in whose thoughts there are idols everywhere. This is possible both consciously and unconsciously, as mentioned in verse (7:138). The *ta'wīlī* purport of this is that when Allāh made the people of the spirituality of the children of Isrā'īl cross the stormy ocean of the spiritual particles in the world of imagination, they saw some people were worshipping imaginary idols, by which they understood that perhaps they had to stay in this very spiritual destination, but Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) warned them that this was imaginary and spiritual (*bāṭinī*) idolatry.

7. The wise Qur'ān is the fountainhead of wisdom and the law of comprehensiveness. Thus, there is no doubt that each of its verses has an exoteric and esoteric meaning and this is established by the holy Prophet^(s)'s *ḥadīṣ*. Thus, it is a fact that wherever the Qur'ān condemns idolatry, it does so of both kinds of idols. A comprehensible example of this is in verses (21:52-67), where idols are *tamāṣīl* (sing. *timṣāl*), which means images, figures, statues and portraits. Its *ta'wīlī* context is that prior to Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c)'s *da'wat* of *tawḥīd*, people's spiritual progress was only to the extent that numerous kinds of images used to appear in the illumination of their imagination. Those who were interested in spirituality were satisfied with this progress. However, Allāh sent Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) as the supreme *muwaḥḥid* (monist) to bring about a spiritual revolution and make them closer to spirituality. Therefore, sparing the greatest idol, he smashed all the rest. Many wisdoms were gathered in this action.

8. You may have been greatly amazed at how Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) controlled and performed a miracle in the hearts and minds of people, externally and internally destroying the rest of the idols and sparing the greatest one. However, your amazement will come to an end when you reflect well in the light of the wise Qur'ān on the marvellous and amazing work of angels, *jinn*s and devils, which they accomplish in the personal world of human beings who are all the servants of Prophets. Some Qur'ānic examples are as follows:

9. Example 1: Angels:

The bright proof of the honour, supremacy and preference of God's vicegerent (that is, every Prophet and Imām) above all physical and spiritual creatures is as follows:

- a) The spiritual and intellectual creation and completion of the Perfect Human Being is accomplished by both the hands of Allāh (38:75), the Best of Creators. This greatest excellence is not granted to any other creature.
- b) All the angels, prostrating in the form of particles entered the pure personality of God's vicegerent. Jibrā'il^(c), Mikā'il^(c), Isrāfil^(c) and 'Izrā'il^(c) together with their armies accomplished their respective services.
- c) The one who, aggrandising himself, did not prostrate to Ādam, became the accursed Satan.

10. Example 2: Jinns:

See verse (21:82) that in the world of imagination (spirituality), there was Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c)'s spiritual kingdom, in which by Divine command *jinn*s were performing numerous kinds of services, such as bringing out the pearls of knowledge and wisdom by diving into the ocean of reflection and pondering. See verse (27:39) how by Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c)'s command a very powerful *jinn* presented Queen Sheba's throne, namely her subtle personality. This throne was brought twice. According to verses (34:12-13), one very important task of *jinn*s was to make images for the King (Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c)) to view in the world of imagination (34:13). In addition to this they used to make many more things for him. From this explanation, it is clear that the world of imagination is in fact the name of the spiritual kingdom of the personal world, in which according to Divine law all the powers of good and evil are in action.

11. Example 3: Satans:

Remember always the key wisdom that God, the Knowing, the Wise has created good as a permanent thing and evil as a temporary

thing and [placing] them opposite each other, He has made the scale of good heavier than that of evil. [Without] this, there would never have been a decision between the true and the false. Yes, it is true that the false has to come to an end (21:18; 17:81); Satan is given respite (7:15; 15:37; 38:80) and the party of Allāh is going to prevail over the party of Satan (58:19-21). The logical result of this comparison is indeed that God has granted the True Guide more power than the ‘misleading one’ (*muzīll*). If what has been stated is correct and a fact, it is also necessary to see in the light of Qur’ānic wisdom what Satan can do to lead people astray, and in such wisdom-filled verses in which the ‘contrast or comparative allusions’ are hidden what do they say about the True Guide! For example, Satan and his tribe watch you from a position where you cannot see them (7:27). This also contains a very great wisdom-filled allusion, as well as a great trial for people. [That is], if the misleading one can see in this way, cannot the Light of guidance see in this way too? If the voice of the false, namely Satan can be heard openly and hiddenly (17:64), this means that the voice of the true one, namely, the True Guide can also echo in the *mu’mins*’ hearts. The Qur’ān says that Satan can be present for anyone (23:98). This too is a great test for all of us who believe and have recognition, as it can be asked: What is your opinion about this matter? Does the Imām^(c) not have Yūsuf’s shirt (heavenly shirt)? Indeed, the holy and pure Imām^(c) has everything.

12. Example 4: Universe:

In numerous verses of the Qur’ān, God, the Omnipotent, has said that He has subjugated all the things of the heavens and the earth to you, as mentioned in verse (45:13). How has this great Divine favour happened or will happen? It is necessary to see the examples of the Prophets in order to understand this. Thus, with the help of this article, you can see in the holy Qur’ān what the Satans do in order to spread evil in the world. However, the power of the good is so tremendous that eventually, they become the servants of the Perfect Human Being, as mentioned in Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c)’s story (21:82; 38:37) that the satans among human beings and *jinn*s used to be busy in his works. Thus, the world of imagination is the

spiritual form of the entire universe and existents, which appears in the world of dreams, [and] in which the spiritual kingdom of the Sulaymān^(c) of the time continues to be established. Now, in the light of these examples, you will be sure that the Teacher of *tawḥīd* of the time (the Imām^(c) of the time) who is appointed by God and the Prophet, can destroy all external and internal idols, just as Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) had destroyed in his time because *tawḥīd* and recognition of God is the soul and essence of the religion, and if there is a religion without this, it is in fact, polytheism (*shirk*).

“And I have no success except by Allāh” (11:88).

17th July, 1985

The Universal Concept of ‘Ibādat

1. *‘Abd* means a human being, a slave, a servant and *‘ibādat* means to know Allāh is one, to worship, to do slavery, to serve, to be humble and to be submissive. The lexical elucidation of *‘abd* and *‘ibādat* is according to the authentic lexicons. However, in their first meaning “to know God is one” great importance is alluded to the recognition of God because the verbal and external affirmation and belief in the *tawhīd* of God is [comparatively] easy, but testifying with the heart is very difficult and which from one aspect is impossible. Therefore, God, the Sustainer of the world has provided the intermediary to His recognition, so that through his help the recognition of God’s oneness may be attained and be attested with the heart and in a spiritual state. This means that wherever the *‘ibādat* or worship of the True Worshipped One is mentioned, necessarily it also alludes to His recognition. This is because of the fact that a specimen of the acceptable worship of One God is found only in the noble personality of the Prophets and Imāms. Thus, their worship is so sublime that it is considered the first category of worship with the recognition of God, so that Muslims and *mu’mins* may succeed in *‘ibādat* following their footsteps.

2. When crossing the limits of the special circle of worship, we observe its general circle, everything and every creature of the universe and existents appears to be attached to an unconscious worship or to a part of it because nothing of the heaven and earth can keep its existence permanent and stable without God’s servitude, for which it has been created. It is in this sense that the concept of worship or God’s servitude becomes universal.

3. It is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān: “Whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth extols Allāh for being free from the attributes of His creatures. He is the Mighty, the Wise.” (57:1; 59:1; 61:1), that is, everything and every creature of this spacious and wide

universe is extolling Allāh similarly with the speech of tongue or with the tongue of state. It is also said in this connection: “There is not a single thing except that it extols Him for being free from the attributes of His creatures [by its speech or by its state], but you do not understand their extolling.” (17:44) Thus, this Divine command is such a universal law (*kulliyyah*) that nothing is exempt from it. Therefore, it cannot be said raising a finger at something or a creature of the universe and existents that such and such a thing or creature does not do *tasbiḥ* or God’s extolling.

4. In verse (24:41), it is said: “Did you not see that all those who are in the heavens and the birds with their wings outspread [in their flights] extol Allāh? Each one knows its own *ṣalāt* and *tasbiḥ*?” If you wish you can reflect on your own that this *ṣalāt* and *tasbiḥ* of all creatures, in which everything of the heaven and earth is included, is not special, but it is all-inclusive because it is not with the speech of tongue nor is it consciously, rather it is unconscious obedience. For example, the service and worship which the sun, the moon the stars, minerals, vegetables and animals do is their natural action which is very necessary to maintain the system of the external (physical) world. However, since they do not have consciousness, choice and recognition, they have neither the recompense and reward and gift, nor reprimand and chastisement.

5. All the creatures of the heavens and the earth do the *tasbiḥ* or extolling of Allāh as irrational beings, thus theirs is the *tasbiḥ* of subjugation. It is not like the rational beings, who do it by their will and choice. Therefore, they say with the tongue of state that God is extolled and free from being like His creatures as in verse (24:41) there is the wisdom-filled allusion that “Birds by their action of flying extol Allāh”. This action expresses that Allāh is free from and above flying and coming and going. Similarly, every creature by its attribute considers God to be free from and above its attribute and *tasbiḥ* is only by the tongue of state.

6. Verse (24:41) has already been mentioned: “Each one knows its own *ṣalāt* and *tasbiḥ*.” *Tasbiḥ* has been discussed above, now I would like to explain the meanings of *ṣalāt*. Among its many

meanings, one means “to walk after someone or to follow”. For example, in Arabic *sābiq* means the horse which runs in front and *muṣallī*^m means the horse which follows the *sābiq* exactly. Thus, the meaning is correct here that everything in the universe follows the Divine law and natural system and this is its *ṣalāt*.

7. Now, in connection with this universal worship to which every creature is naturally bound, *sujūd* (prostration) has to be mentioned too. *Sujūd* literally means obedience. Thus, bowing the head, humility, and submissiveness, all these meanings are signs of being obedient. Here, it is important to pay attention to the story of Ādam with respect to *sujūd* and ask: How did the angels prostrate to him? Are angels physical or spiritual? If we accept that they are spiritual, how did they prostrate like the physical ones? It should be remembered that those angels who prostrated to Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) were in the form of spiritual particles and the nature of their prostration was that they were falling down into the pure personality of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), the Vicegerent of God in his obedience, as mentioned in verses (15:29; 38:72). The exoteric or *tanzili* translation of this verse is: “So when I will complete him and breathe My Spirit into him, you should fall down in prostration to him.” Its *ta’wili* wisdom is: “When I complete him spiritually and place My light in him, then all of you obeying him fall down (*qa’ū*) in his personal world.” *Qa’ū* is the imperative case of a second person derived from *wuqū’*^c, which means ‘to fall down’. There are several wisdoms in this.

8. It is evident from the verse (13:15) that all heavenly and earthly creatures prostrate to God willingly and unwillingly and also their shadows in the morning and the evening. We know from this Divine teaching that *sajdah*, whose primary meaning is obedience, is of two kinds: willingly and unwillingly. Willing obedience is performed by angels and *mu’mins*, in whom there is intention, choice and recognition and all those other than them, obey unwillingly, the example of which is given here by the shadow of human beings. Where it prostrates or obeys by force, it does not have a permanent existence, because its stability and survival depend on others. In the morning it has a temporary existence, and

in the evening, it is obliterated. Since its prostration is by force, the shadow derives no benefit from it.

9. In verses (16:48-50) it is stated that all creatures have shadows and that in a debased condition, they present an example of prostration of subjugation because shadows do not have personal movement since there is no soul in them nor intellect, will or choice. As a result, they continue to appear sometimes on this side and sometimes on the other. This alludes to those whom the Qur'ān calls: "They are dead, not living." (16:21). It is said: all things of the heaven and the earth perform the prostration of obedience, but those which are inanimate are indeed like the shadows. Moreover, those people who are bereft of the soul of faith are also included in the inanimate things. It is for this reason that the wise Qur'ān, in the subject of prostration, has drawn attention to the shadow's subjugated prostration. The angels' prostration is also mentioned in these verses, but their prostration of obedience is full of humility and fear of God and is full of light.

10. When in connection with this subject, we study verse (22:18), more and more light is shed on it: "Do you not see that to Allāh prostrate whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth, and the sun and the moon, and the stars, and the mountain, and the trees, and the animals, and many of humankind? And there are many on whom chastisement has become due." This blessed and wisdom-filled heavenly teaching mentions the prostration of five categories of creatures: minerals, vegetables, animals, humankind and angels. None of these creatures was intended to be tried, except humankind. Thus, people were told through the Prophets to accept religion and prostrate before God, the true worshipped one, without any kind of *shirk* (association with God), that is, in the light of His recognition. Thus, as a result of this Divine *da'wat*, many people did the willing prostration, but the worship of many lacking God's recognition was polytheistic, which is why they became subject to Divine chastisement. Thus, there were very few who had salvation.

11. All the creatures of the heavens and the earth are gathered together in the form of the world of particles in the noble personalities

of the Prophets and Imāms, where everything does the *tasbiḥ* of God in harmony with the *ṣūr-i Isrāfīl*. The Qur’ānic example of this fact is the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd^(c) (21:79; 38:18), in which the particles of minerals are called ‘mountains’, and the particles of vegetables, animals, human beings and angels are called ‘birds.’ A special teaching of the Qur’ān is that everything, even if it is a stone, has speech by God’s permission (14:21). And the place where every inanimate thing receives soul, and mute thing speech, is called the world of particles. However, it should not be thought that to be in the world of particles means to have salvation – this is not a correct understanding. To understand this point, a beautiful example is presented here: A great King shoots a film of the attractive scenes of a garden and meadow and takes it back to his palace. Now, the question arises: Do the above-mentioned material things leave their places and enter the King’s palace? What pleasure and happiness can the trees, flowers and birds attain from such an action that their living pictures are in the royal palace? Yes, it is true that had they [possessed] intellect and recognition, indeed everything would be possible!

12. There is the harmony of the *tasbiḥs* and worship of all the creatures in the world of particles because it is closer to the world of unity. However, things are contrary to it in the world of multiplicity, because here there are stages and destinations of worship and creatures are at different ranks. Thus, the highest worship is that of the Prophets and Imāms, because in their worship, the souls and angels are in harmony with them. After them there are various ranks of worship of *mu’mins* and Muslims, followed by the worship of the people of the Book, then the worship of other religions, followed by those who have no religion, then the worship of animals, vegetation, i.e., trees etc., and the lowest is the worship of minerals. This is the universal concept of *‘ibādat* (worship) as explained in the light of the holy Qur’ān.

Praise belongs to Allāh for His favours and beneficence!

25th July, 1985

The Esoteric (*bāṭinī*) Aspect of Islam

1. Islam is the religion of nature and the religion of *Qayyim* (*Qā'im*, 30:30), it is the religion of the holy Prophet^(s), which in the sense of *sunnat* and law is Allāh's religion. This religion is called *ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* (straight path), and it is to this religion that all the Prophets invited people, and the centre of this sacred and wisdom-filled *da'wat* was the blessed person of the holy Prophet^(s) [himself].

2. Study verses (23:51-53) deeply for a little while so that it may be clear that the wisdom-filled teaching of the Qur'ān removes the time interval between the different Prophets and gathers them together as if all of them were contemporaries. They are then addressed together: "O you Messengers, eat of pure things (*ṭayyibāt*) and do right." Note that this verse includes the blessed word *ṭayyibāt*, whose exoteric meaning is 'pure things' and the esoteric meaning is 'pure knowledge', which is received directly and always works as food for the intellect and the soul because when God's purpose is righteous deed, its main support comes from spiritual knowledge, not by eating good things. Therefore, the Lord of honour has continued the fountainhead of the light of knowledge in every time in this world and has considered all *ummats* as one great *ummat* (23:52), in which the earlier and the later *mu'mins* are brothers to one another and all the Prophets and Imāms in this religious and spiritual unity and integrity are like a Single Soul, one Person.

3. It is evident and clear from this explanation that the true religion, in reality, is only one and that is Islam, which is the religion of nature and upon which all the Prophets acted according to their respective times. For, it was not possible that different religions may be allocated to the Prophets, whereas according to the *sunnat* of one God, there was but one religion of nature and the Prophets had to be united in this unique religion, however every time after the appearance of the truth, people differed [and separated], which

is mentioned in many places in the wise Qur'ān.

4. It cannot be refuted that Islam is a perfect and complete religion (5:3) and it is Allāh's greatest bounty (*ni'mat*) apparently and hiddenly as the Qur'ān itself has mentioned His apparent and hidden bounties in verse (31:20). Thus, the Ismaili faith, with respect to most matters, is the esoteric aspect of Islam and its unique beauty is that the esoteric aspect of the Qur'ān is towards it. It is for this reason that the Ismaili faith has always been the centre of Islamic *ta'wils*, or in other words, it has been the cradle of Islam's esoteric sciences. Do you know how this has become possible? Yes, indeed [it is] by the grace of the light of Imāmat that all these bounties of religion have become possible and God and the Prophet desired this to happen.

5. Ismaili faith is a bright proof of the gradual guidance and elevation and evolution of Islam. In order to understand the correct meaning of "Religion of Nature", it is necessary to reflect with a sound intellect. Thus, in this connection as an example, attention is drawn towards an attributive name of the wise Qur'ān, which is "*kitāb^{un} mubārak^{un}*" (a blessed Book) (6:92, 155; 38:29). Now in order to understand the nature and reality of '*barkat*', we have to have recourse to the Qur'ān itself: Where and with what its endless blessings of realities and recognitions is it compared to or likened with? Thus, in verse (41:10) we clearly see that when God created the planet earth, there were no mountains to begin with. Then He created mountains on the earth and kept in them numerous kinds of blessings. The way the people of the world have been receiving these material blessings from the beginning, similarly its chain will continue as long as the world lasts. This example clarifies that the unlimited blessings of knowledge and wisdom, which are contained in the Qur'ān will continue to appear gradually according to the exigencies of time and space. And this is the meaning of the Religion of Nature.

6. Another example to understand the chain of blessings of the noble Qur'ān is the "pouring of rain". This example too is mentioned in the Qur'ān itself (50:9). That is, God has made the water of rain

the fountainhead of blessings. The *ta'wili* allusion of this is that the spirit and spirituality of the Qur'ān is beyond the access of our intellect. Therefore, this rank of religion is our spiritual heaven and heaven of knowledge and we are in need all the time for the light of the Qur'ān, which as the sun of guidance, may constantly pour the rain of knowledge, wisdom, guidance and rectitude so that the chain of blessings of the “Blessed Book” (the holy Qur'ān) may continue forever and may be the proof of exalted God's countless bounties (14:34).

7. God has created three places for us to reflect and ponder upon: the first is the glorious Qur'ān, the second is the macrocosm (i.e., the external universe) and the third is the personal world. All three contain God's signs (*āyāt*). God's purpose is that humankind should reflect on His signs everywhere. A question arises here: Why is there so much emphasis in Islam on the importance of reflection and pondering? To ponder or reflect is the act in which the intellect penetrates the interior (*bāṭin*) or depth of an intellectual thing, even though the commandments mentioned in the exoteric of the Qur'ān are evident and clear. The answer is that had this proposal to reflect and ponder on the wise Qur'ān and other places been by a human being, questioning it would be permissible, but when God Himself considers those who reflect on His signs as the people of wisdom, such a question is impermissible. Nonetheless, if it is a hypothetical question that would be a different matter.

8. In verse (38:29) God says: “[This] is a Book that We have revealed to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder on its signs (*āyāt*) and that the people of knowledge may obtain exhortation.” This Divine teaching is clear that there are hidden teachings in the holy Qur'ān for every age and the way to benefit from them is to reflect on each of its verses.

9. God and His Prophet have designated a light to illuminate the world of the Qur'ān. If, through the mediation of this light, we reflect and ponder on the signs of the Qur'ān, the macrocosm and the personal world, without any doubt success is certain. Otherwise, success is impossible, because reflection on a verse to

reach its hidden treasures is possible only and only in the light of true guidance.

