

Creation of Light Within the Personal World Through Ism-i Azam

Let us begin by reflection upon how the light (sunshine) is created within the personal world (heart) through Ism-i Azam (Supreme Divine Names). The Holy Quran teaches that the sequence in acquiring complete knowledge starts from the outer world and extends into the inner world of human beings:

"We shall show them Our portents on the horizons and within themselves (in their souls) until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth. Doth not thy Lord suffice, since He is Witness over all things?" (41:53).¹

The highest form of knowledge is given in the form of Light (NOOR). Our Holy Prophet used to supplicate for Light as follows:

"O Allah, place light in my heart, light in my sight, light in my hearing, light on my right hand, light on my left hand, light above me, light below me, light in front of me, light behind me, and enhance light for me."²

The Light is only given to staunch, purified and faithful believers (mumins). The mechanism of enlightenment is through the recitation and meditation on the Supreme Names of God (Ism-i Azam). In the Ismaili Tariqah, the present and living Imam (NOOR Mowlana Hazir Imam) plays a central role in illuminating the path of the believers.

Please study this article to understand the importance of this practice. Information on the code of conduct for a 'golden noorani didar' was posted through the 2005 Ramadan postings and is available online at http://salmanspiritual.com/ramadan_2005/index.html.

Highlight Number 1:

The tawil of Habl Allah (Rope of Allah) is the Imam of the time and the mechanism for enlightenment of the personal world is through Ism-i Azam³:

"God has sent the rope of His holy light from the higher world to the inhabitants of the lower world for the purpose that they may all together hold it fast so that they may be lifted to the higher world (Holy Qur'an 3:103). Externally the luminous rope of Allah is the holy personality of the Imam of the time and internally it is his ever-reaching light. The holy light of the Imam of the time comes to you specially through the ism-i azam (the supreme Name). Thus the Imam within you is the rope of Allah in the position of ism-i azam, to which you have to hold fast in such a way that all faculties of the heart and the mind are turned towards and centered upon it."

Highlight Number 2:

It is mentioned in a hadith: "Indeed, Allah has ninety-nine names. He who memorizes their number (and recites them), enters paradise."⁴ The list of ninety-nine names dictated by the Holy Prophet and the list of tasbis derived from ninety-nine names and a short explanation for each divine name are presented on the following page: <http://salmanspiritual.com/divinenames.cfm>.

Highlight Number 3:

It is mentioned in the Qur'anic story of Hazrat Adam in verse (2:31): "And He (God) taught all (His great) names to Adam."⁵ Through the sacred dhikr of the Supreme Names, Hazrat Adam was shown spiritual miracles associated with each name. After he (Adam) acquired this knowledge, the angels bowed to him. Therefore, spiritual elevation (ruhaniyat) and vision of luminosity (nuraniyat) are directly linked to the practice of Ism-i Azam. This is a fundamental concept for the past, the present and the future.

Highlight Number 4:

It is mentioned in the Qur'anic story of Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) in verse (2:124)⁶: "And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commands (Wa-ithi ibtala ibraheema rabbuhu bikalimatin), which he fulfilled: He (God) said: "I will make thee an Imam to the Nations." He pleaded: "And also (Imams) from my offspring!" He (God) answered: "But My Promise is not within the reach of evil-doers."

Besides the practice of the sacred dhikr of the Supreme Names, Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) was asked to recite the Perfect Words (Kalimati-Tamat). After he fulfilled this, he was elevated from a Prophet to an Imam. His offspring, through his son Hazrat Ismail (a.s.), leads us to NOOR Mowlana Hazir Imam.

Spiritual elevation (ruhaniyat) and vision of luminosity (nuraniyat) are directly linked to the practice of Ism-i Azam (Supreme Name) as well as Kalimati-Tamat (Perfect Words). The Prophets were graced with this opportunity.

Highlight Number 5:

The Ism-e Azam is in two forms: as a word and as a person. For example, in Ayatul Kursi (The Verse of the Throne, 2:225)⁷, the first sentence reads: 'God! There is no god save Him, the Alive, the Eternal'. The great names, in the form of words, are 'al-hayyu'l-qayyum'.

These attributes also apply to a person. The person is the True guide, i.e., the Holy Prophet in the period of Prophethood and the Imam in the time of Imamate. It is important to understand that the Holy Imam is a living Ism-e Azam (Supreme Name of Allah) and the bearer of NOOR. Therefore, the Imam is living and his Light (NOOR) is eternal. Both aspects of Ism-e Azam have to be understood simultaneously.

Highlight Number 6:

"The day we no longer know how, nor have the time nor the faith to bow in prayer to Allah because the human soul that He has told us is eternal is no longer of sufficient importance to us to be worthy of an hour of our daily working, profit-seeking time, will be a sunless day of despair."⁸ — Excerpt from speech made by Noor Mowlana Hazir Imam

The above speech was made to a general audience. However, the Holy Imam has prescribed an hour of extra prayers for the elevation of our soul in the small watches of the night. He has given us the method, prescribed the time, bestowed the luminous word of the esoteric faith, and has explained that the soul is eternal. The True Guide wants us to reach the Abode of Peace (Daras-Salaam).

