

Marifat-e-Nuraniyyat

The Recognition of Noor

Imam 'Alí ibn 'Abú-Tálib^(a.s)

the First Imám^(a.s)



It is narrated from Imam Ali^{asws} that there are Divine secrets about us in this Speech which no one is able to comprehend except those who are truly guided scholars. In the Basar-e-Anwar that Hazrat Salmán² and 'Hazrat Abú Dharr³ asked from Amir-ul-momaneen a.s. about the true nature of Mola's Noor (Divine light). Imam Ali^{asws} replied that Rasool Allah^{saww} has said: 'The strive towards the understanding of Ali bin Abi Talib^{asws}'s noor is in fact the recognition of Allah^{azwj} and identification of Allah^{azwj} in term of noor is the pure deen.

Then 'Imam Alí^{a.s} narrated:

He who accepts my Wilayat superficially (without having deep knowledge and firm belief), has little reward for his deeds⁴, (as their scale will be light, their souls will be in perdition).⁵

O Salmán! The faith (Aiman) of a believer will not attain the level of perfection unless and until he would recognise me as a Noor-the Light. When someone knows me as Noor, only then he would truly attained faith; he is the one whose heart has been tested with the true faith, whose chest (self) is dilated in true Islám and whose faith is based on discernment. Thus, he becomes an ‘Arif’-staunch believer and embraces faith with peace of mind. But that he who fell short of this cognition - he will be a doubter, immersed in disbelief.

O Salmán! and O Jandáb! ⁶ In true essence, recognition of myself as a Noor is the acceptance of Allah^{azwj},⁷ and recognition and knowledge of Allah^{azwj} is indeed my appreciation; this is the meanings of sincere devotion. ⁸ Mankind was ordered by Allah^{azwj} to seek nothing but to admit His Touheed (Oneness). ⁹ And all were commanded to worship none but One Allah^{azwj}. ¹⁰ And they have been commanded no more than this: "To worship Allah^{azwj}, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith), to establish regular prayer; and to practice regular charity; and that is the religion, right and straight path." ¹¹

"Worshipping Allah^{azwj}" is believing in ‘Touheed’. "Sincere devotion" And "being true in faith" ¹² is the confession of the prophethood of the Prophet of Allah^{saww}. "Establishing Prayer" is my ‘guardianship and devotion’. ¹³ He who pledges devotion and submission unto myself has truly established the obligatory prayers (salat). Yet, this matter is hard, exceedingly hard! "Regular charity" in the above verse is confession to the Imámate. All this is the true religion. ¹⁴

The Holy Qur’án has testified that true Faith is the recognition of ‘Touheed’ and confession to both the Prophet and the Imámate. Thus he who acts on these beliefs, achieves ‘Deen’.

O Salmán! O Jandáb! A ‘Momin’ who has been tested by Allah^{azwj} is that who instantly accepts our ‘Amr’ (attributes) and he does not reject any matter pertaining to ourselves, Allah^{azwj} helps him through opening his ‘Chest’. He will not exhibit an element of doubt or suspesion. **However, he who quibbles with ‘why and how’ becomes a disbeliever.** Thus be submissive to ‘Amr-e-Allah’ we are, verily, the ‘Amr Allah’ (Cause of Allah^{azwj})!¹⁵

O Salmán! O Jandáb! ¹⁶ Verily, Allah^{azwj} has made me His Trustee over His creation and His Vicegerent on His earth, in His territories, and over His servants. Allah^{azwj} has given me what no artist can depict and no man of understanding can truly comprehend. One who knows myself in this manner, becomes a monin. ¹⁷

O Salmán! Allah^{azwj}, said: "do not seek Allah^{azwj} ‘s help but through patient and prayer: it is indeed hard except for those who possess a humble spirit." ¹⁸ "Patient" is Muhammad^{saww} and "Prayer" is my Wilayat. ¹⁹ Thus, that is why

Allah^{azwj} has declared that it is indeed hard ²⁰ to comprehend these attributes. In truth, my 'guardianship' is perplexing/mystifying for all but for those who have a humble spirit. **Thus Allah^{azwj} made my Wilayat easier only for those who have 'humble spirits'**.