10. The holy Prophet^(s) used to purify the *mu'mins* by teaching them the Book and wisdom (2:151), giving them *ṣalāt* (pl. *ṣalawāt*; 9:103) and seeking forgiveness for them from Allāh (4:64). Never imagine that *mu'mins*' purification is an ordinary matter, whereas it is the greatest bliss of religion and the supreme benefit of faith that *mu'mins* are purified in this life. We now have to think and ask if this means of mercy exists or not after the demise of the holy Prophet^(s)? If it is said that following the Prophet's demise, this fountainhead of knowledge and wisdom, source of *ṣalāt* and prayer and means of forgiveness is no longer there, this would amount to despondency from Divine mercy while despondency is prohibited in the wise Qur'ān (39:53). If it is accepted that Allāh's Book exists then [surely] the means of teaching its knowledge and wisdom should also exist and this is a fact. Together with this, it should also be acknowledged that the means of *ṣalāt* and forgiveness also exists.

11. In verse (4:54), it is mentioned: "So indeed We have given Ibrāhīm's progeny the Book and wisdom and We have given them a great kingdom." The chain of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c)'s children continues in this cycle through Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad^(s)'s progeny. The Book means the Qur'ān, which is a guardian (5:48) of the previous heavenly books. That is, their realities and recognitions are preserved in it. It is necessary to reflect in what sense the Book and wisdom are given to Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c)'s progeny. And for what since the holy Qur'ān is present with all the Muslims? It means that God gives to the Imām^(c) of the time the spirit and spirituality and knowledge and wisdom of the heavenly Book, so that the fountainhead of the blessings of the heavenly Book may continue. The allusion to granting the great kingdom linked to the Qur'ān to Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c)'s progeny, i.e., Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad^(s)'s progeny shows that in order to attain the spirituality and the *ta'wil* of the Qur'ān people should always have recourse to them.

12. Almost all Muslims accept the *ḥadiṣ* that Mawlā 'Alī^(c) was

the door of the holy Prophet's knowledge and wisdom. There is a need to understand much more in this respect:

- a. The unique knowledge that God granted His beloved Messenger is in the Qur'ān. Thus, the meaning of this famous *ḥadis* is that Ḥazrat-i 'Alī^(c) is the door of the Qur'ān.
- b. The *ta'wīlī* door of the wise Qur'ān which the holy Prophet^(s) had set up was not only for his own time but as a permanent principle. Therefore, our belief is absolutely correct that each pure Imām^(c) in his time is the door of the Qur'ān.
- c. Is it only from the time of the Prophet Muḥammad^(s) that a door was set up to enter the heavenly Book? Did not this law exist prior to him? The answer is that this law has continued from the very beginning, as the holy Prophet^(s) says "Everything has a door."
- d. Under the topics of "*bāb*" or "*abwāb*" in the Qur'ān you can see that all things have doors (6:44), such as the heavens (7:40), paradise (39:72), hell (39:71) and those treasures of Allāh which are in the heavens and on the earth (63:7). Thus, the holy Qur'ān is not only God's greatest treasure on the earth but also in the heaven. This explanation clarifies completely that the living door and Treasurer of Qur'ān's treasure is the Imām^(c) of the time.

13. No wise person can deny the esoteric aspect of Islam. Whatever is written in this article from the beginning to the end, is written under this title. In Islam, all those things which are hidden like secrets cannot be counted. However, here we mention one extremely necessary and great thing, which is the Hidden Book (*kitāb-i maknūn*), in which the spirit and spirituality of the wise Qur'ān (56:77-79) is hidden. *Kitāb-i maknūn*, as it means the Hidden Book is the Imām^(c) of the time, who is manifest in the world, but his status and recognition are hidden from the people; his Supreme Soul is the Guarded Tablet (*lawḥ-i mahfūz*), in which the living spirit and spirituality of the glorious Qur'ān is preserved.

The Concept of Spiritual *Jihād* in Islam

Part 1

1. The holy Prophet^(s) has said: “I have been sent with the most comprehensive words”, i.e., the holy Qur’ān and the sound *aḥādīs*, which were already made absolutely comprehensive before giving them to the Prophet, so that God’s and His Messenger’s pure speech should be unique in the miracles of having all-inclusive meanings. We shall see in the Qur’ān and the *aḥādīs* what has been written about spiritual *jihād* in the light of this principle of “the most comprehensive words (*jawāmi‘-i kalīm*)”. Thus, in this connection, there is the meaning of a special *ḥadīs*: “For a *mu’min* to fight against his own carnal soul is the major *jihād*.” It is true and there cannot be any doubt or suspicion in it. Yet, if somebody asks: Why is it so, what can be attained by crushing the carnal soul alone? The answer is that it is utterly wrong to think that the carnal soul is alone while Satan is joined with it and with the latter are joined all the devilish souls of the entire world. This is the reason why the holy Prophet^(s), the master of the most comprehensive words, considered the fight against one’s carnal soul the major *jihād*, i.e., the spiritual *jihād*.

2. In this connection, study carefully certain martial words and terms of the Qur’ān, so that in the illumination of the light of wisdom, the realities and recognitions of the spiritual *jihād* may become apparent. For example, words such as *ba’s* from the root letters *bā’*, *hamzah*, *sīn* (battle); *jihād* from the root letters *jīm*, *hā*, *dāl*; *jund* from the root letters *jīm*, *nūn*, *dāl* (army); *fath* from the root letters *fā’*, *tā’*, *hā’*, (victory); *ḥarb* from the root letters *ḥā’*, *rā’*, *bā’* (battle); *gālib* from the root letters *ḡayn*, *lām*, *bā’* (victorious); *hazīmat* from the root letters *hā’*, *zā’*, *mīm* (defeat); *ḡanīmat* from the root letters *ḡayn*, *nūn*, *mīm* (spoils of war); *ru‘b* from the root letters *rā’*, *‘ayn*, *bā’* (fright); *qatl* from the root letters *qāf*, *tā’*, *lām* (killing); *shahīd* from the root letters *shīn*, *hā’*, *dāl* (martyr);

zibḥ from the root letters *zāl, bā', ḥā'* (sacrifice); *qurbān* from the root letters *qāf, rā', bā'* (sacrifice); *fidā', fidyah* from *fā, dāl, yā* (sacrifice); *silḥ* from the root letters *sin, lām, mīm* (peace); *iskhān* from the root letters *sā, khā', nūn* (to massacre); *asir* from the root letters *alif, sin, rā* (prisoner); *labūs* from the root letters *lām, bā', sin* (coat of mail); *muḡirāt* from root letters *ḡayn, yā', rā'* (looters), i.e., the *mujāhid's* horses; *yājūj* from the root letters *yā, jīm, jīm* (Gog) and *mājūj* from the root letters *mīm, jīm, jīm* (Magog), etc. Spiritual *jihād* from a *ta'wili* point of view is mentioned in these and such words coined from these root letters.

3. Words from the root letters *bā', hamzah, sin* such as *ba's* (battle) are in many verses in which spiritual *jihād* is mentioned. For example, if verse (4:84) is reflected upon carefully, it is prophesied that external and material warfare will come to an end sometime in the future. In this verse, together with this prophecy it is said: "And Allāh is the severest in fighting." This luminous teaching alludes that it is as a result of the internal (*bāṭini*) war that the external (*ẓāhiri*) war will come to an end because among Divine actions one tremendous act is a spiritual war, which is fought in the field of the external world.

4. Two beauties of Allāh's spiritual army are mentioned in verse (17:5): one is that they are His chosen servants with respect to obedience and worship and the second is that they are capable of fighting a very powerful battle in the form of subtle particles, which not only appear in the higher stages of spirituality but their demonstrations are actually experienced. The spiritual army mentioned in the verse above is in connection with the spiritual experiences of the *ḥudūd-i din* of the children of Israel. Since God's army possesses the capacity of steel weapons within themselves, they are granted the title of "iron" (*ḥadid*) and it is said: "And We revealed the iron in which there is severe fighting as well as many benefits for humankind."

5. The position of the spiritual army is greatly amazing and wondrous and their splendour is extremely incomparable. Sometimes they roar like thunder, sometimes shine like lightning

and sometimes pour like rain and create a deluge. That is to say that the spiritual army works in numerous manifestations. It is like such a miraculous shirt that no kind of heat can affect it. Also, it is such a coat of mail in human form that no war of the world can affect it (16:81).

6. Verse (5:54) describes six exalted virtues of the spiritual army:

- a. Allāh loves them
- b. They love Allāh
- c. They are humble towards the believers
- d. They are stern towards the disbelievers
- e. They do *jihād* in the path of Allāh
- f. They do not fear the blame of any blamers

7. The purport of what is described in verse (29:69) is: Those who do *jihād* against their carnal souls, to them Allāh shows or will show the path of realities and recognitions, as a result of which their personal *jihād* will join the *jihād* of the spiritual army and become one, and thus it will be called the major *jihād* as mentioned in the beginning.

8. The set-up of the armies of religion or the world is not possible without a commander. Thus, the Imām^(c) of the time who is the holder of the command (*ulu'l-amr*) is also the commander of the spiritual army. In order to understand this fact, study Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c)'s story in the Qur'ān, that he was the Imām and commander-in-chief of the spiritual army and in this sense, he was also king. This is because a king is a person who commands others to do his work and he remains above any such work. King Sulaymān appears in this way in the mirror of the Qur'ān.

9. If the question is posed: Was Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c)'s kingdom confined to him alone and prior to him or after him there was no such kingdom, the answer would be an emphatic 'No', it is not correct to think so. On the contrary, the spiritual kingdom has always existed without a beginning or an end. The spiritual kingdom has many names, but one of them is such that a wise *mu'min* can

learn a lot by reflecting on it and that is the “Divine Vicegerency”, i.e., “Vicegerency of God on earth” and undoubtedly it means that God’s vicegerent on earth is the religious and spiritual sovereign and the spiritual army works under him.

10. For the sake of spiritual war shirts that are full of *ibdāʿi* miracles and wonders and marvels (*labūs*, 21:80; *sarābil*, 16:81) are created in the presence of God’s Vicegerent. This is an extremely great secret. It is mentioned by the ordinary name of ‘shirt’ in order to conceal [its reality], otherwise, it is the greatest miracle of *ibdāʿ* and *inʿbiʿās*. Thus, Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) in his time in the position of God’s Vicegerent used to make such [types of] shirts. He himself had become the mould in which his pure copies were made by casting into it from the Universal Soul by the act of ʿIzrāʾīl^(c) (3:49; 5:110). And this miracle takes place with every Prophet and Imām.

11. It is certain that in the light of Islamic teachings, for example, *taṣawwuf* and the Imām^(c)’s *farmāns*, true *muʿmins* become angels by true knowledge and good deeds. This is a fact. Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c) used to make birds for his people from clay (3:49); the *taʿwil* of clay is a *muʿmin*. Although all human souls are parts of the Universal Soul, it is only the characteristic of *muʿmins* that, by being cast in the mould of the Perfect Person, they become angels whom the Qurʾān calls by the name “*ṭayr*” (bird, 3:49; 5:110). These are the same miraculous shirts, mentioned in the previous point.

12. After long years of extremely hard work and toil, what the scientists have created and are going to create in the future and those things which are beyond their thinking, are all [present] in spirituality adorned with perfect beauties of intellect and soul. For instance, the scientists of a superpower may be wishing for such a fort, which is capable of flying rapidly without any sound or being visible and can carry a huge army. Indeed, such kinds of forts and far more superior ones used to be made for Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān^(c). They are called *maḥārib* (34:13), that is, forts as well as fighting forces. They are *ibdāʿi* bodies. What power do they lack and what cannot they do?

13. In verse (48:20) Allāh says: “Allāh has promised you many spoils that you will take.” The universal spiritual *jihād* is mentioned in this command, which will result in the total and lasting victory of *mu'mins*, who will receive the non-Muslim souls of the entire world. Since this is the major *jihād*, its results and rewards too have very great importance. Those souls which are *mu'mins'* “*milk-i yamin*” (those whom the right hand possesses, i.e., slave girls and men) will enter paradise and will serve as *ḥūrs* and *ḡilmān* in the kingdom of the people of paradise.

14. In the *sūrah* of *Ādiyāt* (100), God praises the *zīkr* of the heart during the luminous time. Although this *zīkr* is apparently silent and the lips unmoving, internally it is very fast and revolutionary, therefore it is compared with and likened to the horses of worldly *mujāhids*, as said: “By the snorting horses which are running, who strike sparks of fire [by dashing their hooves against stones], then they raid at dawn.” (100:1-3) It is evident from this luminous teaching that every *mu'min* who is regular in *zīkr* and worship is a *mujāhid* of the spiritual *jihād*, who riding on the horse of successful worship every dawn, attacks the enemies of Islam and routs them.

15. Just as in the physical world an army needs two special things: rations and arms, similarly for those who wage spiritual *jihād*, it is necessary to have the food of *zīkr* and worship and the arms of knowledge and wisdom. What bravery can a soldier who eats and drinks well but has no arms at all show and how long will a soldier fight who has arms but an empty stomach? Thus, being prepared with knowledge and worship, it is necessary to see – who the enemy is. Where is he? How does he attack? The answer is that the enemy is the carnal soul, the Satan who is the enemy of religion and the disbelievers. These three by joining [forces] have become one, as mentioned in the beginning. It is essential to be aware that Satan is both apparent and hidden (6:112). He attacks those who walk on the straight path from the front and behind, from the right and left (7:17). By the *mu'min's* front is meant the future, by behind the past, by right means esoteric and left means exoteric. It is only the True Guide, the Imām^(c) of the time, who can guide in the future, whose *farmāns* regarding the past are true, it is he who can shed

light on the esoteric aspect of the Qur'ān and Islam and it is his exoteric teachings in which there is progress in religion and this world.

28th August, 1985

The Concept of Spiritual *Jihād* in Islam

Part 2

1. The holy Prophet^(s) says: “The Qur’ān is a pliable thing and is multi-dimensional (*zū wujūh*) and you [should] take it on its best dimensions.” This attribute of the Qur’ān of being pliable and tractable is based on all its wisdom-filled words, each of which has numerous meanings, which is why it is called ‘multi-dimensional’. That is, it is like a multi-faceted gem and *ta’wīl* is created from these various dimensions. Thus, not an iota of doubt is there in the fact that where the Qur’ān mentions physical *jihād*, it also includes spiritual *jihād*.

2. How great is God’s favour that He has purchased the insignificant souls of *mu’mīns* and their properties, so that He, the Munificent may, using this excuse, shower the rain of His favours upon them in the everlasting paradise (9:111). The purpose of this heavenly transaction is that *mu’mīns* should live a life of *ġāzīs* and die the death of martyrs. This greatest bliss is availed for *mu’mīns* of every age since God has commanded people of all ages with to do spiritual *jihād* and every *mu’mīn* of the earlier and later times is included in this *bay‘at* (transaction) mentioned in verse (9:111).

3. The purport of verse (57:19) is: Those who have duly believed in Allāh and His Messengers, have the status of the truthful ones and martyrs near their Lord. For them, there is their recompense and their light. Please note that the faith which is mentioned here is not only external and verbal faith, but a perfect and complete faith having fulfilled all its conditions. One proof of this is [the use of] *taṣḍīq* (verification) and the other is *shahādat* (martyrdom). That is to say, the *mu’mīns* who are praised so gloriously in this luminous teaching, have verified faith in the light of recognition in their heart (soul), in addition to verbal affirmation and have also experienced martyrdom of dying with respect to the carnal soul before their

physical demise. However, this very great rank of martyrdom is not possible without knowledge and spiritual *jihād*.

4. You may be surprised to hear that Ḥaẓrat-i Imām Ḥusayn^(c), prior to his physical death, was martyred spiritually, because it is an essential characteristic of the Perfect Human Being to have the experience of the death of the carnal soul before the physical death. It is this act which is called '*taqwā*' (God-fearing). It should also be remembered that the double martyrdom (i.e., spiritual and physical) was first experienced by Mawlānā Hābil^(c), who was the first *asās* of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c). The office of *asās* is a great rank of Imāmat. Ḥaẓrat-i Hābil^(c)'s spiritual rank is mentioned in a wisdom-filled way in two words of the holy Qur'ān: '*Qurbān*' (5:27, sacrifice) and '*Muttaqīn*' (95:27, pl. of *muttaqī*, those who fear God). The exoteric meaning of '*qurbān*' is that Ḥaẓrat-i Hābil^(c) sacrificed a lamb, which was consumed by a sacred miraculous fire meaning it was accepted in the Divine court. Its *ta'wīl* is that to sacrifice a lamb is to slay the carnal soul in the path of God and 'the heavenly fire' is one of the names of spirituality. Thus, the sacrifice of Ḥaẓrat-i Hābil^(c) had taken place when his carnal soul was consumed by the fire of spirituality. It is in this way one has to die spiritually before the physical death. The same is spiritual martyrdom, this act is called *taqwā* and it is also the individual resurrection.

5. Study the purport of verses (3:169-170): 'And do not reckon those who are slain in the path of Allāh (spiritually or physically) to be dead. No. They are alive and are closest to their Lord. They are the ones who are given spiritual and intellectual sustenance. They are happy with what God has granted them by His grace (i.e., realities and recognitions). And they rejoice for those who have not yet joined them and are left behind, that no fear shall come on them nor shall they grieve.' The major and the minor *jihād* are mentioned together in this Divine teaching. Thus, both kinds of martyrs become alive in true sense and that pure life (16:97) is the tremendous progress not only of the spirit and the intellect, but there is an extreme novelty in the body as well, because that is the 'new creation' (50:15), and that is the *ibḍā'ī* body, which has a new manifestation every moment under the Word of "*Kun*".

6. The physical battle of Islam according to the command of the holy Prophet^(s) or his true successor is as the body of the battle, whereas the spiritual battle is as its soul. Thus, in the background of every physical *jihād*, there is a spiritual *jihād*, for example, the *ġazwah* of the Trench (33:9-11). The purport of this example: All those who participated in it were not able to see this spiritual event, it was only the true *mu'mins* who were able to see that on the occasion of this *ġazwah*, the army of Islam was facing a spiritual battle too. Thus, when on behalf of the enemies of Islam a countless army of spiritual particles attacked the Muslims, Allāh sent an unseen army and an invisible hurricane. That army of spiritual particles had entered *mu'mins* from their heads and feet and caused great amazement to them. In order to let their souls undergo the death of the carnal soul in their lifetime, they were pulled out towards the throat and head and this was their spiritual martyrdom. They were imagining vain thoughts about Allāh; perhaps they were imagining that it was their final and physical death or the collective resurrection, etc. (33:9-11).

7. In many Qur'ānic verses it is mentioned that Islam will prevail over the other religions of the world. For the Qur'ānic prophecy of this nature there are three special places: first 9:32-33; second, 48:28-29; third, 61:8-9). The collective and central purport of these wisdom-filled verses is: Nobody can extinguish the Divine light. Allāh will cause His light to reach the level of completion and perfection, even though the powers of evil dislike this act of God. The Omnipotent God has sent His Messenger with guidance (the Qur'ān and the Imām) for the purpose of prevailing over all the other religions of the world. If you study the above-mentioned verses carefully, it will be clear to you that the necessary and main *jihād* of Islam is internal and spiritual, which is by God and the Messenger and which is supervised by the Imām^(c), the bearer of Divine Command in every age.

8. Whatever God Almighty wills or intends is in fact called 'Command' (*amr*) and whatever He commands becomes '*maḥḥūl*' (done, 33:37). This means that when God willed Islam's supremacy and victory, His will was saying "Be" (*Kun*) and therefore it

happened. Thus, if someone can conceive of being beyond time and space, they will be sure that the religion of nature, Islam has been overwhelming and victorious from the very beginning. Reflect on the following verse very carefully: “Allāh has written this (in His *azalī* command): Verily I shall conquer, I and My Messengers.” May I ask you a friendly question in order to draw attention towards the realities? The Prophets apparently had limited success in spreading the light of the true religion and they passed away in their respective times. Does the above-mentioned verse mean this much? No, not at all. This is not about the external and physical aspect, rather the internal and spiritual aspect is mentioned in it that the Prophet and the Imāms of every cycle did the internal and spiritual *jihād* and acted upon this Divine prophecy.

9. A great secret of the treasure of recognition of the exalted Imām^(c) is that sublime spirituality, spiritual *jihād* and personal resurrection are the same one thing. A Qur’ānic proof of this is the word ‘*Fath*’, in which three meanings are gathered together. That is, *Fath* (Opening) is the spirituality, the successful end to a war and also the decision of the Day of Resurrection. Thus, this word wherever it is in the Qur’ān has to have these three meanings. However, because of translation, exegesis or *tanzil* itself, here and there one of them may be more prominent, in which case the other two will be specified for the *ta’wīlī* wisdom.

