

Jama`at khanah

By



`Allāmah
Nasīr Al-Dīn "Nasīr"
Hunzā'ī



Khānah-i Hikmat
Idārah-i `Ārif

Jamā`at-Khānah

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Layout/Printing

Zahir Lalani

Published by

Khānah-i Hikmat/Idārah-i ‘Arif

Dedication

The author `Allāmah Nasīr al-Dīn Nasīr Hunzai, has graciously agreed that this book be dedicated to my late mother, Mrs. Sakina Suleman Noormohamed of Mombasa, Kenya.

On page six of this book is a Qur'anic reference to "*Sakinah*". My mother was indeed a *mu`minah* who brought peace to her family and countless others through her struggle and sacrifices. She laid the foundation for me to grow to appreciate the significance of spiritual motherhood. May her soul rest in eternal "*Sakinah*"!

The subject matter of this book brings back many memories of my childhood, the early part of which was spent in Bukoba, Tanzania, when my father, Suleman Noormohamed Sau was alive. Bukoba is famous for a Jamā`at-khānah with a clock tower, which was once visited by Namdar Prince Salman Aly Khan.

In Mombasa, Kenya, where we moved after my father's death, I remember my mother telling me how her father, Janmohamed Hasham Verjee, used to stand in the shade of an umbrella in the hot sun, to supervise the building of the beautiful Jamā`at-khānah in the Old Town

overlooking the old harbour of Mombasa. My brother, Shamsudin Suleman Noormohamed was the Mukhi of this Jamā`at-khānah in 1981 when Mawlana Hazir Imam visited it.

Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai



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Author's note

Service of the Pen for Jama`at-khanah:

I consider Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai (Samsām) among the earthly angels. She was inspired to render an important service to Jama`at-khanah through the power of the pen and the present book is the result of that inspiration.

`Allāmah Nasīr al-Dīn Nasīr Hunzai

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Preface



In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

God, the Blessed and Exalted says:

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth (of the personal world); His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, and the lamp is in a glass, the glass is (so transparent) as though it were a glittering star (like a pearl); it is lit from (the oil of) a blessed tree, an Olive neither of east nor of the west, the oil of which (is so capable that it) would well-nigh give light though no fire touched it, (it is not one light but) - light upon light; - Allah guides to His light whom He pleases; and Allah strikes parables for men; and Allah all things does know. (And that lamp is lit) in houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted, and His name to be remembered therein, where His *tasbih* is recited in the mornings and in the evenings." (24:35-36)

There is no doubt that the external world in its subtle form, is contained in the personal world, and God is the

light of the heavens and the earth of this world. Because it is in this world where there is togetherness of body and soul and it is the secrets of the realities and recognitions of this world which require light to be shed on them, whereas the material heavens and earth, the minerals, vegetables and animals do not have the capacity to receive the rays of the light of faith, the light of knowledge, the light of love, the light of *didar* (vision) and the light of recognition. Further, it is evident that the light of the rational soul and particular intellect from the world of Divine lights (*lahut*), is granted only to man as an innate capacity.

Now let us reflect upon the magnificent definition and explanation of the sacred verse according to the teachings of the holy *Ahl-i bayt*, in the wisdom-filled prayer which Imam Ja[°]far as-Sadiq used to recite after every morning prayer (*salatu'l-fajr*):

"Allāhumma'j`al lī nūran fī qalbī wa-nūran fī sam`i wa-nūran fī basarī wa-nūran fī lisānī wa-nūran fī sha`rī wa-nūran fī basharī wa-nūran fī lahmī wa-nūran fī damī wa-nūran fī `izāmī wa-nūran fī `asabī wa-nūran min bayna yadayya wa-nūran min khalfī wa-nūran `an yamīnī wa-nūran `an yasārī wa-nūran min fawqī wa-nūran min tahtī"

"O Allah make for me a light in my heart, a light in my ear, a light in my eye, a light in my tongue, a light in my hair, a light in my skin, a light in my flesh, a light in my blood, a light in my sinews, a light from in front of me, a light from my back, a light from my right side, a light from my left side, a light from above me and a light from beneath me."

In these supplicatory words, first is sought the light of faith and love for the heart. Because faith has precedence over everything and is the compendium of many virtues. For the protection and progress of faith it is essential to have the heat of the Divine love in the heart, and this is possible only through the light of Prophethood and the light of Imamat. Next is sought a light for the ear. It is obvious that the light which is necessary for the ear is in the form of the voice of knowledge and recognition and this is possible physically through the Imam, *Hujjat*, and *Da`i* and spiritually through *Jadd*, *Fath* and *Khayal*. And the light for the eye means that as every external and internal sense needs light, both the external eye and the internal eye need light to observe and study the wonders and marvels of the Divine secrets. And the light in the tongue means that until the light manifests on the tongue, it can do neither the open *dhikr* nor the hidden *dhikr*, and

even if the *dhikr-u ʿibadat* is done with great hardship, it does not give any pleasure. Similarly, light is required in all the other cases.

In this blessed prayer, the word "light" is mentioned sixteen times. This shows that there are sixteen worlds of the spiritual wonders and marvels and realities and recognitions in the personal world, for which sixteen kinds of lights are needed to illumine them. For instance, the world of hair is based on the human skin, but its inner wisdoms can be known only when hair is observed with the microscope of Divine light in order to see the miracles of the vegetative soul in them and to see the manifestations within every particle of soul.

One of the allusions of light from all six sides is that in the personal world, the lights of six *Natiqs* enter from six sides. (For details, see Pir Nasir-i Khusraw's *Wajh-i Din*, Chapter 8). In this explanation there is the definition of light as well as its exegesis.