O Salmán! we are those 'Secrets' of Allah^{azwj} ²¹ that will not remain hidden. We are His^{azwj} light that can never be extinguished, And we are His those 'bounties' which can never be matched. Among us, our first is Muhammad, our median is Muhammad, in fact, we are all Muhammad! ²². He who recognised us in this manner, surely, attains Faith.

O Salmán, and O Jandáb! Muhammad^{saww} and myself were the 'one-Noor' that was voicing forth the 'divine eulogy' (tasbeeh) before any other reality started to praise Him^{azwj}. We were the cause of illumination unto all creation. This 'one-Noor' was then divided by Allah^{azwj} into two portions, the Chosen "Mustafa"^{saww} ²³, and his Vicegerent, "Murtaza"^{asws} ²⁴, and made compulsory (vouchsafed) unto His creation. Allah^{azwj}, exalted be His Glory, said to each half, "Be Muhammad!", "Be 'Alí!" ²⁵ It is thus that the Prophet^{saww} had said: "I am from 'Alí and 'Alí is from Me. None can propagate Divine Message but Myself and 'Alí." ²⁶ This refers to us as being one entity in the worlds of Noor and Spirit. Allah^{azwj} refers to this as: "and If he died or is slain." ²⁷ "death" refers to the passing away of the Prophet^{saww}. "Slain" refers to the martyrdom of the Prophet's Successor ²⁸. As we are 'One-Entity', with one Signification and one Noor. We are 'one' in purpose and attributes but are different in our corporeal entity and names. But in the world of spirit, we are One-Spirit. As Rasool Allah^{saww} has explained that you (Ali^{asws}), are the Spirit within my Limbs." In the world of bodies, Prophet^{saww} said: " you are from me and I am from yourself, I am your inheritor and you are my successor. You relate to me as body does to the soul.

Again, Allah^{azwj} says: "Salemu....." ²⁹ which means that "Sending blessings on him" refers to Muhammad^{saww} and "Salute him" refers to his Successor (Ali^{asws}).

Prophet^{saww} said: No benefit shall be reaped from "Sending blessings" and salute (salawat) onto me unless and until one submits to the Wiláyat-e-Ali^{asws}.

O Salmán! O Jandáb! during his (Muhammad^{saww}) time, Muhammad^{saww}, would utter the Divine message, while I would remain silent. Inevitably, during all times, there is the only 'One' who would convey (Allah^{azwj} message) while the 'other' keeps silent although both have complete authority over all (living beings). ³⁰

Remember, Muhammad^{saww} is the master of all gathered (day of Judgement)³¹ and I am the Master of Resurrection. ³² Muhammad^{saww} is the 'Warner' ³³ and I am the "guide." ³⁴ Muhammad^{saww} is the Lord of Paradise and I am the Lord of

the 'Return'. Muhammad^{saww} is the Lord of the 'Divine Spring' ³⁵ and I am the one entrusted with the Banner (Sahib-e-Lawa). ³⁶ Muhammad^{saww} is the Lord of the Keys ³⁷ and I am the Lord of Paradise and Fire. Muhammad^{saww} is the Lord of Revelation and I am the Lord of Inspiration. Muhammad^{saww} is the Lord of signs and I am Master of the miracles. Muhammad^{saww} is the Seal of the Prophets ³⁸ and I am the Seal of the Devine Successors. ³⁹ Muhammad^{saww} is the Master who raised the Call and I am the one entrusted with both Sword ⁴⁰ and Sovereignty. Muhammad^{saww} is the most generous Prophet and I am the 'Straight Path'. Muhammad^{saww} is the one mentioned in the verse as "most kind and merciful" ⁴¹ and I am the one alluded to as "Most High, Most Great." ⁴²

O Salmán! Allah^{azwj}, exalted be He, said: "He causes the Spirit to descend upon His Servant He nominates." ⁴³ This Spirit then descends unto the one entrusted with the Command and the Decree. I (Alí^{asws}) give life to the dead. I know what is in the heavens and what is on the earth. I am, in truth, the Perspicuous Book. ⁴⁴ I give life unto the dead and I have all the knowledge that is in the heavens and on the earth. I am the Perspicuous Book.

