

**Shia Imami Ismaili Muslim Norms for Higher Enlightenment as
Prescribed by Imam Mustansir Bi'l-lāh II (a.s.) in (Pir)
'Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi' (Advices of Manliness)**

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Researcher's Note

Ya Ali Madad. Imam NOOR Mowlana Shah Sultan Mahomed Shah (a.s.) articulated the concept and practical application of higher enlightenment in his Platinum Jubilee Message as follows:

"In these 70 years of my Imamatus, man's material condition has totally changed. There has been immense increase in power over nature but, as we see, with strifes everywhere spiritual power has not increased.

It is my hope that my Spiritual Children, the Ismailis, will, by the example of their own **higher enlightenment** and helpful cooperative movements amongst themselves, set to the world an example of better fraternity and brotherhood which alone can free men from the fear and dangers of moral and mental discord which leads to disaster for all." ¹

In his firman made on December 13, 2003 in Dubai, Noor Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini Hazir Imam (a.s.) asked us to conduct research on the principles and practices of the our faith. This stimulated me to study (Pir) 'Pandiyat-I Jawanmardi' (Advices of Manliness) of Imam Mustansir Bi'l-lāh II (a.s.) from the perspective of enlightenment. This work is a direct response to this holy firman. I sincerely hope that this resource will be useful to all who are conducting personal search for enlightenment within the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslim Tariqah.

Let us supplicate to our beloved Noor Mowlana Hazir Imam to bestow Sunshine in our hearts, light in our foreheads, and the inner vision of the Truth in our intellects. Ameen.

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Shia Imami Ismaili Muslim Norms For Higher Enlightenment as Prescribed by Imam Mustansir Bi'l-lāh II (a.s.) in (Pir) 'Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi' (Advices of Manliness)

The work, Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi, or 'Advices of Manliness' is a collection of instructive religious and moral advices and maxims of Imam NOOR Mowlana Shah Mustansir bi'l-lāh II. These excerpts have been classified and arranged in a sequence which would allow a believer to search for enlightenment and continually improve the quality and quantity of his/her good deeds, and strengthen his/her faith.

Excerpt No. 1: Recognize the Holy Imam

"The (real) believer is one who from the Shariat arrives at tariqat, and from the latter to haqiqat, which is the real inner meaning of Shariat. Shariat may be compared to a candle, tariqat to the path, and haqiqat to the destination. One must strive to walk along the correct path, lit by the candle, and reach the abode of haqiqat. The foundation of haqiqat is to recognize the Imam. The purpose of everything is its inner meaning, which forms its (real) substance, its essence and sweetness. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of Shariat introduced by the Prophet was its inner meaning which is haqiqat, i.e., the recognition of the Imam of the time." (Page 2)

Excerpt No. 2: Walk in the Truth

"The (real) believer is one who is a man (Jawaannard), i.e., he who throughout the whole year of twelve months acts properly and piously, continuously remembering the Truth (Haqq). He must speak the truth, listen to the truth, must abide in truth and walk in truth. His heart must be clean, and his thoughts sincere, he must remain clean." (Page 2)

"The (real) believer is one who possesses the eye which sees truth, who looks at what is lawful (haqq) to him, and does not cast his eyes on what is unlawful to him, such as the property or wives of others." (Page 3)

"The (real) believer is one who continually remembers God (Haqq), and whose tongue does not utter anything without mention of God." (Page 6)

Excerpt No. 3: Seek Forgiveness (Tauba)

"The (real) believer is one who sees his own sins, fears them, and repents for them." (Page 5)

"The (real) believer is one who is afraid of the day of Resurrection when God (Haqq) will demand of him the account of his sins, and who before that day of settlement keeps an account of his sins every day himself." (Page 4)

"The (real) believer is one who realizes his own position and state, who does not forget these, who does not forget about the agonies of death and the bitterness of the moment when the soul shall part with the body, who is afraid of the tortures of the future, and of the answers to be given to the questions of Munkar and Nakir." (Page 5)

"The (real) believer is one who always feels that the All-Forgiving Lord is present before him and sees him, that He is just there, nearer to him than his own self. (page 5)

Excerpt No. 4: Practise Faith With Conviction

"The (real) believer is one whose words (iqrar wa qawl) are unshakeable and true (haqq), whose thoughts of the heart are true, whose promise, whose love and affection are true. From head to foot that slave of God must be sincere and true (haqq). He must be sweet-worded and mild, his soul (ruh) must be sincere. He must be continually preoccupied with the remembrance of God (dhikr), always remaining in meditation (bandagi) and dhikr and praise of God, lauding and recognising God the All-High (Shinakht-i Haqq ta'ala). His actions must be pious, his behaviour proper. He must carry out the commandments and injunctions of his Lord (Khudawand) and pir. He must keep on his tongue the mention of Five Holy Persons (Panj Tan), mentioning and glorifying God with great affection. He recognizes his Master (Aqa), the Supreme Lord (Sahibu'l-amr), the Imam of the time, follows his path, always remaining obedient and listful (attentive) to him, delivering himself, his affairs, and everything that he possesses to that Lord (Mawla) who is the Imam of the time, and the Lord of the world and of all who inhabit it."
(Page 7)

Excerpt No. 5: Submit Dues (Mal-i Wajibat) (1)

"The (real) believer is one who will count the proceeds of every affair, his commercial transactions, his food, and his goods in stock, separating one tenth as his dues (mal-i wajibat). Then he, with true faith and perfect affection, with full sincerity, affectionately and lovingly, must deliver that tithe into the presence of the Imam of the time. If he delivers this in pure, true and strong faith, he will see both the affluence in this world and bliss in the hereafter. God the All-High will be pleased by him. When he has delivered the dues to his Lord (Khudawand), — this will serve as the sign and mark of faithfulness (mu'mini), his obedience and religious sincerity (ikhlas-i kishi). Such a person must be patient, sincere, pious, truthful, clean, modest, and humble as a darwish, regarding himself as nothing, and (feeling) sinful from top to toe. He must not be selfish nor proud, nor self-centered, nor egotistic."
(Page 8)

Excerpt No. 6: Submit Dues (Mal-i Wajibat) (2)