If the *ta'wil* of the "Lamp verse" is *hudud-i din*, then their spiritual and intellectual forms are encompassed in the *Imam-i mubin*. In this magnificent and wisdom-filled example there is also an allusion to the unveiling of the secret of the non-spatial world, in the sense that the blessed Olive tree whose oil gives light is neither of the

east, nor of the west. That is, it is not in the spatial world, but is in the non-spatial world. The *`arif*s observe the unveiling of this great secret when God enfolds and annihilates the universe in the non-spatial state so that they know the extremely great secrets of the non-spatial world, as mentioned in verse (69:17): "And the angels shall be on the sides of the heaven (i.e. the boundary of the universe) and above them eight shall bear on that day your Lord's Throne." The secrets of the world of religion in their entirety are hidden in the personal world. Thus by the Throne is meant the absolute light and every Imam in his own time alone is the bearer of the Throne, because in his blessed forehead the light of Intellect works by the name of the Supreme Throne. When the cycle of the seven Imams becomes complete, a great Resurrection takes place secretly. Then the eighth angel of the collection of the souls of male and female *mu'mins* (*majmū`ah-yi arwāh-i mu'minin-u mu'minat*) is also included among them. The manifestation of the light in his forehead is mentioned in the verses (57:12, 19, 28 and 66:8). In short, the *mamthul* or the symbolised of the symbol of the tree of Olive in the non-spatial world is the Universal Soul.

The same one light in the similitude of the lamp has continued to burn in the inner house of the Prophets and the Imams, because each one of them in his time was the

living house of God. And according to this unchangeable Divine law the present and living Imam is the sacred house of God, which He has commanded to be revered. And what a great mercy it is that the holy *Jama'at-Kanah* represents God's house and it is extremely blessed for the Ismaili *Jama'at*, for in it are hidden the great miracles of spirit and spirituality.

It is a fact that we believe that every true Imam is like Mawla `Ali (a.s.) himself. Thus, whatever is mentioned in the Qur'an, the *Hadith* and the *Khutbatu'l-Bayan* is not only about Imam `Ali but also about every Imam. The living and present Imam is therefore the *mazhar* of the Divine miracles. Thus those fortunate enough to see, have witnessed that for *mu'mins*, both male and female, the miracle of the light of Imamatus starts from the *Jama'at-Kanah* and then encompasses the entire universe, that is, the inner miracles of this light are countless. One of the great miracles of Mawla is that his sacred light is in every *Jama'at-Kanah* in the form of his *ibda'i* or luminous body, as the exalted Imam in the previous *jamah* (attire) has said several times and as the Wise Qur'an, in the language of wisdom, says that the light is there to walk not only in the world, but in the entire universe (*yamshī bihi*, 6:122, *tamshūna bihi*, 57:28).

The Supreme Throne is the Imam, because he is the bearer of the light of the Throne; the prosperous House (*baytu'l-ma`mur*) is the Imam because he is the prosperous House of God; *Baytu'llah* is the Imam because he is the *qiblah* of *haqiqat*; the Sacred Mosque is the Imam, because *masjid* means the place of prostration and in the personal world of the Imam, souls and angels prostrate to God and the *Jama`at-Kanah* is the Imam because he is the soul of this house and the beloved of the *jama`at*.

Since Islam is the religion of nature, it is also the universal religion. This means that with respect to knowledge and good deeds there is room in it for many stages. The best example of it is the *Sirat-i mustaqim*, the straight path, which has many minor stages, but the major and well-known stages are *shari`at*, *tariqat*, *haqiqat* and *ma`rifat*. This can be seen in the Wise Qur'an in the following verses: "(O the people of different religions) for every one of you We appointed a *shari`at* (*shir`ah*) and a *tariqat* (*minhaj*)" (5:48). Similarly, wherever in the Qur'an the word "*haqq*" is mentioned, there the *haqiqat* is mentioned, as in the verse (7:105): "Hazrat Musa said: I recognise the truth so I should not say anything about Allah except the truth." Similarly, there are words mentioned in the Qur'an related to *ma`rifat*, such as "*fa-ta`rifūnahā*" (27:93), "*ya`rifūn*" 2:246; 6:20; 7:46;

16:83), "*ya`rifūnahum*" (7:48), "*`arrfahā*" (47:6). This shows that in Islam in addition to *shari`at* and *tariqat*, *haqiqat* and *ma`rifat* are also necessary. Thus according to this Divine system after *masjid* and *khāniqāh*, it was also necessary to start the establishment of the *Jama`at-Kanah* and its practices, for although the Prophetic *wahy* or Divine inspiration ceased at the demise of the Holy Prophet, the fruits and results of the Wise Qur'an and the Prophetic teachings had to appear gradually.

Countless thanks are due to God that a booklet related to such a sacred place as *Jama`at-Kanah* has been prepared, the greater part of the contents of which already existed in my other books. The suggestion of such a booklet was made last year (1992) during my visit to America at the residence of my esteemed friend Akbar A. Alibhai, Chief Advisor and as a result of a question by his angelic wife, Shamsah Akbar A. Alibhai, Record Officer. What a great good has been generated by this question! I am indebted and grateful to all my *`azizan*.

The institutions of the exalted Imam all over the world, particularly those related to religious education are very sacred, and therefore, we want to practically sacrifice ourselves for them. This useful sacrifice can be in the form of service to knowledge so that the *Jama`at* may

benefit from this service. I am sure that all `azizan agree with me in this matter.

Those who translate my books, those who work the computers, those who edit and those who render other services related to these books in an honorary capacity, want to resurrect me in the personal world of every individual who is interested in my books and benefits from them. Because in the next world there will be, not only the collective paradise, but also the Paradise of the personal world, in which every person and every bounty is available according to one's desire.

When the Holy Prophet has given the supreme teaching of "*al-khalqu `iyālu'llāh* (people are like the household of God)", then with utmost humility we should pray: O Lord of the world! Cool the Hell of ignorance with the special light of knowledge and bestow the everlasting bounties of Paradise on all the children of Adam and the world of humanity. O Allah! Your mercy has excelled Your anger, therefore, it is not impossible that You may forgive all people. *Āmīn!*

Nasīr al-Dīn Nasīr Hunzai,
London,
31st August, 1993.