10. In verse (48:1), it is mentioned: “(O Muḥammad) We gave you victory and an open and manifest victory.” The results of the double *jihād* are in front of the holy Prophet^(s) in this victory: Externally the conquest of Makkah and internally the opening of spirituality, which is the endless recompense and reward. The same spirituality was also the holy Prophet^(s)’s personal resurrection, in which he saw God’s decision between truth and falsehood.

11. It is mentioned in verse (21:96): “*Futiḥat yājūju wa mājūju*”. This means that Gog and Magog will be set free; it is also correct to say that Gog and Magog will be conquered, i.e., they will be overwhelmed and joining the Imām’s army will work together. Yājūj is the title of the primordial Man of a cycle, like Ḥaẓrat-i

Ādam^(c), and Mājūj is the title of the primordial Woman of a cycle, like Ḥaẓrat-i Ḥawwā^(c), then with respect to them, the particles of their generation are [also] called *yājūj* and *mājūj*.

12. *Ta'wil* has a natural system, according to which the planet earth or the nations of the world have twelve parts, each one is called a *jazīrah* or island. Two *hujjats* of day and night are appointed in every *jazīrah*, who are either in the dense or subtle body. There are altogether 28 *hujjats*: $24 = 12 \times 2$ [*hujjats* of day and night of twelve *jazīrahs* + 4 closest *hujjats* (*hujjatān-i muqarrab*)]. They are the oldest and most aged with respect to spirituality, knowledge and experience. Therefore, the wise Qur'ān has called them hunch-backed (*ḥadab*, 21:96). Another reason to call them hunch-backed is that their waist is bent due to the heavy burden of the particles of soul. Thus, when the *ṣūr* is blown in the personal resurrection of the Perfect Human Being, the spiritual particles of the entire world, who are in those *hujjats*, fly towards it.

13. Although the demonstration of the spirituality of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) takes place in every age, yet let us speak about his age that in the beginning, his chosen spiritual children were his *hujjats* of the day and the night. Therefore, for the sake of the covenant of “Am I not?”, the particles of soul of people were first taken from the *hujjats* into Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c)'s heir (7:172). This is the same *ta'wil* mentioned above that at the time the *ṣūr* was blown into the heir's ears, this was the chain of completion of his spirituality, the spiritual *jihād* as well as the personal resurrection. It is a very great Divine favour that here [in this article] many key facts have been manifested regarding the spiritual *jihād*.

Praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

3rd September, 1985.

Questions and Answers on Qur'ānic *Ta'wīl*

Q.1. What is the root (*māddah*), the infinitive and measure (*wazn*) of the word *ta'wīl*? What are its literal and technical meanings?

A.1. Its root letters are *alif*, *wāw* and *lām* (i.e., *āla*). The word *ta'wīl* is itself the infinitive on the measure of *taf'īl*. Its literal meaning is to return something to its origin, and its technical meaning is to explain the esoteric wisdom and reality of something of the Qur'ān and Islam.

Q.2. What is the relationship and resemblance between its literal and technical meanings? Please help us to understand through a clear example.

A.2. The relationship and resemblance between its two meanings are that just as its literal meaning is to return something to its origin, similarly its technical meaning is to return the example of something to its reality (*mamsūl*), for instance, “Rope of Allāh” is one of the examples of the Qur'ān, which by doing *ta'wīl* can be returned to its reality and it can be said that this is its esoteric meaning or *ta'wīl* or wisdom.

Q.3. In verse (3:7) there are fundamental principles related to *ta'wīl*. In the light of these rules, who are those who are well-grounded in knowledge (*ar-rāsikhūn fī'l-ilm*) in Allāh's eyes? What is the meaning of well-grounded?

A.3. They are the holy Prophet^(s) and all the pure Imāms^(c), who according to the Divine standard are very strong and well-grounded in knowledge. Their strength in knowledge and recognition is praised by God Himself. Therefore, it is a sure fact that God has granted these exalted Perfect Men the knowledge of univocal and equivocal verses. This clearly means that after God and the holy

Prophet, the Imāms are the masters of the Qur'ānic *ta'wil*. This reality can be understood in the light of verse (4:162) that this heavenly title “*ar-rāsikhūn fī l-‘ilm*” appears to be among the People of the Book before the advent of Islam and this rank according to this verse is higher than the ranks of all *mu'mins*. Thus, it is evident that “well-grounded in knowledge” are the holy Prophet^(s) and the Imāms^(c) from his progeny and it is through following them that others can receive the blessings (*barakāt*) of *ta'wil* from them.

Q.4. Could you kindly present another Qur'ānic proof regarding the importance and utility of the knowledge of *ta'wil*? Is there such an example in the wise Qur'ān, which shows that in the past God had appointed a certain Perfect Human Being for the sake of *ta'wil*?

A.4. Yes, *ta'wil* has very great importance in the Qur'ān and it has tremendous utility because another name for *ta'wil* is ‘wisdom’ and the Qur'ān says (2:269): “And he who is granted wisdom, has been granted abundant good.” Similarly, the entire goodness of religion is linked with *ta'wil*, which means the esoteric aspect of the Qur'ān and Islam, in which all the hidden Divine bounties (31:20) are gathered together. Thus, every hidden bounty in its own place is proof of the importance and utility of *ta'wil*. Further, as these bounties are countless, the proofs too are innumerable. Let us, therefore, see in the wise Qur'ān where the practical *ta'wil* is mentioned and how a Prophet or Imām has executed it:

Although there are innumerable examples of the practical *ta'wil* in the glorious Qur'ān, the *sūrah* of *Yūsuf* is the best example in this connection, whereby all kinds of questions are answered related to the law of *ta'wil* (12:7). First of all, note here the important point that the way Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) had seen the eleven stars, and the sun and the moon was, in reality, an event of the world of imagination and spirituality, whose *ta'wil* was to come in the future and was conveyed to him by his esteemed father, Ḥaẓrat-i Ya'qūb^(c) (12:4-6). This shows that God had granted Imām Ḥaẓrat-i Ya'qūb^(c) the knowledge of *ta'wil*. Thus, in the light of this heavenly and given knowledge, he gave this glad tiding to his fortunate son, Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) that God would choose him for the rank of Imāmat and

would grant him the supreme bounty of the knowledge of *ta'wīl*, which was also granted completely to his forefathers.

The term *ta'wīl* is vis-à-vis the term *tanzīl*. That is, if a thing has descended to the external and material lowness from the internal and spiritual height, it is called *tanzīl* and when the exalted Imām^(c), by returning it, sees it at the internal and spiritual height, it is called practical *ta'wīl*. Thus, there are many levels of doing *ta'wīl* and the highest level is that of the intellect, followed by that of the spirit and spirituality, where the Prophets and the Imāms by Divine permission, see the intellectual and spiritual form of the relevant thing, such as Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) as a “*ta'wīl* of foresight” (*pesh-bīnī*) informed his two companions in the prison the type of food which they would receive. He was observing this in the light of imagination and this is a good example of practical *ta'wīl* (12:37).

Q.5. Did Imām Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) know only the interpretation (*ta'cībīr*) of dreams, as some people think or had he the knowledge of *ta'wīl*? What is the difference between *ta'cībīr* and *ta'wīl*?

A.5. Allāh had taught Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c) the *ta'wīl* of all narratives (*aḥādīs*, 12:6, 21, 101), which is related to four worlds: the world of spirituality, the world of imagination, the world of dreams and the world of wakefulness. This shows that *ta'cībīr* is confined to the world of dreams only, whereas *ta'wīl* covers all four worlds. This is the difference between *ta'cībīr* and *ta'wīl*. In addition, it is worth reflecting that the word *ta'cībīr* is mentioned only once in verse (12:43) as *ta'cībūrūn* (you interpret), but it is not used for Ḥaẓrat-i Yūsuf^(c), it is related to the chiefs of the king.

Q.6. In the blessed words of the Qur'ān: *ar-ru'yā* (12:43; 17:60; 37:105; 48:27), *ru'yāka* (12:5), *ru'yāya* (12:43, 100) is it not about the dreams of those people who are mentioned? If it is not dreams in the state of sleep, please tell us what it is.

A.6. Be wholeheartedly sure that every word of the holy Qur'ān is full of Divine wisdom, so that the chain of the miracles of its knowledge may continue forever for the people of faith in the

illumination of the light of Imāmat. Thus, the above-mentioned words although apparently relate to dream, but truly speaking there is no mention of the state of sleep in them as would be mentioned in the word '*manām*'. This means that it refers to the miraculous sleep of Prophets and Imāms in which they merely close their eyes, but their hearts are completely awake being merged in Divine remembrance. Such a state can be called dreaming, but its feeling and awareness are brighter and higher than wakefulness. Thus, the gist of this explanation is that the above-mentioned words are about the observations of the world of imagination and the world of spirituality.

Q.7. It appears that certain key wisdoms regarding the subject of *ta'wil* are hidden in verses (7:52-53), would you kindly shed some light on them?

A.7. The purport of the first verse is: "And We have conveyed to those people such a Book, which We have very clearly explained (by our light, that is, the Imām's) knowledge of *ta'wil*, which is the means of guidance and mercy for those who have truly believed" (7:52). The second verse is: "So do they wait for anything, except its (i.e., the Qur'ān's) *ta'wil*? The day its *ta'wil* will come (in the form of material and spiritual revolutions) those who have forgotten it before, will say: Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord came with the truth. So now is there any intercessor who may intercede for us?" (7:53). Just as the exalted Imām^(c) is God's light, similarly he is His knowledge of *ta'wil*, in the light of which the Qur'ān becomes clear. The chain of resurrections continues by this universal light and for its tremendous *qiyāmat* to come is the coming of the Qur'ān's *ta'wil*.

Q.8. The holy Qur'ān is Almighty Allāh's speech therefore it is inevitable that His habit should be found in it. Could you kindly present an example related to this?

A.8. This is a revolutionary and extremely useful question. The answer is that His habit is explained in His blessed names, four of which are: The First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden (57:3).

In the same way, indeed the Qur'ān was in *azal* and will also be in *abad*, it is manifest (*ẓāhir*) and it is hidden (*bāṭin*) too and by the hidden is meant its *ta'wīl*. Further, it is also Allāh's habit that first He speaks from behind a veil, then when the time comes, He grants the hidden treasure of the sacred vision (*didār*) (42:51). Thus, according to this wisdom-filled habit of Allāh, the exoteric aspect of the Qur'ān is like God speaking from behind the veil and its esoteric aspect (i.e., *ta'wīl*) is like His vision (*didār*) without the veil.

Q.9. Among your revolutionary concepts, one is 'God's vision in the form of knowledge (*Khudā kā 'ilmī didār*)'. Could you kindly explain this further for us to understand its reality?

A.9. Study verse (7:143) with the inner eye because the treasure of the highest realities and recognitions is hidden in it. This is the exemplary story of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c), of how he prayed for God's holy vision (*didār*) during his *i'tikāf* on Mount Sinai, as a result of which a wisdom-filled event occurred. [Exoterically] the mention of this event is there in its place, but [esoterically] the reality should be noted that it is the same spiritual and intellectual demonstration which, with respect to the realities and recognitions of *azal*, takes place in the spiritual observation (*mushāhadah-yi bāṭin*) of every Prophet and Imām. Thus, He in *azal*, cast the unprecedented theophany of His majesty, beauty and perfect attributes related to knowledge and recognition on the mount of Intellect, due to which it turned into countless pieces adorned, decorated and arranged gems of knowledge and wisdom. This collection of certainty and recognition and this precious treasure of the secrets of *azal* was, in fact, the wise Qur'ān. There is a lasting reflection of the manifestation of Allāh's face in the inner mirror of every spiritual gem of the Qur'ān. Therefore, to observe each esoteric wisdom of the glorious Qur'ān is Almighty Allāh's vision (*didār*) in the form of knowledge and recognition. One should also reflect on verse (2:115): "And whithersoever you turn, there is Allāh's countenance." If Allāh's vision (*didār*) is possible everywhere, it should first be applied to the world of the Qur'ān, that is, it is an allusion that in every verse is hidden an observation of knowledge

and a recognition of the rank of Allāh's countenance.

Q.10. Could you explain to us the importance of the Qur'ān's *ta'wīl* from the holy Prophet^(s)'s *aḥādīs*?

A.10. There are many *aḥādīs* of the holy Prophet^(s) in this connection. Here, it suffices to mention one only, which is: "The best among you is the one who will fight you for the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān, as I did with you for its *tanzīl*." After the holy Prophet^(s), the best person in his *ummat* is Mawlā ʿAlī^(c), who did *jihād* for the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'ān exoterically and esoterically and this work has been continued in the chain of Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad^(s)'s family and Mawlā ʿAlī^(c)'s children as this is the chain of Imāmat and the Rope of Allāh.

11th September, 1985

The Concept of the Removal of Time

1. In *sūrah-yi ‘Aṣr* (103:1-2) God swears by the time and alludes to a very great loss for humankind, which is none other than an extremely magnificent knowledge and wisdom, which is related to time. This is the reason why God has sworn by His wisdom-filled secrets which are hidden in the background of time. It is a fact that wherever God swears, a very great treasure of Qur’ānic knowledge and recognition is hidden. Therefore, let us pray in the presence of the light of guidance [i.e., the Imām^(c) of the time] with utmost humility and indigence to help us with his special *ta’yīd* (spiritual help), so that we may be able to explain some secrets of “The Concept of the Removal of Time”.

2. In [discussing] this Concept, we have to see how in some verses time is removed from us. Why has it been alluded that people having transcended time and space should think? Can we gain some benefit in knowledge and recognition by conceiving and reflecting in this way? Thus, in this connection, first of all let us examine the verse of obedience (4:59): “O you who believe! Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and the holders of the command, who are from among you.” This command was revealed in the time of Prophethood when only the Muslims of that time were present and who were in a very small number and countless Muslims of the future were not yet born to be included in this address to the Muslims of the Prophet’s time. God, therefore, removed the past from those Muslims and *mu’mins* who were to be born in the future, as a result of which this command to obey was directly given to the people of faith or *mu’mins* of every age.

3. The wise Qur’ān, which is the Divine speech arranged according to wisdom, is eternal (*qadīm*) with respect to its ‘spiritual aspect’ and whatever is eternal is beyond time and space and it encompasses [both] of them. Thus, the example of the Qur’ān being eternal is that its address at the rank of Intellect and the place

of Soul is constant and everlasting. It is preserved in every respect in the Guarded Tablet. Thus, its preservation cannot be likened to any silent, lifeless and irrational written record of this world, while in the Guarded Tablet, in a state of being intellectual, luminous, knowledgeable and spiritual, it is living and speaking and continues every moment to demonstrate its luminous miracles, as mentioned in verses (85:21-22): “Nay, it is a Glorious (*majid*) Qur’ān, in the Guarded Tablet.”

4. The word ‘*majid*’ is among Allāh’s great names (11:73), which means the one who in his special grace and generosity is extremely all-embracing in his favours. God has used this blessed name for His Throne and the mighty Book (the Qur’ān) too. Therefore, the way the Qur’ān is praised as being in the Guarded Tablet is based on the truth, although the verbal beauty [of the language] is not befitting.

5. Where the glorious Qur’ān is in the Guarded Tablet, it is beyond spatial and temporal states and conditions, because the world of the Pen and the Tablet in fact is non-spatial and non-temporal. They are not a body which has three dimensions and there is no time there like the time of the physical world with its past, present and future; there it is immovable time, which can be called everlasting and still time because it is *dahr* (76:1), another name of which is *azal* and the same from another aspect is *abad*. Thus, if you conceive of a Qur’ānic reality in the Divine Word (i.e., *kun!* Be!) or the Divine Pen or the Guarded Tablet, it is the concept of the removal of time, because in such a case the veil of the external time will be lifted for you.

6. Very great wisdoms are hidden in the aorist tense which the Qur’ān uses frequently. The aorist tense includes both the present and the future tenses. Thus, in reality in such words, it is not appropriate to choose one tense and to ignore the other as meaningless, it is more appropriate to give equal importance to both. A good example of such a case is in the following: “*wa yawma yaqūlu kun fa-yakūn*” (6:73). Since ‘*yaqūlu*’ is in the aorist tense, it is common between both the present and the future, therefore its

translation will be in both tenses, such as

- a. “And the day He (God) says: Be! It is.”
- b. “And the day He (God) will say: Be! It will be.”

This is related to the spiritual manifestation of the personal resurrection and the personal world, which is both in the present as well as the future. If one wishes to see the result of this Divine Command in the present, it becomes necessary to conceive of it in spirituality and if it is desired to see in the future, one has to wait for the physical death.

7. It is mentioned in verse (21:104): “*Yawma naṭwi’s-samā’a*.” First translation: The day We enfold the heaven (i.e., the entire universe). Second translation: The day We will enfold the heaven (i.e., the entire universe). These two translations are necessary because the word ‘*naṭwi*’ is in the aorist tense. Thus, we are absolutely sure that the Omnipotent God does not enfold the external and material world in His right hand, but He always and every time does so its intellectual and spiritual position and existence when a personal resurrection takes place in the chain of individual resurrections.

8. In verse (33:37) it is said: “*wa kāna amru’llāhi maf’ūlā*” (And God’s Command is done), not only ‘*kun*’ (Be!), but whatever has to be done has happened. This is the state and reality of the World of Command where no action of God is left for the future. In fact, there is no future there at all. Thus, the Divine Word (*kun*!) is said only once in the *azal* like the blinking of an eye, as mentioned in verse (54:50): “And Our command (i.e., to say *kun*) is but like the blinking of an eye.” You may be bewildered by this Qur’ānic secret that despite the fact that it is said that the Divine Word is said only once, many verses testify that God always and every time continues to say ‘*kun*’ (Be!) to bring things into existence, as it is applied to every Perfect Human Being after their physical creation and spiritual completion, as in the example of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) and Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Īsā^(c) (3:59).

I would like to say about this problem that certainly in the spiritual

world, the Word of Command is not only one in itself, but it also unifies all its own manifestations. These manifestations are found in the chain of the light of guidance. Thus [the analogy of] the Divine Word or the World of Command is the refulgent sun, whose luminous reflection (which is the fountainhead of knowledge and wisdom) removes the veils of time and space and makes the mirror of the heart of the *mazhar* merge with itself, just as the external sun lifts its reflection from the mirror and joins it with itself, when in the numerous mirrors, the duality and multiplicity of the sun become a temporary and metaphorical thing.

9. Sometimes human beings face mental perplexity and bewilderment when reflecting on the length of time. They understand that the length of time is endless and *azal* is the name of such an endless distant past that its beginning is inconceivable, etc. However, in reality, there is no such perplexity at all, because time is originally *dahr* (76:1), which is created from the rotation of the heaven, and the law of survival and annihilation is that a thing which comes into existence from wherever, finally annihilates in it. This explanation vividly sheds light on the fact that external time comes into existence from *dahr* (i.e., immovable time, *azal*) and returns to annihilate in it. Thus, there is no logic in saying: “In the Divine workshop a limited thing continues to be unlimited, but an unlimited thing can never be limited”, whereas it is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān that Omnipotent God enfolds all scattered things (21:104; 39:67), He encloses them (36:12; 78:29), He counts everything in the number one (19:94; 72:28) and similarly everything with God is in a specific quantity (13:8; 54:49), which has been mentioned here.

10. Munificent and Merciful God expands the limited good deeds of His righteous servants and spreads them in the entire universe as compensation and reward and makes paradise from them, colouring them with the luminosity of God’s colour, then He enfolds this sublime paradise, which is in the form of the Universal Intellect, the all-embracing Soul and Universal Subtle Body (3:133; 57:21) in His blessed fist and grants it to the *mu’mins* (21:104; 39:67). The wisdom-filled allusion is also hidden in this enfolding that He

by centralising all ages (i.e., the entire age of the physical world) makes them merge in *dahr* (*azal* = *abad*), as a result of which, all those good deeds of the people of faith which were done in the physical world, become everlasting.

