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## ***Salih's Advice***

# **Pand - I Salih**

***By His Holiness***

**Hajj Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Salih 'Ali Shah**

**The *Qutbs* of the Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Ali Shahi Gunabadi Order**

# Foreword

by

**The Great Master, the Most Gracious, Hajj Sultan Husayn**

**Tabandah, Rida 'Ali Shah**

**In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.**

**And He who befriends the Righteous**

Praise be to Allah, the One. And infinite greetings be upon the spirit of our Prophet, Muhammad Mustafa (may Allah bless him and his Descendants and grant them peace) and his honorable successors.

The illustrious treatise of Pand-i Salih (Salih's Advice), recorded by the eloquent words of my Honorable spiritual and corporeal father, His Eminence Mr. Hajj Muhammad Hasan Salih 'Ali Shah ( may his esteemed grave be sanctified ), contains general rules for the *fuqara* of the Ni'matullahi Order. It is the best as the most compendious and most comprehensive book of [religious] instruction, being short and brief; it is all-inclusive and nothing has been left out. Its greatness and comprehensiveness and the eminence of its author has been admitted and acknowledged by friends and enemies as well as relatives and other people. It has been printed several times so far and has been dedicated to those who requested to have it.

It was not until recently that the honorable brother Mr. Hajj Muhammad Ridakhani, who is one of the sincerest and kindest of *fuqara* and an educated man, quite familiar with the English language, has requested that it be translated into English so that those Muslims who know English and even non-Muslims might enjoy it. This *faqir* (i.e. the writer) agreed to his request. Later, he referred to some of his friends who are versed in the English language to achieve accuracy and to prevent any mistake that might have transpired in the translation of some of the words or phrases. Thus, when the translation was compared with the original text, all confirmed the near as possible accuracy of the translation. Afterwards, Mr. Hajj Ridakhani requested permission to proceed with its publication, which was agreed to.

I pray the merciful God that his efforts in the propagation of the rules of this Holy Religion (i.e. Islam) and *Shi'ite* faith and the Gnostic (*irfani*) truths may be accepted and that the rewards of both worlds be granted to him.

May God help him and all of us to succeed, and through Him may affairs prosper!

*Faqir Sultan Husayn Tabandah Gunabadi,*

*Rida Ali Shah*

18<sup>th</sup> Dhihajja 1405 A.H.L., the holy day of the 'Id (festival) of Ghadir corresponding to the 13<sup>th</sup> Shahriwar 1364 A.H.S. (4<sup>th</sup> September 1985).

# Foreword

By

**The Most Venerable Hajj Sayyid Hibatullah Jadhbi**

**In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate**

The illustrious and holy treatise of Salih's Advice, written by His Eminence the pillar (qutb) of Gnostics ('urafa) and the most righteous of believers Mr. Hajj Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Salih 'Ali Shah (may God sanctify his grave), provides the briefest collection containing the essence of all social, moral, and religious duties and obligations ever written in Persian.

There are some followers of the glorious order of the Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Ali Shahi who live out of Iran; that is, in India, Pakistan, and some other Islamic countries as well as in Europe and the United States of America where they do not speak Persian. Therefore, in order that all Muslims of the world, even those who do not speak Persian, might enjoy the above-mentioned epistle, it was requested that it be translated into English which is to a certain extent an international language. For this reason, His Eminence the pillar (qutb) of Gnostics ('urafa) Mr. Hajj Sultan Husayn Tabandah, Rida 'Ali Shah (may our souls be sacrificed for him) agreed to this request, and our and our honorable and learned brother Mr. Hajj Muhammad Ridakhani (may his assistance last for ever), who has been learning English for a number of years for this purpose and has been learning English for a number of years for this purpose and has been granted certificates from several language centers, undertook to do this duty and duly began to translate it.

After a thorough study of its newly translated English version by several experts in the English language and their confirming of the near as possible accuracy of the translation, it was printed and is now available to those who have a desire for it. Our dear brethren might inform Mr. Hajj Ridakhani of any deficiencies which they may find in the translation, so that it might be improved in the next edition.

I implore God that all brethren may succeed in performing the commandments mentioned in this book, and pray for the reward of both worlds for the honorable translator.

May I be as dust trampled under the feet of *fuqara* of the *Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Ali Shahi Order!*

Sayyid Hibatullah Jadhbi

\*Most regretfully, during the publication of this book, his eminence passed away on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Jumadi ath-thani 1405 A.H.L. corresponding to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 1985 (may his grave be sanctified).

# Prologue

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**In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate;  
Upon Whom I rely and in whom is all My Hope**

Praise be, with praise most pure, to the One Who owns all things, to the One Who by His radiance brings to being everything, to the One most worthy of worship, most worthy of all blessings, to the Almighty One, Who knows and sees all things, to Whom all shall return and from Whom all have come. He is the Beneficent, Who at every stage of being grants every fitting need of every individual. He is the Merciful, Who opens the door for His servants to the road leading back to Him, to the highest road, the path of servitude to Him, the path shown by His prophets, And the best of the blessings He has granted to us is to have chosen us to follow the prophet of the end of time.

O Kind God! We boast of servitude to You, for we have seized hold of the rope You have extended to us. Grant us success through the guidance of Your beloved prophet and pure servant Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, Peace and Blessings of Allah to him and to his progeny. Grant us the success of turning our faces toward You and of complying with the orders of Your Prophet. Grant us success through the illumination of our hearts with friendship (*walayat*) and obedience to the heirs to Your esteemed Prophet's legacy (*awsiya*).

With this supplication for success to the Beneficent God, at the request of some of the wayfarers in the Murtadawi way and travellers in the Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Alitshahi Order, this poor helpless servant of the dervishes, Muhammad Hasan Gunabadi, who has been honored in the way (*tariqat*) with the title Salih 'Ali Shah, has undertaken to write this letter of instructions to remind our spiritual brethren of duties pertaining to Islam and faith. Consideration of the following points has aided in the writing of this letter:

**(1)** For some time now an increasing number of letters with many questions have been arriving from seekers (*taliban*) and novices among the brethren, especially from those who live in places where authorized shaykhs are not readily available to them, and where they do not frequent the knowledgeable veteran *fugara* and they are not aware of the books of the gnostics (*'urafa*) or such books are not readily available. They also have asked about precepts of outward form and precepts of inward meaning; and I have written answers to them. However, since the answer to each letter cannot be written in great detail, and since these replies inform none but those who sent the questions, the same questions are often repeated, and so the answers must also be repeated. Therefore, I have resolved to write on those topics pertaining to the various questions which have been posed in as much detail as is possible in such a letter, so that it might be generally applicable and useful to all. The answers to the remaining questions must be sought from the lips of those who tread the Path.

**(2)** Some of the novice *fugara* or others hear words from certain friends or from those who are against *Faqr* and many a time, without investigating, it happens that they fall into doubt.

They read in the books of gnostics the mysteries of the Path, which are perceptions of the heart and Divine inspirations, or they have heard about them from the men of the Path but have not understand them and have thus considered the mysteries to be nothing more than mere words

and utterances or certain acts [as performed by the *fuqara*]. They have not even referred to the books by the Saints, nor do they ask the learned men about them. They have read and heard about them but, supposing them to be mere religious differences or suchlike, their problems have remained unsolved. Sometimes it happens that they are caught in the snare of blasphemous beliefs or indecent acts, or are inclined to think poorly of the righteous. Therefore, the necessary explanations will be given in this letter, [some] explicitly and [others] implicitly, so that the answers to their problems will be clearly understood.

**(3)** A group of those unfamiliar with the stages of *Faqr* and gnosticism, especially in our time, have not carefully considered the gist of the subject and have not looked into the meaning of the words of the gnostics. Besides, they have not read their books, although, thank God, they have frequently been printed and made available; or they might have read them but have interpreted and distorted the words as they wished and misrepresented them to the people. Moreover, some opponents, out of hostility and obstinacy, in order to give a false account and to create opposition, try to assert that *Faqr* or *dervishhood* – which is a following of the prophets and the Saints, the uniting of form and spirit, having one’s heart with the Beloved while having one’s hands busy work, and being kind and sincere to all creatures – is a new claim. They try to represent *Faqr* to certain people as a form of idleness and shamelessness; as being a burden to society; as not being bound to the rules (*adab*) of religion and the laws; as not observing the manners of religiousness; and as opposing civilization. They do this so as to humiliate *Faqr* before all groups, so that some seekers (*talibin*) might consider their words true and believe in them and thus be led astray from the Truth.

Therefore, a brief account of the beliefs and practices [of *fuqara*] was deemed necessary to be given as a reminder.

**(4)** Some of the seekers of the Path of those who have passed along the Path, on hearing that [walking on] the Path (*tariqat*) is to refine one’s morals, have considered refinement through knowledge and learning, as written in the ethical books, sufficient; or have considered morals, which are “fixed habits of the soul”, by nothing more than their practical effects and good relationship. For this reason, Islamic ethics in its gnostic sense will also be pointed out briefly so that it might be of help.

**(5)** Since *fuqara* consider it their duty to be related at all times to the living, religious scholar (*‘alim*) and gnostic (*‘arif*) of their time and to renew their Covenant (*‘ahd*) [with them] and to inquire of them about their duties, some of them do not pay attention even to the minor details or do not understand the general instructions or they consider them to be insufficient or by way of precaution and assurance, they ask about even the slightest duties.

Some of them fall into another error by considering *dervishhood* as nothing more than oral litanies (*awrad*) and invocations (*adhkar*), resorting to them as a means of furthering their worldly affairs. Or they make use of litanies and invocations – which are actually amorous whisperings to the Beloved and the declaration of helplessness and nothingness before the Throne of the Almighty which should be performed with absolute heartfelt attention – as a means to fulfil their worldly desires. They resort to the outward appearance of the words, thereby thinking to solve their problems. They should become aware of this negligence.

There are others who according to the saying “Is religion anything but love?” assume that mere love is sufficient and, knowingly or unknowingly, fail to be attentive to the performance of good deeds. They do not rightly observe the dos and don’ts which are required for the protection of the state of [spiritual] love and Relationship as well as the watering of Faith. They are not aware even of some of the outward manners (*adab*) and are therefore not very attentive to them.

Besides, it so happened that some friends requested me, in order to make such people aware [of them], to write a brief and comprehensive instruction, so that one might carry it on his person and frequently refer to it, because books are read less for their detailed descriptions and are easily forgotten.

Therefore, I have compiled with their wishes and have collected a summary of the instructions of the Saints of the past, which have often been written down in books and I have put them down briefly and enumeratively. Since it is a letter of advice and instruction rather than a book, I present it to the brethren as *Salih's Advice*. I hope to succeed in writing *The Commentary of Salihya* in a few volumes in the future, and I hope to present it to the readers.

As most of them have neither a knowledge of Arabic nor an acquaintance with the technical terms and important gnostic subjects. I have written this letter in simple, none technical Farsi. I have pointed out, briefly and for the use of all, what they should almost always know, which are general religious duties or are things of which whose good or evil is understood by any [normal] intelligence and need only a reminder. I have explained [in more detail] things that are less taken into consideration whereas close attention should be paid to them, however unimportant they might seem.

And, first of all, I insist that the Friends should try to learn the manners (*adab*) and rules (*ahkam*) of the Divine Law (*shar'*), the learning of which has natural priority over the manners (*adab*) of the Path, and the manners of the Path are for animating and adorning them and have priority over the rules of the Divine Law in terms of honor. They should learn about them, as much as a Muslim needs or requires, from their source in order that they might know their Islamic duties.

And for increasing their insight into affairs related to *Faqr*, they might refer in general to the detailed books written by the gnostics and chiefly to the books by this *faqir's* honorable grandfather, the late Sultan 'Ali Shah the Martyr, and my deceased honorable father, Nour 'Ali Shah the Second (may their graves be sanctified), which are full of truths and replete with advice.

In fact, they should consider this letter both a complementary chapter and a summary of those books and a description of the Promise and Covenant (*'ahd*) made [with God], which under certain circumstances has been added to them and their allusions have been thus clarified.

I hope the Faithful will become aware of the attributes and morals concerning Faith and will not consider the mere relationship [with the Master] sufficient, that they will endeavor to travel along the Path so that they might not fall behind, and that they will be always ashamed of their failure and rebuke the self (*nafs*).

Although there are some exceptions to what has been written, however general it might be, and every general [regulation] has its particular [exception] and a duty might change in special cases, commandments have been made for prevailing cases. But rare cases require special instructions and orders which can be understood only by intelligent people.

In Islam and as regards Faith, women and men, according to Holy verse, are equal and religious sisters are charged with religious duties like those of the brethren. But since women are equal to men with respect to Faith, and should endeavor in the same way, I shall address the brethren in general and have in view the subtle essence (*latifa*) of Faith.

I resort to the spirits of the Saints of religion and thus expect my brethren to study this letter frequently, with care and thought, and to regard it with love and show an interest in it and act according to it. They should not make the failure of another believer a pretext [for disobeying], but should strive, as far as possible, to be a true bearer of the title of *faqir*, which is, in other words, another name for servant.

In fact, revolutions and changes in the world, as are manifest everywhere, should also affect us, and we should wake up and avail ourselves of every opportunity. Although there is no room for parties, sectarianism, and involvement in worldly affairs in *Faqr* and servitude; nevertheless, the believer should be clever, have foresight, value peace, and give thanks to God. And whenever obstacles are few, he should endeavor to pay attention [to religious duties] and to act according to them. And he should not fail to remove religious doubts and disagreements. May the Kind God grant my brethren and me success!

# My Brethren

[1]

## Thinking and Verification

Man's privilege over other animals is his reason and far-seeing thought. A child from the very first day of his birth is similar to other animals but with the growth of the body, his power of thought also develops and his foresight increases.

He finds out from what is known to him or from what he has seen and heard that which was formerly unknown to him as well as discovering the works and influences of other beings.

He engages in embellishing and grooming his corporeal body and attends to its requisites both internal and external. The more he employs his mind, the better requirements that are provided, the better he will progress.

It is evident that gradually he begins to find out the effects and the mysteries of the world of creation, and makes inventions and creates arts and techniques for the benefit of his fellow-creatures.

He should not, however, limit himself to this alone; nor devote all his thought to the outer life; nor use up all his endeavors for his body and its requirements which is mortal; rather, he should awaken and ponder on this:

*Where have I come from and for what purpose?*

*Where am I to go, and where shall my home be?*

[2]

## Proofs of the Immortality of the Spirit, Incorporeality of the Soul, and the Next World

And from the limitation of the body and material things and their transformations, from the gradual and complete annihilation of the body, from the unceasing burning of the innate search and passion for worldly desires, from the pursuit of wishes and the longing for that which he has lost, he will be brought to realize that this unending agitation of thought is not restricted to the world and that human reality is something other than this body. Rather, that which controls the [human] faculties and organs and remains unchanged throughout all the transformations of the body and is single despite the plurality of its faculties and is strange to all despite its familiarity with them and is the knowing, the seeing, and the powerful in the body and is enduring and single in spite of the unawareness of the body and the heedlessness of imagination and throughout childhood, youth, and old age as well as during happiness and unhappiness, corpulence and leanness, illness and health and to which are attributed thought and reason is called "soul" or "spirit", it is the reality and the personality of man and is neither corporeal nor perceptible. The heart and the center of thinking are the intermediaries between spirit and body and spirit dominates over the heart and the heart dominates over the body.

We should, therefore, not entangle the spirit constantly in the well and prison of the body with illusion (*wahima*); rather, the body should be illuminated through the heart with the light of spirit.



And one's truth should not be sacrificed to the world, but one should attend somewhat to one's own self and discover that the effects, words, thoughts, and deeds which are with us throughout life and even unto death are perceptible, but are not found in the body. Therefore, as they are kept on the tablet of the spirit, they remain non-perished and stay with the spirit forever, even after natural death and complete annihilation of the body, which during lifetime is also in the process of perishing.