"You should occupy yourself with matters and work with which God may be pleased, and must not act against the commandments of God. From whatever you earn, you must put aside a tithe, which is a religious duty (mal-i wajibat), and deliver it to the treasury of your Mawla who is 'Ali Murtada, the Master of this world and of the hereafter. You must do it with a feeling of perfect love, with sincere intention, smilingly and rejoicing that the tithe paid by you has reached the luminous presence of your Mawla, and has been accepted. Then offer thanks (because this proves) that your earnings were lawful to you, as the tithe has reached the Mawla, and was accepted. Then the other nine parts are lawful to you, and you will see many benefits from this, both in this world and the hereafter." (Pages 54-55)

Excerpt No. 7: Submit Dues (Mal-i Wajibat) (3)

"But if you do not pay the duty (maliyaa'i wajibat), you will be like the one who does not sow his grain. And if you give the money to some one else to deliver (on your behalf) to the treasury of the Mawla, and he does not deliver it, it will be as if you have given grain to a farmer, who has then consumed that grain, instead of sowing it. In that case both farmer and the landlord will remain empty-handed. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that you should deliver the money to the Imam's treasury correctly, in full and without delay.

...If you do not pay, that one part will become the fire which will burn the other nine parts, then good luck, blessing and well being will depart from you and your property. From the ten parts one is the property of God (Khudawand), who has commanded that his slaves should always be instructed not to fail in making always an account of their income, and paying the share of God, in order that they may enjoy their earnings lawfully."
(Page 55)

Excerpt No. 8: Submit Dues (Mal-i Wajibat) (4)

"The tithe has been established by the King of Men Murtada 'Ali. He commanded the adepts of the Truth (haqiqatiyyan) saying that every one who is the follower of the Truth (ahi-i haqiqat), and has the desire of his didar, must pay the tithe from his income. By this he may secure the chance of the didar. The followers of the Shariat do not know and realize the implications (or symbolism, ramz) of this commandment. Thus every one who has connection with the Imam of the time must always pay his (religious) duty, i.e., the tithe, which is due to the Imam of the time, delivering it, and being ready to sacrifice at his command his own life and (the whole of) his property." (Pages 55-56)

Excerpt No. 9: Rewards of Submitting Dues (Mal-i Wajibat)

"And the Lord (Khudawand) has said: "However much my slaves may give, I, the Creator, shall return to them a hundred-thousand-fold, and shall grant them the chance of my vision (liqa'), together with (Paradisial) castles, (various delightful) places, sights, memorable visions and advantageous positions in heaven. Whoever (from amongst them) has passed beyond this world, will be like one who has already passed the (bridge of) sirat. One who works for the Truth is working for himself. But whoever works for himself, in reality, is a useless waster, because it is the Creator who is the owner of men he has created, and of all they possess. If a man pays the tithe, the nine remaining shares are his lawful possession, otherwise all that he possesses is unlawful to him." (Page 56)

Excerpt No. 10: Strengthen Religion

"O, believers, O, pious ones! Now is the time when you should strengthen religion (din), by helping each other, by trying to gain knowledge, by advancing the religious cause, and striving to make your faith complete. Gain safety by obeying the Imam of the time, and become completely obedient to his orders. Act and do everything piously, — a pious act is that which is carried out in obedience to the word of the Imam. Do unhesitatingly what you are told by the blessed word of the Imam, — then you will attain (real) salvation (rastagaari). Then follow your Pir and Prophet, (by this) following your God. Follow the Imam of your time strictly, so that he may take you under his protection, helping you, granting you victory and relief. Follow your Pir, and regard your association with him as a great boon. Listen to his words, and act according to them, because they are the words of the Imam, and if you act according to them, they will be like medicine to you. And obedience to the Imam, attention to his word, and that of the guiding pir (pir-i murshid) together with his instruction (taa'lim), followed by action in accord with these, will bring about the healing of spiritual ailments (maradhaa-i batiniyyat), and lead to soundness and clarity of the heart. And the wisdom of the teachers makes the mirror of heart clean and shining." (Page 17)

Excerpt No. 11: Keep the Human Spirit Alive in Both Worlds

"Whoever is (a) real man must be united with his spiritual brother. The human spirit is unifying, the spirit of the animal is dividing — from it comes the principle of opposition. The animal spirit derives its life from food. When the latter is not supplied to it, it dies. But the human spirit is kept alive by the recognition of the Imam and love for the followers of the Truth (ahl-i haqq), and if both these do not exist, it perishes.

Therefore, O believers, if you want to be alive in both worlds, perfect your faith, because (only) by the light of faith may you attain eternal life. And faith comes from and is perfected by the recognition and knowledge (ma'rifat wa shinakht) of the Imam of the time, and obedience and love for his followers. Therefore, follow your Imam, and be happy and united with each other amongst yourselves in order that you may be alive in both worlds, and in the hereafter you may become resurrected with the pious, with prophets and saints in the presence of the Imam, with the greatest joy at meeting each other again." (Pages 35-36)

Excerpt No. 12: Be Near the Throne of the Lord

"But those who oppose the Imam and his followers do not feel one with Imam's friends. They will become subjected in the hereafter to the hardest punishment, despairing of their state, and not seeing any one (to help them) either from amongst their own people, or strangers. Thus the believers will, in the hereafter, see all, both their relatives and strangers, but the enemies of the Imam, who are traitors and haters of the path of the truth, will be tortured by their own worries, and by punishment and retribution for their actions.