11. The law of the Qur’ān is very clear and in vivid words, it declares: “Everything is perishable save His countenance.” (28:88; 55:27), including the physical time, because it is related to material things. For instance, when the planet earth will come to an end, the time of its rotation too will end. However, the question is where and how physical time will come to an end? The answer is where there is the vision (*didār*) of God’s countenance and the highest place of His recognition and where *dahr*, *azal* and *abad* are together one. Their perishing is that this material time transforms into spiritual time, i.e., *dahr*, as God says: “Everything is perishable save His countenance.” (28:88)

12. When we are absorbed in the dream, our physical time merges with the time of the world of dream, which is utterly different. Then as we wake up, the world of dream merges in the world of wakefulness, where closing our eyes when we enter the world of imagination, our material moments transform into reflective moments and if “imagination” (*khayāl*) through knowledge and worship merges into “spirituality”, it is obvious that its time will be different and most amazing, because it is sovereign over all the times of the physical world, as every past, present and future is under it. There are many examples of this in the wise Qur’ān, such as in verse (62:2-3) in the language of wisdom it is said that the *mu’mins* of every age, progressing on the path of spirituality through the Imām^(c) of the time, can reach the spiritual bounties and blessings of the time of Prophethood of the holy Prophet^(s). This is the clear concept of the Removal of Time.

13. *Sūrah* of *Raḥmān* (55), which is the ‘Bride of the Qur’ān’ mentions all those magnificent favours and bounties, which are attainable by both human beings and *jinn*s. At the peak of all external and internal bounties, it can be seen well that an extremely precious bounty is the scattering and spreading of Light. Not only

is it most excellent and superb, but also everlasting, immortal, *azalī* and *abadī* as well, which cannot be duly praised by a pen. It is the result of effacement and merging, which is in such a way that in the all-embracing ocean of spirituality, the magnificent ships (i.e., personal world) are laden with spiritual particles. Why should this excellence not be supreme because all those who are in these spiritual ships have merged in God's countenance (i.e., the recognition of *tawhīd*) and have attained eternal life in the attribute of majesty and magnanimity. (Reflect well in the light of verses 55:24-27).

14. There are two names among the wisdom-filled and blessed names of the holy Qur'ān: *marfūʿ* (elevated) and *muṭahhar* (purified) (80:14). Both these names are *maḥḥūl* (past participle). There may definitely be a question in an intelligent person's heart about how can the act of elevation apply to the Qur'ān? Had it been on the lowness of the earth before its revelation? How was it purified? Was it not pure and sublime from the very *azal*? The answer is such that indeed the Qur'ān has been revealed from the proximity of God, but it has two aspects: From one there are those pure and lovely words which are directly revealed from heaven and from the other, there are the words of the people of the earth, which have been purified by lifting them to the heaven of knowledge and wisdom. It is with respect to this aspect that the two names of *muṭahhar* and *marfūʿ* are given to the wise Qur'ān. This clearly shows that wherever in the Qur'ān God has spoken on behalf of unbelievers and polytheists, the treasures of esoteric secrets are also there, just as in other examples, precious treasures can be hidden specifically in such places where people would not imagine them to be.

15. More and more treasures of Qur'ānic secrets can be seen in the light of the above-mentioned wisdom. For example, see verse (45:24) where the word *dahr* is mentioned, therefore this should be read with verse (76:1). Further, the wisdom of perishing (*ḥalāk*, 28:88) and merging (*fanā'*, 55:26) should be kept in view. Then, first of all, *dahr* should be reflected upon. If it is the name of something other than God's countenance, it should merge or perish where whatever is other than God's countenance merges or

perishes. However, this is not the case, then obviously *dahr* is a hidden name of the “Reality of realities” (*ḥaqīqat ḥaqā’iq*).

16. When human being(s) (*insān*) reach the place of *dahr*, they merge, consciously or unconsciously. This can happen in the personality and in the particles of soul as well. However, this merging (*fanā*) does not at all mean that in this state human beings become nothing, rather a material example of this is a piece of iron, which whilst in a glowing fire becomes a red amber, similarly human beings transcending space and time through knowledge and worship can experience merging in the object (*aṣl sē wāṣil*). In such a case, for a while or longer the name ‘human being’ cannot be applied, as mentioned in verse (76:1): “Has there come on man a while of *dahr* when he was a thing not remembered?”, that is, they had merged [in the object]. There is a clear indication in this that such a time is going to come on human beings again. That is to say that in this destination of merging (*fanā*) human beings are not in a state where they can have a name or trace.

17. The concept of Şūfis “*Ḥamah ūst*” (God is everything) is very good, but in reality, it cannot be applied to perishable things of [this world]. It is rather related to the everlasting and imperishable realities of the World of Command, which are observed after ‘effacement and merging’ (55:22-27). If it is accepted that Maṣṣūr-i Ḥallāj was a successful Şūfī of the top rank, necessarily we have to also say that the veil of external time was removed in front of him and he had observed his “Higher I”, which is why he proclaimed “*ana’l-ḥaq*” (I am the truth).

18. The cherished verse (15:21), known as the “Law of Treasures” is an extremely important and comprehensive verse, which we should remember every day. As many times as we may have recourse to it to obtain the light of knowledge and recognition, is insufficient. Thus, it is extremely important to understand that God’s proximity and presence is not in a spatial or material sense, it is in an intellectual and spiritual state. Therefore, these treasures mentioned above are living and speaking, because they are the fountainheads of intellect and soul, and because of this they have

attained the rank of utmost nearness to God. In this connection, we have to necessarily conceive that the human image, which in reality is the image of the Beneficent [is included in them], otherwise the question arises: Can they be somewhere outside of them? No, not at all, because everything is in those Divine treasures or they have to be attached to them. This means that every Divine Treasure has to be a great angel in human form and all sublime realities are within such living treasures, such as *dahr*, *azal*, *abad*, paradise, etc., mentioned in verse (15:21).

19. The word “*as-samā*” (the heaven) is mostly used in the Qur’ān to denote the entire universe, because it is within the celestial sphere (*kurrah-yi falak*). Thus, whatever is said about ‘the heaven’ is a universal law, as said: “When the heaven is skinned” (81:11). That is, during spirituality and resurrection, the external (i.e., physical) existence of this universe will be removed to reveal its internal (i.e., spiritual) state. Similarly, the husk of the external time is peeled back so that the *dahr* under it can be observed with its full beauty and elegance and which is the soul of all external times. Therefore, just as the heaven has a skin or apparent aspect, similarly everything in this material universe has an external aspect and an internal one. In this context, it is a fact that within every individual there is a clean or immaculate, rather a beautiful and elegant human being (i.e., the soul), which is hidden. The external aspect is the husk and the internal is the delicious kernel. This means that the external aspect of this universe is called *dunyā* (this world) whereas its internal aspect is called *ākhirat* (the next world), i.e., spirituality and paradise. It is in this sense that paradise is equal to the length and width of this universe (3:133; 57:21).

24th September, 1985

The Question of Shahādat

1. Shahādat means to observe¹ a thing with either the external or the internal eye. It also means to be martyred in the path of God, to be present, a witness, as God says in verse (3:18): “Allāh Himself bears witness that there is no God but He, and the angels and the possessors of knowledge (*ulu’l-‘ilm*) upholding justice.” Who are these possessors of knowledge who, in a real sense, with God and the angels bear witness to the oneness of God, whom He elevates to the highest position of the heaven of knowledge naming them ‘Possessors of knowledge’ and who uphold justice? They are the Prophets and [their] legatees (Imāms), because they alone have the sublime attributes such as perfect recognition of God, knowledge of His oneness and justice.

2. Did you note carefully that the above-mentioned shahādat related to Allāh’s oneness, is not a common shahādat. It is rather very special and the highest because it is with the shahādat of Allāh and the angels and it is in the light of heavenly knowledge and recognition and real justice. That is, [such a shahādat] is after the inner observation of spiritual and intellectual manifestations and theophanies and perfect recognition because without this, true shahādat of God’s oneness is not possible. Remember well the law of wisdom that whenever any shahādat joins God’s shahādat, it has to be based on the full observations of the spiritual and intellectual worlds and perfect recognition of God, as He says in verse (13:43): “The unbelievers say: you [O Prophet] are not a Messenger. Say: Allāh and he who has the knowledge of [the heavenly] Book are sufficient between you and me to testify [my messengership].” How bright and understandable for wise people is the fact that where the first witness of the holy Prophet’s messengership is God Himself, its second witness is the Imām, i.e., Mawlā ‘Alī^(c). Every wise

¹ The spiritual martyr starts to observe realities and recognises in this world whereas the physical martyr will observe them in the next world.

person can assess well how sublime is the inner (*bāṭini*) position of the exalted Imām^(c) and how he has seen with his inner eye all the spiritual and intellectual states of Prophethood and Messengership, because without this, there can neither be a witness according to God's standard, nor would it be possible to have the luminous knowledge of the heavenly Book.

3. God's witness of the holy Prophet's messengership is the *tanzil* of the Qur'ān and the holy and sacred Imām^(c)'s witness is the *ta'wil* of the Qur'ān. That is to say that, when Allāh sent the Qur'ān and by His command when the light of Imāmat started to do its *ta'wil*, these two exalted witnesses became complete. This is so because the witness of *tanzil* together with the witness of *ta'wil* was always necessary, therefore the source, i.e., the Imām is present in every age. It is according to this verse (13:43) that there is the Tradition of the two heavy things (*ḥadis-i saqalayn*), in which the purport is this [very] *shahādat*, as well as the guidance of the *ummat*.

4. Study the teaching of verse (11:17): "Is he who has a clear proof from his Lord (i.e., the Prophet) and a witness who is part of him (i.e., °Alī), follows him." You are aware of the fact that in the worldly transactions of Islam, where there is a need of witnesses, non-Muslims are not accepted, rather two reliable Muslims who have actually seen the concerned event with their own eyes are sought. However, since the task of Prophethood and Messengership is a 'compendium of spiritual and [intellectual] luminous miracles', which can be seen only by God, the Messenger and the Master of the Divine Command (i.e., the Imām), God has chosen as its witness the true Imām who is the Messenger's soul (i.e., Mawlānā °Alī^(c)). Thus, his witness is the eye-witnessed one (*shahādat-i ru'yat*).

5. "Verily Allāh is witness over everything" (22:17), similarly He is witness over the Messenger and the Messenger is witness over the pure Imāms (2:143; 22:78). That is, the light of Imāmat is merged in the light of Prophethood and the Imāms in their respective times are witness over the people of their times. This means that the Messenger is the door to God and the Messenger's

door is the Imām. And this is the unchangeable *sunnat* of God and that of His Messenger.

6. Study verse (39:69): “The earth will radiate with the light of its Lord and the Book will be set up and the Prophets and witnesses will be brought.” The earth which radiates by the light of her Lord is the earth of the personal world; the Book is the Book of deeds, or the Book of the soul or spirituality and the witnesses who are with the Prophets, are the Legatees, i.e., the Imāms, as mentioned in verse (50:21) “And every soul will come, along with it a driver and a witness.” That is, every soul of the earlier ones and the later ones, with its Prophets and Imāms, where the Prophets are driving people according to the law of *shari‘at* and the Imāms are witness over the people.

7. God is omnipotent. In this sense He is witness over everything and in this connection, He is also witness over the people. However, the external law is that the one who has to be the witness should not be absent, rather he has to be present. Thus, God sent a Messenger in every cycle so that he, during his lifetime may be a witness over the people, that is, he may represent God’s witness, and then he may appoint his successor for this witness. This fact is discussed here in the light of the wise Qur’ān and it is conspicuously present in verse (5:117): “I was a witness over them as long as I was among them and when You made me to die, You were watcher over them.” This is the description of Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Īsā^(c) that he was a witness over the people during his pure life and after him, the Imāms of his cycle were representing this heavenly witness and the same has taken place in the cycle of the holy Prophet.

8. All those verses mentioned about the resurrection are in the form of examples (*amsāl*, sing. *maṣāl*), therefore through every example the recognition of its object (*mamsūl*) is necessary. Had it not been so, the purpose of the example would have been unattainable, as God says: “Then certainly We will relate to them with [a special] knowledge, and We were never absent.” (7:7) That is, all the examples will remain in this world, and at the place of spirituality, which is resurrection and the hereafter, under a special

Divine knowledge only their objects (*mamsūlāt*) will be before them.

Here, the verse “And We were not absent” requires more and more attention because Qur’ānic words are based on the Arabic language. Thus, the question arises with respect to this verse that if God was not absent (*ġā’ibīn*, pl. of *ġā’ib*, meaning absent) then necessarily He was present (*hāẓirīn*, pl. of *hāẓir*, meaning present). However, how can it be possible to accept a single as plural and accept one who is absent as present before us? The answer is that the Prophets and the Imāms are mentioned in these wisdom-filled words because it is they who in many meanings are distinguished with God’s vicegerency and representation. Any King has the right to say about his representatives: “Look, these are my representatives who are coming to you, rather consider that we ourselves are coming to you in their form.”

9. One wisdom-filled purport of verse (17:78) is as follows: “Without doubt the reading of the Qur’ān at dawn, i.e., the luminous worship has been made present (*mashhūd*), that is, as a result of it, the world of spirituality is observed (*mushāhadah*).” This remembrance and worship is thus the special recitation of the Qur’ān and this luminous observation is its soul and spirituality, as mentioned in verse (5:44), that there was guidance in the exoteric aspect of the Torah and there was light in the esoteric aspect so that the Prophets, the Imāms (*rabbāniyyūn*) and *hujjats* and the *dā’is* (*ahbār*) according to their respective ranks could teach the Torah to the people in the illumination of this light. In the above-mentioned sacred verse: “*wa kānū ‘alayhi shuhadā*” (And they were present over this in spiritual state) bears the key wisdom that the heavenly Book’s light is in the holy Prophet^(s) and the Imām^(c) with full spiritual and intellectual manifestations and through them, the *hujjats* and the *dā’is* can also experience it completely.

10. Perhaps you will be most amazed to hear the secret that those who prior to their physical death experience the death of their carnal soul, their resurrection takes place and they are given the book of deeds with very great success. The practical *ta’wīl* is in

this heavenly book, which is called ‘the coming of *ta’wil*’. Such [fortunate] people are called ‘*muqarrabīn*’ (the nearest ones). See verses (83:18-21): “Nay, the record of deeds of the righteous ones is in the ‘*Illīyyīn* and what do you know what ‘*Illīyyūn* is? It is a book which accepts writing (*kitāb^{um} marqūm*), which the nearest ones (*muqarrabūn*) can see in their life time.” It should be clear that ‘*Illīyyīn* and ‘*Illīyyūn* mean Mawlā ‘Alī^(c) and the Imāms^(c) from Prophet Muhammad^(s)’s progeny and Mawlā ‘Alī^(c)’s children, whose collective position is *kitāb^{um} marqūm*, that is, such a book in which the great feats of Imāmat are being recorded continuously. This is the Speaking Book [mentioned in] verses (23:62; 45:29), that is the Speaking Qur’ān and the manifest Imām. Thus, true *mu’mīns*’ book of deeds is in this luminous book, which ambitious *mu’mīns* can see not only tomorrow but even today.

11. It is also a great secret of the exalted Imām^(c)’s treasure of knowledge and recognition that, when a Perfect Human Being enters the door of spirituality, God creates in front of him the heavens and the earth of the personal world and raises his soul and intellect to the apogee of perfection. Thus, through the principle of alluding the positive from the negative, it is said in verse (18:51): “I did not make them present at the time of the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor did I make them witness at the time of their own creation.” One famous *ta’wil* of this verse is that the beliefs and doctrines of the people of falsehood are not such that they can be proved with testimony from the physical world (*āfāq*) and the personal world (*anfus*).

12. It is only the Prophets and the Imāms who are Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c)’s children in the sense of adopting the inheritance of Divine vicegerency and knowledge and recognition. Thus, it is the event of the world of particles that Allāh takes from the loins of every Prophet and Imām those particles of souls which are representatives or “I’s” of the entire world and then in the illumination of the Perfect Man’s light, makes them observe their own spirit and spirituality and the covenant of “Am I not?” continues to be renewed in every Perfect Human Being (7:172).

13. Every word of the wise Qur'ān is a centre of sublime wisdoms. “*Jadid*” (new) is such a wisdom-filled word. A very great wisdom for the people of insight in this word is that every time it is used in the sense of creating a new thing from an old one. Therefore, with respect to the concept of creation, a prudent person should never think that God has created this world and the human being new in such a way that prior to them there was nothing, whereas the Qur'ān presents the examples of creating the old from the new and vice versa. Thus, the act of perpetual renewal becomes the cause of the everlasting and eternal paradise.

14. The ‘new creation’ [mentioned in verses] (13:5; 14:19; 17:49, 98; 32:10; 34:7; 35:16; 50:15) means the subtle body, which through *ibdā'*, i.e., *Kun* (Be!) takes shape from subtle particles. In fact, the above-mentioned eight places mention not only *in'bi'ās*, but the same is *ibdā'* itself.

30th September, 1985

The *Ta'wīl* of Ḥazrat-i Ayyūb^(c)'s Story

Why are there differences in *Ta'wīl*?

Some people think that the evolution and progress of *ta'wīl* or its numerous blessings and abundant wisdoms are different and there are contrary *ta'wīls*, however, this is not so, because *ta'wīl* which is wisdom and abundant good (2:269) in reality is granted to the *ulu'l-amr* (the possessors of Divine Command) and there is no doubt that they are the ones who possess *ta'wīl*. Thus, in the verse of obedience (4:59), there is the wisdom-filled allusion that each one of them should explain the *ta'wīl* from the treasure of it in their time according to the exigencies of time and place. It is on the basis of this that *mu'mins* spread over the entire cycle are commanded to follow the possessor of *ta'wīl* of their respective time. This shows that every possessor of the Divine Command (i.e., the Imām^(c) of the time) explains some “new *ta'wīls*” in connection with the “gradational guidance” of Islam, as it was mentioned in the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān: “The day its *ta'wīl* will come” (7:53). This means that even though *ta'wīl* has to come gradually from the very beginning and no time has been bereft of its coming, yet this also cannot be strange if its “collective result and power” takes a revolutionary form in a particular time.

Personal World:

There are three worlds: the external world, i.e., this material universe, the second is the world of religion and the third is the personal world. Thus, in connection with *ta'wīl*, the link and relationship between these three worlds is that the examples (*amsāl*) are given from this world, but their objects (*mamsūlāt*) are meant to be shown in the world of religion and in the personal world. For example, the Prophet and the Imām are compared to the sun and moon of this external world, who shed light from the heaven of the world of religion and the same luminous sun and moon are also doing their work in the personal world. From this aspect, two kinds

of *ta'wīl* are proven, one related to the world of religion and the other to the personal world.

The *ta'wīl* we are going to present here, that is, the *ta'wīl* of Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)'s story is related to the personal world. His story is mentioned in the Qur'ān as follows: “[And mention the story] of Ayyūb when he cried to his Lord [saying]: Verily adversity has touched me and You are the most Merciful of the merciful ones. So, We heard his prayer and We removed that adversity from which he suffered and We gave him his family and the like of them by Our special mercy and as an admonition for the worshippers.” (21:83-84)

Adversity (*aẓ-zurr*):

Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c) was the fifth among the seven entrusted (*mustawda'*) Imāms of the cycle of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c). According to the Divine *sunnat*, he had to undergo all those afflictions which with respect to the common people are special but with respect to all the Prophets and Imāms are ordinary and common. This is because no Perfect Human Being can attain the “Kingdom of the Soul and the Intellect” without undergoing those difficulties and trials. Such trials are physical as well as spiritual and their special aspect is extremely heavy as well as greatly amazing because they are the essence of the entire world's difficulties. It is for this reason that they are compared to and likened with different examples whereas in reality they are the same one thing. That is, the soul which consists of countless particles and can present all the specimens of good and evil.

Worms in Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)'s Body:

If a wise person reflects carefully on verse (35:12), they will come to know the secret that, although according to humankind only ‘good’ is liked and ‘evil’ is absolutely disliked, nonetheless to benefit from knowledge and recognition in this spiritual experience, God has created two oceans, as has been stated: “And the two oceans are not alike: this, fresh, sweet and good to drink (*khayr*), this (other) bitter, salt (*sharr*). And from them both, you eat fresh meat and

derive the ornaments that you wear.”