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House of God - House of *Jama`at*
(*Khanah-i Khuda - Khanah-i Jama`at*)



Islam, in its spirit, is a perfect and complete religion and it abounds in rectitude, guidance, knowledge and wisdom. Every word and deed and everything of it is enriched with intellectual and spiritual beauties and is full of allusions of certitude and recognition (*ma`rifat*) both exoterically and esoterically. Thus today we would like to discuss the subject (House of God - House of *Jama`at*) and would like to know whether God really needs a house or whether it is the people of faith who need it? The answer is that God, Who is the Creator of the universe, is free from and above space and non-space, therefore, it is needed by the people of faith. In the latter case, other questions arise: If the House of God is to fulfil the needs of the people of faith, what benefits do they attain from it and what are the secrets hidden in assigning a house in the name of God? The detailed answer to this question is:

1. With respect to place and direction or place and time, the concept of God is based on three levels: Firstly, God dwells in a particular house as is the concept of the House

of God mentioned in the verse 22:26; secondly, He is everywhere as mentioned in verse 2:115 and thirdly, He is free from and above space and non-space, because He is *Subhan* (free from attributes), *Quddus* (Holy) and *Samad* (i.e. He Himself is independent and everything depends on Him). It is an irrefutable fact that Islamic teaching and guidance is in a gradual form, and therefore it becomes incumbent upon every Muslim to, first firmly believe in the House of God and attach himself to it so that he may recognise from here the oneness of God. If someone does not understand the wisdom of this fundamental concept and ignores it, he cannot attain the treasures of the second and third concepts. For, to go against the Divine law leads to failure.

2. The way Islam presents the concept of the Supreme Throne is also the centre of all the wisdoms of the true religion. For it establishes not only the eminence and grandeur of the House of God, but also the eminence of those *mu'mins* who are engaged in work for the prosperity and progress of the House of God on earth. They are like the pure angels of the higher world, who are attached to or circumambulate the Divine Throne. This explanation establishes the fact that, just as human beings benefit from the closeness and recognition of the House of God, the angels attain eminence from the closeness and recognition of the Supreme Throne. But God Himself,

may He be hallowed and blessed, is free from and above everything.

3. God existed when the *Ka`bah*, the House of God did not exist, and it was constructed when the time came for the descent of Hazrat Adam to the earth. Thus, by the command of God, the angels constructed the House of God, so that Hazrat Adam and his children could have recourse to it to attain spiritual benefit. This shows that the origin and foundation of religion is the House of God and that the same House of God is the house of religion and house of *Jama`at* also, which in Urdu is expressed as *Jamā`at-khānah*. To say "House of God" means that there is always the manifestation of His lights and secrets and the revelation of His favours and blessings, so that the mu'mins may go to His House in order to attain them and progress in knowledge and good deeds every day.

4. The *Ka`bah*, in which are hidden great *ta'wilic* secrets, is in its own place extremely important, so that the Muslims of the world by understanding its exoteric and esoteric wisdoms, do not lose the wealth of mutual unity and stay united like the Muslims of the time of Prophethood were united. Simultaneously, it was also important to build a local House of God in every Muslim village, for it was not possible for all the Muslims of far-flung countries to reach the *Ka`bah* for daily worship.


Thus the Holy Prophet built a local House of God called a *Masjid* (mosque). It was an enclosure, which had doors on three sides. The basic plan of all those mosques which were built after the Holy Prophet remains the same. Gradually, the construction of mosques turned into an art and thus a specific style of architecture developed. (Urdu Encyclopaedia, Firoz Sons).

5. The *Qiblah* of Islam has many names, such as *Ka`bah*, which literally means a square building (5:95); *al-Bayt* (the House, 2:125); *al-Bayti'l-`atiq* (the ancient House, 22:29); *Baytī* (My House, i.e. the House of God or *Baytu'llah*, 2:125); *Baytin wudi`a li'n-nās* (a House assigned for mankind, 3:96); *al-Bayta'l-haram* (the Sacred House, 5:97); *al-Masjidi'l-haram* (the Sacred Mosque, 2:144), etc.

From the above-mentioned names of the House of God, it is justified without any ambiguity that, just as it is correct to call the place of worship of Muslims, a *Masjid*, similarly it is also correct to call it "*Jamā`at-khānah*", i.e. the religious house of the *jama`at* or community, because the House of God is the religious house of the people for it is built for the people (3:96). In the light of historical research, if we look at the time of Prophethood, the shape of the *Masjid* and the *Jamā`at-khānah* appear to be enclosures of the same kind. Thus, according to me, the

Holy Prophet's *Masjid*, which represented the central House of God, that is, the *Ka`bah*, was the local House of God and the *Jamā`at-khānah* of the present and of the future.

6. *Masjid* means the place of *sijdah*, (prostration) and the house of worship. It also means worship (*`ibadat*), the *ta`wil* of which is the Supreme Name (*ism-i a`zam*), *Asas* and the Imam of the time. For the true Supreme Name of God and His living and intellectual House can only be the Imam of the time. As it is mentioned in *Da`a`imu'l-Islam*, in *Kitabu'l-Hajj*, Vol. I, p. 292, the angels built the House of God. This means that the angels built the House of God spiritually in the personal world of the Perfect Man, for the real work of angels is spiritual. If it is accepted that they built the *Ka`bah* then the *ta`wilic* wisdom of this is that the *mu'mins*, who are physical angels, built a *Jamā`at-khānah* in the physical world. And according to the law of "the better the work the greater the reward", they were made to build with their hands a spiritual *Ka`bah* in spirituality.



Sakinah (40:26)

7. Hazrat Ibrahim rebuilt the House of God on the site before the Deluge of Hazrat Nuh. This place was

indicated by a wind which God had sent to give peace to Hazrat Ibrahim and it was called *Sakinah* (giver of peace). This wind had two ends which followed one another. The *ta'wil* of this wind is the remembrance of God and its spirituality. This reveals the reality that in the background of the physical House of God is mentioned His luminous House. Because every *zahir* (exoteric aspect) has a *batin* (esoteric aspect), and as God says: "And He completed His favours on you, both in *zahir* and in *batin*." (31:20).

8. God says: "And when We made the House a place of reward and peace for mankind (saying): Take as the place of prayer where Ibrahim stood." (2:125). The first *ta'wil* of this verse is that just as, by His command the *Ka`bah*, the House of God, is the place of reward and peace externally, so internally the Imam of the time as the House of God, is the means of every kind of reward and peace. This means that the Imam is the spiritual *Qiblah*, towards whom the attention of the heart is necessary in every good deed and that this is the way of attaining reward. You can see that the reward is mentioned first and then comes peace. The wisdom in this is that, the *mu'mins* cross the stages of reward and good first, by obeying the Holy Imam and then, as a result, they enter into the light of his spirituality. And it is he who is God's inner House in which there is only peace and no fear or danger of any kind. Just as in the external world, the

station of Ibrahim is in a place where there is a stone, similarly in the internal world, in the luminosity of the Manifest Imam, there is a Pearl of Intellect, which we have been commanded to reach to attain the wisdoms of *salat* or *namaz*.