Therefore, O, believers, the matters of the hereafter are settled in this world, whether they are to be good or bad. Therefore let your hearts be pure and united in this world, be united in your hearts with each other so that tomorrow at the Resurrection, in the presence filled with pure light of the Imam of the time, the absolute Lord, you may occupy a place near the throne of the Lord uniting with one another, filled with perfect joy and happiness." (Page 36)

Excerpt No. 13: Darkness and Its Remedy (1)

Causes:

"But he who talks improperly, thoughtlessly, and not to the point, or utters abuse, talks nonsense, mocks, or discusses the qualities and defects of others' wives, or stares at the wives or daughters ('ayal) of other people, or falls in love with another's wife, or if it be a woman falls in love with a man who is not lawful to her to see — then, — may we implore the help of God from God's wrath! — all that man in the course of the whole of his life earned by prayers (namaz) and worship ('ibadat), all that he earned by pious actions, — all this will be given up, thrown to the wind of nonexistence, all will be lost! ... God the All-High will be displeased and dissatisfied. His prosperity will be ruined, and he himself will have to live by begging, in distress, misery, and despair. Both in this world and the hereafter he will be surrounded by darkness and obscurity, he will have to suffer in the hereafter the punishment of Hell, being burnt in eternal fire." (Pages 6-7)

Remedies:

"The (real) believer is one whose word is true, who does not use bad language, does not slander or abuse (anybody), and does not do any one what he does not want to be done to himself." (page 3)

"The (real) believer is one who is pious and sincere by heart, whose actions are not crooked, who has no designs on the property or wives of others, and who abstains from stretching out his hand for what is unlawful to him." (Page 3)

Excerpt No. 14: Darkness and Its Remedy (2)

Cause:

"O, believers, within the man whose temper is irritable the fire of wrath spreads sparks when he becomes heated by a fit of anger, owing to that irritability, and in that excitement, when it appears, are burnt (the fruits of) his faith, pious actions, his reward (for them), worship, purity of heart, decency, understanding, and intelligence. Then the fire of sensuousness flares up in him, causing him to feel the desire for tasty foods, causing him to make designs upon the property, position, rank and wives of others, making him wish to eat and dress well, under the influence of the fire of greed. This is Hell, it will reduce thee to nothingness, throwing thee headlong into the pit. Control as much as you can of the forces of irritability and sensuousness, so that they may not shake you in your position, will not throw you out of balance, stirring up, and causing change in yourself, in your original nature. This is because as soon as man has been brought out of the normal state, he becomes a brute without faith." (page 33)

Remedy:

"The (real) believer is one who is sincere, who never nurses anger and hatred in his heart, who is neither irritable nor rash, and keeps his heart pure and sincere." (Page 3)

Excerpt No. 15: Darkness and Its Remedy (3)**Cause:**

"O, believers! God save us from neglect, — neglect of the truth is a calamity. So far as you can do not neglect remembering God (Haqq), do not be lazy in remembering God the All-High. The negligent one loses (all). God will make the necessities of life scarce for one who forgets the Truth. In the hereafter God will forget him. Therefore do not be negligent, realize your own position and conditions." (page 10)

Remedy:

"The (real) believer is one who is always patient, pious, sincere and truthful, clean in his beliefs, and modest, whose heart is full of the fear of God, who is free from wrath and hatred, and is pure. In his every action he sees his Lord (Khudawand) present before him, always remembering God. Every slave of God who acts in this way will receive in this world splendour and affluence, and in the hereafter he will be in Paradise, in the presence of his Lord (Mawla-y-i khud), Murtada 'Ali. " (Page 7)

Excerpt No. 16: Darkness and Its Remedy (4)**Cause:**

"O, believers, hearts which are filled with malice, which are defiled by doubt are straying from the path into darkness, the hearts which contain vile fancies, such hearts are abode of Satan and of devils." (page 23)

Remedy:

"But pure, loving and clean hearts which contain no malice and enmity at any one, or lust for things of this world, those in which there is nothing except the thought of the Truth, — such hearts are the Throne of the Merciful, and the seat of angels. Therefore, O, believers, see God in your hearts, keeping hearts well-polished, removing rust, dust, doubt and hypocrisy from the mirror of your hearts by the brush of firm faith (yaqin), and wash it with the water of religious knowledge, so that you may see God in that mirror of your hearts. If you love God, turn away your hearts from evil-minded traitors, so that they do not make you similar to themselves. God has turned His face from traitors who do not recognize the Truth, and have lost touch with the Imam of the time." (Page 23)

Excerpt No. 17: Darkness and Its Remedy (5)

Cause:

"One must know for certain that whatever one does, every thought, good or bad in his heart, no one knows these except God the Just. God the All-High is present everywhere, and sees all, knowing the quantity and quality of everything. It is thou who art negligent and ignorant. Whoever knows not, is not on his guard. He forgets God, and Satan tempts him to do something evil. He thus becomes busy with evil-doing in the presence of God the Merciful, either molesting someone, or abusing him. In the hereafter he will be exposed." (page 23-24)

Remedy:

"...so says God the All-High: A sincere devotee is one who sees Me as if present before him, whatever he is doing and wherever he is, feeling ashamed to do wrong. If an evil thought appears in his mind, or a desire to do wrong, or eat something that is not lawful to him, — he must at once appeal to Me, and I shall save him from the temptation offered by Satan, and from that evil deed which will be followed by punishment in the hereafter. And I shall cast into his heart the wish to act righteously. He will then act properly, receiving bliss and happiness in the hereafter. His life will pass pleasantly, and death will be pleasant." (Page 24)

Excerpt No. 18: Darkness and Its Remedy (6)

Cause:

"O, believers, reflect on the unreliability and meaninglessness of this world which has never satisfied any one. On the contrary, it has always disappointed those who are after its riches. Look properly at this earth: how great were the people (buried in it). They strove to gain the pleasures of this world. They struggled much, — but ultimately all of them are gone. But none of the prophets and saints have defiled themselves with this greed for earthly things. How much the kings of this world have fought for it, and with what sadness they have passed and gone. Your forefathers have also gone, and now it is your turn." (page 51)

Remedy:

"O, believers, learn in a critical way (ba-tahqiq) that you have come from the proximity of the Lord (Khudawand), from the supernatural (batin) world, which is the pure world of the spheres, to this transient world, the earth. You will go back to the Lord. Therefore do your best to see that at the time of the journey back to the Friend you may not go empty-handed, so that you may be proud, not ashamed. Abandon the greed for the pleasures of this world and perfect your attitude to the hereafter." (Page 52)

"...He (the Lord) will ask you: "I have given you eyes, reason, mind and sound parts of the body, how did you use them? Have you opened your hand in My way, lavishing money, or used it treacherously to acquire property, women belonging to others, and to harm people? Did your ears listen to words of truth or untruth? Was your tongue busy with My mention (dhikr), or with slandering My devotees? Was your heart full of My love, or of love for worldly pleasures? Did your eyes see the truth or untruth? Have you brought

upon yourself happiness or distress?" — Therefore you had better purify yours hearts of any love for worldly pleasures." (Page 53)