As man lives without the body when asleep, and becomes happy or sad after waking up due to the states and the occurrences that he has undergone [during his sleep], and if he has had a good or a bad dream, whether he wants to or not, he will feel the happiness or unhappiness arising from it after waking up and later on he will see the effects or [the realization of] the dream itself; in the same way, our deeds will accompany us and will bring about ease or torture after death. We should, therefore, give thought to the comfort of the hereafter.

But thought cannot find its way there by itself: hence we have to seek for a path and a guide in order to arrive there. As the prophets and the Saints have already passed along the Path, have experienced its troubles, have gained a knowledge of the provisions for the Path, have been commissioned to awaken [people], and have indicated the right and the wrong way, we should, therefore, seek to comply with their orders. The birth of such far-sightedness is the beginning of journeying towards God.

If this search and desire intensifies, if the believer resolves to correct himself, and if he realizes that he will not attain his Goal by mere outward religiousness or by merely professing to be religious by enacting the outward appearance of religion and that he cannot travel along the Path simply by the writings and the instructions of the Guide and that a Path with endless dangers and innumerable highwaymen should be traveled with a guide and a weapon, he will begin to do research or to investigate in order that he might find out the explicit decree (*nass*) of the Predecessors, who have been clear-sighted and well-informed and whose words he considers to be the truth. This decree is the only means by which the Guide can be recognized and is also conjoined with the [divine] effect.

He should, then adhere [to the Guide] with insight and with good belief, and surrender himself like Moses in his following of Khidr. Such adherence is called, in Gnostic usage and terminology, the "beginning of the journey".

He should, afterwards, in accordance with the orders that he has received, pass along the Path with the steps of an aspirant. And without any objection or doubt, he should maintain his steadfastness in his inspirations (*halat-I warida*), removing himself from temptations by using the remembrance (*dhikr*) [of God] as a weapon, and be always in the state of meditation (*fikr*).

He should take thought of the end, not cling only to outward appearance, and as long as he lives, should not take the grip of his heart from the skirt of the *Pir* (i.e. should cling to him). He should also turn his face in the direction (*wijha*) of the Divine Order and consider showing reverence to him likewise as that paid to God and comply with what pleases him. Doing so is praiseworthy, though blind imitation (*taqlid*) founded on an unstable basis is blameworthy.

And he should for the attainment of [spiritual] luminosity and insight

-- which brings about a state of powerlessness and indigence – increase his recourses (*tawassul*) [to the *Pir*], regarding them as coming from the beams of the *Pir's* [spiritual] attention, lest he should fall into the abyss of boastfulness. For the dangers of self-conceit, obstinacy, and pride are the great dangers of the Path.

## My Brethren

Faith is the attachment of the spirit to the Origin and the dwelling in thought upon the Beginning and the End as well as the great Divine Dignity (*namus*) and the Divine Trust. Therefore, it should be well protected and appreciated and be kept free of impurities. We should make efforts so that we might be endowed with the name of *Faqr* and Faith, by which we are called, and might be distinguished by goodness so that these names might be true of us.

We should make every endeavor to protect the “Primal Covenant” (*ahd-I azali*) – which has been engraved on the tablet of the spirit’s primordial nature (*fitrat*) and which is affirmed by intellect, but has been forgotten in this world by the deceptions of the lower soul (*nafs*) – after renewing it through the “Prescriptive Covenant” (*ahd-I taklifi*).

And we should with God’s Grace avoid heedlessness (*ghaflat*) and comply with the conditions of the Allegiance (*bay‘at*) and set them before us when taking action, always keeping in mind the essence of the instructions which is included in these three phrases: servitude to God, compassion for and benevolence to all people, and service to and humility before religious brethren. So we should act according to them and measure our deeds by them, and with good thoughts, good words, and good deeds respond to the call of the Saints for help and their invitation: “who will be my helpers unto Allah?”

And we should seek to reach the Destination and take the deeds of the deceased as a pattern and not yield to disappointment, which is tantamount to infidelity (*kufr*), and walk [along the Path] with firm intention.

## My Brethren

[3]

### Invocation

#### (*Dhikr*)

The heart (*dil*) is the Divine Treasure House and a place for the outpouring of Divine Grace. The center of the domain of the body is the heart which is always [wavering] between satanic temptation and angelic inspiration. We should observe the heart, for whatever dominates the heart will also dominate organs and faculties.

Since attachment to the world is a trap for the spirit and is the source of all sin, we should, under the direction [of the spiritual Guide], turn our hearts to the Unseen (*ghayb*). We should then turn its face from our Unseen to the Absolute Unseen so that the dispersal of thoughts and temptations might be removed, our cares and grieves become one, our souls become purified, blameworthy qualities which are born out of attachment to the world are purged and replaced by praiseworthy ones, and intimacy with the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God might be gradually increased. Thus, the door which has been unlocked by God might be opened and the heart become a home for the Beloved.

Remembrance (*dhikr*) of God makes the heart humble, the body meek, the morals pure, and deeds praiseworthy. Remembrance of God by a servant, which is in turn a sign of the remembrance of the servant by God and of necessity involves His remembrance, will ultimately set man free from the “imaginary existence” and lead him to the “real existence”. For as long as there is egotism, there can be no worship of God.

Remembrance of God as directed [by the spiritual guide] should be attended to in all our situations and dealings so that its effects might also appear in our deeds and daily life and be left in the world afterwards as a memorial.

This has been given extra emphasis aseptically in certain cases, such as at the time of eating. [It has been said:] “Eat of that over which the name of Allah has been mentioned”. Although this [verse] has been interpreted in connection with slaughtering, its meaning is general. Remembrance of God while eating increases our pleasure and, by the direction of the fervor [of the body] and spirit towards inward being (*Batin*), food digests more easily and as long as that food stays with the body, it is tantamount to remembering God and benefit is more easily attained.

Another instance is at the time of sexual intercourse, for a child who is conceived while God is remembered becomes perfect in his nature as well as faithful, righteous, and intelligent.

The next instance is at the time of sleeping when our attention is drawn towards the “Unseen World”, because if the believer goes to sleep while remembering God, he will be as one who is remembering [God] during his sleep and whatever he dreams, be it the emergence of his spiritual state or some outer occurrence, such dreams would be true dreams.

Another instance is at the beginning of waking up, when he is in the state of returning to this world and his attention is directed towards his physical faculties and members. By remembering God on this day not only his success increases but also his [worldly] affairs will improve.

And at the time of waking up, he should direct his attention (*tawajjuh*) towards the Origin (God) and [His] Manifestation, have recourse (*tawassul*) to the light of the “Fourteen Innocents” and hope for the coming of relief to his heart and for religious and worldly improvement from God. Since whatever is committed to memory at the instant of going to bed and waking up will remain safe, the spirit will get used to the remembering of God at these two instants and will be attentive [to Him]. Thus, as far as possible, he should not fail to remember God for a single moment so that he might remember the religious beliefs at the instant of death.

[4]

## **Meditation**

### **(*Fikr*)**

And he should not spend time without meditation (*fikr*), but rather he should begin a [spiritual] journey, mounted on the steed of meditation, in order to find out the realities of the world and, through the aperture of his own Unseen, direct his attention to the “Absolute Unseen”, waiting for relief (*fara*) to come to his spirit; as it is said: “There is no relief for a believer unless he meets God.”

[5]

## **Expectation**

### **(*Intizar*)**

And he should seek *Mawla* – who is with every particle and every heart will find a way to Him. He has a mind to bestow training and favor, especially upon the hearts of the Faithful -- He should seek him in his own heart until he finds Him, so that he might be able to recognize Him as He appears outwardly and be attracted [to Him] by way of homogeneity.

With this expectation (*intizar*) in his heart, which should be accompanied by the expectation outwardly, together with his actions which should conform to *Mawla*'s satisfaction, he

becomes worthy to be one of the connected-with-victory attendants of the “Support (*Qa’im*) of the Descendants of Muhammad” (may God bless him). Thus, there appears in him the preparedness for companionship. This [expectation] has been, and is still, the best trainer of the Shi’ites.

[6]

### [Spiritual]

### Companionship

The Traveler (*salik*) should be mindful of the beneficence of the Benefactor (i.e. *Mawla*) and be thankful and grateful. He should be, especially, appreciative of the beneficence of Guidance and Faith and not keep the Mediator of [the Divine] favor (*fayz*) away from his heart.

[7]

### Blessing upon the Prophet

### (Salawat)

Even in the ritual prayer (*namaz*), which is servitude to the Unique God, blessing (*salawat*) upon the Prophet (may God bless him and his Descendants and grant them peace) and his Descendants has been ordered. It is a prescript for recourse (*tawassul*).

This request for Blessing is for the presence of the subtle essence (*latefa*) of Faith which comes from the Prophet and is present in the hearts of his followers, as well as linking it to the “Muhammadan Truth” (*haqiqat-i Muhammadiyah*). It is praiseworthy to remember the Saints, to utter the names of the living Saints for benediction and recourse, and to resort to them as mediators each day.

[8]

### Rules and Manners of Companionship

Companionship (*musahabat*) with the Saints or, upon their orders, with others who have traveled along the Path is one of the pillars of the “Journey along the Path” (*suluk*). It helps the Traveler (*salik*) with his traveling (*sayr*) and is a means of increasing his knowledge. For companionship with them makes man remember God; their words increase one’s knowledge and their deeds make one desire the eternal world. Looking at the “Men of Knowledge” (gnostics) is considered as a form of worship and approaching them is a blessing, for the soul is influenced and colored by companions.

He should not, when in the presence of anyone of them, observe differences in rank, but should turn his face in the direction (*wijha*) of the Divine Command and regard it as a means of obtaining His Grace. However, in their gathering together in one place, observance of rank and differences in position should be taken into consideration.

As far as possible, the believer should cleanse his outward appearance of all impurities, and adorn his inner being (*batin*) with the ornaments of Love and sincerity. He should regard the reality of the Saints as intercessors (*shafi*’); and, in their presence, increase his attentive observation (*muraqaba*), directing his attention (*tawajjuh*), and concentration of heart [to God]. When arriving in their presence, he should refrain from showing manifestation of Love as far as he is able to control himself especially, if strangers take objection to it. He should not do anything that gives rise to a pretext for fault-finding and jealousy. Observance of outward manners (*adab*) is also necessary inasmuch as he is able to control himself. He should not, for instance, as far as possible, knock at the door; nor speak in a loud voice; nor take the lead. While sitting, he should sit, if it is possible, with his face towards them; if it is not possible, he should sit in such a manner

that he might be able to see them. He should not prolong his sitting, as it causes weariness; unless he has some business [with them] that necessitates it.

While sitting, he should not pay attention to others beyond what is usual and customary, and certainly not in a way that might make others take objection or feel dejected. Nor should he sit with his back against anybody, especially if he is a believer, except in learning sessions or where it is necessary.

He should be alert to comprehend what he hears and act in accordance with it, and find an example of what he has heard within himself, for what is said might be [as the saying goes], "I beat him to frighten you".

He should avoid talking with others, especially when it results in distracting attention. Whispering should also be refrained from, unless it is necessary. And he should ask whatever he deems necessary, but should not ask too much, and the question should be intended for acquiring [spiritual] benefit. He should also refrain from speaking in the middle of their speech.

He should not mention the bad in others, especially not malign a believer to the Saints (*awliya*), unless he is asked or circumstances demand it. In this case he should answer sympathetically and with well-meaning words.

In practicing *musafaha* [with them], he should consider it as a renewal of the Covenant ('ahd). With an impure heart and scattered thought it would be mere [false] imitation which makes purity and serenity (*safa*) of heart impossible. In practicing *musafaha*, he should take the circumstances into consideration and should follow moderation in order that he might not trouble them. He should refrain from deeds and words that might cause disturbance or annoyance and, as far as possible, should not cause inconvenience [to them] in worldly affairs. But rather, he should appeal to the inner being (*batin*) of the Saints for resolution (*himmat*) in any affair and seek assistance from them so that he might attain his Objective as soon as possible.

And he should pay for the brethren with his heart and his tongue, be benevolent to them, and wish them progress.

# My Brethren

[9]

## Concealment of the Secrets

The affair of *walayat* and the [spiritual] Path (*tariqat*) refers to the [spiritual] heart (*qalb*) and not to the [bodily] organs. It is related to *sirr* (the inner most element of the heart) and not *sar* (the head), and has been conveyed from heart to heart. It has not been written in books and its principles can not be expressed in words. Rather, the more they are said or written down, the more they become hidden. Since the effect [it produces] is brought about by the command and order of the Saint (*wali*), actions based on written words would be without effect.

The secrets of religion should be kept hidden, particularly that which has been ordered to be concealed and which he has taken upon himself. And he should not give utterance to whatever is inspired in his heart, be it a spiritual state (*halat*) or a belief, since he should, follow the *Pir*, pass and step beyond it. Such a state, once passed through, should not be referred to again as a source.

In his deeds and actions, the believer should consider the preservation of the conditions, Faith, lives and wealth of fellow Muslims. He should be cautious even with the most reliable brethren and not place his burden on the shoulders of those who have not attained his level, just as Abudhar did not know what was in Salman's heart, for he was not supposed to know it.

If he perceives in his heart an inner manifestation from the Saints, he should not give way to exaggerated statements but should be careful not to disobey them. Such dissimulation (*taqiya*) and concealment are innate in the Saints and are their custom.

And having control over the desires of the lower soul (*nafs*) is mortification, strife, and self-discipline. Domination over the lower soul as well as perseverance and determination strengthen the will.

Concealment brings honor, whereas the opposite which is called divulgence (*idha'a*) brings about baseness and weakness of the spirit and a decline in the effect [of *walayat*].

And he should have respect for the orders of the Saints. He should refrain from revealing his secrets to others. Even when it is not necessary, he should in advance conceal his [social] comings and goings as well as the extent of his property, thereby preserving his life and possessions.

The situations which call for dissimulation (*taqiya*) differ from those which demand fighting the "holy war" (*jihad*) and "enjoining the good and forbidding the evil". These two commands are designed for promoting Islam and defending all Muslims, and are to be performed under the command [of the Saints] and at the appropriate time.

Sacrificing one's self and dedicating one's life and wealth in the way of God and to the protection and promotion of Islam as well as preserving religiousness is different from the upholding of the Faith, lives, wealth, and honor of the Faithful including one's own.

# My Brethren

[10]

## Morality

The human being is composed of all the characteristics attributed to animals but which are more perfectly created in man in order that he might endeavor, like them, to seek what is good or bad as well as what is of benefit or of detriment to his body, so that he might gain in comfort and repel that which might cause damage and pain.

Besides, man has the faculty of thought and reason by which he can keep all attributes at a moderate level, gain domination over his lower soul (*nafs*), employ them for the advancement of his spirit, and reveal praiseworthy morals in himself, avoiding those that are blameworthy.

Therefore, the believer should always be attentive to the correction of his soul and the refinement of his inner morals, because the “spiritual fixed habits”, which compel man to action, if they be praiseworthy, will produce good deeds and if they be blameworthy, will produce evil deeds.

Although ethicists have explained these things in detail in their books and have given instructions about them, by reading moral books, even the Traditions (*ahadith*) and the Holy Qur’an, a person cannot gain praiseworthy qualities thereby. For as soon as one head of the lower soul is struck down, it raises another head.

Thus, the struggle against the lower soul and Satan should be done resolutely, with the attractive force of eagerness (*shawq*) and live arising from Faith. It should be done by appealing to the inner being (*batin*) of the Saints and asking their help as well as by watering the subtle essence (*latifa*) of *walayat*, which is present in the hearts of the Faithful. This subtle essence is the “dignity of the most supreme spiritual reality of ‘Ali’ (*‘alawiyyat-i ‘Ali*—peace be upon him), which draws the believer constantly from the darkness of ignorance and the world of nature into the light of incorporeality (*tajarrud*) and Knowledge. And there is no other causative agent in the world but it: “*La fata illa ‘Ali*” (there is no chevalier spiritually but ‘Ali).