The second *ta'wil* is that, just as the *Ka`bah* is the central House of God, similarly, *Jamā`at-khānah* is the local House of God. Or in other words, just as the *Ka`bah* is the House of God at the level of *Shari`at*, the *Jamā`at-khānah* is the House of God at the level of *Haqiqat*. Therefore, the virtues which are mentioned in the Qur'anic verse about the *Ka`bah*, the central House of God, are also true about this local House of God, which is called *Jamā`at-khānah*. Thus according to Qur'anic wisdom and the Isma`ili faith, *Jamā`at-khānah* is the place of reward and peace. This means that the entire reward of all religious commands and prohibitions is centred on the *Jamā`at-khānah* and this is also true for spiritual peace and satisfaction. Because this religious house of the *Jamā`at* has double virtues. On the one hand, it is the representative of the *Ka`bah* and on the other hand, it is the symbol of the true Imam, because the Imam, in accordance with Divine Will, has given the *Jamā`at-khānah* to his followers to represent his own personality and physical and spiritual closeness. Thus at

the first stage, this is the station or place of Ibrahim for the *Jamā`at*.

9. In verse (3:96), God says: "Verily, the first house set up for mankind is at Bakkah (Makkah), blessed and a guidance for the entire people of the world." In this blessed verse there are many wisdom-filled allusions. One of them is that "first" is the foundation of the ordinals and it necessitates that it be followed by the second, third, fourth, fifth, etc. This implies that although the first and the central religious house is in Makkah, there will be many secondary and local religious houses (*Jamā`at-khānahs*) in the time of Prophethood and the cycle of Imamah.

The second allusion is that just as the first religious house was set up in Makkah, the first Imam (Mawla `Ali) was also appointed in Makkah. He is the spiritual and luminous house for people and in which, there are blessings and guidance for those who (actually) become personal worlds.

The third allusion is that one of the meanings of the suggestive recitation of "Bakkah" is *giryah-u zari*, weeping and shedding tears. So its *ta'wilic* implication is that the first house of spirituality is built for people from

the shining tears of the love of Mawla, which for the lovers of Mawla, is full of blessings and guidance.

The fourth allusion is that the *Ka`bah*, the Imam and the *Jamā`at-khānah* are the House of God on the one hand, and on the other hand, they are also the religious houses of the people, because the blessings and guidance which are in these houses are for the sake of the people, and their attribution to God is due to their being His special possessions.

10. It is said in verse (24:36): "(That light is lit) in houses which God has permitted to be exalted, and His name to be remembered therein. He is hallowed therein in the morning and in the evening." By these houses are meant the Holy Imams and also the *Jamā`at-khānahs*, in which is lit the lamp of the Divine light, whose observation and recognition is certain.

11. The *Ka`bah* is the exoteric sign, symbol and pattern of those verses whose *ta`wilic* wisdom is linked to the living House of God, the Imam. The recognition of the Imam which is extremely vital, cannot be attained by anyone without obedience to him and the centre of obedience is the *Jamā`at-khānah*, because it is the place of reward and peace.

Just as everything has a soul, so the *Jamā`at-khānah* too, has a great soul, and this is the soul or the light of the Imam of the time, in which the soul of the *jama`at* revives. If you believe that there is the light of the true Imam in the *Jamā`at-khānah*, then you should know that this same light is the living House of God, for as the Qur'an says: "There is indeed a good pattern (of word and deed) for you in Ibrahim and those with him." (60:4). From this Divine teaching is revealed that, although externally there were many people with Hazrat Ibrahim, it was those who were with him internally who had reached the ultimate degree in obeying him. Otherwise their good pattern would not have joined with the good pattern of Hazrat Ibrahim. The question then is, who were or are these people? They are the progeny of Hazrat Ibrahim, i.e. the Prophets and Imams, whose manifestation in his view was extremely necessary (2:124), and God had given everything to them (the progeny of Ibrahim - 4:54). Thus the Holy Prophet, following Hazrat Ibrahim, not only made the *Ka`bah* the *Qiblah*, but also built a *Masjid* as the local House of God and the Holy Imams in their respective times have also built such Houses of God called *Masjid* or *Jamā`at-khānah*.

12. It is said in verse (28:57): "Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary, whereunto the fruits of all things are brought, a provision from Our

presence? But most of them know not." If you reflect upon the phrase, "the fruits of all things", they do not come automatically anywhere in the world. But it is true that the place which the Prophet and Imam assign for worship, the spiritual fruits of all things come there automatically and these spiritual miracles are related to the *Jamā`at-khānah*.

When the Wise Qur'an said "the fruits of all things", then according to this Divine law all things including, minerals, vegetables, animals and human beings, all are considered to be trees so that the fruit of each of them may reach the House of God. But this is only possible spiritually. Thus the *Jamā`at-khānah* is the place where the magnificent soul (i.e. light) of the Imam of the time works, to which the souls of all things come, for in the *Imam-i mubin* (manifest and speaking Imam) all the things of the universe are encompassed (36:12). These bright proofs about the eminence and blessings of *Jamā`at-khānah* are enough for true *mu'mins*.

Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai,
10th December, 1984.JKI

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JKII Part II



1. It has been established that the House of God is the house of the *Jama`at*, and it has also been established that just as the *Ka`bah* is the central house of religion, so the *Jamā`at-khānah* is the local house of religion. And this system is in accordance with the Divine law (*sunnat*) and the law of nature, according to which He makes the place of blessings and mercies closer to His servants both externally and internally. Just as when Hazrat Adam descended to this world, the *Ka`bah* was built on the earth for his and his children's sake and it has the status of the Supreme Throne here, for what the Divine Throne signifies is also signified by His House. After the *hijrah* (migration), the Holy Prophet built another House of God in Madinah, which we can call the first *Masjid* as well as the first *Jamā`at-khānah*, because originally they both had the same shape and reality. In any case it represented the Ancient House of God. This means that the *Ka`bah* represents the Supreme Throne and the *Jamā`at-khānah* represents the Holy *Ka`bah*.