Excerpt No. 19: Darkness and Its Remedy (7)

Cause:

"...Abstain from misappropriating anything so that your hearts may not be humiliated. Those whose hearts have lost enthusiasm and become tired of uttering the dhikr, either from indifference or laziness, come to this because of their misappropriation, of what is unlawful, or by not paying their religious dues." (page 43)

"O, believers, realize this and do not miss the point which is a very serious and important one. Even, with great difficulty, it cannot be settled by force. It depends on the inner (batini) feeling of satisfaction. Misappropriation of the religious dues ultimately destroys one. The tithe implies many high points and numberless tests (for the donor). If one does not give it, he courts numberless misfortunes and calamities. It is an extremely serious matter, do not take it lightly, — it is a heavy burden. Both the one who gives it and who receives it must deliver it honestly and in full to the abode of the Lord (Mawla-na)." (page 44)

Remedy:

"Therefore the real believer is the one who follows the Imam of his time and waits his order. Whatever the Lord of the time, who is the Master of religion, orders him, he listens and acts accordingly. He must pay the tithe (mal-i wajibat) in full. Every night he must reflect on his duty to pay something as the tithe, or whether he has paid in full. If it comes to his mind that a portion of tithe still remains with his own property, pending settlement, he should pay it quickly. Whenever you pay your tithe, you will be thanked, and then you may rejoice as if you have received Divine help in delivering the Imam's dues to him." (page 51)

Excerpt No. 20: Darkness and Its Remedy (8)

Cause:

"O, believers, whoever retains the Shah's tax, and does not put it aside, thus taking away the Shah's income, and enjoying his life, he becomes a malefactor and evildoer, his heart becomes blackened, and he will ultimately become an inmate of Hell." (page 42)

Remedy:

"The first duty which the believer must discharge is to see that what he eats and what he clothe himself with are clean, lawful to him and legitimate for his use." (page 48)

"...By paying the duty you will rise high in your own esteem, and by not paying it you will remain in the valley of despair. If you pay it, your worship will be accepted, and if you do not, it will find no acceptance because worship is acceptable only if what you eat and what you clothe yourselves are clean and lawful to you, that is to say, if you recognize the Imam of your time, paying a tithe unto him. Then only the food you eat will be lawful to you, and

the dress in which you clothe yourself will also be lawful. Then only all other forms of devotion will be accepted." (page 49)

"In addition to this the real test of affection is the question of (the readiness to sacrifice) property, not merely reciting prayers (namaz). ... In this world of perishable things you cannot get anything unless you pay for it. Therefore why should those eternal values be given free, without payment? Come forward then, with money, not with prayers. First pay, then pray, so that your prayer may be acceptable." (page 49)

Excerpt No. 21: Compulsory Daily Prayers

Teachings of Allah and His Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.s.):

"Ibn Mas'ud said: I asked the Prophet which action is dearest to God and he replied, "Prayer at its proper time." ²

"Ibn Mas'ud said that a man kissed a woman and came and told the Prophet. Then God revealed, "And observe the prayer at the two ends of the day and the neighbouring parts of the night, for good deeds remove evil deeds." (Holy Qur'an 11:114). The man asked God's messenger whether this referred to him, and he replied, "It refers to everyone of my whole people." ³

"Abdallah b. 'Amr. b. al-'As said that the Prophet mentioned prayer one day saying, "If anyone keeps to it, it will be light, evidence and salvation for him on the day of resurrection." ⁴

Teaching of Hazrat Murtaza Ali (a.s.):

"Optional prayers cannot attain the pleasures of God for you when compulsory daily prayers are left unattended." ⁵

Teaching of Imam Sultan Mahomed Shah (a.s.):

"The healthy human body is the temple in which the flame of the Holy Spirit burns, and thus it deserves the respect of scrupulous cleanliness and personal hygiene. Prayer is a daily necessity, a direct communication of the spark with the universal flame" ⁶

Excerpt No. 22: Status and Function of Pirs (1)

"The pir is the person to whom the Imam of the time has granted his position, which makes him the highest amongst the creations (ashraf-i makhluqat). And whenever he (i.e. the Imam) has chosen the pir, and appointed him, he (the pir) must convey to others the knowledge in detail (ma'rifat-ra ba-tafsil bi-guyad). You must attain perfection in knowledge of the Imam through him. But if he (i.e. the Imam) has not appointed a pir, you must come to know some person amongst the learned (sahiban-i ilm) whom he (i.e. the Imam) has commissioned to guide and to preach to people (ba-dalalat wa da'wat) so that you may attain through the guidance and preaching of such a person (irshad wa da'wat) the recognition of the Imam (ma'rifat-i Imam). Thus you will not remain in wretchedness, attaining through the illumination of his knowledge (rawshana'i-y-i ilm-i u) the recognition of the Imam. And whenever there is a pir, the teachers will take up preaching (da'wat), by his permission, remaining under his control and order." (page 26)

Excerpt No. 23: Status and Function of Pirs (2)

"Therefore, O, believers, it is obligatory for you to follow the pir, never flinching from his obedience. Be bound by what the pir tells you, acting as he says. The pir does not demand from you any payment or fees, — I give him this instead of you. And when you obey the pir, the pir — if God pleases — in the hereafter will pray to God for your protection.