Therefore, within the Dhulfaqar of invocation (*dhikr*) and meditation (*fikr*), which is granted to him, he should lay an axe to the root of the lower soul; and so dedicate the dependence and intimacy of the lower soul; and so dedicate the dependence and intimacy of his heart to the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God that the fondness of the world – which is born out of egotism and obstinacy and is the root of all sin and the source of all indecency – might gradually decline. Thus, he might gain domination over the lower soul and be able to prevent its manifestations until it is non-existent.

Unless such a state is attained, *Mawla*’s approval by which moral virtues are measured will not be achieved. For one’s duties and behavior differ according to different cases: in one case, He approves of our being *hard* and in another case of our being *merciful*. And moderation cannot be determined by Imperfect reason or a low intelligence, unless the heart becomes the seat of God and the Truth rules over the heart which of itself rules over the body.

[11]

## Attentive Observation (*Muraqaba*)

And

## Self - Examination (*Muhasaba*)

Therefore, we should observe our [spiritual] state and deeds, for at every instant of forgetfulness [of God] the lower soul will raise its head. We should thereby take account of them before [the Day of] Judgment, and weigh our thoughts, words, and deeds on the scales of reason and with a measure, which is of *Mawla's* consent.

We should also illuminate our inner being (*batin*) with the light of the *walayat* and Faith so that good morals, which are the exemplar of Paradise, may appear in us and that we may be purified from all bad tempers which are the exemplar of the flames of Hell.

[12]

### Remembrance of Death

And thinking upon the world and its destructibility and upon natural death and the mortality of the body – which can neither be helped nor avoided – and that every thing must be left behind and passed over and that man must leave the world empty-handed, gradually empties the heart of the love of the world and turns the thoughts of man towards provisioning for the Eternal Life and strengthens his remembrance of God.

[13]

### Desire

Since at the instant of death Truth is revealed to everyone, the remembrance of death fills the Wayfarer (*salik*) with longing to meet *Mawla*, and the heart will then naturally be cleansed of wishful desires.

[14]

### Repentance (*Tawba*)

And since the believer should always attend to himself and visualize his morals and deeds -- while paying regard to his evil-doings and thus regretting such deeds, words, and thoughts – he will attain the state of repentance (*tawba*) and returning to God. For the gate of repentance is one of the gates of Paradise which is open at all times and to everyone.

And he should drive away the Devil's temptations by remembering death, which lies in ambush, as well as by waiting to meet the Beloved.

[15]

### Returning to God (*Inaba*)

He should make the most of his time and, while recognizing [*Mawla's*] remission and magnanimity, stamp on his lower soul, thereby returning repentantly to God. This state becomes more intense once his insight develops and the greatness of the Beloved becomes better known, thus he will raise the silent amorous prayer of "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves" from the depth of his soul and will utter from his heart, "There is no god but Thou; glory be to Thee! I was indeed a wrong-doer". The "ontological (*takwini*) taking off (*khal'*) and putting on (*lubs*)" that is extinction (*fana*) of self and existence (*baqa*) in God (Haqq), has a different manifestation and a certain name at every level. On this level, it is called repentance (*tawba*) and *inaba* (returning to God). At another level its manifestation is called *isti'adhi* (taking refuge in God) and *bissmillah* (the uttering of "in the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate"). The ritual prayer (*salat*) and the alms-tax (*zakat*), renouncement (*tabarra*) and friendship (*tawalla*), and extinction (*fana*) and existence (*baqa*) are all different levels of its manifestation.

[16]

### Shame



The Wayfarer (*salik*) who perseveres in being good, feels abashed of himself and even of his good deeds, let alone his evil- doings. He feels shame before God (*Haqq*) that -- while being favored with His gifts – in His dominion, with His power and strength, and in His presence, he opposes Him. Moreover, feeling modesty before people is innate and is one of the praiseworthy qualities.

[17]

### **Fear, Hope**

And the believer lives always in fear of himself, his deeds, and of Satan's misleading him. Because of the infinite kindness of the Beloved (to His servants) and His magnanimity, he makes haste towards Him, regarding himself as inferior to all others.

[18]

### **Humility, Pride**

He is humble towards all people whom he regards as God's creatures, for humility brings about dignity. Thus, pride and arrogance, which are the inevitable result of *ghaflat* (heedlessness of God) and are signs of being unaware of one's self, will not remain in him. How can he be proud of himself, if he deliberates on the beginning and the end of his body, and if his needs for everything as well as his inability to turn even one single hair into white or black are taken into consideration?

[19]

### **Haughtiness and Hypocrisy**

So there will be no reason to be proud of himself and haughtiness will be despised. The believer does not consider people (*khalq*) as support that he should rely on. He pays heed neither to that which they see or hear, nor to their good or evil words.

[20]

### **Reputation, Kindness and Compassion**

On the contrary, he considers all (people) as works of God (*Haqq*); lives them all, and does not bear enmity towards them. He is kind and has compassion on everyone, especially his inferiors, and deems himself an intermediary and agent, providing them with service.

[21]

### **Tenderness**

And he should not be hard-hearted, lest he remain unaffected by (other people's) wretchedness and entreaty and his sense of pity remain un-awakened. Rather, he should regard a pain in any individual soul as a pain in all members [of society].

[22]

### **Discernment**

Since *tawajjuh* (attention to God and invocation) make the spirit turn towards the "Higher World," which is the world of knowledge, they will bring about a general change in the constitution of his soul and body and will add to his discernment (*farasaṭ*) and [power of] deliberation. Thus, he should foresee the end and weigh up the consequences of his actions from the beginning.

[23]

### **Anger and Desire**

One should know that, in order to attract that which is agreeable and to drive away the disagreeable things, God has created in man two faculties which act as agents of the faculty of thought so that they might carry out its orders. They are called the faculty of desire and faculty of anger.

If these are followed in moderation, and a middle course is taken, together with reliance upon God and the “Invisible Direction”, and if they are the orders of the “Divine Commander” – which is a measure of acceptability and which can not be achieved without the remembrance of God -- then they would be like two wings for flying to the “Higher World”.

If they act contrarily and turn their faces towards this [material] world and their benefit only by adding to bodily comforts, then they will be like two fetters bound to the legs of the bird of the spirit and will draw it down to the meanness of nature. So the cur and the pig of man’s being will become the ruler of his domain.

[24]

### **Courage and Aspiration**

And the moderate limit of the faculty of anger is courage and bravery. In which case, due to the heart’s attentiveness [to God] and its recognition of Him as the true Agent, the believer will exhibit fixed determination, great aspiration, and steadfastness along the Path towards the Objective, without being deviated from the Path by the slightest wind.

[25]

### **Chivalry**

And he should show chivalry (*futuwwat*), manliness, and exercise self-sacrifice in the path of God and His Friends. By the order of *Mawla*, he should not attach any value to his life, wealth, reputation, or honor. Rather, he should sacrifice the inferior to the superior; although according to the given order, he should endeavor to observe all stages. However, he should not tolerate strangers being present in the sanctum of the Beloved.

[26]

### **Sense of Honor**

The believer should be zealous, lest dust should lie on the face of the Beloved. If it happens that somebody utters blasphemy, he should not be offended; rather, he should pass over it peacefully and pay no heed to it.

[27]

### **Anger and Suppressing**

#### **One’s Anger**

If his anger bursts into flames, he should keep himself away from violence, which is a kind of madness. Such a madness, if it be not deeply rooted, will afterwards make him remorseful and will disappear. When he becomes angry, he should immediately begin to remember God and perform *musafaha* with a believer, keeping in mind that *Mawla* is present and watchful. He should suppress his anger and calm it down with the water of patience. At this time, if he is standing, he should sit down and be silent; and if he is sitting down, he should stand up and start walking.

[28]

### **Forgiveness**

And he should try to forgive, as far as he can, for the Beloved approves of forgiveness; besides, he himself expects forgiveness from the Beloved. Moreover, he should endeavor to attain to such a state that he may regard the offenses of both his enemy and friend as something coming from God for his own training, and may find “There is no power and no strength save in God” within his own being.

[29]

### **Benevolence**

So he should even be benevolent to them in return. And if the faculty of anger acts without restraint, being disobedient to reason, and is used for removing carnal displeasure, any kind of behavior or disposition resulting from it will not be admired.

[30]

### **Rashness, Cowardice, Enmity, Grudging**

If man does not pay heed to obstacles and sacrifices himself, it is rashness or recklessness; and in case of negligence, it is fear or cowardice. Thus, if someone does wrong to such a man, he will feel enmity towards or hold a grudge against him, will exceed his limit, and will behave contrary to what has been ordered.

[31]

### **Injustice**

In this way, he will do himself and others an injustice and will have no consideration for God’s creatures.

So, by finding the slightest pretext, he will kindle the fire of enmity and will “burn up a world”, and will eventually surrender to other blameworthy traits. May God preserve us from the evil of Satan and the “demanding ego” (*nafs-i ammara*)!

[32]

### **Desire, Chastity, Greed, Torpor**

Similarly, if the faculty of desire in human nature is bound by the shackles of the Divine Order and acts in obedience to reason and avoids going to extremes and works only to the extent necessary – as it is ordered by God and the prophets – for the survival of mankind and the cultivation of the world, it is chastity and continence. Whereas going to either extreme, which is greed or torpor, is a vice.

And the world is [a place] for the trial of the believer as well as for his training and the acquisition of virtue. Therefore, one’s property, wife children, fame, reputation, and one’s subordinates should be deemed as things entrusted to one’s custody by God to be well cared for, served, and watched over.

He should consider apparent causes as a pretext and a means, placing the reliance of his heart upon God who is all life-bestowing while keeping himself busy with work.

[33]

### **Reliance upon God (Tawakkul)**

He should deem God the “real causative Agent” and the provider of daily bread and, with reliance upon God (tawakkul), put real effort into his wok; that is, “having his hands busy

with work and his heart directed to the Beloved". For whatever He makes happen is for our own well-being.

[34]

### **Submission, Contentment, Thanksgiving**

And He is kinder to us than we are to ourselves. Therefore, we should not only be submissive to the "ontological and to the prescriptive command" (*amr-i- takeini wa taklifi*), but we should also be pleased and content and give thanks for His gifts which are innumerable; such gifts as our existence, faculties, organs, health, our security, and so on; and the greatest of all gifts which are Guidance and Faith and the lives of the prophets and the Saints to guide us:

The cloud, wind, moon, sun and firmament are in action,  
So that you may obtain a loaf of bread but eat not  
headlessly.

Whenever he is blessed with a [real] act of thanksgiving or performing his duties well, he should be thankful for it.

Who can ever succeed thanking God,  
By efforts or using words

[35]

### **Doing Good to Parents, Loyalty**

Rather, thanks should be given to the means of any favor whether real or figurative. The most important of these are the means of Guidance through the prophets and the Saints, the means of [our material] creation through our parents, and the means of education through our teachers.

[36]

### **Loyalty**

The believer should be loyal to all and not forgetful of anyone who has done good to him. If he gives somebody his word, he should not break it; and if he makes a promise, he should keep it and carry it out. He should consider and give thanks for any blessing bestowed by God, instead of considering only his own expectations and then being disappointed, because giving thanks for a favor will increase it.

[37]

### **Contentment**

He should be content and satisfied with what has been given to him, without complaining about it. However, praying and wishing for things are not contradictory to the state of contentment and thankfulness, and are thus permitted. And he should not in his heart place hope in anyone.

[38]

### **Being Free from Want, Expectation and Generosity**

He should refrain from wanting, because making a request from someone other than the “One who is free from want” (God) is base and vile. Expecting anything from anyone like us is far from abstention which is the ornament of *Faqr*. Rather, in times of poverty, the believer should be patient. If God has increased his daily bread, he should, as a sign of gratitude for such a favor, pay the “rights of God.” If some of it is left over, he should use it to give comfort to his family and donate a part of it for helping the poor, as all acts of thanks- giving and generosity are the ornaments of wealth.

When a believer, through success granted by God, pays attention to correcting himself and distinguishes what is good for him from what is bad, he will not sacrifice his spirit to his body and his body to the world. On the contrary, he needs the world for preserving his body and his body for attaining perfection of the spirit.

[39]

### **Greed**

He does not exceed a moderate limit in amassing worldly goods, and does not make effort beyond the extent ordained. Otherwise, the soul becomes clouded and thus the greedy person will be troubled by this world before being troubled in the next world. And greed is a key to hardship, and a greedy person is a slave to world and is always in company in company with poverty.

[40]

### **Legitimacy**

In earning his living, the believer should not exceed the instructions of the Divine Law (shar’), as one’s daily bread is predetermined and becomes legitimate (halal) or illegitimate (haram) according to one’s course of action.

[41]

### **Trickery and /cheating**

He should not lack in [respect for] humanity, in fairness, mercy, and manliness; nor should he plan to acquire wealth by trickery, deceit, cheating, and lying which is Satan’s handiwork. For neither is its acquisition under our control, nor is its preservation within our power.

[42]

### **Opposition Restlessness**

Moreover, he should not be attached to his belongings or deem himself the real owner, so that he might not boast of their acquisition; nor show opposition and become disappointed and restless at their loss. He should realize that He who has given them, He Himself has taken them away.

[43]

### **Jealousy**

And he should not be jealous of favors bestowed on others, for God has bestowed His favors upon all of them. A jealous man is always angry at his fate (*qada*) and divine Decree (*qadar*); he sets himself on fire within, and is always disconsolate. And Faith avoids jealousy; wealth does

not come from anybody but God; and the world is ephemeral. Thus, there is no reason to be jealous. And the believer should attend only to himself and not to [the affairs of] others.

# My Brethren

[44]

## Service

The Faithful – whose faces due to the attachment [to the *Mawla*] and to the subtle essence (*latifa*) of Faith are directed towards God – are like mirrors with regard to each other and are the spiritual children of Muhammad (may God bless him and his Descendants and grant them peace) and ‘Ali (peace be upon him). They are spiritual brethren to each other whose bodies are different but their spirits are as one. And according to the Covenant (*‘ahd*) and the Promise they have made, service and assistance to the brethren are requisites for Love and Faith. Doing good to them is considered to be a form of worship while opposing and doing evil to them is considered as sin.

You should know each other’s worth and be each other’s service both outwardly and inwardly, and should strengthen the subtle essence (*latifa*) of Faith through it. For making the heart of a believer happy gives satisfaction to *Mawla* and will cause tranquillity and progress in [the affairs of] both worlds.

You should become pleased by meeting each other and enjoy each other’s words. Meet each other with a wish for peace and good health and by performing *musafaha*, and end your meeting by praying, asking forgiveness, and showing love for each other. For practicing *musafaha* with a believer without selfish motives is the same as remembering the “Divine Pledge”, and awakens the friendship that arises from Faith.

Touching the thumbs of each other’s hands and joining fingers together for *musafaha* will incite the human magnetic power and love, and will illuminate the heart. It will make the dullness of heart, which results from one’s sins, drop away like the falling of leaves from trees in autumn, and will calm down lust and anger. However, we should not be content with its external and habitual form; rather, we should endeavor to invoke its true meaning, that it might give us the above advantages.

In the presence of the Saints, salutation should be confined to them and priority should be given to the spiritual forerunners. The young should have regard for the old, and the old should treat the young in brotherly manner, holding them equal to themselves, and should support them. Anyone who is on a [spiritual] higher level should not blame the one who has not yet attained to such a station (*maqam*), nor should he try to impose upon him that which he has perceived. Rather, he should influence him gently and with kindness.

Satisfying the Faithful’s needs and making their hearts cheerful, pleases *Mawla*. It will cause Divine Grace to overflow and the Wayfarer (*salik*) to progress.

Visiting a believer with a spiritual aim (*wijha*) and presenting him with a souvenir or a gift, visiting the sick, escorting the deceased, and visiting their graves meet with the approval of God and the Saints.

Worldly motives and perishable desires should not obscure Friendship and hinder service to each other. Such things could bring about terms or a rift between them. For if two believers are on bad terms with one another for three days, the aroma of Faith in them will disappear.