2. You should be aware of the fact that in Islam *taqwa* (piety, God-fearing) is extremely important, because it is the spirit of all worship (*`ibādāt*). In order to attain *taqwa*, one has to struggle a lot. But note the compassionate

nature of the Signs of God (*sha`a'iri'llah*) and that by respecting and revering them, one attains the piety of the heart (22:32). The pure personality of the Imam of the time, who is the speaking Qur'an and the *Jamā`at-khānah*, are among the Signs of God, and therefore, reverence for them results in the piety of heart and is also itself piety. For one of them is the hidden or spiritual House of God and the other is His apparent or physical House.

3. The *ta'wilic* implication of verse (22:26) is that God appointed Hazrat Ibrahim as His House so that the recognition of *tawhid* may be attained in the spirituality and luminosity of this rank, and nothing is associated with Him. God has also commanded this living House of His (i.e. Hazrat Ibrahim himself) to be purified ideologically, spiritually and intellectually, so that three kinds of angels may come there, and they are those who circumambulate, those who do *qiyam* or *i'tikaf* and those who bow and prostrate.

4. The Divine law is that the spiritual *Masjid* and luminous *Jamā`at-khānah* has continued to be forever in the pure personality of the Prophet and Imam. Hazrat Nuh has called this luminous house "my house (*bayti*)" (71:28) and the *mu'mins* who entered it were called "the people of the house (*ahl-i bayt*)", for as the Qur'an says: "O my Lord, forgive me, my parents, and those who enter my

(spiritual) house as (perfect) believers, and the believing men and believing women" (71:28). In this wisdom-filled prayer of Hazrat Nuh, the *mu'mins* are in two categories: those who had entered his luminous house (i.e. the House of God) due to their perfect faith and those who have still not been able to enter it.

5. In his time the Holy Prophet was God's living House (22:26) and the luminous and miraculous *Jamā`at-khānah*, for as it is said in verse (33:33): "Verily, God intends but to keep away from you (every kind of) uncleanness, O you people of the (luminous) house, and to purify you in every respect (externally and internally)". This holy house was the light of Prophethood and Imamat and the people of the house were the Holy Five Persons, namely, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa, Hazrat `Ali-yi Murtaza, Hazrat Fatimah-yi Zahra, Hazrat Hasan-i Mujtaba and Hazrat Husayn-i Sayyid-i shuhada'. This luminous house is the speaking House of God and the intellectual and spiritual *Jamā`at-khānah*, and it is the house of wisdom about which the Holy Prophet has said: "I am the house of wisdom and `Ali is its door." It is also the same blessed and holy house in which, according to verse (24:36), the lamp of the Divine light is lit.

6. In order to present this reality in an understandable way, it is asked: To whom does the straight path belong?

Does it belong to God or to the Prophets? Does it belong to the Holy Prophet or the Imam? Does it not belong to the *mu'mins*? The answer is that, first of all, it belongs to God, for He is the goal of it. That is, all have to go to His luminous House (42:53; 2:156). It is also the path of all the Prophets, because they were the guides of the people on it (1:7; 4:68). It is the path of the Holy Prophet, the last Messenger, because he is the chief of the Prophets and Messengers (12:108); it is the path of the Imam because he is the true guide (13:7). And it is also true that the straight path is made for the guidance of the *mu'mins* (4:115). Thus the extremely pure and sacred House, which belongs to God, also belongs to all the above-mentioned ranks. Although God Himself is free from and above space and non-space, the recognition of His oneness is not possible outside His luminous House (24:35). This house, which is full of mercies and blessings and illumined with the light of recognition, is the light of the Prophets and Imams (24:36) and this same house also belongs to *mu'min* men and *mu'min* women when they follow them completely (57:12; 66:8).

7. It is the law of creation that everything is initially created in a fixed mould and that without it, its existence is not possible. The fruit of trees cannot be created without skin nor the kernel without stone, just as human existence and shape is not possible without the womb of

its mother. On the other hand, there are things which do not have a specific shape and form, because they are scattered without a matrix, like for example the four elements, namely, earth, fire, water and air. Thus the Holy Prophet and *Ulu'l-amr*, by the command of God, built a local House of God so that every follower after being cast in this mould, may be called a true *mu'min* and a special form of faith and spirit may be created of him.

8. According to the law of universal mercy when it is possible that a pattern of the Supreme Throne in the form of the *Ka'bah*, be brought down to earth and in the time of the Deluge to be carried to the fourth heaven and in the time of Hazrat Ibrahim, was reconstructed and in the time of the Holy Prophet, a local House of God was built, then it is also possible that the *Jamā`at-khānah* truly represents God's external House, the Holy *Ka'bah* and the Imam of the time, who is the internal House. This is true and there is no doubt about this.

9. *Jamā`at-khānahs* are of three kinds: First is the universal *Jamā`at-khānah*, which is the blessed personality of the Imam of the time, second is the local *Jamā`at-khānah*, which is the *Jamā`at-khānah* of the city, town, village or area, and the third is the personal *Jamā`at-khānah*, which is the heart of every faithful servant. But their interrelated wisdom is in the local

Jamā`at-khānah. Because it is here that a *mu'min* gradually progresses, the door of the personal *Jamā`at-khānah* or the *Jamā`at-khānah* of the heart opens for him and he is illumined with the light of faith (*nur-i iman*). And it is here that the holy *didar* or vision of the pure Imam takes place, which is the true *Jamā`at-khānah* of luminosity.

10. In verse (10:87), God says: "And We revealed to Musa and his brother: Provide houses for your people in *Misr* and make your houses places of worship, and establish prayer, and give glad tidings to the *mu'mins*." *Misr* is the name of every city which has a protective wall around it and by this is meant the city of spirituality, because not only does it have a protective wall around it, but also a door. Thus in this wisdom-filled verse the spiritual progress of the personal *Jamā`at-khānahs* is mentioned. That is, God commanded the Prophet and Imam to make houses in the city of spirituality for the *hudud-i din* (religious hierarchy) of their community and to give the status of the House of God to these houses and do the work of true mission (*da`wat-i haqq*) and give to *mu'mins* the practical glad tidings of such spiritual progress and ascension.