On the day of Resurrection (Qiyamat) the accounts of those who are the first and those who are the last will be left in the hands of our Lord (Mawla-na) — 'Ali, — may a remedy be attained on his mention! He will question the slaves of God and interrogate them. He will show kindness to the chosen ones who have been devout, but the rebellious hypocrites will remain in the middle of the plain of Resurrection in the glare and heat, in distress, humiliated and ashamed, groaning and weeping on the way, each being worried about himself. But every one who has been obedient to the pir will stand on that terrible day in the shadow (i.e. under the protection) of the pir of his time." (pages 26-27)

Excerpt No. 24: Status and Function of Pirs (3)

"O, believers, on the day of the Resurrection, except for the perfect pir, all other pirs, mirs and brothers will stand trembling, not one being able to utter a word (of intercession). But your (real) pir, who helped you in this world, will also become your helper and protector in the hereafter. Therefore do not give up following him, as you belong to that world and must enjoy it and rejoice there. Therefore do not be bound in this world by rejoicing, enjoyment of power, position, rank or respect. With every day, you must keep on intensifying your love and service to one another, to your pir, and your Imam, never remaining dependent on this world which is transient and without real substance and worth. Do not be polluted by it because it will cast you into indifference. When this happens, you will fall into disputes and quarrels with each other till death. Then you will taste frustration, shame and remorse. Thus nothing will help you in the hereafter except that you live in such a way as to please the Imam of your time, serving him or spending money in his cause, so far as you can, because if you spend it (for your own sake), or amass it, you will never see it again, and this will become your punishment. But what you give for the sake of your Lord (Mawla), will remain (to your credit) in the hereafter." (pages 27-28)

Excerpt No. 25: Status and Function of Pirs (4)

"If you desire to keep your hearts fresh and alive with affection and love for the Truth (Haqq), if you wish that love for the Lord (Khudawand) should become rooted in your hearts, making you long for the vision (liqa') of your Creator, longing for the didar, then take your hearts away from all that is not the Truth and turn your faces towards (your) Lord (Khudawand), appealing to the Creator and the pir, or spiritual guide, giving up frivolous and absurd thinking, throwing love for this world out of your hearts completely. Then love for (your) Lord (Khudawand) will at once become strong in your hearts, marking ardent your longing. Take refuge with God from the ignorant and hypocritical people who have turned their faces from the abode of the Imam of the time and the true pir, from those who do not recognize the Imam of

the time. They will be ruined, stranded, humiliated, aggrieved and annihilated." (page 28)

Excerpt No. 26: Status and Function of Pirs (5)

"O, dear ones, listen: you must strive to acquire knowledge in religious wisdom (ma'rifat-i ilm), seeking explanations of an expert ('alim). You must look properly into your own hearts and mind, learning the knowledge of the Merciful Lord ('ilm-i Khudawand-i karim) from a (true) teacher (mu'allim). You must act according to what he says so that you may attain perfection, acquiring the wealth of this world and of the hereafter. You must carry out the commandments which he conveys to you, carefully paying attention to what the pir has said concerning the (religious) wisdom ('ilm). This you must attain. The teacher helps you to know the pir and religion (din), guiding you to the higher knowledge (ma'rifat), making you right and steady in what the glorious Imam commands. Act according to what he has ordered and is ordering you to do, and be ready to carry out (his) orders every moment, so that you may be every moment able to share the bounty (fayd).

O, believers, if you wish to attain perfection in the knowledge of God (Khudashinasi), attain the degree of the ma'rifatu'l-lah, you must accept the commands of the Pir of your time, and act according to what he orders you, never disobeying him, but continuously following his command, until you reach the cognition (kashf)." (pages 25-26)

Excerpt No. 27: Status and Function of Pirs (6)

"Therefore, O, believers, the true believer is one who keeps his face turned away from disobedience, remaining obedient to the orders of the True King (Shah-i haqiqi). He progresses towards the truth, carrying out instructions of the pir, just as the pir himself carries out the orders of the Lord (Mawla). As just as the pir obeys the order of the Imam, never exceeding his orders, so must the teachers (mu'alliman) obey the orders of the pir, never transgressing them, until they attain their aim. The believers (mu'minan) must similarly obey the orders of their teachers, never transgressing them, and learning more from them to recognize (ma'rifat) the Imam, to obey the commandments of the religion and to carry them out, until they reach their goal.

Therefore, accept wholeheartedly (ba-jan) whatever the spiritual guide (murshid) teaches you, when he gives his advice, religious instruction and admonition; this will bring you in truth and righteousness to the Truth (haqiqat) and to the recognition the Imam of the time (Imam-i hadir). You must be thankful for this, because it is valuable for the traveller on his road to have a guide, a candle and a light, so that he may ultimately reach his home safely and without suffering." (page 40)

Excerpt No. 28: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (1)

Let us first reflect on following extract of Pir Shihabu'd-din Shah Al-Hussaini from his book 'True Meaning of Religion' on the topic of 'itrat (Close relatives)⁷ and relate it to the theme of 'Recognition of the Light of the Imam':

"Muhammad and 'Ali both were manifestations of one and the same Divine Light*, but they came in two different persons (libas,-dress) in order to uphold each other's mission amongst humans, and in order to introduce each other to the people. However, the people did not recognize them. Salman Farsi said in Persian, on the day when Abu Bakr was in appearance (zahir) elected as a caliph: 'kardid-na-kardid,' i.e., 'you have done this, and yet you have not done it.' He meant that they had appointed a lieutenant to the Prophet, and yet, in reality, nothing had been done. But this is a long story, O, God!

The holy Light which manifested in Muhammad and 'Ali continued in the world through Fatima, in her sons, Hasan and Husayn, and no power in the world can extinguish this Light. It is said (Holy Qur'an 9:32): 'they wanted to extinguish the Light of God, but God brings His light through, to the end,' i.e., to the completion of its mission.

Even if traitors and apostates dislike this, how can this Light disappear from the world? Or how should it return to its Source without accomplishing what it was destined to accomplish?

Therefore those people who are born later, what have they to do, and whom have they to follow, so as not to stray from the right path? And even if they do not recognize it, and wantonly go on a wrong path, God, nevertheless, has to manifest a Guide (hujjat), who should be with them."

*Please note that the unity of Allah, Ali and Muhammad occurs at the level of LIGHT (NOOR). There is only ONE Noor which has to complete its mission.

Excerpt No. 29: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (2)

Let us now reflect on the following extracts from three Khutba of Hazrat (Noor) Mowlana (Shah) Murtaza Ali (a.s.) which clearly describe the position of aale-e-Muhammad (Descendants of Muhammad, may the peace of Allah be upon them) and relate these to the theme of 'Recognition of the Light of the Imam':

"The Almighty God has placed His trust in Aale-e-Muhammad (Descendants of Muhammad, may the peace of God be upon them). They are strongholds where His Commandments receive protection and from which they are expounded and interpreted. They are fountain heads of knowledge created by Him, shelters for His teachings, refuges for Heavenly Books, mountain like citadels to defend His religion. Islam in its beginning was weak and helpless, they came to its help and defence. Islam was nervous of the infidels around it, they made it strong and powerful." ⁸

"I swear by the Lord that I know fully well all the messages of God that the Holy Prophet (may the peace of God be upon him and his descendants) has received, the ways of fulfilment of promises made by God and of all the knowledge that science or philosophy could disclose.