In case of differences arising, they should, as far as possible, be settled between them, because whatever we seek by separation could be better achieved by kindness and unity.

Whenever an intermediary is required, they should seek reconciliation through him, as one of the duties of all believers is to reconcile their brethren. Once one hears that a grievance or disagreement exists between two brethren, he should try that it might not endure but be settled.

Moreover, as far as possible, one should prevent that which could give rise to such disagreements between believers, as conflict weakens both of them and all [believers] as well. If the spending of some money is required, even though it be paid by the reconciler himself, it is allowable and it is acceptable to God and is approved of by Him. And between two believers and two lights one should not cause disconnection and separate them.

They should assist each other in their affairs unless it causes loss to another believer. In this case one should observe the rights of both of them. In settling their differences, if one of them is right, one should assist him and remove the injustice done to him. In a dubious case, an effort should be made to reconcile them.

Observation of fraternal rights should also be taken into consideration regarding the descendants of the believers who have passed away, especially if one of them has left a son. All assistance should be given him so that the good reputation of his father might be kept alive and that he might take his place.

Observation of outward manners, though unimportant in essence – as [it is said:] “Manners drop between friends” – should be considered except in special sessions of [spiritual] intimacy (*uns*) and *Faqr*, especially if there is a new-comer or a guest. It is for keeping up appearances and having regard for those who are still bound to them and also because the attention of most people is directed towards us.

It is admirable if dignitaries show [a spirit of] fraternity and equality, and it is well-seeming if the others hold them in due respect, having regard for outer appearances.

The secrets of the believer should be kept and his faults should be concealed. If evil things are said about him, one should kindly remove doubts about him and thus cleanse him of such slander. And on the assumption that those things are true of him, one should correct him kindly so that it might not be assumed that the evil-doings of a believer are done with the approval of the Saints. Meanwhile, one should give advice to him privately, because evil-doings, in addition to personal loss, result in defamation of the Saints.

The acts of a believer should be deemed, as far as possible, to be right. However, if there is no way of their being justified, we should not divulge or spread them; nor should it be declared that he is not a believer. And we cannot shun him, unless an open utterance or an order is expressed by the Saints. Rather, we should shun his evil deeds [but not he himself], as God in the Holy Qur’an praises or condemns qualities and deeds but not the persons involved.

And we should not be credulous of evil things which [are said about believers], as God calls the one who says evil things about a believer an “unrighteous person” (*fasiq*). However, if we become aware that his acts are against the approval of God and *Mawla*, we should advise him privately.

Showing benevolence to a believer should be done both openly and secretly, whereas giving advice should be done only in private so that he might not become despised before the public and his soul come into conflict with himself. Even though an evil deed is seen to be done by a believer, backbiting him before anybody, especially the saints, is blameworthy and it does more harm to the slanderer himself [than to the believer]. However, if resolving his difficulty can only be achieved in telling it, and one hopes that [telling] it would have a good result, then benevolence obliges one to tell it, but not before people.



Any business, which might lead to [questionable] differences, should not be done with a believer so as not to result in irritation or in the breaking of the friendship, unless one takes strong measures as if with strangers; and the concessions which are planned for at the end should be brought forward at the start. There is a well-known proverb among people which is full of wisdom and says: "Marriage with relatives and transaction with strangers".

To annoy, to injure, to harm, to degrade, to reproach, or to ridicule a believer will cause the loss of both this world and the Hereafter. Even being heedless of formal manners (*adab*) such as turning one's face away from a believer, turning one's back to him, sleeping with one's feet towards his head, and so on are not permissible as far as they can be avoided.

Interfering in a business which a believer intends to do in a way that might cause damage to him is prohibited (*haram*).

Backbiting a believer or finding fault with him is a great sin and has been strictly forbidden; whereas giving advice to him, feeling pity for him, and being benevolent to him are praiseworthy provided that one finds effective help thereby and that he is not insulted. Speaking slanderously is worst than backbiting.

Also distrusting a believer, imputing evil to him, spying into his affairs, exciting sedition and making mischief between believers, and calling them names arouses the anger of God and causes Him to withhold His favors.

[45]

### **Situation Involving Accusation**

And although shunning a believer is not allowed; nevertheless, due care should be taken in the situation and places where one might become an object of accusation through his fault, but one should not avoid him disrespectfully. Moreover, one should be careful, lest the wrongdoing of that believer should affect oneself.

Since idleness, being a burden to society, and having expectations from others are forbidden in the Ni'matullahi Order and are also disapproved of by God, one should rather encourage the believers to work, and be of assistance to them in that regard.

# My Brethren

[46]

## Attaching Importance to Commands and Prohibitions

Faith is (askin to) cultivation, whose crop is harvested at the instant of death and its comfort and benefit will be revealed after death. This cultivation should be irrigated with good thoughts, good words, and good deeds so that it might grow and not wither, and that the believer might perhaps profit from it before natural death by “voluntary death”.

God has determined goodness and has commanded that of which He approves. Thus, the requisite for attachment [to the Beloved] and faith in Him is obedience. And whenever a friend understands what pleases his Friend, he should act in accordance with it, not to mention His commands and prohibitions. He should obey automatically, and since this [obedience] is against [the inclinations of] the lower soul (*nafs*), laborious efforts (*kulfa*) should be exerted to affect obedience. This is why it is called “duty” (*taklif*).

[47]

## Combining of Shari’at and tariqat

And he should attach great importance to [His] commands and prohibitions and not take them lightly, and endeavors, as far as he can, to observe both the outward rules and the Divine Law (*shari’at*) and the inward manners (*adab*) and the [spiritual] Path (*tariqat*). These two should not be separated from each other, for neither of them is effective without the other.

*Shari’at* deals with the deeds related to the body and *tariqat* deals with the deeds related to the heart. *Shari’at* is to adorn the outward appearance (*zahir*) by obedience, while *tariqat* is to purify the inward being (*batin*) by praiseworthy morals, love, and the remembrance of God and to illuminate the heart by knowing Him. Therefore, these two are like shell and kernel, or word and meaning, or soul and body, or lamp and light, or drug and its effect.

The holding together of the outward (*zahir*) and the inward [aspect of religion], or *shari’at* and *tariqat* has been and is still a characteristic of the Ni’matullahi Order. Therefore, one should take due care to observe them, and he who considers himself nearer [to God] thereby should try harder in complying with the rules inserted in the Holy Qur’an which are addressed to the Faithful. Even accomplishing worldly affairs such as earning one’s living, increasing one’s wealth, supporting one’s family, and taking allowable (*hala*) pleasure, if done with the intention of obeying the commands which have been given, would also be considered as a form of worship.

And in Islam, precepts are so inclusive that for any affair there is a command or prohibition, and a Muslim can accomplish all his worldly affairs with the intention of obeying the [command of] servitude to God.

[48]

## Recitation of the Qur’an

Therefore, reciting the Qur’an, which is the Divine commandment and the outer manifestation of God’s Covenant with His servants, is a general command.

We should recite it, as far as possible, even a little, every day so that it might remind us of our servitude and that we might remember the Covenant. We should understand its meaning as far as we can [in Arabic], and reflect upon it. And at the beginning of reciting, we should, while being pure and clean, seek refuge in God from the evilness of Satan's temptation, lest it should take root in the heart and distort the Quran's true meaning.

Reciting the Qur'an and directing one's attention to God and the Divine Covenant are good even for those who are not able to understand it without referring to its translation. This has been commanded. Nevertheless, we should not be so absorbed in its words that we lose its meaning and intention. It is praiseworthy to recite the translation of the Qur'an, if it has been translated well - except during the ritual prayer (*namaz*) - in order to pay attention to some of the precepts and moral instructions and earn them, so that we might know at least that what we have is better and greater than what others claim to have.

[49]

### The Ritual Prayer (*Namaz*)

The ritual prayer is the pillar of religion. It is the significant sign of being a Muslim, the turning of a servant to God, and the gist of all prayers. Therefore, if it is accepted, all the rest will be accepted and if it is rejected, all the rest will be rejected. It is the first Islamic precept, and it is more admirable if performed with the community. For the congregating of the Faithful is in itself a prayer and it is also a blessing and an act of mercy.

A believer should not be lazy and should perform particularly the morning and evening ritual prayers, which are nearer to the form of the "middle *namaz*" (*namaz-i-wusta*), as far as he can, in their time. And he should try that his spiritual state (*hal*) might accord with his words. And his heart should be with the Beloved, and he should consider Him present. By the *adhan* (calling to prayer) and the *iqama* (the second call to prayer), he should prepare himself for making war against lower soul (*nafs*) and then, by the *takbirat al-ihram* (pronouncing the words "God is great"), should reject everything but Him and pass through the stages of the Path in accordance with his words [in the prayer] until he presents himself [before God] and utters the *salam* (greeting). He should, of course, know what he says, to whom he says it, and what he wants.

If he does not attain such a state and does not succeed, he should consider himself unfit and negligent and reproach his soul (*nafs*) and bring the state of other Wayfarers to mind so that he might set his soul in motion with the scourge of eagerness (*shawq*).

And allusions [to the *namaz*] are fully detailed in the books of gnostics, especially in the books of the late Sultan 'Ali Shah the Martyr (may his grave be sanctified).

In performing the "supererogatory ritual prayers" (*nawafil*), he should endeavor meditatively and act in accordance with His commands and his intention should be aimed only at *Mawla*.

By exerting precision and exploration in the precepts of the ritual prayer, one should try to recognize the allusions and general instructions which are inferred from them and to comply with them. They are such things as: admiration of cleanliness; the blameworthiness of indisposition [towards duty]; the praiseworthiness of forming congregation and community; admiration of the cessation of work until noon on Fridays; the effectiveness of lecture and preaching; observance of charity; concentration of thoughts and attentiveness (*tawajjuh*); observance of household duties - as it is said, "The mosque of a woman is her house", - equality and brotherhood; obedience to the Saints; unity; preventing ourselves and others from cruelty; observance of hygiene (health care); avoidance of making clothes and dishes of gold

and silver which are required by the public in doing business; lack of attachment of men to ornamentation although they should be attached to cleanliness; consideration towards companions and not offending them even by our having a bad smell; getting relief from the hardships of worldly affairs by directing one's attention to God (*tawajjuh*); admiration of being awake at early dawn; wishing for the faithful what we wish for ourselves, as [in the *namaz*] the words *ihdina* (guide us) denote more than one person.

And so are the commands on holding religious celebration - which is inferred from the "ritual prayer on the two Festivals" (*namaz-i Idayn*) and the "Friday ritual prayer" - ; interdicting the permissibility of slandering the Faithful before God and the Saints, whereas the necessity of interceding (*shafa'at*) for them - which is inferred from the "ritual prayer for the dead" (*namaz-i amwat*) -; directing one's attention to God (*tawajjuh*) in any change or revolution - which is inferred from the "ritual prayer of the Signs" (*namaz-i ayat*) -; observing economy and moderation even in consuming water; fearlessness together with caution - which is inferred from the "ritual prayer of Fear" (*namaz-i khawf*), and so on all of which an intelligent Muslim can perceive with careful consideration.

Moreover, the believer should give attention to each matter so that he might perceive what the Beloved approves of, and act in accordance with it.

[50]

### Litanies (*Awrad*)

And also after the ritual prayer, he should, as far as possible, recite the litanies (*awrad*) and what follows the ritual prayer (*taqibat*) with heartfelt attention (*tawajjuh*) while grasping their meanings and in the same place where the ritual prayer is performed. For in what has been commanded is to be found God's satisfaction and the training of the soul provided that one performs it with heartfelt attention (*tawajjuh*). Moreover, in directing one's attention [to God] and in having resource to Him (*tawassul*), improvement in the affairs of this world and the next, the lifting of sorrow and grief, and the resolving of difficulties have been taken into consideration and promised.

[51]

### Supplication (*Du'a*)

Supplication (*du'a*), which is calling upon God, is by the will of the heart (*qalb*), whether it is pronounced or not. For willing with the heart, making a vow to fast or to perform a ritual prayer for a certain work or making a vow to dedicate [a portion of one's] property, having recourse to the religious Masters and asking the intercession of their pure spirits - since God has allowed them to intercede (*shafa'at*) on our behalf - , alms-giving and charity in the name of God, and so forth are all different stages of supplication.

Furthermore, heartfelt attention (*tawajjuh*) and aspiring by a believer are also a form of supplication and it would, of course, be granted if made with whole-hearted attention and in the state of seeking deliverance and helplessness which is breaking away from everything but God.

And in order that he might increase his *tawajjuh* (attention to God) and have his heart in one direction, making clean his body and clothes free of filth and dirt as well as of what belongs to others, purifying his heart of un-cleanliness, repenting (*tawba*) and *inaba* (returning to God), [eating] legitimate food, observing the Divine Law (*Shar'*), not being disheartened, and having a general or a particular permission have all been commanded.

However, supplication (*du'a*) is more suitable and much nearer to being granted at the time of the outpouring of Divine Mercy, during the gathering of the Faithful with spiritual intention and

when the Faithful are in a state of intimate conversation [with God]. Especially when the Faithful are in a state of repentance and in their sessions and circles of invocation, in which cases God's Mercy includes all, then one should not be negligent [of supplication]. And verbal supplication if raised from the heart, uttered or recited also by mouth and with due attention so that it might affect the heart and become a spiritual state (*hal*), would be a true supplication. Recitation of special supplications, if assuredly received from the Saints, for learning the manner of praying and intimate conversation with God and the way of [inner] politeness is much praised. The least to be gained thereby is the recognition that man should not attend to the outer world instead of his inner self or deem himself sinless. Rather, he should always bring his sins to mind, take refuge in God, and ask Him forgiveness for himself, his brethren, parents, ancestors, and his children. He should ask God for their well-being, should remember the deceased and ask forgiveness and mercy for them, and ask for the supplications of the brethren to be granted.

Since God has permitted the Prophet (may God bless him and his Descendants) to intercede and has approved of his intercession (*shafa'at*), the believer should, at the beginning and at the end of supplication, grasp his Majesty by the skirt (i.e. appeal to him) and utter the "formula of God's blessing upon the prophet" (*salawat*). And in asking God's forgiveness (*istighfar*), mercy, strength, the granting of wealth and children, abundance and an increase of favors, and heavenly and earthly blessings have also been promised as well as His forgiveness. Therefore, while supplicating, he should be in the state of asking [God's] forgiveness and invoke its formula and not wish for worldly things which are base, and not be content with low demands to be fulfilled by the Generous One but should leave them to God, as He manages our chief requirements Himself. And he should not wish for anyone's misfortune, because it will bring trouble.

The instant that he finds a [spiritual] state of praying is the time for his prayer to be granted, and any night that he spends in servitude, the door will be opened to him and it will become the "Night of Power" (*Shab-I-Qadr*) for him; nevertheless, his *tawajjuh* (attention to God) increases and becomes more effective at those times that have been mentioned and dedicated to the act of worshipping. Similarly, at those times when a Saint has succeeded in uniting [with God] or a door has been opened to the people, our attentiveness (*tawajjuh*) would certainly become more perfect.

[52]

### **Early Dawn (*Sahar*)**

And the hours of early dawn, when the weather is clear and the body is in a state of comfort and the spirit is bright and pure and he has not yet engaged in worldly affairs, are the best hours of the day for him to bring his sins to mind and make intimate conversation with the Generous One who is free from want. Spiritual and bodily benefits and success in worldly and other-worldly affairs can be gained abundantly by wakefulness between the "two dawns" (the true dawn and sunrise). And from among the days of the week, Friday, and from among the months, Ramadhan is much favored [as times of prayer].