11. In verse (9:18), God says: "Only those who believe in God and the Last Day, and establish prayer (*salat*) and

give *zakat*, and fear no one but God, are able to make the *Masajid* of God prosperous, so these are they who are among the rightly guided ones." Here by "the *Masajid* of God" are meant the *Jamā`at-khānahs* or the *Masajid* of the entire world. How is it possible for a single person to participate in the prosperity of all of them? It is obvious that it is impossible physically and hence it necessitates a *ta`wilic* wisdom, which is that the *Masajid*, namely the *Jamā`at-khānahs* of God are in three levels, as has already been mentioned in paragraph No. 9, and these are the universal *Jamā`at-khānah* (i.e. the Imam of the time), the local *Jamā`at-khānah* and the personal *Jamā`at-khānah* or the *Jamā`at-khānah* of the heart. And all these three *Jamā`at-khānahs* can be made prosperous by the attendance of he who believes in God and the Last Day and establishes *salat*, i.e. he accomplishes the work of *da`wat*, and gives the physical and spiritual *zakat*. When the faithful servant goes to his local *Jamā`at-khānah* with devotion and love and worships God in it, then by this wisdom-filled act is made prosperous not only the local *Jamā`at-khānah*, but also the personal *Jamā`at-khānah* and the universal *Jamā`at-khānah*. They are united and interrelated, because the *mu'min* is attached to the *Jamā`at-khānah* and the Imam of the time is the spirit of the *Jamā`at-khānah*, and it is also a fact that in the case of the *mu'min* who firmly believes in *Jamā`at-khānah*, a

special particle of the particles of his soul always serves the blessed and holy personality of the true Imam. You should research the reality of the soul and study the articles related to the particles of the soul, so that you understand how soul is simple (*basit*) and is everywhere.

12. It is said: "The heart of the *mu'min* is the Throne of God". However, it is necessary to ask and know what the real meaning of this saying is. Because the word "*mu'min*" is applicable to many people, but the concept of the Divine Throne is very high. You should understand that the heart of the *mu'min* is the Imam of the time and it is this holy personality in which the Divine light shines, for as the Wise Qur'an says: "And know that Allah comes in between the man and his heart" (8:24). That is, in the light of true knowledge, you should know the law of trial: Why does God come between man and his heart (i.e. the Imam of the time)? Indeed the wisdom-filled allusion and the secret of success in this is that one should have recourse to God with his true heart. He should return to Him and further go where his heart is. This shows that in reality, the *Jamā`at-khānah* of the heart is also the Imam of the time.

And I have no success except by God (11:88).

Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai,

20th December, 1984.

JKII



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Q&A Questions about *Jam`at-kh nah*



Q.1. Buzurgwar `Allamah sahib! Would you kindly tell us something about *Jamā`at-khānahs* in the Northern Areas of Pakistan: when and how were they built? Were they built in accordance with a direct *farman* of the Imam of the time or was the *farman* received through a representative of the exalted Imam?

A.1. The construction of *Jamā`at-khānahs* in the Northern Areas of our country started about seventy-two years ago. The *farman* to do this sacred work was received through a dignitary of religion, Hazrat Agha `Abdu's-Samad Shah and the *Jama`ats* acted upon this wisdom-filled *farman* with utmost devotion and dedication.

Q.2. At present how many *Jamā`at-khānahs* are there altogether?

A.2. I made a survey of *Jamā`at-khānahs* in 1973 when I was the officer in charge of the Ismailia Association, Gilgit Branch, and at that time, there were approximately three hundred *Jamā`at-khānahs*, including some temporary *Jamā`at-khānahs* for Ismaili soldiers. At present there are approximately seven hundred

Jamā`at-khānahs in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, including Chitral.

Q.3. Have you seen spiritual light? If so, when and where? Inside the *Jamā`at-khānah* or outside it?

A.3. *Al-hamdu li'llah* (Praise be to Allah), this humble servant has been blessed with this light. This luminous miracle started in the autumn of 1948 in the old *Jamā`at-khānah* of Kharadar, Karachi, and then by stages, it increased until the personal Resurrection was experienced.

Q.4. Can you prove from the Holy Qur'an that *Jamā`at-khānah* has great significance and sublime status?

A.4. Yes, *insha'allah* (God willing) I can provide such proof from the Qur'an. I am an ardent lover of the miracles of the *Jamā`at-khānah* and immersed in the favours of *Jamā`at-khānah*, and directly and indirectly, have written quite a lot about its virtues. In short, the first House of God is the *Ka`bah*, the second is the Imam of the time, who is the *ta`wil* of the Holy *Ka`bah* and the third is the *Jamā`at-khānah* in which the spiritual vision (*didar*) and the luminous miracles take place, and the fourth is the heart of a believing servant. Therefore, wherever the *Ka`bah*, or the sacred Mosque

(*al-masjidu'l-haram*) is mentioned in the Qur'an, that in *ta'wil* is the praise of the Imam of the time, and the recognition of the Imam of the time is possible in *Jamā`at-khānah*, because his spiritual vision is in the *Jamā`at-khānah*.

Q.5. Have you participated in the construction of a *Jamā`at-khānah*? If so, in which area or country?

A.5. In this connection, I remember with wonder an event in my childhood when I was about three or four years old. The construction of the central *Jamā`at-khānah* was taking place in my village, Hyderabad in Hunza and I was playing with some children when someone said: Children! Come, fill your shirts with sand and bring it here. I carried handfuls of sand with some other small children. At that time I had a piece of red coral in my hand which I loved very much. But it occurred to me that it should be sacrificed for the *Jamā`at-khānah*, so I put it in the double wall. Given my age at the time this was a miracle to me. In later years, I came to love *Jamā`at-khānah* in true sense and tried to take part in their construction, whenever possible. This was particularly true for the *Jamā`at-khānahs* of Yarkand in China, the construction of which was vehemently opposed by certain influential members of the *Jama`at* and at the same time by some non-Ismaili adversaries who

accused me of being a spy. They succeeded in having me imprisoned and put under house arrest many times, but did not succeed in proving that I was a spy, nor did they succeed in having me executed. I was innocent of their accusations and I loved only constructing *Jamā`at-khānahs*.

Q.6. What do the *Ahadith* say about *Jamā`at-khānahs*?

A.6. Here I shall mention only one *Hadith*, the most comprehensive of the *Ahadith*, which is: "He whose Mawla I am, `Ali is his Mawla. O Allah! Love those who love him (`Ali) and be an enemy of those who are his enemies, ... and turn the truth with him wherever he turns." According to this *Hadith* of the Prophet, the `Ali of the time is the Mawla, i.e. the guardian and master, and God has made the truth turn with him wherever he turns. Thus, the *Jamā`at-khānah*, according to the *farman* of *Imam-i mubin* (manifest and speaking Imam) is based on the truth. It has many virtues, because it is the *ta`wil* of the Holy *Ka`bah*.