We, the progeny of the Holy Prophet (may the peace of God be upon him and his descendants), are the doors through which real wisdom and true knowledge will reach mankind: we are lights of religion." ⁹

"Remember that descendants of the Holy Prophet (S.A.S.) are stars in the Heaven, if one sets the other will rise to illumine your path; the Merciful Lord has thus completed His Blessings amongst you." ¹⁰

Excerpt No. 30: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (3)

"O, believers! The path of God (Haqq) is the "Straight Road" (Siratu'l-mustaqim). This means the recognition (marifat) of the Imam of the time. His leadership is the right path. So far as you can, try by every means to follow that right path in order to attain the goal of Truth (manzil-i haqiaqat), which is the recognition of the Imam of the time. Strive to perfect your devotion and faith (din wa iman) when you are still young, and arrive at the coveted "Spring of water", because towards the end of your life you may become weakened. You may then become greedy for (pleasures of) this world, neglecting (religious matters). Therefore comprehend this and fulfill it now if you can." (pages 9-10)

"The real man is one who is hospitable. This does not mean that he will be like a lion at another's table, or like a fox. His face is always friendly. He has a true love for and perfect faith in the Imam of his time. He tries to attain that lasting wealth, the recognition of the Imam of the time. He is benevolent and well-behaved, as one should be, being kind and friendly to the friends and devotees ('ashiqan) of that Lord (Mawla)." (pages 10-11)

Excerpt No. 31: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (4)

"Some people appeal to God while they have no knowledge of the Imam of their time, or oppose him. They should enter the Ark of Noah of the time because all other ships will be drowned. Therefore follow the (spiritual) authority and your leader, so that you may sit in the house of the Truth, entering the Ark of the Noah of your time, and reaching the land safely. That authority, that Noah of your time, is the Imam of your time. Know him, and enter the Ark of Noah, i.e. the path of his preaching (tariqa'i dawat-i u), so that your faith may become perfect and your souls may become safe from calamities. The house which has no windows or openings remains dark. Similarly, the heart of one who does not know the Imam of his time, who is the sun of that period, remains dark, without light and enlightenment. It always remains in darkness of irritation and enmity. Darkness causes one suffering and to stray from the path, becoming lost. Therefore the one who does not know the Imam of the time (hadir), and regards him as absent (gha'ib) from the world, is erring, alien to the community, and an enemy. People like these, owing to the absence of spiritual guidance, become split into sects, continually struggling, quarrelling and opposing each other. They are at war with every other community until at last they perish." (page 29)

Excerpt No. 32: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (5)

"If a man does not recognize the Imam (Wali) of his time, does not accept him as such, treats his orders as already contained in the plain commandments of the Shari'at, ascertains from ordinary theologians ('ulmama-y-i zahir) the indications (ma'ni) of the Coran and the various hadiths concerning the institution of Imam, and if he acts according to the theologian's opinion, all his pious acts will be fruitless and his troubles useless,—he will finally go to Hell. This is because the correct meaning of the Coran and hadiths is only with the Imam. The Prophet,—peace be upon him,—himself said that whoever accepted his progeny ('itrat) and the Book of God as his guidance would never be lost. The expression "my progeny" refers to the Imam, according to the words of the Coran (III, 30): "...my progeny, one following the other". But the Imam can only be recognized with the help of another Imam, being the person whom the Imam appoints to that office from amongst his own progeny (dhurriyyat). Only he will be the Imam, no one else. Ordinary mortals (makhluq) cannot appoint any one as their Imam. Whomever the Imam selects for (the transfer of) the light of Imam, that person only is the Imam and a member (aal) of the dynasty. His other sons will be (ordinary) people who deserve salvation (ahl-i najat), if they obey him and serve him.

Therefore follow the Imam in order that you may be connected with him , i.e. the Imams, one generation after another. If others have no connection with the Imam, this is because they opposed him, adopting a hostile attitude towards him, and the Imam concealed himself from them, while they began to follow the ordinary theologians,—this is why they err." (pages 30-31)

Excerpt No. 33: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (6)

"The learned, however, know that the world cannot be without an Imam even for a moment, because if it is, the earth with its population will instantly perish. But their craving for position and importance (in the community) compels them to conceal this, and (outwardly) deny this. Surely, that strife which they had with various prophets and saints was due to this desire to preserve their position of respect.

O, believers, it is astonishing to see how one who has no connection with the Imam, yet laughs and rejoices, but it is still more astonishing when one rejects the Imam of the time, and adopts a hostile attitude towards him. He is like a child playing on the edge of the dam of a water mill, or on the roof of a house, or with a snake in his hand. Do you see such inopportune laughter or untimely and out-of-place rejoicing among the ordinary people? It is bound to become the cause of their calamity, their punishment and sorrow.

O, believers, O, sincere ones! Smile only then when you are saved from the calamities and perils, when you are out of the whirlpool and on dry land, when you are safely back from the journey. It means, then, that joy will be attained when you arrive at the recognition of the Imam of the time, becoming his faithful and obedient slaves, and not being even for a moment disobedient or forgetful of him. You will then become enlightened by his

recognition,—and it is this time which will be appropriate for joy and merriment." (page 31)

Excerpt No. 34: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (7)

"The true believer is one who always occupies himself with mention (dhikr) of the Lord (Khudawand), whose heart is full of love and whose tongue is busy with glorification of the Creator (Khudawandgar). He will hear the instructions given to those who tread the path of truth, will act accordingly, and will admonish his friends, thus acting righteously himself first, and later on inducing others to do so.