Highlight Number 7:

"As the demands on his time increase, every Muslim will find it more difficult to seek for himself the answer to the fundamental question of how he should live his life for it to be truly Muslim. It is men such as you who will have to be practical and realistic in the world of today and tomorrow. Rather than let force of circumstance impose upon us through our default in not having suitably prepared ourselves for the future, ways of life which are not,

or should not be ours, we must ourselves design the path we should tread."⁹ — Excerpt from speech made by Noor Mowlana Hazir Imam

Each one of us has to set priorities. The Holy Imam brought the issue of time management and priorities in 1976. At the present, life is more hectic and the challenge of practising bandagi is enormous. However, the time **invested** in bandagi has material as well as spiritual benefits. It is a key to our survival and growth!

Highlight Number 8:

Faithful murids will inherit light as described in the following verses of the Holy Quran¹⁰:

"On the day when thou (Muhammad) wilt see the believers, men and women, their light shining forth before them and on their right hands, (and wilt hear it said unto them): Glad news for you this day: Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein ye are immortal. That is the supreme triumph." (Holy Quran 57:12; Pickthall's translation)

"On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say unto those who believe: Look on us that we may borrow from your light! it will be said: Go back and seek for light! Then there will separate them a wall wherein is a gate, the inner side whereof containeth mercy, while the outer side thereof is toward the doom." (Holy Quran 57:13; Pickthall's translation)

"And those who believe in Allah and His messengers, they are the loyal, and the (spiritual) martyrs are with their Lord; they have their reward and their light; while as for those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations, they are owners of hell-fire." (Holy Quran 57:19; Pickthall's translation)

Highlight Number 9:

Faithful murids will get salvation as described in the following verses of the Holy Quran:

"Men who celebrate the praises of God, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): "Our Lord! not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire."¹¹ (Holy Quran 3:191; Yusufali's translation)

"God will say: "This is a day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are gardens, with rivers flowing beneath, - their eternal Home: God well-pleased with them, and they with God: That is the great salvation, (the fulfilment of all desires)."¹² (Holy Quran 5:122; Yusufali's translation)

May you be inspired to practice Ibadat (bandagi) regularly at the prescribed time (noorani waqt). Ameen.

*A 'golden noorani didar' is a didar in which the full glory of Khudavand NOOR Mowlana Hazir Imam's LIGHT manifests in one's forehead ('Bhamar Gufa Upar Noor' as taught by Pir Imamdin, 'O believers! the light resides in the region between the two eye brows'.)

**Ta'id is that spiritual and luminous help which is given to Prophets, Imams and the mu'mins of the highest rank, in form of a miraculous kind of knowledge and wisdom, in which spiritual beings speak to them and through visual and auditory allusions and signs, knowledge, wisdom and necessary guidance is given to them.

End Notes

1. Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, 343-344
2. Siddiqi, A. H. *Kitab al-salat. Chapter CCLXVIII. Supplication in the night prayer. In: Sahih Muslim Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes and brief biographical sketches of major narrators)*, 368
3. Hunzai, Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir. *A Thousand Wisdoms: An Encyclopaedia of Tawil (Hazar Hikmat)*, 142-143.
4. Robson, J., *Book X. God's Names. Chapter I. In: Mishkat al Masabih Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes)*, 483.
5. Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, 36
6. Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, 44
7. Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, 57
8. Aga Khan IV. Excerpt from Convocation address at Peshawar University, Pakistan, on November 30, 1967.
9. Aga Khan IV. Excerpt from address to the Seerat Conference, Karachi, Pakistan, on March 12th, 1976.
10. Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, 388
11. Yusuf Ali, A. *The Holy Qur'an*, 173-174
12. Yusuf Ali, A. *The Holy Qur'an*, 281

References

1. Aga Khan IV. 1967. Convocation address at Peshawar University of Pakistan, November 30, 1967. Available online: <http://ismaili.net/speech/s671130.html>
2. Aga Khan IV. 1976. Islam is Allah's Final Message. Address to the Seerat Conference at Karachi, Pakistan, on March 12th, 1976. Available online: <http://ismaili.net/speech/s760312.html>
3. Hunzai, Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir. 1996. *A Thousand Wisdoms: An Encyclopaedia of Tawil (Hazar Hikmat)*. Translated from Urdu into English by Faquir Muhammad Hunzai and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai. Danishgah-i Khanah-i Hikmat/Idarah-i Arif, Karachi.
4. Pickthall, M. M. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*. The New American Library, 12th. Edition.
5. Robson, J. *Mishkat al Masabih Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes)*, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, r1990.
6. Siddiqi, A. H. *Sahih Muslim Vol. I (English translation with explanatory notes and brief biographical sketches of major narrators)*, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, r1990.
7. Yusuf Ali, A. *The Holy Qur'an (translation and commentary)*. American Trust Publications, 1977.

Peace, light, barakat, taid and a 'golden' didar,
Noorallah juma
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