When the personal resurrection of the Perfect Human Being occurs, first of all, spiritual particles known as Gog and Magog enter his person, and in a way, they eat his animal soul by licking it. This event in Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)’s story is depicted as the eating of his blessed body by worms. There are various examples of this spiritual event [in the Qur’ān], such as:

- a) To destroy the wall erected by Ḥaẓrat-i Zū’l-Qarnayn^(c) (18:98)
- b) Gog and Magog create mischief in the earth (18:94)
- c) Eating of the sacrifice of a righteous person by the sacred heavenly fire (5:27)
- d) To eat and make others eat the meat of the sacrifice during the pilgrimage (22:28)
- e) To eat the flesh of one’s dead brother in the sense of back-biting (49:12)
- f) Repairing the wall which was about to fall down by demolishing it first so that the treasure may not be exposed before its due time (18:77)
- g) This is also Nimrod’s fire (21:68-69)
- h) This is also Pharaoh’s fire (28:38), etc.

Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)’s Progeny:

All Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)’s children and servants had died. God, by His omnipotence, not only revived them but also gave him twice as many. The *ta’wil* of this is that the Perfect Man (Prophet/Imām) is the vicegerent of God and the successor of Ādam, in whose personality are gathered all the people of the entire world in the form of ‘*ẓarrāt*’, who are called this Ādam of the time’s special and ordinary *zurriyyat*. When the Perfect Human Being experiences spiritual death prior to physical death, all these people who are in the form of spiritual particles also die. Then these and all of those are revived and in the personal world of the Perfect Man,

there are as many intellects as there are souls. This is the *ta'wil* of Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)'s people dying and reviving and their becoming twofold. However, one important point to remember is that souls are separate, but the intellects no matter how many become one by joining together. This means that although the Pearl of Intellect is only one, all the people are in it, in fact, the entire universe is enfolded in it.

Satan's Abortive Attempt:

As has already been mentioned, evil is also necessary with good for the sake of trial. In verse (6:112), you can see that God, the Knowing, the Wise has appointed according to wisdom and expediency many enemies from among the Satans of humankind and *jinn* for every Perfect Human Being. Thus, the Satan who was in human form severely opposed him and showed malevolence towards him because Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c) was active in conveying and [spreading] the *da'wat*; and as a result of this enmity, the Satan who was from among the *jinn* adopting the shape of an animal touched his blessed body in his dream, due to which he became severely ill. Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c) however, as the chosen friend of God remained patient. He was commanded: "*Urkuḡ bi-rijlika*" ("Strike the ground with your foot" 38:42). That is, do intense and abundant *ẓikr*. He did so, as a result of which, a fountainhead of extremely pellucid and sweet fountainhead of spiritual knowledge and wisdom gushed forth in front of him and he was commanded to bathe and wash in it and drink it.

What is *Ẓiġs*?

God then commanded him: "Take a *ẓiġs* in your hand and strike with it and break not your oath (38:44)." *Ẓiġs* means a sheaf of straw, a collection of something and [in *ta'wil*] it means 'A collection of particles of soul'. Thus, among the countless examples of these particles, one is that his personality was struck with a wisdom-filled strike (*ẓarb*), similar to a friend striking with a bouquet of flowers where the latter not only counts the flowers but their petals too! Thus, there are extremely subtle allusions in this noble verse. Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c) had 'three wives': in the physical world it was a

lady, in the world of religion it was the supreme *ḥujjat* (i.e., *bāb*) and in the personal world his spirit, also known as soul, whereas within his own personality, he had the rank of Intellect. Thus, it is clear that his soul was pure and spotless, however, it was necessary to keep the oath in order to present a specimen of the law of transformation (*iṣlāḥ*) and purification, therefore the subtle particles struck his satisfied soul (89:27) with a wisdom-filled blow.

You are convinced of the fact that the Prophets and Imāms, in order to experience their personal resurrection, first of all, undergo the ‘experiment of the carnal soul’s death’. Although this experiment is extremely difficult for the *mu’mins*, how can it be impossible for them, while all the miracles of Islam are on the straight path, not away from it and while the Prophets and Imāms are guides on this straight path and all *mu’mins* are their followers?

Let us now discuss another of the numerous wisdoms of the above-mentioned word ‘*ẓarb*’ (strike). One such wisdom is in verse (2:71) that the ox, which the children of Israel slaughtered by God’s command was, in fact, an example and symbol of mortification (*nafs-kushī*). That is, it is proof of reviving after the mortification of the carnal soul prior to physical death, [as described in verse 2:73] that a dead person was brought to life by striking him with a part of the sacrificed ox. In this reference you can see that the word ‘*ẓarb*’ (to strike it/him) is used as ‘*izribūhu*’ (strike him) and by also using ‘*ka-zālika*’ (in this way) this miracle is given the status of such a universal law that whoever holds dear to be revived by dying in this life, must slaughter the ox of their carnal soul and strike his personality with a part of it in a wisdom-filled blow.

Ḥaẓrat-i Ayyūb^(c)’s Attributes and Excellences:

In verse (4:163) his graceful mention is that he was among those blessed Prophets to whom Allāh had sent the revelation. In verse (6:84) his praise is that he was guided [by God] like the other Prophets, he had the honour of being from Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c)’s progeny and he was granted the reward and rank by God which is granted to those who do good. The specific story of Ḥaẓrat-i

Ayyūb^(c) is in verses (21:83-84; 38:41-44), the *ta'wili* wisdom of which has been explained by the True Lord's grace. He is an example of how every person is rewarded according to his position as a result of *zikr* and worship (21:84). Almighty God called him patient, His chosen servant and one who has recourse to Him and He made his story an example for worshippers and wise people. This means that the miracles he experienced were not different from the law of recognition.

Examples of Various Types:

God's *sunnat*, which is unchangeable and there is no alteration in it, is among the fundamental matters of religion. This means that the fundamental realities are always the same, just as the Prophets' and Imāms' spirituality is the same, however, there are varied examples of it in the wise Qur'ān (17:89; 18:54). The reason for this method is a trial as well as the vastness of the reality, that is, spirituality is such an unfathomable ocean that, in order to present its example, different vessels of examples of the entire world are used.

Note:

The importance and usefulness of the writings of Khānah-yi Hikmat are before you. In addition, this article has the honour of being requested by such a learned and wise scholar that I personally consider him to be one in thousands.

5th October, 1985

Humankind's Paradisal Attire

1. What will be the nature of the special attire or robe of honour (*khil'at*) of humankind, which will be invested by God in paradise? Are the silken clothes of paradise, such as fine silk (*sundus*) and brocades, silk of thick texture (*istabraq*) like the clothes of this world? If not, why are they so gloriously praised? If the clothes of paradise are different from those of this world, please tell us what are their characteristics. In connection with the recognition of paradise and its bounties (47:6), is it not fundamentally important to recognise paradisal attire? These and other such important questions may be buried in the heart and mind of every seeker of reality. Thus, while picking up the pen on this necessary and pleasant subject, I pray with utmost humility that may the True Lord help us for the sake of all *mu'mins*! *Āmin*!

2. First of all, in this regard, it is necessary to know that not a single thing of paradise is without intellect and soul, because the abode of the hereafter is entirely alive (29:64) and in this world the best example of life is humankind, who is the noblest and superior of all creatures. Thus, paradise which is in an intellectual and spiritual state, is like a perfect and complete luminous personality and the same personality is the paradisal attire as well, because according to the law of paradise, the best attire that was possible to adorn with the beauties of intellect and soul, is the human form only, i.e., humankind's luminous or subtle body, which has many names.

3. Human beings are neither born nor die together simultaneously, rather they are born individually and they pass away at different times. Similarly, stars and planets of the universe are created individually in different times and perish in their respective times individually. All this takes place by Divine Command. Obviously, the age span of human beings is very short whereas that of stars and planets is very long. Thus, according to one scientific estimation

1.5 million years have elapsed since the planet earth came into existence and according to another such estimation humankind has been living on the earth for approximately the same length of time. The question, therefore, arises: Where were they living before this? Answer: They were living on another planet. How did they move from there to here? Answer: Since they were in the paradise of subtlety and spirituality, therefore they flew by their paradisaal attire, i.e., the subtle body and landed on this earth. Nonetheless, paradisaal attire is such that it can exist even without a planet.

4. Verses (22:23; 35:33; 76:12) mention that the raiment of the people of paradise is of silk (*ḥarīr*), the wisdom-filled allusion of which is that their raiment is living, miraculous and *ibḍāʿi*, which is the astral body. That is, the subtle body because silk is the product of a creature in which there is the example of the “new creation”, which is the silkworm, which is the example of a human being’s dying and reviving in this life, but also the proof and symbol of the fact that after this *inʿibāʿas* (i.e., dying and reviving), a human being becomes an angel and starts to fly. However, there is a difference as well in this example, that is, in the former the worm is absent (i.e., has died) and the moth is present, but in the latter, human being is present and angel is absent (hidden). Thus, this is a very great trial.

5. Study verse (101:4): “The day in which the human beings will be like scattered moths.” Things which are selected for the sake of Qur’ānic parables and allegories contain within themselves many wisdoms. Thus, in the above-mentioned verse, comparing and likening human souls to moths, it is alluded that human beings in their dense body crawl like a worm on the ground, but in their subtle body, they are fully capable of flying in the space of the universal paradise like angels.

6. God Almighty has mentioned the [multiple] examples of the Reality of realities in numerous ways in order to test human beings, and by looking at them it appears that their objects (*mamsūlāt*) are different, but this is not the case – the Reality of realities is only one, its examples are given in different ways. Thus, it is necessary to reflect: Are Yūsuf^(c)’s shirt (12:93), Dāwūd^(c)’s armour (21:80),

Sulaymān^(c)'s fortress (34:13), Masīḥ ʿĪsā^(c)'s bird (3:49) and Divine coats (16:81) different from each other? No, not at all. [In fact] because they are all the *ibdāʿī* shirt, they are everything. In it are available not only spiritual foods in the form of various fragrances but also insight (*baṣīrat*) of the highest kind. It is armour as well as a fortress, it can also fly wherever it wants to like a bird, it can protect from heat and war and it is the same shirt which is the paradisaal attire, which can be obtained from the Imām^(c) of the time.

7. When a scientist invents a machine or instrument which can be used for different purposes, it proves to be very useful and is praiseworthy in people's view. This is an example of human beings who are very weak in materialising their intentions and mostly incapable of doing many things. God Almighty however, through His perfect power has always been creating paradisaal attire for the people of faith by casting it in the mould of the Perfect Human Being. This is so miraculous and full of marvels and wonders that it cannot be duly described. This paradisaal attire is everything, created from the essence of the entire universe, in which all the bounties of paradise are brought extremely close to the *mu'mins* (50:31). It is the same personal world in which there is the hidden treasure and every great secret related to God's Godhead.

8. It is extremely necessary for every *mu'min* to recognise and reflect on how the personal world is spread throughout the universe. How this spacious and vast universe is enfolded into the personal world, i.e., human being! Thus, fortunate people join their intellect and soul with the *mazḥar* of Divine light, so that through him they may find themselves in the entire universe and the entire universe within themselves since God's *walī* is the Universal Intellect (the Supreme Throne) and the Universal Soul (God's *Kursī*), that is, the manifest Imām^(c) surrounds all the intellectual, spiritual and material things (2:255; 36:12).

9. In five places of the Qur'ān (18:31; 36:56; 76:13; 83:23, 35), it is mentioned that the people of paradise will be on thrones (*arā'ik*). *Arā'ik* is the plural of *arikah*, which means adorned or bedecked throne, veiled throne or couch, or canopied bed. The

object (*miṣdāq*) of all these meanings is the subtle body because the spiritual kingdom of a *mu'min* is hidden in it. The same is the living house of paradise, speaking throne and flying attire. In fact, it is the compendium of paradise, i.e., it is everything.

10. In this connection the example of *jinn* (*pari*) is very interesting as well as useful. However, it must be remembered that on the basis of stories, people have considered *jinn* and *pari* two different creatures, whereas this subtle creature is called *jinn* in Arabic and *pari* in Persian. Had it not been so, the wise Qur'ān would have mentioned *paris* by a different name. However, it is not so, rather the wise Qur'ān mentions only *jinn*, which in Persian is *pari*. If you can accept this fact, many veils of soul will automatically be removed in front of you, because the recognition of *jinn* (i.e., *pari* and subtle creature) is extremely necessary to both understand the Qur'ān and to recognise oneself.

11. There is no doubt that among *jinn*s as among human beings, there are two types: the righteous *jinn* and the evil ones. The Qur'ān praises the righteous *jinn* and describes them with the word *ṣāliḥūn* (72:11). The singular of this word is *ṣāliḥ*. Its meaning is not only righteous, but also the one who does good deeds. The word with its plural forms (*ṣāliḥūn*, *ṣāliḥin*) according to the Qur'ānic wisdom has so much importance that God has praised it in various ways.

12. After this well-grounded statement that *jinn* itself is *pari* and all of them are beautiful and some of them are good also, we would like to say that the paradisaal attire works like a righteous and obedient *jinn*. They can traverse the distance of thousands of miles in the blink of the eye because their flight is like lightning. Like a flash of lightning, they can also appear and disappear. [In other words], there is no difference between paradisaal attire and *jinn*, because both are subtle. Therefore, they can cleave any kind of wall and enter a house, however in order to enter a house, they are commanded to enter through the door (2:189). Therefore, when they come to the door by the speed of lightning, the most secure door opens automatically and closes automatically, an act which takes place with extreme rapidity.

13. All things in God's Godhead and in His kingdom, every one of them is representing the numerous manifestations [of His] mercy and knowledge (40:7). Nonetheless, in this connection some of them have special importance. For example, in this time while the spiritual cycle has begun, the existence of U.F.O. is well known, about which even the scientists are bewildered and cannot say what creature it is and this is the reason why they have named it U.F.O. (i.e., unidentified flying object). It is an enigma for the people of the world and it is not surprising that it may unravel to the people in the future. In any case this too like the paradisaal attire is a miraculous thing which flies like *paris*. If it can be tamed and subjugated to human beings by a spiritual revolution or science, there can be great help to them in subjugating the universe.

14. According to the Qur'ānic law (40:7), everything is surrounded by mercy and knowledge, where mercy is for the soul and knowledge is for the intellect. Thus, there is a lot for the soul and intellect in the Flying Saucer or U.F.O., that we can consider it the specimen of the paradisaal attire. We can also call it an advanced human being, as well as it should not be surprising in its being *jinn* (*pari*) and angel. It may also be called human beings' 'Higher I' and subtle body because so many such names belong to the same reality and that reality belongs to the human being.

15. Without doubt, the fact that a human being is the microcosm and it contains within it the macrocosm, is accepted by all. That is [also] the personal world, which through its countless particles that are a compound of soul and body, is representing the entire universe. There is nothing in the heavens and the earth, the specimen of which is not in the human being while the microcosm is the quintessence of the macrocosm. [That is to say], the external world is like an extremely huge tree and the human being is its fruit and kernel. This means that when a human being submits the stone of his 'I' to the Gardener of *Azal* through obedience, He sows it in the garden of nature and causes it to grow, as a result of which the human being becomes a subtle universe, because the law of nature is that from the tree is created the stone and then again from the stone the tree. From this, we come to know where paradise is

already created, it is spread throughout the universe, however in order to make it more and more realistic and a practical paradise with the wisdom of individuality, it is enfolded in every *mu'min*, so that with knowledge and action and the Divine colour it may be more fresh and real.

16. The wise Qur'ān works according to the view and intellect of every individual and similarly, the holy Prophet^(s) had spoken to different people according to their intellectual levels. Thus, the most important thing for the people of oneness in the light of the Qur'ān and *ḥadīṣ*, is the harmony, togetherness and unity of all realities, such as the unity of the microcosm and the macrocosm, the unity of all human beings both in *azal* and in *abad*, different manifestations of the same person, for instance, human being, angel, *pari* (*jinn*), the body of similitude, Flying Saucer, paradisaal attire, etc.

17. The important point to remember is that the same great angel is sometimes [described] in the singular and at other times in the plural, in the sense that he within himself is a spiritual universe and whenever the intent of “Be” (*kun*) is uttered, countless angels can instantly manifest themselves. Singular in the sense that all those angels in their essence and attributes are not different or contrary to one another and being from one substance only, have become united with the great angel, as the Qur'ān (89:22) says: “And your Lord has manifested (will manifest) Himself, while the angels were standing (will stand) rank upon rank.” Although in the world of particles, the multiplicity of angels is correct, at the place of Intellect and rank of *ibdā'*, there is only one extremely great angel who alone represents both unity and multiplicity. If the question arises here about “*ṣaff^{un} ṣaffā*” (to duly stand in line), it should be known that such Qur'ānic words in their meaning reach their climax, therefore the ultimate meaning of the standing of angels in a line is that all of them become one.

18. If the spiritual journey of the personal world is circular, by going round it you will eventually arrive where you had started it. In such a case that which is at the starting point will be the

first and the last. Thus, regarding the Throne (11:7) both the following translations are correct: (a) “His Throne was on the water (knowledge)”; (b) “His Throne became on the water (knowledge).”, that is, the Throne was as it is from the very beginning, but it was observed later on.

19. Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) was a perfect and complete personal world in his time. Therefore, although he was a single individual, all souls were gathered together in him. Keeping in view only the sacred souls from among all of them, it is said (16:120): “Verily Ibrāhīm was an *ummat*, obedient to Allāh as a *ḥanīf*.” *Ḥanīf* means the one who utterly inclines to one side (i.e., the right one). That is, there were countless souls in him.

20. All the earlier and later people are gathered together in the personal world (i.e., the Imām^(c) of the time), because it is he who is the *miqāt* (appointed time, appointed place). The appointed time is his personal resurrection and the appointed place is his blessed personality, and the total result of this resurrection is called “a known day” (*yawmⁱⁿ ma^clūm*) (56:49-50).

21. The wise Qur’ān in its special language says that all the virtues and miracles of all the great Prophets and Messengers were gathered in the holy Prophet^(s). One example of this is: “Follow the guidance of those Prophets.” (6:89). The Divine purpose in this is that the holy Prophet^(s), by following the previous Prophets should attain all their miracles. This universal law clearly shows that no virtue or miracle was absent from the spirituality of the Chief of Messengers.

22. The creature whose creation God Himself praises is indeed the best creature, as it is said in (23:14): “Then We created him another creature (i.e., the creature of the ultimate rank). So blessed is Allāh, the best of creators.” As has already been mentioned, the thing which is at the very end of the personal world is also at its beginning. Thus ‘another creature’ which is mentioned in the above verse is on this side Ḥaẓrat-i Qā’imu’l-*qiyāmat*^(c) and on the other side he is Ḥaẓrat-i *Mubdi^c*. Many secrets of recognition have been

mentioned in this article about paradisaal attire. Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

Note: The office bearers of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi ʿĀrif suggest that the reader should study carefully all the books and articles by the author, because all of them are written on the principle of explaining one another.

17th October, 1985.

Examples of Knowledge and its Contrary

1. Importance and Utility of Knowledge:

If the physical, spiritual and intellectual worlds are considered three oceans, all three of them will be oceans of knowledge because the real ocean will be that of the intellect by which the spiritual ocean will be filled and the physical ocean [too] would have been filled. This is a fact, however, it is a matter of amazement that the intellectual, spiritual and physical oceans which are filled with knowledge are separate from one another from one aspect, but are together from another aspect, just as a ball of iron is made red hot in a furnace by the ironsmith. Every person should reflect on this good example that the ball is the physical universe, the heat is the Universal Soul and the light is the Universal Intellect, as the bearers of the Throne and angels around it prayed to God (40:7): “O our Lord, You have comprehended everything in mercy and knowledge.” That is, Your mercy and knowledge have encompassed everything.

2. Knowledge and Ignorance (*jahl*):

Examples of all realities and recognitions are in the wise Qur’ān. Every example has two aspects: positive and negative, so that the understanding of reality may be easy for those who seek to understand. Thus, through the mediation of the holy Prophet^(s) and the Imāms^(e) from his progeny, some Qur’ānic examples of knowledge and its contrary (ignorance) are being explained here so that the yearning for the acquisition of knowledge present in the readers may be intensified and ignorance, wherever and with whatever name it may be, is exposed and every individual may struggle strenuously in order to eradicate it.