[53]

### **Friday**

In Islam, Friday has been appointed as a festival for Muslims and the "Friday ritual prayer" has been determined to replace the "noon ritual prayer". On this occasion people should gather together; in every village or city a congregation should be arranged and people should also come from every surrounding district; two sermons should be delivered in which God and Prophet (may God bless him and his Descendants) should be praise and glorified and prayers

should be said to God; and general advice and necessary instructions according to circumstance be given. In Qur'an also one chapter (*sura*) has been revealed under the name of "Friday". Thursday night and Friday are distinguished and have been dedicated to worship. And from this gathering all kinds of worldly and other-worldly interests are derived, and it is [a sign of] the splendor of Islam and Muslims and is a representation of their obedience, unanimity, and unity.

Furthermore, the conducting of business and economic development after [Friday ritual] prayer has been taken into consideration. Unfortunately, among the Sh'ites during the "Occultation" (*ghaybat*) less importance has been given to it so that even its name is not heard nowadays, and all have been deprived of this grace. However, *fuqara*, thank God, have assigned Thursday night and Friday for worship, religious visits, and services and do not become involved in worldly affairs until Friday afternoon. And they have held and still do hold sessions on Thursday nights. This Faqir's desire (i.e. the author's) is also that they should not, as far as they can, give up this admirable habit and should be present, as far as they can, at the *Faqr* sessions which are held on Thursday nights.

Sunday night has also priority over other nights, and it is better, if it is possible, to hold *Faqr* sessions also on that night; though religious gathering is always desirable and is admired, provided that it does not prevent those believers from attending to their business and work and does not cause trouble.

The gathering together of the Faithful with the spiritual aim (*wijha*) will excite Love and will bring blessing and honor. And the *Faqr* sessions should be dedicated to worship and they should be involved in the remembrance of God and in heartfelt attentiveness to Him (*tawajjuh*). If an authorized person is present there the ritual prayer (*namaz*) should be performed in congregation. And the excellence of practicing *musafaha* will increase on Friday. Reading the books of the gnostics, by which the religious matters and true knowledge are called to mind and taught, is also useful and increases one's knowledge and insight. Besides, in meeting each other [in such sessions], they will be informed about each other and so the Faithful's needs will be granted.

The length of sitting and staying there differs according to circumstances, places, and the spiritual state of *fuqara*. However, if they want and are able to stay with one another until morning or if they want to stay awake until morning, without troubling anybody, it is most praiseworthy. There is no objection to the presence of the non-brethren in the general *Faqr* sessions, even though they observe nothing but outward manifestations and take mostly no benefit other than what their eyes see or their ears hear. But practicing *Faqr musafaha* with those who are outside this Order is not allowed.

[54]

## **Fasting**

Fasting has been commanded in the Divine law (*shari'at*) for the training of the soul, habituating it in the practice of obedience, breaking the carnal desires, decreasing animal powers, purifying of the spirit, being aware of the conditions of the poor, and for other reasons. It takes place in the month of Ramadan under certain circumstances and instructions.

And to the extent that bodily desires are decreased, the [strength of] spirit increases. The healthy condition which has been promised becomes apparent by fasting, whereas indisposition results from changes in the conditions of sleep and wakefulness [during fasting] and also from gluttony, laziness, incontinence, sleeping during the two dawns (the true dawn and sunrise), and idleness.

Man should not become so attached to his stomach and genitals that he cannot bear to have his meal, for instance, one or two hours late, or is terrified of having it late. It is only the temptation of the lower soul (*nafs*) and its urges during servitude and obedience [to God], which should be resisted.

We should make every effort so that the day and the night of fasting be spent in remembering God and that all organs and faculties be restrained from opposing the Divine Command and from worldly pleasures.

[55]

### **The Alms-Tax (*Zakat*) One-Fifth (*Khums*)**

The alms-tax (*zakat*), levied on financial incomes, has been assigned for public use, and one-fifth (*khums*) of booty and incomes has been assigned to the pilgrims and the descendants of the Prophet (may God bless him and his Descendants and grant them peace) and to the *Imam* and the needy who are related to them.

[56]

### **Alms**

And other obligatory or recommended alms are assigned for decreasing the attachment of the heart to the world and for turning one's attention to the true ownership of God Almighty, exerting control on the earnings or incomes, and for keeping an account of the expenses or expenditures so that a believer might be able, as far as possible, to live on his income and not spend more than he receives, lest he should be encumbered with debts. Furthermore, blessings have been promised for giving alms.

And the Giver who provides the daily bread can decrease or increase it, or bestow it in a way which cannot be thought of, and can preserve or take it away. Much emphasis has been laid, especially on paying the *fitra* (*zakat* of the breaking of the fast) which is an expression of servitude and the remembrance of the Allegiance (*bay'at*), and is a manifestation of the primordial nature (*fitrat*) of Faith.

Giving the recommended alms such as giving a banquet and assisting the Faithful, giving charitable gifts to the poor and feeding and clothing them, constructing building such as bridges, pools, baths, mosques, hospitals, schools, and so forth for public welfare - if one can afford it and with due observance of moderation - is admired by God and people as well; and it brings about friendship, security, and prevention of troubles and calamities. And the giving of them should not be restricted to a certain group; rather, the welfare of all mankind should be taken into consideration. And the less outward show of giving without sincerity and the less obligation involved without any result, the better it will be.

[57]

### **The Pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajj*)**

A pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*) is obligatory on every Muslim provided that by traveling to Mecca on a pilgrimage and returning from there, his normal life will not be disturbed. Many good results such as training, exploring, increasing intelligence and experience, blessings, and appreciation of favors will become apparent after this pilgrimage.

[58]

### **The Holy War (*Jihad*)**

The "greater holy war" (*jihad-i-akbar*), which is the struggle against the lower soul for servitude to God and a detachment from the world, is obligatory on the Faithful, who should fight against Satan with the arms of invocation (*dhikr*) and meditation (*fikr*) and by appealing to the inward

being (*batin*) of the *Pir* for aspiration (*himmat*). Outward efforts for the advancement and protection of Islamism, giving one's property and life for the sake of the Truth, fighting the "lesser holy war" (*jihad-i- asghar*) - in cases commanded by the *Imam* - with foreign enemies and fighting with arms are all obligatory on every Muslim. But the "lesser holy war" is not obligatory on those who are exempt from it. Likewise, defense against an invader is obligatory at any time that circumstance demand.

And learning the rules of fighting is a requisite, at any time, for Muslims in general, and particularly for the Shi'ites who are waiting for the appearance of the *Imam* (i.e. the Promised *Mahdi*) and for fighting in the "Holy War" in the wake of that Exalted One (i.e the *Imam*).

[59]

### **Enjoining the Good and Forbidding the Evil**

Enjoining what is good (*ma'ruf*) and forbidding what is evil (*munkar*) are two steadfast pillars and two watchmen of Islam, the commanding of which is the duty only of the "Masters of the Command" (*sahiban-i-amr*) or of those who have come into [spiritual] contact with them, and themselves have complied with that which is right and have been relieved from the calamities of the lower soul. These people have been placed under the protection of God and can realize what is good or bad for others and accordingly enjoin or forbid them as circumstances permit and to the extent necessary and as required for their advancement.

These two are, at the appropriate time, the duties of all Muslims as wishing beneficiaries for the brethren, guiding them in doing good, accompanying them in doing good and being virtuous, advancing and protesting the Divine Law, preventing the spread of wickedness, heartfelt disgust at all evil, and encouraging and assisting them to do good, provided that they can discriminate between good and evil and know the appropriate time to do so. It is most important that they themselves comply with what they say; and, of course, the best way of enjoining or forbidding, which is generally effective, is by setting an example through our own way of behaving.

[60]

### **Recommended Acts (*Mustahabbat*)**

Other religious precepts and Divine commands which have been mentioned in the Quran or those given by the Saints, who are the exponents of the Quran, should, as far as possible, be complied with and one should not be negligent of them, for they are admired by the Beloved and everything which is admired thus has been called a "recommended act" (*mustahabb*) in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and should be performed as far as is possible. And in most cases, even worldly results are also obtained by their performance.

[61]

### **Ritual Purification (*Taharat*)**

Since a believer is always remembering God and thus a performer of the ritual prayer, he must, inasmuch as possible, already have performed the *ghusl* (the major ritual ablution) and if it was not possible, he must have performed the *wudu* ( the minor ritual ablution); other than these, he must have performed the *tayammum* (the ritual ablution with dust and earth). They are protections against Satan and arms for the holy war (*jihad*). Especially, in visiting the Faithful and in religious sessions and while reciting the Qur'an, purification and emitting a wholesome aroma are praiseworthy. Likewise, he should make effort to purify the inward being (*batin*), too.

[62]



## **Prohibitions (*Nawahi*)**

And what has been prohibited is that which places a Wayfarer (*salik*) at a distance from God and makes the heart impure and ties it to the world. Therefore, he should refrain from it and give up the fleeting imaginary pleasures in order to attain eternal happiness.

He should not contaminate himself by evil deeds which are not in accordance with the intellect and which offend the Saints, thereby making him to be repugnant to people and to be defamed; thus turning him into an object of dislike, while often the effects will remain after.

In the Holy Divine Law of Islam, the good (*ma'ruf*) and the evil (*munkar*) have been specified and the way of avoiding the evil has been prescribed. And they are fully explained in certain books and all Muslims should mostly be familiar with them. To mention them here will take a long time and will produce a lengthy book.

And some sins, which often destroy the state of repentance and become settled in the soul, have been called "deadly" and severely prohibited in the Qur'an. Lesser sins are counted as "venial", the insistence upon which ultimately overshadows the soul and darkens the heart. These venial sins might be found in all forms of worship, transactions, and social relationships.

[63]

### **Gambling**

For instance, gambling - which destroys families, habituates people to idleness, confuses the mind, and which turns friends into enemies - is an evil action from which a wise man should refrain.

[64]

### **Intoxicating Drinks**

So are the intoxicating drinks by which the reason, which distinguishes man from other animals and is the source of good qualities and deeds, becomes feeble. Opium, Indian hemp, and bhang are also counted as intoxicating [in their effect].

# My Brethren

[65]

## Marriage

Poverty (*Faqr*) or *dervishhood* is the cutting of the attachment of the heart away from everything but God and the turning of one's face towards the non-material world and the having of one's body with people while keeping the heart aloof from them. But this is not incompatible with marriage and taking a wife. Rather, marriage is an Islamic Tradition (*sunnat*), and it keeps the believer safe from numerous dangers and ensures his daily bread. Thus, if he performs his duty and tolerates hardships, it will be a preceptor for the Wayfarer (*salik*). And solitude is not allowable except in cases of compelling necessity.

In taking a wife, he should not be concerned only with her property and beauty; even her educational knowledge in itself is not useful. Rather, he should take into consideration her inherent nobility, piety, chastity, morals, and dignity. It is also necessary for him to be cautious of her not having a contagious disease. Furthermore, he should also take into consideration her ability to give birth to a child which is required for the survival of mankind and which is the result of marriage. And he should, as far as possible, keep himself away from undue formalities both before and after marriage, for such impediments mostly hinder him from getting married and later create troubles and impairments.

In associating with women, he should behave with kindness and forgiveness and guide them in accordance with the Saints' orders so that they might willy-nilly become aware of their duties helped by his kindness and might act accordingly. They, too, in turn, should not exceed their duties.

Since the main objective is the survival of the generation, intemperance in sexual intercourse is not allowed, for the essential materials for the survival of the body diminishes and a man's health become damaged. In this respect, compliance with the Saint's orders is preferred. However, eating legitimate (*halal*) food and remembering God [at the time of intercourse] together with the intention of obeying [Him] are necessary so that in case of the birth of a child, it might be a good one.

And since the ability to exert justice is very rare, he, by taking more than one wife, does not get any benefit except that he puts himself to [undue] trouble; unless he does it out of helplessness or in case of necessity.

[66]

## Divorce

And divorce is blameworthy before God and people and is unpleasant in the eyes of the Prophet (may God bless him and his Descendants) except in cases of necessity. It is better to show forbearance, as far as he can, towards women when they are unpleasant. Such action is more pleasant than divorce.

[67]

## Children

And mothers should be familiar with the necessary rules of motherhood and of hygiene for themselves and their children from the beginning of pregnancy and during it and after the delivery of the child and during breast-feeding and their menses. They should also know about the necessary rules of physical and spiritual training for their children.

The spiritual state and emotional condition of parents during sexual intercourse will have an effect on the child. Moreover, their physical condition and their thoughts will affect the shape, mentality, and temperament of the child and even its becoming a boy or a girl. Therefore, they should take due care.

Children up to the age of seven are under the care of their mother and during this period she teaches them how to speak and act and eat their food properly. Thus, their future is influenced by the virtue and wisdom of their mother. After this period, children are mostly under the care of their father and teacher.

[68]

### **Education**

The training of the body and the mind of children, including their education, is the duty of their parents. Reading and writing can be deemed necessary for everybody. Even reading foreigners' books, after reading our own books and after acquiring clear-sightedness regarding our own Saints' commands, is good for everyone in order to increase information, whereas learning about [religious] beliefs and necessary precepts, to the extent required, is indispensable to everybody. However, learning the various religious or worldly sciences to the extent possible, if the necessary means are provided, is considered to be a virtue and an excellence.

[69]

### **Business**

Since human beings have been created to be naturally civilized, they are in need of each other. Therefore, they should assist each other and everyone should undertake some work so that he might not become an idle body and a burden to society. The believer should rely upon God, show magnanimity, and refrain from expectation and covetousness. For it is blameworthy to count on and have reliance upon even the outward reality (*zahir*) of the Saints. Rather, he should appeal to their inner being (*batin*).

And by doing work which is admired by God, he should make every effort possible and not be content only with learning the art of his master; but rather, he should always exert curiosity in finding the unknown and improving his own art. If he has enough property to live on, he should assist society, even though he does it by looking after and improving his own property, the accomplishment of which will provide repose and rest for people.

And he should keep aloof from begging and theft which are severely prohibited in Islam and which are the two negative aspects of business, lest they should also appear in his legitimate (*halal*) business.

He should not transgress the instructions given in the Divine Law (shari'at) for transactions, because the True Owner (i.e. God) does not allow him to take possession of such property thereby obtained. In doing business, he should seek God's satisfaction and should be of assistance to His servants.

[70]

### **Usury**

And he should keep aloof from usury which in particular has been severely condemned in the Quran and is in fact a declaration of war against God and the Prophet. But usury is different from the "contract of partnership" (*mudaraba*) and sale which are allowable.

[71]

## **Prohibited Business**

Some businesses which are prohibited and which are also unpleasant and disgraceful to people such as butchery, hunting, and hoarding are obvious in their lack of blessing.

[72]

### **Giving Little, Asking Much and Fairness**

And giving short weight or short measure and charging to excess are blameworthy. Rather, a believer in all his thoughts, words, and deeds should not sell for too little or buy for too much, and he should do as he would be done by. This is one of the concepts of fairness.

He should abstain from what habituates man to idleness and makes him a burden to society, let alone its perniciousness, such as falling into the habit of attending the pleasure-seeking parties and of drinking, gambling, playing hermetic magic, smoking opium and Indian hemp, and so forth. Because the Islamic precepts are based on working, manliness, and servitude to God.

Moderation in any work is praiseworthy so that the body might not become worn-out, the soul might not get tired, and the physical constitution might not become weak. Working hours should be six to eight hours a day depending on whether it is mental or physical work, whether it is cold or hot as well as on the kind of work, one's physical constitution, and on the place of work; unless circumstances require it to be otherwise. Laziness is similarly blameworthy and is destructive to the rights of society. And being bound to business and work has always been and is still one of the distinctions of the High *Ni'matullahi* Order who in their efforts, thank God, have served and still serve as examples.

And in expenditure, the believer should practice moderation, for haste or laziness in any work is blameworthy. As it was mentioned before, he should not let his expenditure exceed his income. Rather, after saving up a small part of his income, he should divide the remainder into various parts for spending on his life. This is the true meaning of contentment and compatibility. But he should not make life hard for himself when he is able to manage otherwise. Furthermore, in matters of expenditure, a man should not look at those who have more than he has, for he will always be dissatisfied. Rather, he should look at those who have less so that he might always feel content.