O Salmán! Muhammad^{saww} is the Elevator of the Proof, ⁴⁵ and I am the Proof of 'One True Allah^{azwj}' unto His creatures. It is this Testimony that empowered the Spirit of Allah^{azwj} ⁴⁶ to ascend unto heaven. I am the one who enabled Noah^{as} to sail his Ark. I was present with Jonah (Younis) in the belly of the Whale. ⁴⁷ I parted the sea for Moses to create a 'save pass' through it. ⁴⁸ I am the one who destroyed Qaruun Ula (Allah^{azwj} 's enemies). I was bestowed with the knowledge of the Prophets and Saints and their Decisive Utterance unto living beings.

Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad^{saww} remained incomplete but through me (Wilayat). I make rivers and oceans to flow and create fountains to burst from the crest of the earth. I may be refereed to as (analogous to) 'father of the earth. I caused the world to be revolutionised and I bring about the Chastisement at the Day of Overshadowing Gloom (judgement). ⁴⁹

I am that Khidír who taught Moses. ⁵⁰ I taught David and Solomon. ⁵¹ I am Dhu'l Qarnayn. ⁵² I am the one who suppressed the great 'troughs and peaks' through the command of Allah^{azwj}. I am also the one who raised and firm the peaks ⁵³ and flattened the Earth. ⁵⁴ I am the Summon bearer from a near Place. ⁵⁵ I am the Creature on the Earth. ⁵⁶ The Prophet addressed me as: "Ya 'Alí! you are the Dhu'l Qarnayn and are its both ends. You belong to the beginning and will remain until the End."

O Salmán! The slain among us is not dead and can never be eliminated. The one who is in occultation- is amongst us and performs his duties as we do. We do not come to the world through maternal/paternal relationship and no

one is comparable to us. I am the one who spoke through the voice of Jesus when he was in the cradle. ⁵⁷ I am Noah. I am Abraham. I am Sálíh who possessed the She-Camel as one of Allah^{azwj}'s Signs. ⁵⁸

I am the one who caused the Commotion. ⁵⁹ I also bring the Trembling and would cause the 'final quake'. ⁶⁰ I am the 'Protected Tablet' ⁶¹ (Lowhay Mahfooz) and all the knowledge it has originates from me. I appear in any appearances ⁶² as per wish of Allah^{azwj}. Whoever observed these appearances, has seen me and by looking at me one observes the signs of Allah^{azwj}. In essence, we the Masomeen^{asws} are the Noor of Allah^{azwj} that can never be consumed or be subjected to evolution.

O Salmán! all Prophets have gained honour due to us. **You can praise us with whatever titles and attributes (one can imagine) but do not ascribe 'Rabuviat' to us (believe we have a creator). People find salvation through us and reach destruction due to us (for bearing enmosity to us).**

O Salmán! he who firmly believes in all what I presented and explained, is that 'Momin' whose 'Qalab' (heart) has been tested by Allah^{azwj} with 'Aiman'. And he is pleased with our attributes. But whoever doubts and hesitate, he has reneged on the Faith, although he may pronounce that he believes in my Wiláyat. ⁶³

O Salmán! myself, and the Divine guides of my family, the Imáms, are the hidden mystery of Allah^{azwj}! ⁶⁴ and His nominated guardians. ⁶⁵ We are all one, our 'Amr' (cause/wish) is one, our mystery is one. **Thus do not try to find distinctions among us or you will be killed (loose faith).** We will be kept on appearing in all times and have our manifestation in every age as per Allah^{azwj}'s will. Woe be onto the one who denies us! None shall refute these, except the one whose heart, eyes and hearing has been sealed.