Man attains the recognition of his Creator when he acquires knowledge of himself. First you must acquire the knowledge of your body, limb by limb. You should realize that it has not come into existence by itself, but has been created by some one else. Then you should reflect: who is this who has created me? For what purpose? Where is he going to take me? — Then you will see that if your body maintains a state of balance in its elements, it will be free from disease. Otherwise its condition will be upset. He must then abstain from unsuitable foods. He may thus infer that if one abstains from excesses, in every thing observes a proper measure, not deviating from it to either side, and if he purifies his moral self, whenever he discovers in himself the properties of brutes and beasts, he then acquires human properties, and purifies himself. And when his heart has become pure, and doubt and dishonesty leave his mind, when, he acquires certainty in the recognition of the Imam of his time, seeing him as everywhere present before him, looking upon him, he then reaches the stage of self evident certainty ('ilmu'l-yakin), and attains the stage of absolute truth (haququl-yaqin) when his heart becomes enlightened by the absolute light and in that light he begins to see his soul (jan). Thereafter he begins to see with absolute self-evidence the place in which his Creator is." (page 38)

Excerpt No. 35: Recognition of the Light of the Imam (8)

"O, believers, O, dear ones, the real believer for the sake of the hereafter changes his evil ways for right ways, persevering in them. The real believer serves his brother believer for the sake of the hereafter. There were (in the past) those who were doing this of their own accord, who took up the service of enlightened pirs (piran-i rawshan-dil), those who used to ask questions from the teachers concerning the matters of the Truth (sukhan-ha-y-i Haqq), and acted (according to what was said to them). Some people for the sake of the hereafter, and for the sake of the didar of the Imam of their time, have given up royal thrones. This is the decision of wisdom, because it is due to profound wisdom when one gives up for this (something) transient, as royal authority or high position. Some give up worldly authority for the sake of the didar of the Imam, thus acquiring eternal authority. But how numerous is the filthy rabble who give up the didar of the Imam, running after position, thus abandoning light for darkness, or water in order to get into fire.

The good ones used to give up their relatives and their people for the sake of the didar. Others, similarly, gave up their properties, estates, families, position and respect. Others again for the sake of the didar and out of love for

the Imam of the time used to walk (long distances), making their feet sore. Others for the sake of the hereafter served their spiritual brothers at their assemblies. Good ones sat in the assemblies of the believers for the sake of making their faith perfect, occupying themselves with worship and acts of piety, or asking of their teachers questions concerning the true knowledge ('ilm-i haqiqi), and memorizing it. They used to learn it, sitting and listening to their teachers, and memorizing what they said, acting piously according to their instruction, being full of love for the religion of the truth (din-i haqq).

O, believers, be all in love with the pure religion of the Imam! Be ready to comprehend the meaning of (his) word and knowledge ('ilm), never neglecting your own progress and behaviour, because neglect of the truth is a calamity." (pages 33-34)

Excerpt No. 36: External and Internal Fasting

"The whole year you must fast, just as ordinary Muslims (zahiriyan) fast for one month. The meaning of this fast is austerity. Control yourselves, keep yourselves away from bad qualities, evil and indecent actions and devilish acts, so that the mirror of your hearts may be gradually polished.

...—you must be patient, persevering in austerities, and keeping your inner self fasting as long as you live.

Here we specify the parts of the fast of the inner self: the fast of the head means to treat one's own head with the same humility as the feet of other people, casting out from one's head the lust of superiority, greatness and pride, because greatness and superiority are only suitable to the all-great substance of the Truth (Haqq), who is eternal, the King of the Authority.

The fasting of the eye means that one must keep away coveting looks from the women who are not lawful to one. The fasting of the ear means that one should abstain from listening to slander. The fasting of the tongue means that one should keep one's tongue from uttering abuse or slander. The fasting of the heart means to keep the heart free from doubt. The fasting of the foot is to hold one's foot back from a wrong step. The fasting of the hand is to keep all one's limbs away from treachery so that they may not do evil. This especially applies to one's tongue which must be kept from uttering lies. And there is no greater lie than the denial of (the existence of) the Imam, saying that he has disappeared. God has cursed liars, who talk about such a disappearance (of the Imam), and make the ignorant people follow them in order to enjoy their short lived respect." (pages 59-60)

Excerpt No. 37: External and Internal Ablutions

"The believer must keep pure and clean both in his body and soul (zahir wa batin). He must keep clean his dress, body, and heart, in order that angels may accompany him. Because if his body and soul are defiled and if he does not keep them clean, his associate and the one who shares his bed with him will be diws and devils. They also will take their place in his heart. Therefore you must observe (ritual) purity (taharat). Just as the zahiris for their zahiri worship do their ritual ablutions (taharat) and wudu so the internal ablution is

the washing in truth (wudu-i haqiqi) which is necessary for the soul,—let the followers of the truth (ahl-i haqiqat) know this and follow this rule.

The ablution of the head means to keep oneself obedient to the Imam. The ablution of the hand is swearing allegiance (bay'at dadan) to the Imam of the time. The ablution of the foot is to advance along Imam's way in obedience to him. The ablution of the heart is to keep steady in affection for the Imam. The ablution of the tongue is to keep on continually remembering (dhikr) the Imam. The ablution of the eye is to have the chance of the didar of the Imam of the time.

The one who obeys the orders and words of the Imam has all his limbs purified, and he who has found the way to the Imam, and resigned himself in the obedience of his command,—his soul becomes clean, and his spirit good. But if one knows nothing of the Imam, or denies his existence, or does not accept the Imamat of the Imam, or nourishes doubt as to his Imamat, he will become like the one who is continuously in a state of ritual uncleanness. Therefore seek refuge with God from those who do not accept this, and believe in shari'at which has reduced (cleanliness) to those outer ablutions while overlooking the inner self. For both the body and the soul must be purified." (page 61)

Excerpt No. 38: Taid (spiritual help) and Vision (didar)

"The qualities of the real man are such that he has the time to do all his work. Calamities will go far from him, and his enemies will be blind. His daily bread will be plentiful, he will have success and blessing in his work which will always be successful. His children will be healthy and pious, and his house prosperous. He will always be in time to do his work, and God the All-Forgiving will help him. The help of God will mean that the mirror of his heart will not be rusty, his faith will grow stronger, and his activities will be honest, his earnings will be lawful, and it will be from lawful sources that he will spend in the way of God. His good will reach the pure spirits of the believers and faithful and pious men. Lawful earnings are not the lot of hypocrites, they will not reach the unclean spirits of such people. It is honestly earned money which will reach the blessed throne and the presence of the Lord of the time of the pious believers, —! The Lord of the world will be pleased by that devotee, and he will be well and blessed. God the All-Powerful and Mighty will be satisfied with the devotee, his faith will be strong, his body and soul will be sound (rawshan). His intelligence and comprehension will be bright, and in the hereafter the Lord of the Honour will grant His great vision (didar)." (page 11)

Excerpt No. 39: Return to the Truth

O, believers, Mawlan-na Shah Mustansir bi'l-lāh says:

"Whoever in this world consorts with the followers of the Truth (Ahl-i Haqq), learning the knowledge of religion from them, my look of mercy will rest on the head of that devotee. At the point of death he will safely (re-)join the Truth."