3. Certainty and Doubt:

Among the numerous names and examples of knowledge, one is certainty (*yaqīn*), the three levels of which are well-known: *‘ilmu’l-*

yaqīn (certainty of knowledge), ‘*aynu’l-yaqīn* (eye of certainty) and *ḥaqqu’l-yaqīn* (the truth of certainty). The contrary of certainty is doubt (*shak*) as well as suspicion (*gumān*). Vis-à-vis certainty, there are also three levels of doubt and suspicion. Where certainty is praised in the sense of knowledge, there doubt and suspicion is condemned in the sense of ignorance, so that directly and indirectly the importance of knowledge may be evident, as the Qur’ān (2:2) says: “That Book is such in which there is no doubt.” That is, there does not exist any level of doubt in it. This obviously and plainly means that in this Book (i.e., *alif, lām, mīm*) there is the truth of certainty and that is the light of Imāmat.

4. **Healing (*shifā’*) and Illness (*bīmārī*):**

Countless people in this world were suffering from the disease of ignorance. God had pity for them and revealed the wise Qur’ān as medicine and healing for this sickness. However, just as in the case of physical sickness it is necessary to have recourse to an expert physician or doctor, it is necessary to have recourse to a spiritual doctor for the treatment of spiritual sickness and who has been appointed by God and His Messenger. All this is included in the wisdom of the following verse (10:57): “O humankind! Indeed, an exhortation has come to you from your Lord, and a healing for that which is in your breasts, and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.”

5. **Light and Darkness:**

In the Qur’ān, light means knowledge and darkness means ignorance because knowledge is the light in which realities appear in their original form. If you see some subtle spiritual light within yourself, you are very fortunate, however, it must be remembered that this is not the real light, rather it is its example because real light comes before you in the form of knowledge and wisdom. Thus, whether it is externally or internally, light is the example of knowledge and darkness that of ignorance.

6. Guidance and Deviation:

Guidance is the example of knowledge and deviation that of ignorance; and as the example comes first and then its object (*mamṣūl*), the fruit of guidance is received in the form of knowledge and the result of deviation is chastisement. It is also a fact that all words and examples together with their temporary (*haṅgāmī*) meanings act as different containers for mercy and knowledge, or in other words, the Ādam or father of words and meanings is knowledge and the mother Ḥawwā', is mercy. Thus, there is the characteristic of Ādamhood and Ḥawwāhood (i.e., the characteristic of the primordial parents) in the personality of every individual. Similarly, there are mercy and knowledge (or knowledge and mercy) in the meanings of every word. This means that the meanings of all Qur'ānic words, reaching the height of wisdom, turn into mercy and then knowledge. For instance, if you wish, you can historically lift up the children of Ādam and join them to Ḥawwā' and Ādam.

7. Rich (*ḡinā*) and Poor or Needy (*faqr*):

Knowledge is affluence and its absence is poverty, as mentioned in verse (3:181): "Indeed Allāh has heard the saying of those who said: Allāh is poor and we are rich." On reflection it will be known that those who believe in Allāh would never say such a thing and those who do not believe in Him, how can they make such a statement: 'Indeed God exists, but He is poor' because according to them God does not exist at all! Therefore, there is *ta'wīlī* wisdom in this verse, which is that a group of philosophers and materialists had said this about the holy Prophet. Apparently, this unjust and improper taunt applied to the Prophet, however in *ta'wīlī* sense, it was against God Himself because the Prophet as a Messenger was God's vicegerent. This clearly means that they as individuals or a group thought that the holy Prophet^(s) and the true Imām^(c) are empty of spiritual knowledge and thus considered God to be poor.

8. Insight (*baṣīrat*) and Blind Heartedness (*kūr-bāṭinī*):

One name of spiritual knowledge is *baṣīrat* (inner eye, the eye of the heart) and its absence is called blind heartedness, as God says:

“(Say: O Prophet): This is my way, I invite to Allāh. I as well as he who has followed me, are on *baṣīrat* (inner eye, insight) (12:108). To follow the Prophet in a real sense means that in addition to following the exoteric aspect of his teachings, he should also be followed esoterically to the extreme end. Such following is fulfilled by the Commander of the faithful, Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Alī^(c) and the Imāms^(c) from his progeny. Thus, in the sense of *baṣīrat* (inner eye), the observation of the spirit and spirituality and all ranks of knowledge and recognition are attained by the holy Prophet and the Imām.

9. Speaker and the Dumb:

The teacher of the Qur’ān, who is the light (i.e., the Imām, 5:15) speaks with the spiritual tongue. However, an ignorant one who does not have this tongue is dumb. The same example is mentioned in the holy Qur’ān in verse (16:76): “Allāh has struck a parable of two men: one of them is dumb, unable to do anything and he is a burden on his master, wherever he sends him, he brings no good. Can he be equal to him who enjoins justice and he himself is on the straight path?”

10. Hearing and Deaf:

Among many Qur’ānic names of Mawlānā ‘Alī^(c), one is “*uzun^{un} wā‘iyah*” (69:12), which means “remembering ear”. The noble Qur’ān says that the Imāms are witnesses over humankind and the Prophet over the Imāms (2:143). This vividly and clearly means that the light of Prophethood together with the spirit and spirituality of the wise Qur’ān is present and witness before the light of Imāmat. Thus, every Imām is the ‘remembering ear’ of the voice of luminous knowledge and he listens to the Qur’ān from the Prophet and remembers it and for the purpose of this spiritual teaching, the Imām is present and witness physically and spiritually in front of the people.

11. Good and Evil:

Knowledge and wisdom is ‘abundant good’ (2:269) and contrary to this, ignorance is abundant evil. There is no doubt that it is only God Who knows the knowledge of the “unseen” (*ḡayb*), but God

says that He has made His Messengers aware of the knowledge of the “unseen” (72:26-27). The practical proof of this is the wise Qur’ān, that it was unseen prior to its revelation, as it is said: “And he (Jibrā’īl or the Prophet) is not niggardly in [making public] the “unseen” (81:24). It is declared in this verse that whoever desires to have knowledge, he should have recourse to the holy Prophet, but in order to do so the recognition of the door is extremely necessary because the holy Prophet^(s) in his luminosity is the house of Allāh, which is the house of wisdom and Mawlā ‘Alī^(c) and every Imām^(c) in his own time is the door of that house, as mentioned: “So you enter houses through their doors” (2:189).

12. Height and Lowliness:

Knowledge is height and in contrast to it, ignorance is lowliness. You can see that pure and limpid water always comes down from a height, which is of two types: heaven and the mountains. The holy Prophet^(s) is the heaven and the true Imāms^(c) are the mountains. Together with the other blessings of heaven, that of water gathers in the mountains. That is, it has springs, the treasure of snow and glaciers, whence the water continues to flow gradually according to the need of the season. This means that there are the fountainheads of every kind of knowledge, treasures and frozen secrets in the exalted Imām^(c)’s personality.

13. Purity and Impurity:

It is well known that physical purity is attained by using [pure] water, whereas spiritual purity is obtained by such a knowledge, which due to its being from the original fountainhead, is pure. This kind of knowledge washes away the impurity of ignorance. It is because of the fact that ignorance is the worst impurity, as the idolaters are impure (9:28), the reason for which is their ignorance. They are not allowed to go near the Inviolable masjid, i.e., the Ka’bah, i.e., the House of God, the *ta’wil* of which is the Imām and in order to go near him physically one needs knowledge. In order to attain the Imām^(c)’s vision (*didār*) one needs even more knowledge, which must be pure and limpid.

14. Friendship and Enmity:

The fundamental and great means of spiritual knowledge is the pure friendship of the Imām^(c) of the time and the main cause of ignorance is his enmity. Another name of this friendship is love and the intense love is called ardent love (*ishq*). Allāh likes that the *mu'mins* should have ardent love, so that the destinations of knowledge and wisdom may be traversed easily. The Prophets and Imāms are the representatives of God. Prophets' and Imāms' obedience is obligatory after that of God, so that true love may be able to show its miracle and the doors of spiritual knowledge may open.

15. Humanity and Animality:

Humanity is like knowledge and in comparison, animality is like ignorance. Reflect on the wise Qur'ān that many *jinn* and humankind have fallen down from their status and become like cattle (7:179) and the reason for this is ignorance. As a result, if it is possible that some people, despite being in human form become like cattle due to ignorance, then in contrast to this, it is possible that some people because of their knowledge may be called angels in their physical form. There is no doubt that [due to knowledge] Prophets and Imāms are the greatest physical angels.

22nd October, 1985

Soul's Colourfulness in the Compassionate's (*Raḥmān's*) Colour (*Şibġatu'llāh*)

1. Some realities and recognitions are extremely important, therefore their different aspects are highlighted by mentioning them time and again, so that there may be a satisfactory addition to the treasure of information of the listeners and readers. Although you have partially read about Allāh's colour, it appears that you have not seen a complete article about it. Thus, this servant, who by himself is a pauper, takes recourse for the charity of knowledge to the King whom God and His Messenger have hereditarily appointed and exalted with the crown of knowledge and wisdom and who is the Imām^(c) of the time and the master of Divine Command.

2. If one reflects [on the holy Qur'ān] in true sense, none of its verses is without the mention of God's colour either openly or allusively, however, its central and most prominent mention is in verse (2:138), in which an extremely colourful and beautiful world of all-pervading meaning is hidden, which is: “[We have adopted] Allāh's colour, and who is better than Allāh at colouring. We are His worshippers.” *Şibġah* means the method of dyeing; *aş-şabġ's* original meaning is ‘altering’; *şabaġa's-şawb* means ‘to dye cloth’; *şabaġa yadahu bī'l-mā'* = he dipped his hand in the water; *şabaġa fulān^{um} fi'n-na'im* = He immersed him in bounties; *şibġ^{um}* also means sauce, because bread is eaten by dipping it in it. Christians immerse their children in water in order to baptise them. This is called *şibġat^{um}* or *iştibāġ*.

3. We should refer to *Kitābu'z-Zinah*, chapter ‘*al-ʿArsh*’ to see if the different colours of spirituality and luminosity exist or not. In this chapter a wisdom-filled narration is mentioned that Imām Zaynu'l-ʿĀbidin^(c) said: “... Then Allāh created the *ʿArsh* from the lights of different colours such as green from which the green colour came into being, and [one] yellow from which came into being

yellow, and one is red from which came into being the red colour and one is white light which is the light of lights, from which the light of day came into being.” This blessed guidance makes it clear that the lights of different colours are mentioned in the wisdom of God’s colour. That is, all those colours which are in the presence of God, are in the form of lights. It is from those colourful lights that the *‘Arsh* of the personal world is created.

4. To immerse oneself in worship with the exalted attributes of devotion, true love, knowledge and recognition of God, to bring a change in one’s personal world, all these wisdom-filled allusions are in the sacred verse of Allāh’s colour, because the wisdoms of the Qur’ānic verses are linked with lexical meanings. Thus, all those meanings, which have been discussed above have been mentioned here. It is also necessary to mention here that first and foremost, this noble verse is related to the holy Prophet and the Imāms and to the people of faith of different ranks.

5. The seven colours of the physical world are: black, white, red, green, yellow, crimson and blue. They are all mentioned in the Qur’ān. It is a universally accepted fact that everything of the physical world has come from the subtle world. Similarly, all the colours of the material world have come from the spiritual world. However, there they are linked with the subtle soul and the light of subtle elegance and beauty, rather they are themselves the lights of different colours, which create the unprecedented colourfulness of paradise. However, the moment they come to this world they become dense, or in other words, they were not able to come to this world, only their shadows could come. Therefore, it is correct to say that the bounties of this world are the shadows of the bounties of the hereafter.

6. No Muslim can doubt that the soul of faith is praised in the blessed verse of *ṣibḡatu’llāh*. If such is the case, let us directly see ‘faith’ (*imān*) as it is mentioned [in the Qur’ān] (49:7): “But Allāh has endeared the faith to you and has decked it in your heart.” The inner observation (*mushāhadah-yi bāṭin*) is mentioned in this verse, when the light of faith rises in the personal world being coloured

in God's colours with extreme love and attraction. The sun of the external world illumines only the surface of material things, contrary to which the inner light immerses every spiritual thing internally as well as externally, such as transparent glass is immersed in the sun's rays externally as well as internally; as charcoal merges in the heat and light of fire internally and externally. This is an example of the light of faith, which is *Rahmān's* (Compassionate's) colour in which a *mu'min's* soul is entirely coloured.

7. The World of Command which is subtle and entirely intellect and soul, where the existence of everything becomes a manifestation under the word 'Be', if a red rose is seen, it is a manifestation of red light, if there are meadows and trees, these are manifestations of green light; if there are yellow flowers, they are manifestations of yellow light, if there are white flowers or pearls, they are manifestations of white light. Similarly, there is a manifestation of the same colour as the existence of everything, so that the scene and observation of *Rahmān's* colour and the light of faith may be as a specimen of paradise.

8. There is also the important point in connection with the explanation of *ṣibġatu'llāh* that when the rain of Divine mercy falls on the personal world, consequently there is the manifestation of such subtle and colourful spiritual gardens (27:60), which being full of the colours of lights become extremely splendid, perfectly beautiful and highly soul-nourishing, so that the viewers in addition to the great secrets of recognition of themselves and of God, may come to know how luminous are the trees and flowers of the Gardener of *azal* which He grows in the paradise of the personal world.

9. When Allāh removes the bark or veil of the external aspect of the universe and existents (81:11; 50:22), the subtle world in the form of paradise becomes visible, in which the four roots (*aṣl*) (two spiritual and two subtle physical) are four elements as well as four rivers, from which according to Divine will is created the universal paradise and the paradise of the personal world. They become prosperous and luminous, in which are all those bounties

which are desired by human souls, particularly those from which the eyes attain pleasure (43:71). The highest pleasure of the eyes is the sacred Divine vision, which has numerous manifestations and theophanies.

10. In the destination of spirituality after the opening of the inner eye, first appears the amazing colourfulness of soul, which is an example and glad tiding of the fact in the future that the intellect and soul are going to be coloured with knowledge and wisdom, as mentioned in verse (23:20): “And [We have created] a tree [of olive also] that springs forth from Mount Sinai and grows with oil and curry for the eaters.” The olive tree means the Universal Soul, then *Nāṭiq*, *Asās* and *Imām*; Mount Sinai means the forehead; oil means the Universal Intellect, which is also mentioned in verse (24:35), curry means the Divine Word, which is the fountainhead of wisdoms. Thus, the eaters of the spiritual food, by dipping the bread of *tanzil* in the curry of the wisdom of *ta’wil* make the bread colourful, i.e., by mingling the exoteric knowledge with esoteric knowledge it becomes rich and splendid.

11. There are four mountains in the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c). One of them is openly known while the other three are hidden. The one which is known openly is familiar to all, while those which are hidden are: the mountain of the forehead, the mount of soul and the mount of intellect. The holy Prophet^(s) also had four such mountains. In addition, the *ḥujjats* of the *Nāṭiq*, *Asās* and *Imām* also act as the Qur’ānic mountains. For instance, the mountains and birds used to do *tasbiḥ* (divesting God of creaturely attributes. 21:79) with Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd^(c). Thus, in this verse, the mountains signify his forehead, soul, intellect and *ḥujjats* and the birds mean the rest of the souls. They were all doing God’s *tasbiḥ* with him.

12. The beautiful and charming flowers of a garden, having lavishly spent the wealth of their colour and fragrance for some days, gradually fade away and come to an end, however, the chain of their collective existence never comes to an end. Thus, the flowers of fruitful trees through their effacement and merging transform into their respective fruits, where their worth and value

increase. Similarly, a human child in childhood is lovely like an unopened bud, but in adolescence like a smiling flower. However, the question here is: does this flower too in the future become a precious fragrant and delicious fruit or not? Why not, while every bud by its very existence gives the glad tidings of a flower and every flower is the glad tidings of a fruit?

13. When the Omnipotent God colours a personal world, every aspect and every meaning of it is tinted. An example of this is that subtle gardens and beds of flowers appear in it, all of which are in fact the manifestations of green light. Now the plants of such a spring will advance towards their respective flowers and seeds, or the perfume of paradise will be extracted from them, or the honey of paradise will be made from them, or a Throne will be made for God from their colours (i.e., lights). All these examples are appropriate in their own places, whose meaning is knowledge and wisdom.

14. Everything, every word and every example contains a mercy and a knowledge. Thus, in the example of colours there is special mercy and knowledge, as it is reported from Ḥaẓrat-i Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq^(c), when he was asked about the meaning of verse (68:1): “By *Nūn* and the Pen and by what they wrote”, he said: “*Nūn* is a river in paradise, which is whiter than snow and sweeter than honey. God commanded it: Freeze! It froze. Then He commanded the Pen: Write! Then the Pen wrote what had to happen till the Day of Resurrection.” Revolutionary wisdoms are hidden in this *farmān* of the Imām^(c), that the ink of the inkpot (Blessed mouth) of *Nūn*, i.e., the Pen of Intellect is white, i.e., the white light and it is like a river of paradise, which is sweeter than honey and by its being frozen the Divine Pen manifests in the personal world.

29th October, 1985

One and Many (*Wāḥid awr Jamʿ*)

1. There are countless wonders and marvels of knowledge and wisdom in the wise Qurʾān. The greatest wonder is the wisdom-filled mention of the law of unity according to which all are hidden in one and one is hidden in all, as mentioned in the Qurʾān: “He created you from a single soul (*nafs-i wāḥidah*), then from it made its mate.” (39:6) This is related to the personal world, when the Perfect Human Being is spiritually created, the particles of his spiritual children are also created with his creation because they are part of him. Then in the world of religion, their procreation becomes complete from the spiritual parents, who are the *Nāṭiq* and the *Asās*, then the *Asās* and Imām and then Imām and *Bāb*.

2. *Nafs-i wāḥidah* means one Soul. It also means unifying soul. This meaning is hidden in the word ‘*wāḥidah*’ which is on the pattern of *fāʿilah*. Its examples are the vegetative soul, animal soul and rational soul, each one of them has potentially unified countless souls of its kind. However, the Perfect Human Being, by Divine Command, is the actual *nafs-i wāḥidah*, i.e., he unifies all souls of his kind in his personality, and he does the same in others. In this way he gathers together the particles of soul and he also scatters them.

3. The word ‘*insān*’ (human being) is singular and its plural is ‘*anāsiyy*’, but the noble Qurʾān mostly refers to all human beings in the singular form. In such cases all human beings appear to be one. In the same way ‘*jinn*’ is mentioned in the singular, in which all *jinns* are one. In such a case, what surprise can there be if in the same way, when one Ādam is mentioned, numerous Ādams are included. God Almighty in the way of ‘removal of time’ may have said about all these Ādams (2:38): “We said: Go down all of you from here (i.e., paradise).”

4. Although the heavens are seven, they are joined together and

appear as one. It is for this reason that in the wise Qur'ān they are mentioned in the plural as '*samāwāt*' and also in the singular '*samā*', so that people may be aware of the secrets of "*waḥdat-i kaṣrat-numā*", that is, unity which appears to be multiplicity. The earths, like the heavens are also seven (65:12), but in the holy Qur'ān everywhere the earth is mentioned in the singular as '*arḍ*'. These numbers have a very pleasing *ta'wīl*, that is, the seven heavens mean the seven ranks of spirituality, which are related to the Lords of the seven cycles, but this spirituality is one reality. Further, the Lords of the cycles are united in such a way as if one of them has accommodated the rest in his personal world. The *ta'wīl* of the seven earths is their supreme *ḥujjats (abwāb)*, who are seven and being joined together have become one. This shows that the heaven and the earth are seven as well as one.

5. [The archangels] Jibrā'il^(c), Mikā'il^(c), Isrāfil^(c) and 'Izrā'il^(c) are each one as well as many. One in the sense that he is an angel and many in the sense that he is a very huge army, as mentioned in verse (32:11) that death has one angel (i.e., 'Izrā'il^(c)), but in verses (6:61, 93) from the Divine teaching it appears that he, in reality is the name of the unity of the numerous angels who are designated to seize the souls [at the time of death].