O Salmán! I am as the father of every believer. I am also the creator of Catastrophe. ⁶⁶ I am the approaching calamity. I will be coming soon. I will engulf all and make their hearts trumble. ⁶⁷ and make them deaf. ⁶⁸ I am that 'Supreme Test' which will be revealed to all. We are the signs of Allah (Aitul'-Allah), the significances and the Countenance of Allah^{azwj}. ⁶⁹

When my name was written on the Throne of sky, it attained its calmness. When it was inscribed on the mountains, they were upraised. When written on the earth, it became stable. When it was inscribed on the wind, it started flowing. When written on the lightning, it started to flash. When written on the oasis, it produced nourishment. When inscribed on the Noor, it became bright. When inscribed on the clouds ⁷⁰, it generated their outpouring grace, and when inscribed on the thunder ⁷¹, it made the thunder quieter. My name caused the night ⁷² to be deep in its darkness, and when inscribed on the day ⁷³, it made it luminous and radiant.

Notes

2.) Salmán-i-Farsí (Salmán the Persian), known as Salmán the Good, one of the faithful Companions of the Prophet (PBUH). He came from Jayyan, near Isfahán, and later became a Christian. Sold as a slave, he was brought to Yathib (Mecca) by his master and attained the presence of the Prophet(s.a). He was immediately attracted to Islám. He was a deeply learned and ascetic man, with a strong command of the scriptures of many religious traditions. Imam Alí (a.s) said of him that he was like Luqman the Wise. As he knew both Arabic and Persian, he translated parts of the Qur`án into his native tongue, becoming the first to undertake such a task. He was also an innovative military strategist, displaying his skill most notably during the battle of Khandaq, in which he proposed the digging of a trench around Madinah to keep the Quraysh army at bay. For a time, he served as governor of al-Mada`in (Ctesiphon) near Baghdád. According to the most reliable history, it was there that he passed away in 35 A.H (around 656 A.D.). He was one of only three souls (the other two were `Abú Dharr and Miqdád) who remained truly faithful to the Covenant of Islám.

3.) Jundub `ibn Junadah, known as Abú Dharr Al-Ghifarí, was a shepherd of the Ghafarí tribe which lived in the Waddan valley, near Mecca. He was known for his courage, his calmness and his far sightedness and also for the repugnance he felt against the idols which his people worshipped. Hearing of the new Prophet(s.a), he journeyed to Mecca and was taught the new Faith by Imam Alí (a.s) and attained the presence of Muhammad (pbuh). Upon returning to the Waddan, he converted a large number of his tribe. After the battle of Khandaq, he was accepted as a personal servant of the Prophet, Who was greatly pleased with him. After the passing of Rasool(s.a), because of his sharp criticism of the worldliness of the Muslim community, `Uthmán(L.A) , banished him. It was there that he died in 32 A.H. (about 653 A.D.). According to tradition, the Prophet (pbuh) had said, "The earth does not carry nor the heavens cover a man more true and faithful than `Abú Dharr."

4.) Qur`án 7:9.

5.) See Qur`án 23:103 and 101:8 .

6.) Abú Dharr.

7.) Arabic: Ma`rifat Alláh

8.) Or "pure religion" (ad-Dín al-Khális). See Qur`án 7:29, 39:2, 3, 40:14

9.) Tawhid

10.) Qur`án 9:31 and 98:5

11.) Qur`án 98:5

12.) Arabic: haneef

13.) waláyat or wiláyat.

14.) Arabic: za`likad dinul qay yimu. See Qur`án 30:30.

15.) Arabic: Nahnu Amru`lláh.

16.) Abú Dharr

17.) Arabic: Imán

18.) Qur`án 2:45.

19.) Guardianship/Friendship

20.) In the cited verse (2:45), "patient perseverance" is sabr, yet "prayer" is salát, . . . Imam Alí (a.s) then proceeds to connote salát

with acceptance of his Wilayat or Guardianship, which, according to this interpretation, is exceedingly more difficult to attain than recognizing the Prophethood of Muhammad, (pbuh).