Q.7. Have you experienced any great miracles in the *Jamā`at-khānah*? If so, where and in which *Jamā`at-khānah*?

A.7. I have seen extremely great spiritual miracles in the blessed *Jamā`at-khānah* of the town of Qarangghu Tughraq. This blessed town is in Yarkand in China. Everything I have written and said are because of the blessings of these miracles which took place in this *Jamā`at-khānah* in China.

Q.8. What rational proof is there of the significance and eminence of *Jamā`at-khānah*?

A.8. Everything has a heart or centre. Similarly, faith and religion also need a centre for growth and progress, so that human abilities may develop fully and the rope of Allah is firmly held collectively. Otherwise, there may be differences.

Q.9. From which age did you start to go to *Jamā`at-khānah*?

A.9. By the grace of God, I started to go to *Jamā`at-khānah* from a very young age, for there was an attraction in it for me. When the elderly members of our town were doing *`ibadat* and *tasbih* in praise of God and when they were reciting *na`t* (praise of the Prophet) and *manqabat* (praise of the Imams), I felt tremendous happiness.

Q.10. Who did you go to *Jamā`at-khānah* with initially?

A.10. Initially I started to go to *Jamā`at-khānah* with my revered father. He was an ardent lover of religion and was a *khalifah* (equivalent of *Mukhi*) of his Pir. Undoubtedly, I received the religious spirit from him.

Q.11. In your Area was there the tradition of *dhikr-i jali* (loud *dhikr*) and *shab-bidari* (vigil of the night) prior to the establishment of *Jamā`at-khānah*?

A.11. Yes. We believe that the religion of Islam which is the religion of nature, consists of *Shari`at*, *Tariqat*, *Haqiqat* and *Ma`rifat*, so that everyone can gradually enter the *Ma`rifat*. In this connection, *dhikr-i jali* is an important element of the *Tariqat*, and therefore, in the *da`wat* of Hakim Pir Nasir-i Khusraw, the tradition of *shab-bidari* and *dhikr-i jali* was practised prior to having *Jamā`at-khānahs*.

Q.12. In which area or in which *Jamā`at-khānah* have you done *shab-bidari* the most?

A.12. As *ruhani majlis* (spiritual assembly) and *shab-bidari* has continued as a religious tradition in the Northern Areas, so I have participated in *shab-bidari* almost everywhere I have been to. The extremely severe

trials of Yarkand attached me to the *Jamā`at-khānah* and enriched me with the wealth of *shab-bidari*. Then I came to understand how the water of life is hidden in darkness!

Q.13. Our revered teacher! How many *Jamā`at-khānahs* have you attended and performed *`ibadat* in?

A.13. I do not have a precise record, but as a frequent traveller between the east and the west, I have been blessed by being able to visit many *Jamā`at-khānahs*. If we have been done some *`ibadat* of the True Worshipped in such places, we should be grateful to Him for this favour and refrain from any kind of pride.

Q.14. According to your experience are all *Jamā`at-khānahs* equal in excellence and miracles or do they have degrees? If they have degrees, what is the reason for this?

A.14. It is commanded in the Qur'an that the House of God must be kept pure so that the miraculous souls may come there (2:125). The ultimate indication of this command is that the people of *Jamā`at-khānah* should purify their hearts through *dhikr* and *`ibadat* and knowledge and recognition, so that they may have the vision of the Holy Imam in the *Jamā`at-khānah*. On this

basis it is possible for *Jama`at Khanahs* to have different degrees.

Q.15. In your writings you allude to the miracles of the *Jamā`at-khānah*, so we would like to ask you in which *Jamā`at-khānah* did you see those great miracles?

A.15. As a matter of personal experience I have seen extremely great miracles in the *Jamā`at-khānah* of Qarangghu Tughraq in Yarkand and also in prisons there. If I were to write about this, it would be a voluminous book.

Q.16. Where and when did you receive permission to do the *`ibadat* of *ism-i a`zam*?

A.16. In 1946, in Hasanabad, Bombay, Hazrat Mawlana Sultan Muhammad Shah blessed me with the secret of the secrets of *ism-i a`zam* when he came for the Diamond Jubilee. For approximately half an hour, Mawla blessed the group with precious guidance. In this holy *didar* a great Resurrection was hidden for me.

Q.17. Please tell us whether the Satan can enter *Jamā`at-khānah* or not? If he can, is it a Satan from man or from *jinn*? Please also tell us how is it possible for the Satan to enter the House of God?

A.17. Satan can easily enter the *Jamā`at-khānah* if it is not properly guarded, whether he is of human beings or of *jinn*s. The House of God is the straight path of spirituality and Satan always tries to mislead people from here. See in Qur'anic verses (17:14-20) how Satan has been given respite and freedom until the Resurrection.

Q.18. In order to benefit most from *Jamā`at-khānah*, what must one do and what conditions should be fulfilled?

A.18. The best way to benefit most from *Jamā`at-khānah* is to study all those *farmans* which are related to the *Jamā`at-khānah*, so that ardent love is created for it. When this holy love has been created every difficulty becomes easy. For pure love is a light and in the light there is every kind of guidance. And in such a state, God willing, miracles of the House of God will appear.

Q.19. Would you kindly advise us about the sanctity of and reverence for *Jamā`at-khānah*.

A.19. *Insha'allah*, *Jamā`at-khānah* is the *ta'wil* of the *Ka'bah* and is among the signs of God (22:32), the reverence of which is the *taqwa* (piety) of the heart. And the one whose heart has piety, becomes successful.

Q.20. What is the relationship between the *Jamā`at-khānah* and the *Ka`bah*?

A.20. One is a parable (*mathal*) and the other is the meaning (*mamthul*), one is *tanzil* and the other is the *ta`wil*, one is *zahir* and the other is *batin*, and thus there is an heavenly relationship between them.

Q.21. How many kinds of *Jamā`at-khānahs* are there in the Ismaili Tariqah and what are they?

A.21. There are three kinds of *Jamā`at-khānahs* in the Ismaili Tariqah: personal *Jamā`at-khānah*, which is the heart of a *mu'min*, local *Jamā`at-khānah* and universal *Jamā`at-khānah* and there is unity between all three of them.