6. The holy Prophet^(s) and the pure Imām^(c) are also singular and plural. Each of them is one, therefore it is not difficult to understand that they are in the singular. However, we have to reflect on how are they plural? In this connection, we would like to say that every Prophet and Imām has a personal world within himself, in which although there is each and every thing and all people, nonetheless *mu'mins* have a special place, in the sense that every truthful *mu'min* finds his "Higher I" joined to the Prophet and Imām, as the wise Qur'ān in the words of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) says that Allāh's greatest munificence on the Children of Israel is that He granted them the spiritual kingdom through "the luminosity and recognition" of the Imām^(c) of that cycle. The blessed verse is: "[And that time is also worth mentioning] When Mūsā said to his people: O my people, remember God's favour unto you, when He appointed Prophets from among you, and made you kings, and gave you what he has

not given to anyone in the world.” (5:20) The same purport is also in verse (28:5). The gist of both these verses is that it is the Imāms who in true sense are the Kings and those who attain the rank of ‘merging in the Imām’ (*fanā’ fi’l-Imām*) through knowledge and action will also become kings in spirituality and resurrection.

7. All people are apparently called the children of Ādam, but in true sense it is only the Prophets and Imāms who are the children of Ādam. Similarly, the ‘progeny (*zurriyyat*) of the children of Ādam’ is of two kinds: the chosen and the common. Thus, God took his spiritual progeny (*zurriyyat*) from the blessed loins of every Prophet and Imām, that is, the souls of the *mu’mins* and made them aware of the light of recognition and then asked them: “Am I not your Lord with all this? They replied: Why not?” (7:172) This shows that the door of Divine recognition and *tawhīd* is always open.

8. Ḥaẓrat-i ‘Alī^(c) was one Imām, but all the Imāms were gathered in him. Therefore, all those verses and *aḥādīs* in which the *walāyat* and Imāmat of Mawlā ‘Alī^(c) is mentioned also relate to every Imām. The Qur’ānic example of how Mawlā ‘Alī^(c) despite being one was many is: “Verily, your guardian (*walī*) is Allāh and His Messenger and those who believe and perform the *ṣalāt* and give the *zakāt* while they are doing *rukū’*.” (5:55) There is a famous and authentic tradition that this verse has been revealed about Mawlā ‘Alī^(c), because it is he alone who had given *zakāt* to a beggar in the state of *rukū’*. However, for the sake of knowledge a question can be asked why in the verse after mentioning God and the Messenger, why are those who believe mentioned in the plural? The answer is that here, God has removed the future time and has gathered together all the Imāms in the blessed personality of the father of Imāms, Mawlā ‘Alī^(c), just as He had included an *ummat* in Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) (16:120).

9. The law of the order of numbers is known to all. First of all, there is one, followed by two, then three, etc. This means that one is the example of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), because he as the Single Soul is the primordial human being (7:189; 39:6); two is the example of Ḥaẓrat-i Ḥawwā’^(c), as two is born from one, Ḥawwā’ is born from

Ādam and the rest of the numbers are an example of the children of Ādam. See below:

Ādam	Ḥawwā'	children of Ādam										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	100	1000	etc.

A superb question arises here, whose answer can be very useful and that is with reference to the Qur'ān (7:189; 39:6): How did it become possible that God created all human beings from only Ādam, i.e., the Single Soul, whereas Ḥawwā' was not yet born? It can be answered in many ways:

- (a) This was the world of particles (the spiritual world) where the particles of soul were created.
- (b) This was pictorial creation, in which innumerable pictures of Ādam alone were created and linked to subtle particles or the subtle body and every picture was named Ādam or *insān* (human being), so that when the time comes, the entire humanity may have recourse to its origin and all those pictures may join the owner of the pictures, that is the Single Soul.
- (c) Sages have said: "*Lā talidu'l-waḥdatu illa'l-waḥdat*" (Unity begets only unity). Thus, the Single Soul (i.e., Ādam) who was one, begot one, that is from the number one were begotten countless number ones, such as: 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, etc., in order that the knowledge and action of recourse may be easy.
- (d) The existence of Ādam was the gist, essence and extract of the previous cycle, in whom all the particles of souls were transferred and their previous relationship had come to an end according to the Qur'ān (23:101) and they had to be created the spiritual children of this present Ādam according to the law of nature of "creation within creation".

10. Among the singular and plural, one has necessarily to be real and the other metaphorical. Thus, it is known that singular is, in

reality singular and the plural is metaphorically plural. A numerical example of this is given here:

One (1),
Two ($1+1=2$),
Three ($1+1+1=3$),
Four ($1+1+1+1=4$),
Five ($1+1+1+1+1=5$),
Six ($1+1+1+1+1+1=6$),
Seven ($1+1+1+1+1+1+1=7$),
Eight ($1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1=8$),
Nine ($1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1=9$),
Ten ($1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1=10$).

You see that the existence of number one is separate as well as hidden in the others. Therefore, number one is real and the rest are metaphorical. Reflect well on this.

11. Soul is a non-spatial thing. In its origin it can exist without space. Nonetheless, for the sake of perception, feeling and action, it needs subtle particle or subtle body or dense body. Among these three the smallest and the least quantitative is a particle or atom. Nevertheless, it is the initial point of creation of body and the last particle of the analysis of matter. However, despite this a complete spiritual world is contained in it. It can fly with extreme rapidity and it is mentioned by several names in the wise Qur'ān.

12. Every kind of vessel is a body and whatever is kept in it is also body. Thus, physical things can be accommodated in a body to a certain extent only and not exceeding it. On the contrary all spiritual things can be contained within soul because it is a non-spatial thing, therefore there is no problem of lack of space. Thus, all other souls can be contained in every individual's soul and similarly each individual's soul can walk in all. You will be very happy that this universal principle is extremely useful and is exactly according to the Qur'ān (6:122): "And We made a light for him through which he walks in the people." Remember that here the walking is in the personal world and soul and for that the light

of guidance is the means to do so. Peace!

Note: President Fath Ali Habib and President Muhammad Abdu'l-Aziz are of the opinion that if the series of articles and books are not duly benefitted from, how can the beloved *Jamā'at* be served well in the important field of knowledge?

5th November, 1985

Numerical Wisdom - 40 (Forty)

1. True *mu'mins* will never have any doubt that God, according to His sacred guidance (36:12) has threaded everything of the universe and existents in the string of [His] power and wisdom and has attached it to the blessed personality of the holy Imām^(c). He has (also) contained astonishing secrets and subtle souls of all external things in the rank of Imāmat and immersed and confined all the existents of the universe in the ocean of luminosity of the Imām, the locus of manifestation (*mazhar*) of sacred attributes. Thus, it should be known that there is nothing in the exterior and interior of the universe which does not testify to the fact with the tongue of [its] state and the tongue of wisdom that the true Imām^(c) is ever living and present in this world.

Thus, here, by the grace of the Divine light, we want to explain the numerical wisdom of the number forty to some extent.

2. God, the Knowing, the Wise vouchsafed the holy Prophet^(s) the exalted rank of Prophethood and Messengership at the completion of forty years, even though he from infancy, in fact, by birth was absolutely pure. He had praiseworthy ethics and commendable qualities from the very beginning. Thus, although it was possible to grant him the rank of Messengership from the very beginning like Ḥaẓrat-i Yaḥyā^(c) and Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā^(c), but the condition of fulfilling forty years became compulsory merely for the sake of declaring the great task of Prophethood and Imāmat. Thus, it should be known that the number forty is among the special ranks of the Prophet and the Imām.

3. Pīr Nāṣir-i Khisraw^(q), in his famous book *Wajh-i Dīn* in Discourse 30, under the title of “*ta’wil* of the *ṣadaqah* of sheep” has written that the collective number of *ḥudūd-i dīn* is forty, that is: 5+2+7+24+2=40, that is, 5 spiritual *ḥudūd* (Intellect, Soul, *Jadd*, *Fath*, *Khayāl*) plus *Nāṭiq* and *Asās*, 7 Imāms, 24 *ḥujjats* of night

and day, 2 that is *dā'ī* and *ma'zūn*. The collective number of all these is forty. This same number is also that of the Prophet and Imām, because the light of Prophethood and Imāmat is the same one light and all the *ḥudūd-i dīn* are gathered in it.

4. One of the purports of verse (46:15) is: 'Mostly the completion of human understanding and maturity of intellect and awareness is by the fortieth year. Thus, a beneficent and prudent person, when they reach this age, prays to his Lord for success in bringing about a spiritual and ethical revolution on a great scale in his life.' It should thus be known that this importance of the number forty in human life is in view of the fact that its *ta'wīl* wisdom is related to the Prophet and Imām.

5. A noble *ḥadīs* mentions that the Divine hand prepared the leaven of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c)'s body by kneading it for forty mornings. That is, every morning during the luminous time, the leaven of physical existence continued to be prepared until forty days elapsed. The *ta'wīl* of this *ḥadīs* is that Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), who was God's Elect, his sublime spiritual personality was completed by successful and worship in the light of recognition (*'arīfānah 'ibādat*) of forty mornings. His spiritual creation was also under the influence of forty *ḥudūd*. Thus, the secrets of the recognition of Prophethood and Imāmat are hidden in the number forty.

6. It is evident from the wisdom-filled speech of the Qur'ān that the duration of forty nights is significant for the worship for which Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) had gone to the mountain (7:142), so that by this special and superb *i'tikāf*, he may draw more and more close to his Lord. The *ta'wīl* allusion of this is that the destinations of spirituality cannot be traversed without the recognition of the light of Prophethood and Imāmat, which is the centre of forty *ḥudūd*.

7. The children of Israel were deprived of the Holy Land for forty days as a punishment for their abandonment of the obligation of *jihād* and during this period they had to wander in the valley of wilderness. This has the same *ta'wīl* that they had disobeyed their Prophet and the Imām of the time, whose sign was forty. Their

punishment was a result of disobedience, so that thinking people may reflect on it and understand the wisdom.

8. In the major *jummal* [science of numerology], the letter ‘*mīm*’ represents number forty. This letter [of the Arabic alphabet] is such an amazing letter that by prefixing it to names and words, numerous kinds of meanings are determined and in all of them are hidden the secrets of Imāmat. For instance, one name of Allāh, which is related to His knowledge is *‘Alim* or *‘Allām* or *A‘lam* or *al-A‘lam*. This is the external aspect, but in reality, the greatest name is *mu‘allim* or *al-mu‘allim* in which the letter ‘*mīm*’ is prefixed. The proof of its greatness is that if someone is only learned, they do not have the same virtue as someone who is learned and also teaches others [because teaching is the attribute of God Himself], as He taught Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c) the knowledge of the reality of all names (2:31). This clearly shows that God Himself was the *mu‘allim* (teacher) of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam^(c), the elect. This explanation not only demonstrates how sublime the meaning and reality of the letter ‘*mīm*’ is, but we also come to know that in ‘the knowledge of names’ there are the treasures of all realities and recognitions.

9. There is much meaning for true and wise *mu‘mins* in the above explanation that it is Allāh’s light itself, in true sense, the teacher and guide in every age both physically and spiritually and the same light, that is the Imām^(c) of the time, who is His Supreme Name. This explanation includes all the keys to realities and recognitions.

10. It should be well-known that the minor *jummal* of number forty is four. It is also the minor *jummal* of the blessed and sacred names of Muhammad and ‘Alī, that is four, such as: $40 = 4 + 0 = 4$ (answer in minor *jummal*). Let us now examine the literal expansion of their names: *mīm*, *ḥā’*, *mīm*, *dal* (Muḥammad); *‘ayn*, *lām*, *yā* (‘Alī). The [corresponding] numbers and the aggregate of these sacred letters are: $40 + 8 + 40 + 4 + 70 + 30 + 10 = 202$ and their minor *jummal* is: $2 + 2 = 4$. From this numerical *ta’wīl*, it is evident that Muḥammad and ‘Alī are the forty nights, in which Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) did special *i‘tikāf* on the Mount Sinai.

11. It is necessary to reflect on the wisdom in verse (46:15) that first of all, it is related to *Nāṭiq*, then to *Asās*, Imām, *ḥujjat* and *dā'i*, thereafter this command applies to the *mu'mins*. Each of these ranks has spiritual parents. Yes, indeed as a principle, the holy Prophet too, had spiritual parents. It is alluded in this verse that, as the physical mother of every human being bears a child in her womb with great difficulty and gives birth to it with great difficulty, the same is the condition of the spiritual mother too.

12. The *ta'wili* purport of the above-mentioned verse is that a human being, i.e., the follower of the light of guidance reaches the full youth of knowledge and action and spirituality and attains the recognition of the forty *ḥudūd*, he seeks grace from the Lord to thank Him for this supreme bounty and in the light of this recognition also knows what kind of favours have been bestowed by Him on his spiritual parents (46:15).

13. In the same verse (46:15), it is said: "And create capacity for me in my offspring", i.e., join me to the Companion-on-High (Higher "I") and for my lower "I" make my offspring capable so that living in them I can continue to do good deeds, because in paradise every desire is fulfilled. One greatest desire of a human being is to remain alive forever and continue to do good deeds, but it is not possible except by living in others. Thus, the above-mentioned verse alludes to this desire.

14. In verse (22:78), the holy Qur'ān says: The holy Prophet is witness (present) over the pure Imāms and they are witnesses over humankind. This means that the light of Prophethood is working in the light of Imāmat and the Imāms are physically and spiritually working in the people, particularly in their spiritual offspring; and this is the chain of paradise, therefore it can reach the *mu'mins*. Thus, every human being who is truly human and a real *mu'min*, becomes the criterion of the above-mentioned verse and will be able to do good for his spiritual parents when the age of forty years is reached with attaining knowledge, doing good deeds and recognising the *ḥudūd* and such *mu'mins* will continue doing good deeds living in their offspring.

15. At the end of this sacred verse (46:15) it is said: “Verily, I turn repentant to You and verily I am of those who submit [unto You].” The *ta’wil* of repentance is to turn to God and become extremely close to Him, and Muslim, someone who surrenders, is the one who submits their “Higher I” to God. Thus, in this verse are mentioned the spiritual parents and the *ḥudūd-i dīn* (religious hierarchs), about whom some explanation is given here.

16. A dear friend asked the following question with great simplicity: Where are the religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*) in this age, except for the Imām^(c) of the time and they with everything are gathered in him (36:12)? What is the need to create more questions about the religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*)? I told him with sincerity, love and humility that on one hand you say that there are no religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*) at present and on the other, you yourself say that they are in the Imām^(c) of the time! By this logic the importance of your question comes to an end, thus, the last part of your question becomes illogical. Nevertheless, I would like to answer you in the following way:

- a. The *ta’wil* of the Qur’ān and *ḥadīṣ* is according to the system of the religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*), therefore their knowledge is a pre-requisite for the knowledge of *ta’wil*.
- b. If it said that the religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*) are related to the past, their importance will remain intact, because no nation ignores its history. Therefore, knowledge about them is important even from a historical point of view.
- c. The way the past dignitaries of our faith used to receive *ta’wils* from the light of Imāmat, and of which whatever is available in their precious books, cannot be analysed without the knowledge of the religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*).
- d. Today, although there is no *ḥujjat* or *pir* outside the family of the Imām, nonetheless this does not mean that the door of progress spiritually and of knowledge has been closed, whereas under the title of ‘Recognition of Imām’ there is much to learn and understand.

- e. The True Religion is like a straight path, it is also like a bridge and a ladder, as this fact is testified by the holy Prophet^(s)'s *mi^crāj* (ladder) and the verse of *ma^cārij* (pl. of *mi^crāj*) (70:3). *Mi^crāj* and *ma^cārij* mean the ranks, i.e., the religious hierarchy (*ḥudūd-i dīn*).

Peace

15th November, 1985

Human Being within Human Being

1. It is mentioned in verse (6:122): “Is he who was dead, then We revived him and We gave him such a light that thereby he walks in the personal world (*bāṭin*) of the people like the one who is in darknesses from whence he cannot come out?” Almighty Allāh never speaks of the lower level, nor of the middle, rather He always and every time speaks of the peak of matters, events and states, and from this highest level the light of His *farmān* continues to be shed on all levels. Thus, the verse above mentions the comparison of two peaks of the true and the false, that is, it is the story of the Perfect Human Being and his adversary. A comparative diagram is recorded below. Study it carefully and deduce many useful logical conclusions:

Comparative Diagram

	Perfect Human Being (this, his)	Adversary (that, his)
1.	This is truly living	That is truly dead
2.	This is with light and is bright	That is without light and is dark
3.	This can walk in the personal world of others with light	That cannot walk in the personal world of others with light
4.	This can give light to his own people	That cannot give light to his own people
5.	This can come to the personal world and give knowledge	That cannot come to the personal world and give knowledge
6.	His followers can be living and with light	His followers cannot be so

7.	His followers will also be able to come to the personal world and walk with light	His followers will not be able to do so
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2. **Human being within human being:** How is it possible, that is, the existence of one person in another or the entering of one person into another person's personal world? A bright proof of this is the above-mentioned verse, whose easily understandable logical explanation is made here with the help of a diagram, which is extremely useful, from which every wise individual can draw various kinds of positive results. In addition, reflect on how countless small human beings are hidden in the form of particles in the loins of a father and if they were to be divided among the population of the planet earth, each of them would have more than one particle, so that each man may potentially be the father of all human beings in his lifetime.

3. **Human being within human being:** Another prominent and material example of this is the child in the mother's womb and the stages through which it passes from the loins of the father to the day of its birth, which is a journey full of powerful wisdoms, because according to Mawlā 'Alī^(c)'s *farmān* a human being is the "speaking book". This attribute is actual in the Perfect Human Being and in the rest it is potential. Thus, as there is "human being within human being" in corporeality, similarly there is "human being within human being" in spirituality. However, there is a great difference between the two: the body is limited due to being spatial, whereas the soul being non-spatial is unlimited.

4. Study verse (57:28) carefully where it is mentioned: "He will appoint for you a light whereby you will walk." It should be known that among the places where one walks with light, the first is the spiritual aspect of the world of humanity as mentioned at the beginning of this article with reference to the Qur'ān and explained by a diagram. Thus, one human being enters another as in the chain of the holy Imāms the light of guidance continues to be transferred, that is, in this act of light it continues to be transferred from one

Perfect Human Being into another. This is a practical specimen of one human being entering another.

5. I recall one of my Burushaski verses, that is related to this subject, which is:

*Murdá qáburar aki un tíkulo pasóom aaśíqe ríuu!
Dóoste jísmulo dukíwar cháa gáne zindáwlo hurút*

“O the lover’s soul! Do not enter the dead grave,
you do not deserve to remain in the dust;
Revive in the body of the Ever-living Friend and
stay there forever!”

6. The holy Prophet^(s) says: “Between my grave and my pulpit there is a garden among the gardens of Paradise. Check *Wajh-i Dīn*, Discourse 19, at the end of which under the heading ‘*Hikāyat*’, Pīr Nāṣir-i *Khīraw*^(q) gives the *ta’wīl* of it: The Prophet^(s)’s grave is his legatee (*waṣī*) Mawlā ‘Alī^(c) and his pulpit is Ḥaẓrat-i Qā’im^(c). From this, it is clear that the soul goes to a living ‘grave’ and the body is buried in a lifeless grave.

7. If the human soul is pure and chaste, it works like a miraculous mirror, in which the subtle form of everything appears and it shows a world of subtle human beings. A small example of this can be given by two mirrors which stand opposite each other; they are separate as well as in each other. Materially only a few mirrors can do this work because more create obstacles, however, the spiritual mirror transcends more or less and far and near.

8. The word ‘*Rabb*’ is used for Allāh as well as for human beings, as it is said: *rabbu’ d-dār* = the master of the house, *rabbu’ l-faras* = the master of the horse. Similarly, it is said in the Qur’ān: “*Uẓkurnī ‘inda Rabbika* (12:42) = mention me in your Lord’s presence.” Now consider the *ta’wīl* purport of verse (36:51): “And when the *ṣūr* of the personal resurrection is blown, they hie to their Lord (i.e., the Imām) from the graves of the physical bodies.” “*Ilā Rabbihim yansilūn*” has two meanings: (1) They hie to their Lord. (2) They become the off-spring of their Lord, because when

every resurrection takes place, previous relationships come to an end (23:101) and a new relationship is established with the Lord of knowledge of their time. Thus, all spiritual particles enter the personality of the Perfect Human Being and all of them become his progeny.