21.) Arabic: Sirru`lláh.

22.) This exclamation cited in the Kitáb-i-Íqán, p.153. 23.) "He who is chosen as an Envoy" (i.e. the title of Prophet Muhammad, PBUH)

24.) "He in whom God is pleased" (i.e. the Title of the Imám `Alí(a.s)

25.) The imperative used in both cases is Kún, "Be" or "Exist".)

26.) This is reference to the verse in the divine Qur`án: "Our Selves anfusaná wa anfusakum.) ourselves, and yourselves" Qur`án 3:61].

The quote from Muhammad, (PBUH) given here is also from al-Bursî's Masháriq Anwár al-Yaqín fi Asrár Amir Mu`minín (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus, 1978) as well as from other sources.

27.) The verse cited is: "Will it be that, when he dieth or is slain" (Qur`án 3:144)

28.) Reference to the Shahdat of Imám `Alí (a.s)in 661 A.D.

29.) Qur`án 33:56.

31.) Qur`án 42:7 and 64:9

32.) Qur`án 6:128, reference to the Qur`ánic verses that eschatologically there will be a Day of Ingathering and a Day of Resurrection

33.) This alludes to Qur`án 13:7: "But thou art truly a warner, and to every people a guide"

34.) Qur`án 16:89 [MF's note].

35.) "Lord of the Pool" (Arabic: sáhib al-hawz) is a well-recognized title of `Alí. "Pool" refers to the pool of refreshing water in Paradise which the sincere believers will drink from. See Qur`án 15:45, 37:45 and 76:5-6.

36.) i.e. the Banner of Victory in the latter days.

37.) Qur`án 38:50. See also Qur`án 6:59, 39:63 and 42:12.

38.) Qur`án 33:40

39] Arabic: Wasiyy. "Seal of the Successors" is another title of `Imam Alí(a.s).

41.) Qur`án 9:128

42.) Qur`án 42:4

43.) Qur`án 40:15.

44.) Qur`án 27:1, 28:2.

45.) Qur`án 4:174

46.) Jesus Christ.

47.) The story of Jonah is briefly recounted in Qur`án 37:139-148

48.) Qur`án 18:37: "His companion said to Him, in the course of the argument withhim: `Dost thou deny Him Who created thee out of dust?` "

49.) Qur`án 26:189: "Then the punishment of a day of overshadowing gloom seized them, and that was the Penalty of a Great Day."

50.) Qur`án 18:78. In the Khutbat`ul-Iftikhár (The Sermon of

Glorification), the Imám(a.s) says the station of the companion to Khadír. In Islamic tradition, Khadír was a servant of God who had been taught special knowledge and was sent to be a companion and teacher to Moses (see Qur`án 18:65-82; Bukharí, Vol. 1, Bk 3, #74, 78, 124 and also Vol. 9, Bk. 93, #570)

51.) Cf. Qur`án 21:79. [

52.) Cf. Qur`án 18:83.

53.) Qur`án 55:7

54.) Qur`án 84:3

55.) Qur`án 50:41.

56.) Translation of the Arabic dábba; it refers to one Who should arise on the earth, although he is not of the earth or from the earth, and lead men to God.

57.) Qur`án 19:30-33.

58.) Qur`án 7:73.

59.) Qur`án 79:6-7: "One Day, everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion, Followed by oft-repeated (commotions)."

60.) See Súrah 99.

61.) Qur`án 85:22.

62.) i.e. Theophanies

63.) Guardianship and Vicegerency.

64.) Qur`án 26:6

65.) Qur`án 6:61 and 74:31

66.) Qur`án 101:1 and 69:4.

67.) 40:18: "Warn them of the Day that is (ever) drawing near, when the hearts will (come) right up to the throats to choke (them)."

68.) Qur`án 80:33: "when there comes the Deafening Noise: That Day shall a man flee from his own brother."

70.) Qur`án 30:48. .

71.) Qur`án 13:13.

72.) Qur`án 36:37.

73.) See, e.g. Qur`án 92:2.

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