## My Brethren

[73]

### Compassion

All people (*khalq*) are the resultant effects and signs of the Truth (*Haqq*). Therefore, we should, in accordance with the “Divine Covenant”, be compassionate and kind to all and make efforts so that the eye of the heart might open and we might recognize all as mirrors for seeing the Beloved.

Under any condition, we should not desire evil to others, and we should keep company with and be benevolent to all mankind. We should be like a father to little ones, a brother to the young, and a child to the old, and assist everyone in his work providing that nobody is hurt thereby. And the Faithful, of course, have priority over others and we should attend on them, love them especially, and be in unity with them. The Muslims have priority over the “People of the Book” (*ahl-i-kitab*) and the latter, in turn, have priority over others.

[74]

### Good Disposition

In associating with people, the believer should behave cheerfully, gently, and kindly. Showing a bad temper to anyone is blameworthy, creates dejection, gives him trouble, and spoils his actions. It also causes pressure of the gravestone [on the body after death], which is a manifestation of pressure on the heart; whereas good behavior and cheerfulness produce good results.

[75]

### Doing Good to Parents

And especially to the temporal parents, who are the intermediaries for the birth of our earthly bodies, we should be benevolent and obedient, because from the beginning of the seed taking shape and during pregnancy, breast-feeding, and childhood until youth, they have suffered much pain and overlooked their own pleasures for the sake of their children; and as long as they are alive, their kindness towards their children is ever-increasing. And God has commanded that we should do good to our parents secondly to serving Him. Especially, when they reach old age, we should not be negligent in nursing them. Even if they are against religion, then only in religious matters they should not be followed but we should maintain fair sociability.

[76]

### Observation of the “Bonds of Family Relationships”

Towards other relatives, we should also show kindness according to the degree of their closeness to us and not let them break up or separate. Rather, we should strengthen their unity. Because observation of the “bonds of relationship” increases one’s life-span and property and removes calamity, whereas keeping away from one’s relatives shortens the life-span.

If there is any slight friction, it should be prevented so that it might not spread and increase. Because if a mild complaint about a brother is not averted, it will certainly be talked about before his children and will become inherent in them and will result in enmity. And both sides should show forgiveness, and if they have affection for each other and their relatives, they should set selfishness aside. For in associating with anybody we should show tolerance and approach him in his desires. If there is any fault in him, we should try to remove it gradually with kindness.

And we should not like him in accordance with our own desires, for in this case we should be left friendless.

[77]

### **The Sects of Islam**

And in relation to all sects of Islam, whether *Shi'ite* or *Sunnite* or any others, all of which are under the flag of one word and have the same religion, the same Prophet, the same book, and one *qiblah*, we should maintain an Islamic brotherhood with due consideration for religious solidarity. And the believers are to be taken for brethren and the brethren of the Path should be chosen to be served.

[78]

### **Honoring the Religious Scholars**

And particularly with regards to the honorable order of the '*ulama*' (the religious scholars), who are authorized to relate the Traditions (*rawayat*) and have been appointed to propagate the religious precepts, also the order of the '*urafa*' (the *gnostics*) - who are authorized in giving insight (*dirayat*) and have been appointed to refine men's souls, discipline morals, and draw the attention of people towards God - the aspect of their relationship and representativeness are to be taken into consideration and the aspect (*wijha*) of their spirituality to be respected.

These two orders are like the two hands of the same person or like the two departments of the same office and have always been united and have never been in dispute or in disagreement with each other. However, disagreement on political grounds was induced at the end of the reign of the Safawids and the ignorant of both sides were deceived. This very act was one of the causes that led to the overthrow of the Safawids. Afterwards, no considerable measures were taken to settle the differences. But, thank God, there are no differences among the learned on either side.

And the '*ulama* have acquired knowledge from the Prophet through intermediaries, and knowledge is the exemplar and inheritance of prophecy. The '*ulama* are the leaders of the Muslims and the representatives of the Saints in narrating the religious precepts. If, however, one of them acts in a manner contrary to his duty, speaking ill of his [religious] title or him is not allowed. Rather, blame should be aimed at the bad qualities and evil deeds of individuals. Therefore, insulting the title of one having [religious] knowledge [as the '*ulama* have] is an evil act.

[79]

### **The Descendants of the Prophet**

Moreover, we should have respect for the descendants of the Prophet, with whom they are corporeally related. It is, of course, the descendants' duty to protect this respect and maintain the reputation of the Islamic community (*millat*) by showing magnanimity, piety, and lack of covetousness.

[80]

### **The Sufi Orders**

Similarly, behavior towards the followers of the *Faqr* Orders and those who are apparently related to the [spiritual] Path should be based on tolerance, religious brotherhood, and the following of similar paths, and we should keep a good and friendly company with them. Having knowledge of and confidence in one's own Path or tenet as well as being firm in following it

compels the showing of kindness towards them, because the name of the Beloved is also heard by them and they are not in opposition.

But practicing *musafaha* with other dervishes in our own way requires a knowledge of their true connection [with the Prophet] ; therefore, it is not allowed.

We should not speak ill of the others, for praise and blame should be laid on morals and actions. Furthermore, we should take [God's words] into consideration: "And those who strive in Our [Cause], surely we shall guide them to Our Paths." Above all, we should not speak ill of the leader of any order, nor should we take the attitude of rejecting the ways of others, as it brings enmity and increases obstinacy.

[81]

### **Insulting and Cursing**

And it is not allowed to insult or curse anybody, unless it has been expressed explicitly by the Saints and handed down to us, for it brings disagreement, discord, and corruption. Besides, we should only seek denouncement of and estrangement from Satan, the lower soul and its appearances, and evil deeds by our heart and deeds and secretly; not openly or by giving utterance. As [in the ritual prayer] "taking refuge in God from Satan" (*isti'adhi*) after *takbirat al-ihram* (pronouncing the words *Allahu akbar*, "God is great" and before pronouncing the *bismillah* (in the name of God) is recommended to be uttered quietly. Then *bismillah* is uttered loudly.

And speak favorably of the deceased and the dead and do not speak ill of them, as you are not aware of their state at the time of death, unless it is related to us from the Saints, who are present at that time. Because only considering someone to be bad, and not speaking ill of him, is allowed in the words of the Saints.

[82]

### **Respecting the Honorable**

Show respect to the honorable who claim outward respect. Give due regard according to the degree of rank and do not cause stimulation of envy and enmity among others.

In speaking to a person, the subject discussed should be said in words, which are familiar to him and which are to his taste so that he might not become annoyed and turn away from truth, for man is the enemy of what he does not understand.

And in answering any question, if you are assured that your words will have an effect, speak only of that which you are certain; otherwise, refer the questioner to those who are wiser. And do not argue about your Way, as it darkens the heart and reveals [bad] intentions. When a dervish calls others [to his Way], it should be accomplished with good deeds, praiseworthy qualities, and sociability; not just with utterances of mouth. Although assisting a seeker [verbally] and helping him to understand and removing doubt from a person who is in doubt are necessary, prescribing medicine for a person who feels no pain is without effect and only increases his bigotry.

[83]

### **Fairness on One's Words**

And bigotry and unfairness displayed by anyone and at any place is blameworthy, as His Eminence *Mawla* [Ali] – peace be upon him – has said: "Look at what is said, not at who has said it." And the evil deeds of the Faithful, more than anything else, keep the people away from the Truth, although the deeds of the followers should not be taken as a basis for judging the

goodness or badness of the way. However, the expectation of the public is to see us doing good deeds.

Moreover, by the mere fact that corruption dominates over our times and environment, we should not despair and surrender ourselves to the lower soul and evil deeds, as [it is said in the Qur'an]: "He who is astray cannot hurt you, if you follow [right] guidance.:"

Pharaoh's wife could protect her faith among the Pharaonic. You should also protect yourselves to the greatest extent possible so that your privilege might be revealed.

Do not pay heed to the vice of others and do not speak ill of them because of their evil deeds. Rather, keep away from their wrong-doings and prevent them from such deeds providing that you can do it in a kind manner. And if they speak ill of you, which is the result of their ignorance, reply peacefully and benevolently. Moreover, if they ever do evil to you, leave them, as far as possible, to God and even forgive them, for the "Promoter of affairs" ( i.e. God ) Himself looks after our affairs.

[84]

### **Places Bringing Accusation**

And in association with people, keep away from those by whose evil deeds you might be affected or whom you might become an object of accusation. Keep away from sessions where they smoke opium, Indian hemp juice, bhang and so forth; but do not keep away from nor disdain companionship or association with the poor. through

[85]

### **Association With the God**

And in association with the people of Truth and the servants of God, for the sake of God, do not fear to be blamed and be not afraid. Behave towards everyone with kindness and certainty; but you should also keep a wary eye even on your closet friend so that if he turns out to be the worst enemy, he might not have any pretext for finding fault with you.

[86]

### **Keeping the Secrets**

And, as far as possible, the believer should not reveal his secrets to anybody, and he should also keep the secrets of people and not spoil their trust. He should not listen to slanders about others; neither should he believe nor give effect to them. For personal motives are plenty and parti-colored; rather, he should be observant of them. The believer should be trustworthy and treat all people honestly and truthfully and protect the lives, property, reputation, and honor of everybody.

[87]

### **Obeying the Law**

You should have respect for public law and obey it and, as far as you can, do not exceed the limits of your personal duties. Moreover, you should be engaged in your own work and not involved in political affairs, lest you should be used as a tool and a pretext for executing the objectives of others. You should not interfere in other person's affair either.

[88]



## **The Right of People and Paying One's Debts**

In doing business and settling accounts with people, you should be prompt to render accounts and should keep your promise, as one who is prompt to render accounts is trusted to share in people's property.

And we should repay, at our earliest convenience, the loan that we have taken and not leave it until it is demanded, for irresponsibility closes the door of kindness to us and to others and has made usury more popularized.

If you have been acquitted on a charge by a court and deem yourself indebted before yourself and God, you should pay your debt, as [paying] the "right of people" is more strictly observed than paying the "right of God." Because if we do not pay the "right of God," though it is very strictly observed and blessing has been promised if we pay it. He will waive it and forgive us if we repent and ask for forgiveness, whereas the "right of people," unless it is waived by them, will hardly be forgiven [by God]. If someone owes you and is unable to pay and if it is impossible for you to overlook it, you should give him a period of grace. Moreover, it is better to make such an arrangement that he might be able both to earn his living and to pay his loan.

[89]

### **The Inferious**

And you should have mercy on your inferiors, and their training and education should be done kindly and gently. We should treat the inferiors in the same way as we ourselves expect to be treated by our superiors.

[90]

### **The Neighbor**

The neighbor of your house or landed property, whoever he might be, should be treated with due consideration, let alone your partner.

[91]

### **The Stranger**

To a stranger, particularly if he does not have any acquaintance, you should show kindness and make him feel at home.

[92]

### **The Orphan**

You should look after and comfort on orphan, who is left without a protector, and not treat him harshly, An ignorant person, who does not know the value of a Man of Knowledge and has not experienced the enjoyment of the [spiritual] love, should not be treated harshly. Rather, one should make him understand [the Truth] gently and lead him to it. The widows who have no family or relatives and the respectable who have fallen into contempt and the debtors who without being negligent have sustained a loss and feel shame before their creditors, should be considered and given mercy. Supplying the needs of Muslims, visiting the sick, assisting the poor and attending their funerals, visiting graves, consoling the injured, and helping the weak and the helpless are all requisites of Faith.

[93]

## Reconciliation

Making mischief between two persons is not allowed, unless when it is in the interests of religion and has been commanded. And in quoting other people's words, one should be careful not to incite any form of sedition.

[94]

## Tormenting a Muslim

Finding fault with Muslims and the tormenting of them by a fellow Muslim, from whose hands and tongue all Muslims should be unassailable, is a grave misdeed. Any form of mockery, taunt, cursing, gossip, and concealment of truth do not tally with having Faith. Moreover, a believer should attend to his faults instead of those of others.

## My Brethren

[95]

### Method of Life

### Consultation

A believer should show foresight in his own and other people's affairs and should deliberate over them. He should consult with someone who is wiser than he and thereupon select that which is in the interests of [his] religion and the world and act accordingly; for consultation protects a man from slipping.

[96]

### Asking God for Proper Guidance (*Istikhara*)

And if he feels uncertain about doing something and the doubt is not removed after consultation, he may practice *istikhara* (asking God for proper guidance) and thereby ask God to show him the good and the evil of this affair. Whatever is replied will be to his benefit. Reliance upon God (*tawakkul*) and letting matters take their course is also a kind of *istikhara*, for whatever is advisable will happen.

[97]

### Ornithomancy

And different temptations of the lower soul (*nafs*) should not keep him away from doing his work, for ornithomancy or taking a thing as a bad omen is prohibited. And one's thoughts should not be fettered to or disturbed by those things whose natural effects are unknown and have not been confirmed by a Saint, for even giving utterance to them is prohibited, as it agitates the soul. If such a thought comes into his mind, he should ask God's forgiveness (*istighfar*) and take refuge in Him and give alms to a needy person, so it will be removed.

[98]

### Taking as a Good Omen

And taking a thing as a good omen is admirable, for it strengthens hope, makes resolution firm, and sets the heart at rest.

[99]

### **Imagined Things**

And since man is, from the beginning of his birth until the end of his life, under the influence of *wahima* (the faculty of imagination) and is not even for a single moment relieved from the image-forming act of *wahima* and since the flourishing of the world is achieved by means of *wahima*, it cannot be totally overcome and by escaping from one imagined thing (*mawhum*) he falls into another.

However, many imagined things are ways and openings to truth. Therefore, he should pay attention to their origins and their ultimate purpose and find out the meaning of those which have been related to us from the Saints and take them into consideration, for they are affected by the strong spirit of the "Representative of God."

And some of the imagined things which conform to natural effects, whether open or hidden, or which have spiritual effects, or are effective in training people or useful in giving comfort to them, or without which people neglect to perform their humane or religious duties, should not be considered mere imagined things. Rather, they should be regarded as being real according to their different stages.

And those, which are not, so, even if they show some effects, as the result of the focusing of attention on them by certain souls, should be termed "imagined things." Therefore, what has been affirmed by the Saints and has produced a positive effect should be honored.

There are many imagined things or proverbs, aimed at ethical instruction or educational purposes, which should be explored and circulated. And those imagined things which are common and are proverbial among people of any group, village, or town should not be disregarded openly as long as they are the subjects of attention. For, as a result of the attention paid to them by these souls, they give rise to some effects. Therefore, one should dissuade people from them and disillusion them.

[100]

### **Haste**

And in performing worldly affairs, which are not urgent, the believer should not hasten to accomplish them beforehand; especially in taking revenge and reprimanding, it is better to hesitate and delay so that it might not lead him to a feeling of remorse. Preparations for any form of work should be made beforehand so that when the time comes, he might not encounter difficulties or make undue haste, for making haste in doing something before its proper time is not propitious. It is also not right to make preparations just at the time of doing something. Furthermore, delay brings disaster too.

[101]

### **Hesitation**

Similarly, laziness and indolence, which result in losing one's opportunity, is blameworthy. But when performing and carrying out religious affairs or affairs of great urgency, haste is praiseworthy. Showing moderation [in the performance of the work], which is desirable in any affair, is the grasping of the right opportunities; and one should follow it.

[102]

## Eating and Drinking

In eating and drinking, even though the food supplied is lawful (*halal*) and is taken with the remembrance of God, the believer should not over-indulge for it makes him unhealthy.

[103]

## Coitus

In having sexual intercourse with his lawful wife, he should not exceed the limits, as it weakens his temperament.

[104]

## Sleeping

Likewise, sleeping, which cannot be omitted, should not exceed the moderate limits. He should not sleep more than one third of a day and not less than one fourth. And he should go to sleep with the remembrance of God. Furthermore, immediately after having a meal, he should neither sleep nor lie on his back.