9. The office of Divine vicegerency is most fundamental and necessary in the religion of Islam, but most of the people are utterly unaware of the meanings and secrets of vicegerent and vicegerency, even though Allāh has said everything in the language of wisdom. For instance:

- (a) The allusion of the Divine declaration that this vicegerency is not confined to a particular time or a particular country, but its chain has to continue as long as the world exists because the vicegerent's relationship is with the entire earth, by which are meant the people of all ages.
- (b) Had God willed He would have appointed one of the angels as His vicegerent and the fountainhead of knowledge, but He appointed a human being as vicegerent and gave him control of the earth's surface. How exalted is the vicegerent that God Himself is his Teacher and he is the teacher of angels!
- (c) The wise Qur'ān continues to say in symbolic language that every Prophet and every Imām executes the duty of God's vicegerent.
- (d) The vicegerent of the time imparts true knowledge to the angels, i.e., the righteous people (*mu'mins*) both exoterically and esoterically. The only way of imparting esoteric and spiritual teaching is that people in the form of particles gather together in the world of particles of God's vicegerent. The world of particles is the Perfect Human Being's personality. This shows that the real specimen of "Human being within human being" is the exalted personality of the Perfect Person.

10. A spacious house can accommodate a family as well as some guests and people continue to come and go. The same is the example

of your body, where in addition to the countless particles of your soul, there are also countless representative particles. However, the example of a house to explain this reality is very small, therefore let us take the example of a great country where in addition to the original inhabitants, foreigners come and go and some even settle in it. Similarly, your own soul is like a country, whose kingdom can be in your name.

11. The wise Qur’ān presents the one same reality in numerous kinds of examples. Thus, your soul is as if the “holy land” (5:21), which it is imperative for you to conquer through the strenuous *jihād* of knowledge and action, just as Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā^(c) said to his people: “O my people! Enter the Holy land which Allāh has ordained for you, and do not turn your backs, for you will then turn back as losers” (5:21). This story is extremely important from a *ta’wili* point of view therefore, study carefully verses (5:20-26). It is mentioned: “Enter through the gate and attack them,” in which it is alluded that one can conquer the spiritual kingdom through the Imām^(c) of the time, because it is he who is the successor to the Gate (i.e., Mawlānā ‘Alī^(c)) of [the city] of spirit and spirituality and knowledge and wisdom.

12. Soul is the ‘path of peace’ in order to merge in God. It works like a bridge between this world and the next. It is also the ladder to climb to the roof of the intellectual heaven. A brilliant and resplendent world is hidden in the soul in which an everlasting paradise flourishes where each and every bounty is available. The mount of *Qāf* is in it. Sulaymān’s kingdom is in it. It is the ‘speaking book’ of all secrets. It is God’s house, the Throne of *Raḥmān*, the Hidden Treasure, the unseen Treasure, the pearl-producing ocean, a town, a country, a single human being and also the unity and integrity of countless human beings. In short, soul is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān by numerous names and examples. Numerous names of a thing are the proof of its importance, grandeur and usefulness.

13. Soul is an extremely fast thing, it can travel the entire world of humanity in a single moment and it is always in movement, which

is the name of the life of every living thing. Thus, “human being within human being” is a fact. Endeavour to be simultaneously revived in many righteous human beings.

Peace!

20th November, 1985

Prophetic Worship (‘*Ibādat*) – Ideal Worship (‘*Ibādat*)

1. In connection with progress in the pure Divine worship and remembrance, *mu’mins* attain as much and similar profit and benefit as their struggle and the amount of knowledge they acquire. Reflecting on the law of treasures (15:21), we come to know that the things of heavenly mercy are revealed to the people of the earth ‘as much as they have knowledge’, because mercy is under knowledge (40:7). Thus, God’s mercy continues to reveal to the people ‘according to the quantity of their knowledge’.

2. First of all, in this subject of Prophetic or ideal worship, some realities and recognitions are explained through questions and answers, so that in addition to sufficient interest in this subject there may be some keys of wisdom for the readers:

Reflect carefully on these questions and answers and by explaining them clearly draw conclusions from them.

	Question	Answer
1.	Which worship is ideal in the wise Qur’ān?	That of the Prophets
2.	Whose path is the straight path?	The Prophets and Imāms’ path is the straight path.
3.	In which great Prophets are all the Prophets and Imāms gathered together?	In Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm ^(c) and the holy Prophet Muhammad ^(s) .
4.	Whose excellent example is mentioned in the Qur’ān?	That of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm ^(c) and the holy Prophet ^(s) , the Mercy for the world.
5.	What is meant by there being no change in the Divine <i>sunnat</i> ?	The togetherness of the Heavenly Book and its Teacher forever.

6.	Give us other names of such a Teacher.	Light, Guide, Speaking Book, Imām ^(c) of the time, etc.
7.	How many and which are the main and fundamental subjects of the Old Testament, the Gospel and the Qur’ān?	Two subjects: Guidance and Light (5:44, 46; 24:35).
8.	Is the heavenly Book not light?	Indeed, it is, but in the person of the Teacher (29:49).
9.	Why are Guidance and Light mentioned separately (5:44)?	Because Guidance is the heavenly Book and the Light is its Teacher.
10.	Which is the best place for worship and remembrance?	The place which is established by God, the Messenger and the holders of the Divine Command (4:49).
11.	What does ideal worship mean?	It is the worship which is performed with ardent love of God and His recognition.
12.	What is the main condition for worship?	Recognition of God.
13.	Where in the holy Qur’ān is the first mention of recognition?	In the <i>sūrah</i> of <i>Fātiḥah</i> where it is said: “ <i>Iyyāka na‘budu</i> ” (1:4) (You alone we worship).
14.	Who are the proofs of “ <i>Iyyāka na‘budu</i> ”?	The holy Prophet ^(s) and the holy Imāms ^(c) .

3. In verse (19:58) study the splendour of the excellent weeping and supplication (*giryah-ū zārī*) of the Prophets on externally and internally hearing the verses of *Raḥmān* (Compassionate) and shedding tears and falling down in prostration with utter humility! This is the state of their effacement and merging! What were

the resplendent pearls of their continuously shed tears saying in their mute language? They were saying: ‘O people! Observe the example of the Prophets carefully, if you wish you too can become the resplendent pearl of the ‘heavenly ardent love’, which God Almighty purchases with great appreciation.’

4. Verses (17:107, 109) describe that state of God’s Friends (the holy Imāms^(c)) in which they on hearing the verses of the Qur’ān internally, fall down on their faces in prostration. They fell down upon their faces weeping and the holy Qur’ān’s spiritual sound increased their humility even more. It is alluded to in this that people should progress following the footsteps of the Prophets and Imāms and transform into light by constantly burning in the fire of Divine love. It is possible that there may not be light straight away, and instead, there is smoke. However, there is no despondency since in the future a flame will appear instead of the smoke.

5. The holy Qur’ān’s wisdom-filled allusions consider the prostration of humility with weeping and supplication (*giryah-ū zārī*) essential. In verse (96:19) prostration on its own is the proximity of God, in which case why should not a prostration with abundant tears be a kind of merging with God, while true Muslims in that state consider themselves extremely humble and insignificant? Very many virtues of religion are gathered in this state, such as God’s fear, repentance, ardent love, dissolving of the carnal soul, purification of the heart, etc.

6. Study verses (53:59-62): “Do you wonder at this statement and laugh and not weep, while you amuse yourselves? Rather prostrate yourselves before Allāh and worship Him.” Remember that for a heart to become like a stone is due to neglecting worship, the cure of which is hidden in prostration, worship and abundant remembrance.

7. If someone wishes to develop Divine love, the holy Qur’ān commands that they should follow the holy Prophet^(s) (3:31), and it is also enjoined on the people of faith to love his kith and kin (42:23), i.e., with soul and heart and ardent love they should obey

the pure Imāms^(c) so that they may be among those *mu'mins* who are praised in (2:165) as: "Those who believe are stauncher in their love for Allāh." *'Ishq*, staunch or ardent love is another name for Allāh's love.

8. Reflecting on the wisdom of the *ḥadis*: "Love is for the sake of Allāh and hatred is also for the sake of Allāh", can it not be said that: "Is the true Imām^(c)'s love not for the sake of the holy Prophet^(s) and that of the holy Prophet^(s) not that for the sake of God's love?" If this fact is acceptable, know that wherever in the wise Qur'ān approved and acceptable worship is mentioned, there necessarily is hidden the light of Imāmat, because the foundations of religion are always strong and alike. This means that in order to be aware of the secrets of Prophetic worship, it is necessary to enter through the 'door of Imāmat'.

8. It is said about the children of Israel (2:58): "And [remember] when We said: Enter this village (i.e., the village of personality, which is the Prophet's city), and eat as much as you wish wherever you like, and enter the gate prostrating and say: Pardon. We shall forgive you your sins and shall increase the goodness for the right-doers." Every great Prophet for his cycle is the 'city of knowledge' and the 'house of wisdom', and his *Asās* is its gate or door. Thus, the children of Israel were told to enter the inner village (personal), because it is someone who is the city of knowledge and the house of wisdom, and it is here that every kind of spiritual nourishment is available. This sheds light on the reality that the secret of Prophetic worship is hidden in the recognition of the Imām.

9. About the teaching of Prophetic and monistic worship, it is said (60:4): "Indeed, there is an excellent example for you of the speech and action in Ibrāhīm and those with him." The spiritual companions of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm^(c) were the Prophets and Imāms, whose living and present excellent example has continued to remain in every age and according to which, worship that is free and purified from every kind of external and internal idolatry, is ordained. In such a worship, let alone physical and ideological idolatry, but also there should not be the idol of the slip of [one's]

imagination because according to every monist other than the oneness, everything else is an idol.

10. It is not enough to consider the great Prophets and the holy Imāms free from and above the dirt of external and internal idols, it is more necessary to know their way of worship, during which they forget not only the world and what it contains but their own existence. As a result, such worship becomes a living light which speaks by itself as desired by them. [An example] of this is when an artificial planet [machine] liberating from earthly pull (gravitational pull) reaches space, it can move without internal power. This means that those chosen and perfect personalities, the Prophets and Imāms in that state are merged in the Universal Soul.

11. The holy Qur'ān mentions the prostration of angels in verse (16:49) and their worship and *tasbiḥ* (purifying God from all creaturely attributes) in verses (21:19-20). However, how can it be possible for such an important thing and such sublime realities to be outside the personal world of God's Vicegerent, whereas all things are confined in and gathered there? Thus, one most important example of the worship of the Prophets and God's Friends is that the angels continue to do *zīkr* and worship night and day in the special circle of the light of Prophethood and the light of Imāmat. The angels according to the law of oneness are as countless rays of the fountainhead of light, therefore their luminous worship is also the worship of the Perfect Human Being.

12. Study carefully *sūrah* (94) where, in a way, the pure life of the holy Prophet^(s) is depicted. It is very clear that in the beginning, the holy Prophet faced many difficulties, however, despite them, he not only continued the chain of remembrance and worship but advanced it by enlivening it and making it meaningful until God expanded his blessed breast with knowledge and wisdom. The burden of free will and responsibilities was taken off him and now heavenly guidance was responsible for each of his words because in this state his Supreme Name, *zīkr*, *tasbiḥ* and worship rising from his blessed heart had reached his pure forehead. Here the Supreme Name of God with its miraculous tongue was performing its own

zikr together with some other Supreme Names. Such living and speaking beautiful names of this rank can be called angels, whose luminous worship has been mentioned above. Thus, in the context of such ease and facilities of the miraculous worship in the holy Prophet^(s)'s sacred personality, it has been said: "Verily, with every difficulty is facility. Verily, with every difficulty is facility (94:5-6)." The repetition in the verse is in order to draw attention to the importance of this law.

13. You can realise fully how exalted and difficult is the worship of the Prophets and the Friends of God. Thus, how is it possible for this insignificant servant to explain it fully. However, like a dumb child who wishes to say many things and cannot, makes certain signs with his voice and hands, which are understood by his mother and family. Similarly, I have tried to write some points of this most sublime subject in the expectation that the wise will reflect more and more on this extremely useful topic and explain the allusions to my beloved students.

26th November, 1985

Well-wishing (*Khayr-khwāhī*)

1. The holy Prophet^(s) says: “Religion means sincerity and well-wishing.” He was asked: “For whom, O the Messenger of Allāh?” He said: “For Allāh, for His Messenger, for the Imāms of the *mu'mins* and for their community.” (*Da'ā'im al-Islām*, I, 134)

2. Every sound *ḥadīṣ* explains one or more verses of the Qur'ān. Thus, in the above-mentioned *ḥadīṣ* is explained well-wishing which is mentioned in verse (9:91). That is, sincerity and well-wishing is first of all for God, then for His Prophet, then for the Imām of the time and then for the *jamā'at* of *mu'mins*. However, well-wishing for the lowest rank apparently appears to be difficult although in fact, it is not so.

3. The wise Qur'ān directly or indirectly teaches the Muslims of the world well-wishing. Since it is entirely exhortation (*naṣīḥat*) and which means well-wishing, the gist of Islamic worship is prayer (*du'ā*) and in which *mu'mins* seek well for not only themselves but for all *mu'mins* and Muslims in the form of good. Other than well-wishing is evil, which is something that we seek refuge from in Allāh's presence.

4. Any word or deed cannot be accepted in religion without good intention, another name of which is well-wishing. A heart which has well-wishing is the abode of angels, where satan can neither enter nor stay because he can stay in a heart which contains the dirt of evil in the same way flies are found buzzing around where dirt is found.

5. Observe in the Qur'ān that one of the characteristics of great angels is prayer (*du'ā*, 40:7-9), by which is meant well-wishing, an attribute which is due to pure heartedness and knowledge. It is also said in the wise Qur'ān (53:26) that many heavenly angels continue to intercede for human beings because the great angels are

always well-wishers. However, whether a person benefits or not from this intercession is another matter. In any case, the definition of well-wishing is that *mu'mins* who always wish well for others are extremely close to angels.

6. Every wisdom is not only good it is also abundant good (2:269). Thus, wisdom is hidden in well-wishing of *mu'mins* and Muslims, and if one can wish well for all people, this is the greatest wisdom, and in such well-wishing one has to accept that due to *mu'mins'* well-wishing and intercession, the people of hell will eventually go to paradise. It is because of the fact that just as people were one in *azal*, similarly they are going to be one in *abad*.

7. What is there not in Allāh's blessed hand, all things have become "monoreality" (i.e., one reality) there. One of the countless names of "monoreality" is also 'good' (3:26). Thus, God will grant the *mu'min* who is the well-wisher of people in the light of knowledge, good from His blessed hand, in which there is a spiritual kingdom (67:1).

8. Perhaps you may ask: How is it possible to wish well for unbelievers while we are commanded to have enmity towards them and friendship for the believers (*mu'mins*) (9:16)? The answer to this question is yes, it is true, but you must know too, that friendship is permanent and enmity is temporary, as during Islamic history in the time of Prophethood when unbelievers used to accept Islam, enmity which was temporary transformed into friendship. Similarly, it is alluded everywhere in the Qur'ān that Islam is going to prevail over all other religions, such as in verses (9:33; 48:28; 61:9). To understand this Qur'ānic prophecy in the light of knowledge is well-wishing for the world of humanity. It is highly pleasing that all people will come together in one place in the kingdom of paradise.

9. In this connection nobody should ever think that there is no hell and its punishment, which is definitely a reality. However, it is necessary to know that the greatest punishment is in the intellectual state, that is, ignorance, from which escape is only through the

knowledge of certainty. Ignorance is false which is going to vanish and knowledge is true and will remain intact (17:81).

10. We have to necessarily discuss to some extent the subject of “Good and Evil” in connection with the subject of well-wishing. Good is permanent and evil is temporary. Contrary to this, had both been equal, i.e., permanent, the resurrection would have never occurred nor the respite given to Satan ever come to an end, nor would the truth have prevailed over the false. From this, it is clear that the evil in different modes of well-wishing comes to an end and only the good remains [see the point below].

11. When God enfolds or will enfold the universe and all its things in His right hand (21:104; 39:67) is an example of the intellectual state, when it will be the Day of *ba‘ṣ*, in which together with satan’s respite coming to an end, evil will automatically come to an end. That is, evil by coming into Allāh’s hand will also turn into good, just as an unbeliever becomes a *mu’min* by entering [the fold of] Islam.

12. It is only through knowledge and recognition that your circle of well-wishing can expand to the point where well-wishing is created for all human beings, because in reality all people have been created by extending your own soul and therefore, without enfolding them all within yourself (17:104), you cannot be perfect and complete, nor can you reach Allāh’s presence. It is therefore necessary for every *mu’min* to wish well for all the children of humankind in the light of recognition.

13. Why is a human being a compound or compendium of body, soul and intellect? It is because he is related to the three worlds: the physical world, i.e., this world, the spiritual world and the world of intellect. Thus, in Sufic language we can say that in reality a human being is one only (i.e., the world of unity or oneness or the world of intellect); in the spiritual world he represents both unity and multiplicity and in the physical world or the world of multiplicity he is scattered in his numerous manifestations. Therefore, when a wise person wishes well for all people, in reality, he or she is

wishing well for themselves because the people are part of them.

14. Qur'ānic wisdom says that when the holy Prophet experienced the *mi'rāj*, at the place of soul all the people's souls were with him and at the rank of Intellect, all intellects were merged in him as you are aware that *fanā'* (merging) means to become one. This is the glory of the holy Prophet's guidance that he enabled people to potentially merge with Allāh. Now, it is the obligation of each individual to walk on the straight path and enter through the door of knowledge and recognition and recognise how they have become merged in the Messenger. This is the best example of all becoming one by walking in the light of the best role model (*uswatu'l-ḥasanah*).

15. It is absolutely important to understand well human unity and integrity in order to avoid malevolence and to wish everybody well. That is to say that in the world of unity, namely at the rank of *azal* only one human being is created, even though today there are his numerous manifestations here in the world of multiplicity. When he will return to the world of unity, he will be like a single individual similar to his initial state, while all the people of the world will be merged and united in him in an intellectual state, as is said in the wise Qur'ān that people have to go to Allāh's presence one by one (6:94). However, it should be remembered forever that there are at least three ways of becoming one: First, taking one and leaving the rest behind. Secondly, to unite all of them in one and thirdly, apparently one but internally (i.e., intellectually) to unite them all. The third way is ordained for human unity and it is the one which is mentioned in the Qur'ān.

16. It is evident from verse (59:10) that a true *mu'min* does not have enmity and rancour for any *mu'min*. This is related to this physical life, now let us consider its state when there is progress in knowledge and the spiritual life, the name of which is paradise, as said in verse (15:47): "We will remove whatever rancour may be in their hearts so that they will live together as brothers with affection and love. As brothers, face to face, they will sit together on couches raised." Which rancour can this be which will be removed from the

hearts of *mu'mins* in paradise? It is impossible that *mu'mins* may have mutual enmity and rancour until they enter paradise. Therefore, it is true to say that this is the same rancour which was temporarily for the enemies of religion due to expedience and wisdom for the sake of inviting to Islam. However, when individual or collective resurrection takes place, all the people enter the paradise of spirituality of the religion of God and the rancour comes to an end.

17. If somebody is killed in connection with *jihād* or as punishment in Islam, it is in the context of far-reaching and meaningful well-wishing. It is not that there is real and lasting enmity. Yes, if it is called enmity, it is outward, superficial and a temporary kind of enmity, which is for the sake of religious objectives. However, when the objectives are attained, mutual brotherhood and affection is created

18. The person who out of malice wishes evil for others and whose heart is not free of rancour, always continues to suffer mental torture. This is the punishment for their malice. On the contrary, whoever in the light of religious guidance has good thoughts for others, is indeed in the paradise of well-wishing. Such a person is very fortunate that they have a good opinion about God and His creatures. This is the purport of the Qur'ān that Allāh is the One under whose law of mercy people are made to enter paradise in two ways: those who understand, willingly and those who do not understand, unwillingly (3:83; 23:115). The invitation to Islam is a bright example of this fact because it is potential paradise. People entered Islam not only willingly, but some were forcefully made Muslims through *jihād*. It is evident from this that the way Allāh has willed will happen eventually, for the sake of which those who have been punished in the hell of ignorance will also be included in the people of paradise.

The praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

22nd December, 1985

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