N.N. Hunzai

22nd August, 1992.Q&A

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POEM1 **Blessings of Prayer in**
Jam `at-kh nah◆

Divine mercy for a *mu'min* is always Prayer
The purpose of obedience in the Qur'an is Prayer.

Prayer is praised with "*Man ahsanu qawlan*"*
By God, thus the capital of faith is Prayer.

This is the fruit of success, this is the kernel of worship
The result of the faith of a Muslim is Prayer.

Bow down in submission in obedience to Mawla
Know that the fruit of *farman* for you is Prayer.

Seek help through Prayer in the path of *Haqiqat*
If there is a burning candle on this path, it is Prayer.

If there is any disease of soul or body
The remedy for every pain and disease is Prayer.

If you yearn for the manifestation of the Divine lights
See your eye of recognition is Prayer.

The world of heart is illumined with the light of reality
The light-scattering sun of the heart and soul is Prayer.

If there is pain and torment in the world, it matters not
Thousands of thanks, for a garden of *Rizwan* (Divine
pleasure), is Prayer.

It is known that the repentance of Adam was Prayer
And the cause of Nuh's Deluge was Prayer.

If Nimrod's pyre appears again and if there is
An Ibrahim even now the garden is Prayer.

It was Prayer which had rescued Yunus
Thus in every cycle the Divine mercy is Prayer.

It was Prayer which made Khizr immortal
The spring of the water of life in this world is Prayer.

The miracles of the staff and the white hand which Musa
received
The main cause of such miracles is Prayer.

The miracle of the Holy Spirit which was in `Isa
Its hidden wisdom is Prayer.

The Holy Prophet, secluded himself in the cave of Hira
His aim and the candle of the place of vigil was Prayer.

Mawla-yi Karim is the Divine light in this world
The possibility of attaining grace from this light is Prayer.

If the light of Imamat is like the path of God
On this path also the lamp of certitude is Prayer.

Myriads of the beloved's manifestations
The lover has seen with his inner eye, is Prayer.

Come here morning and evening and remember Him and
pray
The protector of ethics and faith is Prayer.

The path which leads to the destination of Oneness
The easiest path to it is Prayer.

In this poem of Nasir is hidden a treasure of realities
The Divine treasure full of pearls is Prayer.

* "Who is better in speech than he who prays to God?"
(41:33).

8 April, 1973.POEM1

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POEM2 *Jam`at-kh nah*



Within the dot of oneness of the *Ba'* of *Bismi'llah*
A reality is hidden of the maxims of the *Wali* of Allah.

`Ali is the guide of the path of God and the Prophet
Hold on to his hem to reach the destination eminent.

Imam of *jinn* and mankind and holder of Resurrection's
banner

The king of both worlds and the sovereign of the exalted
court.

Munificent to all creatures and generous to both friend
and foe

Is exalted `Ali, the forgiver of sin and fault.

By the command of the present and guardian Mawla
A place of worship is established, how pleasant!

The true observers of the world of purity
Make the dust of it their eyes' antimony.

Why are you afraid of the roar of sorrows' army

Come to the house of *Mushkil-kusha*, where there is refuge for you.

Come, O *murid* of the sovereign of religion, the Imam of the time

Seek whatever you want from the court of Imamat.

Wash in the tears of repentance if you are wise

The garment of your dear soul which has become soiled.

O beloved from now only my heart and the path of your love remain

If the heart strays kindly bring it back to the path.

I do not have any obedience in the Divine court

Except the *wazifah* of love and prayer with yearning.

Remove the veil, O the light of the spiritual eye

So that we may glance at your glorious face.

If you want salvation from the pain of the darkness of grief

Come to the house of the light of the age, morning and evening.

It is the door of this house where indigent Nasir calls

By the exalted Shah's kindness all his wishes are fulfilled.

POEM2



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Transliteration of Non-English Words



`Ārif	Hadīth
`Azīzān	Al-Hamdu li'llāh
`Ibādat	Haqīqat
Ahādīth	Hudūd-i dīn
Asās	Ibda`i
Bā'	Ġ'tikāf
Basīt	Imām-i mubīn
Bātin	Inshā'a'llāh
Baytī	Ism-i a`zam
Al-Bayta'l-harām	Jamā`at
Al-Bayti'l-`atīq	Jamā`at-khānah
Al-Baytu'l-ma`mūr	Jāmah
Baytu'llāh	Khalīfah
Bismi'llāh	Khānah
Da`ā'imu'l-Islām	Khānah-i Khudā
Dā`ī	Khānah-i Jamā`at
Da`wat-i haqq	Khāniqāh
Dhikr-i jalī	Khayāl
Dhikr-u `ibādat	Kitābu'l-Hajj
Dīdār	Khutbatu'l-Bayān
Farmān	Lāhūt
Fath	Majmū`ah-yi arwāh
Giryah-ū zārī	Mamthūl

Al-Masjidu'l-harām

Mazhar

Minhāj

Mukhī

Murīd

Namāz

Nātiqs

Nūr-i imān

Qiyām

Quddūs

Rizwān

Rūhānī majlis

Sakīnah

Salāt

Salātu'l-fajr

Samad

Sha`ā'iri'llāh

Shab-bīdārī

Sharī`at

Sirāt-i mustaqīm

Subhān

Tā'ifīn

Ta'wīl

Ta'wīlic

Tanzīl

Taqwā

Tarīqat

Tasbīh

Tawhīd

Wahy

Wajh-i dīn

Walī

Zāhir

Zakāt



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Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai

is the author of over a hundred books related to the esoteric interpretation of the holy Qur'an. He writes both prose as well as poetry. He is the first person to have composed a Diwan of poetry in Burushaski, his mother tongue, and is known as Baba-i Burushaski (Father of Burushaski) for his service to that unique language. He also composes poetry in three other languages: Urdu, Persian and Turkish. His contribution to spiritual science has been recognised by Senior University of USA and Canada in the form of an honorary Doctorate. He is also a Distinguished Senior Professor of it. His works include "Qur'anic Healing", "Balance of Realities", "Essence of 'Ibadat", "What is Soul", "Recognition of Imam Pärts", as well as being co-author of a German-Burushaski dictionary published by Heidelberg University and "Hunza Proverbs" published by Calgary University.