[105]

## Clothes

And he should not be extravagant with his clothes, nor should he be too Spartan with himself. He should not be bound to special clothes and should show moderation even in the size of them. One of the distinctions of the *fugara* of the *Ni'matullahi* Order is this very fact of their not being bound to special clothes. However, it is necessary for them to keep their clothes neat and clean.

[106]

## Cleanliness

And cleanliness is praiseworthy in any affair and is encourage in Islam. Instructions have especially been given to perform the *wudu* (the minor ritual ablution), which is a duty, and the *ghusl* (the major ritual ablution), which is washing the whole body, whether as an obligatory duty on certain occasions or as a recommended duty on days of communal gathering such as Fridays and Feasts and when going on a religious visit. For keeping clean and preventing the spirit from becoming depressed and in order not to excite disapproval in the Faithful and among companions, even using pleasant scent has been approved. Similarly, the trimming of certain hair and protecting and keeping the rest clean in order that it might not cause disgust has been commanded. Shortening one's clothes, taking a bath, paring one's nails, trimming one's beard, sweeping and removing cobwebs have also been ordered.

[107]

## Travelling

And travelling, especially for men, is useful. In our time, because of security and availability of good roads and means, travelling has been made easy.

The believer should make sure that he does not content himself with the mere outward experience of travelling, for the inner and outward [experience of] journeying and visiting various countries as well as meeting different people and celebrated men will increase his knowledge and will provide him with education and experience. This will also provide him

with means of trade, prosperity, and recreation and will prepare the way for him to be acquainted with customs and peoples. Therefore, as long as the order of life is not broken, travelling is praiseworthy.

[108]

### **Last Will and Testament**

And it has been commanded that once he has determined to make a journey, he should also remember the journey to death and, thus, make his will and write his testament. Writing one's testament is very good at all events and it is not only peculiar to the sick or the traveler but is auspicious in itself. And since the believer should have his death in mind, he should also put his worldly affairs in order.

[109]

### **Idle Talk and Action**

And a believer should refrain from idle and useless talk and action, seeking God's satisfaction in what he does, and not spoil himself, his life, and his faculties, which are entrusted to him by God and not keep himself occupied with baubles.

[110]

### **Joking**

Inopportune and excessive joking is also considered idle; and especially with hot-tempered persons and with those who cannot take a joke, it is inadmissible. Furthermore, excessive, loud, and inopportune laughter, especially in the presence of dignitaries, is also indecent.

[111]

### **Association and Taking a Seat**

In associating with others and attending sessions, the believer should not be bound to sitting in a special place but should sit wherever accessible with due respect for others. For confining oneself to sitting in a lower place is similar to confining oneself to sitting in an upper place, and "down" and "up" are mere imagined things. Furthermore, he should not be bound by the habit of paying unnecessary visits; rather, he should do it with the sole intention of visiting out of friendship.

[112]

### **Taking on Oath**

And he should not take an oath, even though what he says be true, so that the Friend's (God's) name for worldly affairs. And he should not use religion, as a means of satisfying his worldly desires, for it is not admissible to get wages even for religious services, let alone an idle oath or even a false oath.

[113]

### **Bearing Witness**

The believer should be truthful and honest. He should not bear false witness; nor should he conceal the truth, even though it is detrimental to his own, his parents; or relatives' interests, unless it is in the interests of a believer's Faith or is for his satisfaction or is for bringing about a reconciliation.

### A summary of the Faithful's Attributes

In conclusion, in order that the attention of the reader may be increased, I shall write, as a summary of what has been written so far, the attributes and morals of a true believer – who is more rare than the “red sulphur” (*Kibrit –i ahmar*) – all of which are taken from the words of God, the Prophet, His Eminence Master of Masters (peace be upon them). In this case repetition is desirable both for emphasizing and for reminding.

A believer wishes for God and seeks God. He has pure intention, a humble heart, and a submissive body. He does not stretch his foot away from the Path, nor does he slip from it. His friendship is immaculate and his deeds are free from deceit. He attends to himself, not to others. He fears only his own self, and others are safe from him. His observance is out of knowledge, his only benefit is to receive a lesson; his silence is that of wisdom; and his words are those of truth. He has knowledge coupled with patience, wisdom with steadfastness, forgiveness with power, and bravery with kindness and mildness. He feels happy when he does well to others, feels remorse for his wrongdoing, and fears his own self. He weighs up the consequences of an action, withstands hardships, and seeks assistance, in any state and act, in patience and prayer.

He is ready for death and prepares himself and makes provision for it. He does not waste his precious life but spends it in doing good, and advises others to do well. His modesty overcomes lust; his forgiveness overcomes anger; his friendliness overcomes enmity; and his contentment overcomes greed.

He dresses as people do, and lives among them but does not attach his heart to them. He hastens to render servitude to God and does not put off until tomorrow what he can do today. He is moderate in worldly affairs, and keeps himself away from sin. He does not harm anybody, does well to anyone who has done him wrong, re-embraces anyone who has broken off relations with him, and forgives anyone who has deprived him [of his rights].

He does not beg for anything from others and does not reject their requests. He does not supplicate anyone for anything except He who is free from want, and fulfils the need of the needy. He does not ask for justice but he himself exercises it. He keeps himself from making errors, always admits himself guilty, and forgives other's errors. He is an enemy of oppression and a friend to the oppressed. He is not offended by the coldness of others.

He does not find fault with others, accepts people's excuses, and conceals their faults. He does not rejoice at other people's flattering him and does not grieve over their slandering him. He sympathizes with the Faithful, that is to say, he feels glad about their happiness and sad about their troubles, and tries to find, if he can, a way to help them and to make their hearts happy; otherwise, he asks God for help. He wishes for others whatever he wishes for himself and considers good for them whatever he considers good for himself. He does not get impatient with a believer but gives advice to him in private, and wishes him well both secretly and openly.

He does not become happy when the world favors him, nor does he become sad when the favor is withdrawn. He strengthens his resolution, does not adopt bad habits, does not repeat his mistakes, does not answer unless he is asked; and, when speaking, he speaks briefly and weighs up his words, and his deeds bear witness to his words.

He does not fail in the management of his life. He refrains from deceit, hypocrisy, and telling lies. He does not think highly of himself and does not look down on others. He does not upbraid others, nor does he dispute with them. He does not spend too much of his time with women, but is kind to them and pleases them. He tries to give satisfaction to his neighbors, and does not raise his voice. He does not gossip with other people, and tries to bring about reconciliation among them. He is fair in judgement and does not treat with anyone unjustly. He does not laugh shamelessly. He does not make [undue] haste in achieving his affairs. He does not speak ill of people, honors the memory of the absent, and does not swear at anybody.

He chooses wise friends and keeps away from bad companions. He is a friend to the oppressed, vagrants, and the weak. He keeps company with the dervishes and does not prefer people's satisfaction to God's. He does not fail to aid others with his possessions, life, and body.

He accepts when invited and greets his friends when meeting them. He consults others about his affairs and is not disloyal to people in consultation. He does not take bribes, although it is not inadmissible to receive remuneration and get reward for his work.

Although paying attention to the contents of this summary and contrasting them with ourselves and our deeds makes us disappointed, God's generosity is infinite and His Grace is boundless; so we should not cease from searching for these attributes, and that which cannot be totally gained, should not be totally discarded.

Although you cannot attain His union through your efforts,

Yet, strive as much as you can to search for Him.

We should endeavor to use these attributes as criteria, and judge our deeds by them. And we should consider ourselves sinful and our lives spoilt and beg most humbly for forgiveness from the One Who is free from want.

It is best that a servant for his transgressions,

Offers apologies before the Throne of God,

Although what is worthy of His dignity,

No one is able to accomplish.

I hope He may bestow upon all Friends the state of servitude and supplication, and make them successful in accomplishing that which pleases *Mawla*.

Although I tried hard to write this letter briefly, I could not control the pen and the letter became long. For this, I apologize to my Friends.

“And peace be upon him who follows the guidance”

Dated the “Feast of Scarifice,” 1357 A.H.L. (1939), corresponding with 11<sup>th</sup> of Bahman 1317 A.H.S.

## Notes

1. According to Qur'an, 2:256: "Whosoever disbelieves in idols and believes in Allah, has grasped a firm handhold which will never break."
2. A saying (*hadith*) of the sixth Imam.
3. Qur'an, 33:35: "Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women,...- for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a vast reward."
4. A line of verse attributed to Jalaluddin Rumi, *Diwan-I Shms*.
5. Qur'an, 3:52, 61:14.
6. Qur'an, 6:118.
7. I.e., the Prophet, his daughter Fatima, his cousin, son-in-law and successor, Imam 'Ali, and the eleven Imams that follow 'Ali (peace be upon them).
8. A saying (*hadith*) attributed to the prophet.
9. I.e., the Promised Mahdi.
10. According to saying (*hadith*) of the fourth Imam: "Had Abudhar known what Salman had in his heart, he would have killed him."
11. According to Qur'an, 48:29: "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are hard against the unbelievers, merciful one to another."
12. A saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet.
13. Qur'an, 7:23.
14. Qur'an, 21:87
15. According to a saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: "Believers, in their friendship and benevolence for one another, are like the human body: when one part of it is in pain, the other parts also suffer and become unified in ministering to it."
16. A saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet.
17. A line of verse by Sa'di, *Gulistan*.
18. A verse by Sadi, *Gulistan*.
19. According to Qur'an, 14:7: "And when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you give thanks, surely I will give you more; but if you are thankless, my chastisement is surely terrible.'"
20. By the "right of God," is meant *khums* (one-fifth of booty and incomes) and *zakat* (the alms-tax) including *fitra* (*zakat* of breaking of one's fast).
21. An Arabic proverb common in Persian.
22. Referring to Qur'an, 49:6: "O you who believe! If an unrighteous man (*fasiq*) comes to you with a tiding, make clear, lest you afflict a people unwittingly, and then repent of what you have done."
23. By "voluntary death," is meant dying of self, shedding all reprehensible characteristics and reviving he heart with praiseworthy attributes while maintaining one's worldly life. Hence the Prophet said: "Die before you die." In sufi terminology, it is also called *fana*.



24. *Taklif* literally means “burdening” or “troubling,” and has the same root as *kulfat*, “trouble” or “discomfort.”

25. According to saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: “The ritual prayer (*salat*) is the pillar of religion. If it is accepted [by God], all the rest will be accepted also; and if it is rejected, all the rest will be rejected too.”

26. A saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet.

27. This is a reference to several similar verses in the Qur’an, including “And O my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn unto Him repentant, He will cause the sky to rain abundance on you and will add unto you strength to your strength; and turn not your backs as sinners’ (11:52).

28. A reference to a saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: “Practice fasting so that you may be healthy.”

29. Referring to Qur’an, 2:261: “The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is as the likeness of a grain of corn that sprouts seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allah multiplies unto whom He will; Allah is All-embracing, All-knowing” and other similar verses.

30. *Mustahabb* literally means “desirable” or “will-liked,” and has the same root as *hubb*, “to love.”

31. Referring to a saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: “God has not created any lawful thing more hateful to Him than divorce.”

32. According to Qur’an: 2:278, 279: “O you who believe! Fear you Allah; and give up the usury that is outstanding, if you are [in truth] believers. But if you do not, then be warned of war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger.”

33. Referring to Qur’an, 17:23: “Your Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and [that you show] kindness to parents.”

34. That is the word “There is no god but God” which is referred to in Qur’an, 3:64: “Say: ‘People of the Book! Come now to a word common between us and you, that we serve none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from God.’”

35. According to a saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: “Men of knowledge (*‘ulama*) are the inheritors of the prophets.”

36. It should be noted in this text that the word “descendants” (with a small d) refers to those who descended from the Prophet, whereas “Descendants” (with a capital D) refers only to Fatima and the twelve Imams (peace be upon them). See also note 7.

37. Qur’an, 29:69.

38. Qur’an, 5:105.

39. A Persian proverb with a slightly different wording.

40. Referring to Qur’an, 30:39: “What you give in alms, seeking Allah’s countenance, those – they receive recompense manifold.”

41. According to a saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: “A [true] Muslim is one from whose hands and tongue all Muslims are unassailable.”

42. Referring to Qur'an, 2:153: "O all you have believed, seek you help in patience and prayer" and also to Qur'an 2:45.

43. A line of verse by Hafiz, *Diwan*.

44. A verse by Sa'di, *Gulistan*.

45. Qur'an, 20:47.

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### Glossary

Abudhar and Salman, the two companions of the Holy Prophet. After the Prophet's death, they became two of the loyal followers of 'Ali ibn Abitalib. The Holy Prophet has said about Salman: "Salman is of our Household," P.36.

'ahd-I azali, the "eternal covenant," the "primal covenant"; referring to the Covenant made between God and human souls in eternity before man's coming to this world, when God addressed human souls and asked them, "Am I not your Lord?" They said: 'Yes, we testify"' (Qur'an 7:172), P.27. See also 'ahd-I taklifi and bay'at.

'ahd-I taklifi, the "prescriptive covenant." It refers to the covenant which a believer makes with the spiritual Master. This covenant between the believer and the Master which brings about spiritual attachment to the Master, gives the believer the means of advancing along the Path. Thus, it is considered as the renewal of the 'ahd-I azali and is identified with bay'at, P.27.

ahl-I kitab, the "People of the Book," i.e. Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, P.76.

'alwiyyat-I 'Ali, the most supreme spiritual reality of Imam 'Ali, P. 38. See haqiqat-i Muhammadiyah.

amr-I taklifi, the "prescriptive command." It refers to the laws set down by God in revelation which man can obey or disobey according to his own free will, P. 45 Cf. amr-I takwini.

amr-I takwini, the "ontological command." It refers to the laws of creation which all must obey by the very nature of things. It is referred to in several verses in Qur'an such as: "His command (amr), when He desires a thing, is to say it 'Be,' and it is" (36:81), P. 45 Cf. amr-I taklifi.

awisiya, plural of wasi meaning one who becomes authorized after somebody's death. In the Shi'ite sense of succession, it means "the Prophet's legitimate successors," P.16.

baqa, subsistence; gaining existence in the Reality of God after total extinction (fana) of one's deeds and qualities. It is one of the Stations (maqamat) of the "Travelling along the Path to God" (suluk) which is achieved after fana, P. 40.

Bayan Assa'ada, a four-volume "commentary on Qur'an (*tafsir*) in Arabic written by His Holiness Hajj Mulla Sultan Muhammand, Sultan 'Ali Shah, PP. 7, 11.

bay'at, literally, selling; giving one's allegiance. In Islam and particularly in Sufism, it denotes the believer's taking the oath of allegiance to the Holy Prophet, the *Imams* or their rightful successors (*awsiya*). Thus, it is the rite of initiation. There are several Qur'anic verses which point to this, such as: "Verily those who swear allegiance unto you, swear allegiance unto Allah. The Hand of Allah is above their hands" (48:10), PP.27, 66.

dhikr, remembrance. In Sufism, the remembrance of God in the heart and invocation of one of His Names as instructed by the Master. Dhikr is one of the pillars of the "Travelling along the Path" (*suluk*) and should be accompanied with *fikr*, PP. 26, 29, 38, 66.