O, believers, Mawlan-na Shah Mustansir bi'l-lāh says:

"The true believer is one who has no malice in his heart, which is pure. Whoever wants to attain my didar in this world and the hereafter, must keep himself away from every defect, opposition and evil act. And according to how far he achieves purification of his heart, and is able to see his Creator in this world, so he will also see Him in the hereafter. It is obligatory and necessary for the true believer to recognize his Creator who is manifest in this world in the form of a human being, and to see Him here in order to see Him also in the hereafter." (pages 62-63)

Excerpt No. 40: Truth, Light and Eternal Existence

And now, O brothers, Mawlan-na Shah Mustansir bi'l-lāh, the Imam of the time says:

"Whoever treats himself as something (important) in this world, being sure of his own (important) existence, will become non-existent (non-entity); will be deprived of a share of existence. Man (by himself) is neither extant nor non-existent, neither light or darkness. If the Imam, who possesses association (with God, walayat), helps him, he becomes endowed with being and light. But if he does not recognize (the Imam) from a (false) sense of security, and does not swear allegiance to the Imam of the time, he will become non-existent and dark."

O, believers! our Lord (Mawla-na) and King of the time, Shah Mustansir bi'l-lāh says:

"Whoever in this world has connection with us, and for this reason suffers at the hands of (our) enemies, and experiences hardships, and yet preserves his heart pure and warm, he will attain relief in the hereafter, and will rejoice at the vision (liqa') of his creator." (page 62)

Conclusion

The Platinum Jubilee message was delivered 50 years ago. In the 49 years of his Imamah, our beloved Imam NOOR Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini's voluminous activities clearly show that we have made great progress. The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is now a global organization and Ismailis have created a greater awareness of their own spirituality. However, to set example, perhaps, we should also consider following advice of Pir Shihabu'd-din Shah Al-Hussaini (a.s.):

" Thus, with the help of God, in labour and worship, in the struggle with your own evil impulses, with the spiritual knowledge kept alive in your heart, with certainty in reason, with study and the acquisition of a religious education, with the vision of the saints of God and of their example in the heart, by the discharge of your duties, you will attain a high degree of spiritual refinement, as it has been systematically explained. If you do all this, you may attain the degree which you seek. You have to seek it, and it depends upon Him not to leave you without a chance." ¹¹

In his message to students in Bombay, Imam Sultan Mahomed Shah Al-Hussaini (a.s.) explained about the fundamental principle of our Holy faith:

"... While the material conditions of life change, the spiritual conditions which are not only limited to this life but go beyond, are based on one fundamental principle, namely search for enlightenment by the right spiritual contact with the light of your holy faith." ¹²

May our beloved Imam NOOR Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini (a.s.) grant the worldwide Jamat luminous (noorani) and spiritual (ruhani) ta'id (help) to advance materially, spiritually and intellectually, and may He bestow the global Jamat with the inner vision of the Truth. Ameen.

End Notes

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2. Robson, J., Book IV. Prayer. Chapter XVII. In: *Mishkat al Masabih Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes)*, 114-115.
3. Robson, J., Book IV. Prayer. Chapter XVII. In: *Mishkat al Masabih Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes)*, 114.
4. Robson, J., Book IV. Prayer. Chapter XVII. In: *Mishkat al Masabih Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes)*, 116.
5. Imam Hazrat (Noor) Mowlana (Shah) Murtaza Ali (a.s.). *Nahjul Balagha: Sermons, letters and saying of Hazrat Ali (Translated by Jafery, Syed Mohammed Askari), Sayings of Hazrat Ali: 39, 277.*
6. Aga Khan III (Noor Mowlana Shah Sultan Mahomed Shah), *Memoirs of Aga Khan*, 176.
7. Pir Shihabu'd-din Shah Al-Hussaini. *True Meaning of Religion*, 40
8. Imam Hazrat (Noor) Mowlana (Shah) Murtaza Ali (a.s.). *Nahjul Balagha: Sermons, letters and saying of Hazrat Ali (Translated by Jafery, Syed Mohammed Askari), Khutba 5, 7-8.*
9. Imam Hazrat (Noor) Mowlana (Shah) Murtaza Ali (a.s.). *Nahjul Balagha: Sermons, letters and saying of Hazrat Ali (Translated by Jafery, Syed Mohammed Askari), Khutba 123, 91.*
10. Imam Hazrat (Noor) Mowlana (Shah) Murtaza Ali (a.s.). *Nahjul Balagha: Sermons, letters and saying of Hazrat Ali (Translated by Jafery, Syed Mohammed Askari), Khutba 103, 72-73.*
11. Pir Shihabu'd-din Shah Al-Hussaini. *True Meaning of Religion*, 48-49
12. Imam Noor Mowlana Shah Sultan Mahomed Shah Al-Hussaini. *Precious Pearls*. No. 43

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3. Imam (Noor Mowlana) Shah Mustansir bi'l-lāh II. *Advices of Manliness (Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi)*. Translated from Persian to English by W. Ivanow. The Ismaili Society Series A No. 6.
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7. Imam Noor Mowlana Shah Sultan Mahomed Shah Al-Hussaini. *Precious Pearls – Firman Mubarak of Mowlana Hazir Imam*. Compiled and translated by H. M. Sherali Alidina and Kassim Ali M. J., Ismailia Association, Karachi, 1955.