Dhulfaqr, the two-edged sword of 'Ali (peace be upon him). In Sufism, it designates the invocation (*dhikr*) and meditation (*fikr*), P. 38. See also *fata*.

fana, extinction, annihilation; extinction of one's deeds and attributes in the deeds and attributes of God. It is one of the stations (*maqamat*) of the "Travelling along the Path to God" (*suluk*), P.40.

faqr, literally, poverty; spiritual poverty. Faqr, dervishhood, and Sufism are different terms which are used for the same reality. The true meaning of Faqr (Sufism) and its reality is to "die to oneself" (*fana*) and to "become resurrected in God" (*baqa*), an eternal life which is not followed by death. Without attaining such death and life, one shall not be called *faqir* or Sufi. Thus, Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "He who is not born twice shall not penetrate the kingdom of the heavens and the earth" (cf. st. John, 3:3), PP, 17, 18, 20, 21,27, 46, 52, 63, 64, 70, 79.

fata, a youth, a knight. Fata is used particularly with reference to a person who has kindness, forgiveness, bravery, and other praiseworthy qualities. It is said that 'Ali ibn Abitalib (peace be upon him) was the true fata. He, in the Battle of Uhud, helped the Holy Prophet while most of the Muslims had left him alone. 'Ali, in this battle, fighting with his two-edged sword, Dhulfaqr, gained a glorious victory and saved the life of the Prophet. At that time, on the battlefield, an angel called from Heaven: "There is no fata but 'Ali and no sword but Dhulfaqr," P. 38.

fikr, meditation. In Sufism, it designates directing one's attention to God's Name invoked in the heart of the Traveller (*salik*) by the spiritual guide at the time of initiation (*bay'at*). Fikr is one of the pillars of the "Travelling along the Path" (*suluk*) and is accompanied with the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God, PP. 26, 31, 38, 66.

fuqara, plural of *faqir* (*darvish* in Persian). Faqir is an Arabic word, derived from faqr (poverty), meaning a "poor man." In Sufi terminology, it refers to the poor in spirit and designates the followers of the Sufi path. According to Qur'an (35:15) "O men, you are the poor in relation to Allah, and Allah is the Rich, worthy of all praise." And also when Moses says: "O my lord, surely I have need of whatever good you send down for me" (28:24), PP. 1, 2, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18, 63, 88.

ghaflat, heedlessness, carelessness, negligence. It denotes being negligent of the remembrance of God. And it is said that the source of every evil is the ignorance of God, PP. 27, 41.

ghaybat, occultation; referring to the occultation of the twelfth Imam (the Promise Mahdi) who was born in 256/858. He is the son of the eleventh Imam. After the martyrdom of his father, he became Imam and, by divine command, went into the “minor occultation” which lasted about seventy years. Then, in the year 329/939, his “major occultation” began and will continue as long as God wills it. According to the Holy Prophet: “he will appear and will fill the earth with equity and justice when it is filled with oppression and tyranny”. He is usually mentioned by the titles of the “Support (*Qa'im*) of the Descendants of the Prophet,” the “Imam of the Period,” and the “Lord of the Time,” P. 63.

ghusl, the ritual ablution by which the whole body is washed, PP. 68, 88.

haqiqat-i Muhammadiyah, the “Muhammadan Truth.” It signifies the supreme spiritual reality of the Holy Prophet which is identified with the subtle essence of walayat. It is also called alawiyat-i 'Ali; because after the Prophet, Imam 'Ali was the inheritor of this reality and after him, his successors (awsiya) inherited it. By virtue of accepting walayat and through initiation (bay'at), it will be placed as a seed in the heart of the believer, P. 32.

himmat, literally, aspiration; the spiritual will; directing the heart with all its power towards God in order to obtain a certain purpose for oneself or another. Thus, it is a concentrated spiritual force in the Master, PP. 34, 66.

Hu, (or Huwa) He; the third person masculine singular pronoun in Arabic. In Sufi terminology, it refers to the Almighty God. It should also be noted that the number 121 below Hu means “ya 'Ali (O 'Ali). In a certain Arabic alphabet, abjad, the letter are arranged according to their numerical values. Thus, ya 'Ali (O 'Ali) comprises letters the numerical values of which are 10, 1, 70, 30, 10, which add up to 121, P. 15.

Imam, the leader. In its Shi'ite sense, Imam is the one who is chosen from on high by divine decree (nass) through the Prophet. Hence he is “free from error and sin” (ma'sum). The Imams (peace be upon them) are the only completely legitimate successors to the Prophet. The first Imam, 'Ali, was appointed by the Prophet himself, and each of the others in turn was appointed by his predecessor according to divine decree. The last one, the twelfth Imam, is the hidden Imam who is appear again one day as the promised Mahdi, PP. 65, 67.

inaba, returning, returning to God; one of the Sufi spiritual states (halat). It is necessary for the Traveller (salik) who seeks nearness to God to repent (tawba) of his evil deeds, return to Him, and ask for forgiveness, P. 40.

istikhara, asking favors or guidance. In Islam, it refers to a man's invocation to God when he is undecided as to whether to do something or not, and seeks guidance for a salutary decision. Istikhara is usually done through consulting the Holy Qur'an or by using a rosary, P. 85.

Khal' and Lubs, khal' literally means “to take off” or “to remove” and lubs means “to put on” or “to wear.” The Almighty God has put the “ontological taking off and putting on” in the progression of things. This khal' and lubs is clearly seen in plants, animals, and man. God

takes the imperfect form off them and puts the perfect form on them. This is called the “ontological taking off and putting on.” Similarly, He has also put taking off and putting on in “prescriptive duties” – both in the duties pertaining to the bodily frame (*qalib*) and in the duties pertaining to the heart (*qalb*) – that one’s duty (*taklif*) may be in accordance with one’s creation (*takwin*), P. 40.

*Khidr* (or *Khadir*), literally, the green (or the green one). A mysterious prophet whose figure is a very important one in the spiritual hierarchy of Islam and is closely similar to that of Elias. According to Qur’an (18:60-82), Moses asks a servant of God (i.e. *Khidr*) unto whom God had given His mercy and who had been taught knowledge from His presence: “Shall I follow you so that you may teach me, of what you have been taught, right conduct,” P.26.

*kibrit-i\_ahmar*, red sulphur; another name for elixir, the substance that makes possible the transmutation of base metals into gold. According to a saying (*hadith*) by the sixth Imam: “The believer is rarer and more precious than red sulphur,” P. 91.

*Mawla*, from the same root as *walayāt* meaning Master, spiritual guide as well as the Lord, PP. 31, 32, 38, 39, 40, 43, 49, 50, 52, 58, 91, 94.

*muhasaba*, self-examination; the Traveller’s accounting of his thoughts and deeds on the Path to God. The Holy Prophet has said: “take account of your actions before they take account of you, and weigh yourself before you are weighed, and die before you are dead,” P. 39.

*muraqaba*, attentive observation, constant attention: one’s keeping away from all other than God both inwardly and outwardly, PP. 33, 39.

*Murtadawi*, related to *Murtida*, the spiritual title of the first Imam ‘Ali ibn Abitalib (peace be upon him). He was the cousin, son-in-law, and the legitimate successor of the Prophet. The Sunnis consider him the fourth caliph but in the Shi’te view, he is the successor (*wasī*) of the Prophet and his immediate caliph, P. 16.

*musafaha*, derived from the word “*safh*” meaning “joining one’s hand with another’s.” *Musafaha* is also called *safa* (purity) for its inciting of love, friendship, and intimacy (*uns*). According to a saying (*hadith*) of the Prophet: “If two Muslims meet and perform *musafaha*, their sins will be forgiven before they separate.” *Musafaha* takes place between two believers with their right hands by joining thumbs, fastening their other fingers, and consecutively kissing each other’s hand, PP. 34, 43, 49, 50, 64, 79.

*mustahabb*, (Pl. *mustahabbat*), recommendable, desirable, admirable. It is said of acts whose performance is not obligatory but is admired by the Divine Law (*Shari’at*), P.68.

*namaz-i\_amwat*, the “ritual prayer for the dead.” A ritual prayer (*namaz*) performed for the dead before their burial, P. 59.

*namzz-i\_ayat*, the “ritual prayer of the Signs.” *Ayat* (plural of *ayaṭ*) literally means “signs,” and this ritual prayer (*namaz*) is performed on unusual occasions such as when there is occurrence of earthquake, severe storm, eclipse of the sun or the moon or thunder and lightning, P. 59.

namaz-i 'Idayn, the “ritual prayer on the two Festivals.” *Idayn* literally means two festivals and refers to the two great religious festivals of Islam: the festival of *fitr* and the festival of *adha*. The festival of *fitr* is the festival of the breaking off the fast and is celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month Shawwal, after the ending of the month of Ramadan. The festival of *adha* (meaning sacrifice) is celebrated on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month Dhul-hijja, after completion of the ceremonies and practices of *hajj*, P. 59.

namaz-i khawf, the “ritual prayer of Fear.” A ritual prayer (namaz) which is held when danger threatens one from enemy, P. 59.

namaz-i wauta, the “middle prayer.” It is a prayer referred to in Qur’an as follows: “Be you watchful over the prayer, and the middle prayer” (2:238). Muslim authorities differ as to which of the prayers it is. According to gnostics (*'urafa*), the essence of the middle prayer is in remembering God in one’s heart which, as it is said in Qur’an (29:45), is greater than the ritual prayer (*namaz*): “And perform the prayer; prayer forbids indecency and dishonour, but verily remembrance of Allah is greater,” P. 57.

Ni'matullahi, related to His Highness Nur al-Din Shah Ni'matullah Wali born in 731 A.H.L. (1331 A.D.) and died in 831 A.H.L. (1428 A.D.). He was one of the greatest Sufi *qutbs*, PP. 1, 3, 4, 9, 16, 54, 56, 88.

Nour 'Ali Shah II, His highness Hajj Mulla 'Ali Nour 'Ali Shah II, the eldest son and the successor of his honourable father His Holiness Sultan 'Ali Shah. He was in Bayducht (in Khurasan) on 17<sup>th</sup> Rabi' ath-thani 1284 A.H.L. (1867 A.D.) and martyred on 15<sup>th</sup> Rabi' al-awwal 1337 A.H.L. (1918 A.D.) and was buried in Rayy (near Tehran) in the courtyard of the Imamzadih Hamzeh. His Holiness was succeeded by his son, His Eminence Hajj Shaykh Muhammad Hassan Salih 'Ali Shah. He wrote several books, the most important of which is *Salihya*, PP. 5, 20.

Pand-i Salih, “Salih’s Advice.” *Salih* is originally an Arabic word meaning righteous or pious. But in this text, it refers to the spiritual title of the honorable author in *tariqat*, i.e. Salih 'Ali Shah, PP. 1, 3, 19.

Pir, literally, elder. In Sufism, it denotes the spiritual master without the assistance of whom the Traveller (*sallik*) cannot gain union with God. He is also called *shaykh* (English, sheikh) and *qutb*, PP. 26, 35, 66.

qalb, heart (Persian, *dil*). The Arabic root from which *qalb* is derived has the sense of “turning, revolving, and inverting.” The heart is called *qalb*, because it has two faces. One face of the human heart is turned to the world of spirituality (*malakut*) and the other face to the world of materiality (*mulk*). Thus, it constantly turns from one world to the other, PP. 29, 35, 60.

qiblah, the direction towards which Muslims turn during the ritual prayer (*salat*), namely, towards the Ka'ba in the Masjid-al Haram placed in Mecca, P. 78.

qutb, literally, pole, axis. In Sufism, it designates the Guide or the Master. Thus, he is the axis (*qutb*) around which the spiritual hierarchy (*silsila*) revolves. He is also the “axis of his period” on whom the order of the world depends and by whom it is preserved, PP. 3, 4, 5.

Salihya, a gnostic book written, upon the request of His Highness Hajj Muhammad Hassan Salih Ali Shah, by his father His Highness Hajj Mulla 'Ali Nour 'Ali Shah II (may their graves be sanctified), P. 20

Shab-i Qadr, "the Night of Power." Qadr means power, divine decree, measure, worth, and majesty. Hence Shab-i Qadr is, according to Qur'an, the night of the descent of the Holy Qur'an and it is "better than a thousand months; in it the angels and the Spirit descend" (97:4), P.62.

Shari'at (shar'), literally, road, the public road to the watering-place. But in Islam, it refers to the sacred revealed Law, i.e., the totality of God's Commandments relating to the outer dimension (zahir) of Islam, PP. 47, 55, 56, 60, 64, 73. Cf. tariqat

Sirr, secret, mystery. In Sufi terminology, it also denotes one of the seven subtle essences of the heart (qalb). Thus, it is a subtle essence between the spirit (ruh) and the acrance (khafi). There are different descriptions for it, such as: the source of the mysteries of spirituality or that which is inaccessible to the enticements of the soul (nafs), P. 35.

Sultan 'Ali Shahi, relating to His Holiness Hajj Mulla Sultan Muhammad, called "Sultan 'Ali Shah" (may his grave be sanctified), the grandfather of the honorable author. He was born in Baydukht (near Gunabad in Khurasan) on 28<sup>th</sup> Jumadi al-ula 1251 A.H.L. (1835 A.D.) and martyred on 27<sup>th</sup> Rabi' al-awwal 1327 A.H.L. (1909 A.D.) and was buried there. He became the qutb of the Nimatullahi Order after the death of His Highness Saadat 'Ali Shah by his decree. His Holiness wrote several books, the most important of which is Bayan Assa'ada. After the branching of the Order, the Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Ali Shahi Order became distinguished. Today the Ni'matullahi Sultan 'Ali Shahi Order is one of the largest Sufi Orders, PP. 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 16, 20, 58.

Tabarra, renouncement. In Shi'ite sense, it means renunciation of the enemies of the Saint, P.40. Cf. tawalla

Taqiya, dissimulation. It is the dissimulation of one's religion and the hiding of particular religious practices from the opponents in case of danger. It is also the hiding of words which are not advisable to be said to others. The sources through which taqiya is practiced by the Shi'ites are the Holy Qur'an and the sayings (Ahadith) of the Imams (peace be upon them). According to the Holy Qur'an: "Let not the believers take the unbelievers for their friends, rather than the believers. Whose does that has no connection with Allah unless [it be] that you but guard yourselves against them, taking [as it were] security. Allah warns you that you beware [only] of Him. Unto Allah is the journeying' (3:28). And it is related from one of the Imams (peace be upon them): "Practising taqiya is my religion and it is the religion of my fathers". Besides, it seems to be natural for a wise man to practice it, P.36.

Tariqat, literally, road, private road. In Islamic and particularly in Sufi terminology, it refers to the inner (batin) dimension of Islam, i.e. to the deeds which concern the heart. Thus, it is identified with Sufism, Faqr (Dervishhood), PP. 16, 18, 35, 55, 56. Cf. Shariat,

Tawajjuh, attention. In Sufism, heartfelt attention to God as directed by the Saints. It is the result of the remembrance of God (dhikr) and meditation (fih), PP. 31, 33, 42, 58, 59, 60, 62, 64.

Tawalla, friendship. It is from the same root as walayat and in its Shi'ite sense means befriending the friends of the Saints, P. 40. Cf. Tabarra.

Tayammum, the ritual ablution performed in certain cases with earth instead of water. It is only done for the face and hands, P. 68.

'Ulama (sing. Alim), religious scholars; those who are expert in the Qur'an, Traditions (Ahadith), and the Divine Law (shar'iat), PP.11, 18, 78, 79. Cf. 'urafa.

'Urafa, plural of 'arif meaning the knower, the gnostic. In Sufism, the term signifies he who is possessed of direct knowledge (gnosis or ma'rifat) of God, has attained the spiritual stations, and possesses spiritual perfection, PP. 3, 4, 18, 78.

Walayat, literally, proximity, sainthood, friendship, power, and dominion. Thus, it means proximity to God and friendship with Him. In Qur'an and Qur'anic commentary (tafsir) and Sufi terminology, it refers to the power of spiritual guidance and the function of initiation (bay'at). The Prophet of Islam, like other prophets before him, had this power which His Holiness transmitted to his legitimate successors (awsiya), PP. 16, 35, 38, 39.

Wali, (pl. awliya) friend; friend of God; saint. Derived from the word walayat, wali means one who has attained proximity to God and thus has "spiritual dominion and power" (walayat). Hence in Islam and particularly in Sufism, he is the spiritual Guide, PP. 34, 35.

Wudu, the ritual ablution by which, as instructed, the hands, face and the arms are washed and the wet hands are rubbed on the head and the feet. It is one of the acts of worship, PP. 68, 88.

Zakat, literally, purification, cleaning and progress. It denotes, according to religious scholars, purification of and increase in one's property by the giving of a portion of it to the needy, P. 65.