

Rumi says 'Union with Him is the Night of Power' (Holy Qur'an XCVII)

Diamond Jubilee Spark :: Knowledge & Prayers for Advancement

(PDF version of Enlightenment Post No. 26)



The lit candle represents the Light of Imamat. Let us expand our spiritual hearts to carry this Holy Light. Ameen

**Researched and Compiled by:
Noorallah Juma, Ph.D.**

**SalmanSpiritual.com
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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Ya Ali Madad! The launch of Diamond Jubilee year of Noor Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini Hazar Imam (a.s.) is only 26 days away. To keep up with the momentum, here is another enlightenment post to increase our knowledge and enhance our yearning through Dhikr and Angelic Salwat. This enlightenment post has a dhikr track titled, 'Noore Karim, Ya Rabb' because the divine name Lord (Rabb) alludes to the divine root of the existent things, since God is the "Lord" of all.



Knowledge Section:

The objective of this enlightenment post is to first explore some descriptions of terms from 'The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam' by Cyril Glassé and follow this up with the teachings of Rumi and Ibn al-'Arabi on how to continually harness Light in our ascent to our Origin. The process of enlightenment is just not something which happens like a 'Big Bang'. It is a process of constant unveiling; 'kholo parda' (removing veils) is an endless sequence. According to Ibn al-'Arabi, one has to struggle to get an opening, and then go through the process of seeing sparks of Light through the long road of darkness. Then he says, 'Those noble lights will never cease becoming manifest to him through his acts of spiritual struggle (*mujahada*) and his striving until a greatest light is unveiled for him'. Many people think the vision of the greatest light will happen suddenly. I think this is far from the truth because one has to have capacity to absorb Light. Thus, one has go through the process of constant unveiling first because these are great bestowals.

in our Tariqah, our beloved Holy Imam constantly enlightens and increases the intensity of Light in our souls. The murids and the mumins who perform great seva (unconditional volunteer service) and bandagi should thank Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam for all the Light that he has already invested into their souls. We should all be thankful for the opportunities that the Holy Imam is giving us so that **he** can invest more of his Light in us!

This is how I understand Light upon Light. I will support this concept from the readings from the sources that I have cited above and I will conclude with two examples of how some people experienced higher spiritual enlightenment.

1. Description of Terms

(Source: The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam' by Cyril Glassé, HarperCollins pbk. ed., 1991)

Here are some important terms from the above source:

Laylat al-Qadr: (lit. "night of power" or "destiny"). The night in the year 610 A.D. in which the Koran descended, **in its entirety**, into the soul of the Prophet. It is one of the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan. For this reason the last ten nights of Ramadan are taken to be particularly holy. On that night, the Angel Gabriel first spoke to the Prophet, the Koran was revealed, and the Divine mission began.

The Surah 97 describes the Night of Power as "better than a thousand months ...peace until the rising of the dawn." It is related the Â'ishah, the Prophet's wife, explained that Laylat al-Qadr is the "soul of the Prophet". That is to say, since the Prophet is all of creation in the form of a man, the night corresponds to his soul. This also implies that the true nature of human soul is a receptacle of God's revelation. (p.243)

Please note that the whole of the Holy Qur'an entered into the soul of the Holy Prophet (s.a.s.) on Laylat al-Qadr in year 610 A.D. The Holy Qur'an was revealed to the people over a period of 23 years, i.e. from the time when the Holy Prophet (s.a.s) was 40 years old till the age of 63 years when he passed away.

In order to understand the last sentence of the above definition, we need to understand to understand some basic principles of Sufism:

Sufism: (Ar. at-tasawwuf). The mysticism or esoterism of Islam. ... Sufism is the science of direct knowledge of God; its doctrines and methods are derived from the Koran and Islamic revelation. (p.375)

Sufism is the "inward" path of union, which complements the *shâri'ah*, or "outward" law, namely exoterism, the formal "clothing" of religion. Sufism is esoterism, the perception of the supra-formal essence which is "seen" by "the eye of the heart" (*ayn al-qalb*). All true belief has the "taste" (*dhawq*) of Sufism in it, for without it belief would be theoretical knowledge which committed one to nothing and engaged one in nothing. Sufism takes Islam, and the testimony of faith (*shahâdah*), and removes limitations from the understanding of its meaning until the dividing line between the "world" (manifestation), and Reality (God), has been "pushed back" to the very limit and nothing but God remains. The Koran calls those who know the essence of things "the possessors of the kernels" (*ulû-l-albâb*); in turn Sufis liken esoteric knowledge to a "kernel" (*lubb*), hidden within a shell. This kernel is the "essence" or "intrinsic truth" (*haqîqah*), which resided at the center of the circle of knowledge and, at the same time, contains the circle itself. Leading to this center from the circumference, which is exoterism, is the radius, the Sufic spiritual path (*tariqah*). (p.377)

From the above, we can understand clearly why we practise the Ismaili Tariqah and why we emphasize the esoteric dimension more than the exoteric dimension. Now let us read about the forms of Sufism, especially dhikr:

Sufism has many forms, but always contains two poles: doctrine and method. Doctrine can be summarized as intellectual discrimination between the Real and the unreal, the basis for this being found essentially in the *shahâdah*: "there is no god but God" or "there is no reality but the Reality". Method can be summarized as concentration upon the Real by the "remembrance of God" (*dhikr Allâh*), the invocation of the Divine Name (*dhikr* means "remembrance". "mention", "invocation"). Both doctrine and method must, however, be complemented by perfect surrender to God and the maintenance of an equilibrium through the spiritual regime, which is Islam. (p.377)

Invocation is the quintessential means of actualizing the Divine Presence and passing from intellectual theory to experience and realization. In Scholastic terms this is a movement from potency to act — in effect to "union" with God (*ittihâd*) or the realization of the Oneness of God (*tawhîd*), which is goal of Sufism. (p.377)

The Koran often underlines the importance of invocation in words such as these: "Remember God standing or sitting" (3:191); "...Those who believe and do good works, and remember God much ..." (26:277); and "Surely the Remembrance of God is greatest" (*wa ladhikru-Llahi akbar*) (29:45). The principle of reciprocity between God and man is expressed by God's revealed words: "Therefore remember Me: I will remember you" (*fâdhkurûnî adhkurkum*) (2:152) (p.377)

2. Teachings of Rumi

(Source: The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi by William C. Chittick, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1983))

Chittick writes: Allusion has already been made to a basic goal of the spiritual path: the subjugation of the ego by the intellect. Man's fundamental problem is that he does not perceive things the way they truly are. Since he sees form and not meaning, he falls under the spell of the enchantress, this world. But the touchstone world is not at fault, man's vision is defective; he must begin the task of dispelling illusion within himself.

Rumi says: The "sword of religion" is he who enters combat for religion's sake and whose efforts are totally for God. He discerns correct from incorrect and truth from falsehood. But, he first struggles with himself and rectifies his own character traits. As the Prophet has said, "Begin with your own self!" (F 171/179) (p. 148)

Chittick writes: Everything man can possibly wish to possess is contained within himself. Made in God's image, he embraces all His Attributes. Man's perfected heart is God's throne, but his ego is the veil which prevents him from seeing his true Self. Until the veil is lifted, he will remain in ignorance and error. (p.148)

Rumi says: The great scholars of the age split hairs in all the sciences. They have gained total knowledge and complete mastery of things that have nothing to do with them. But that which is important and closer to him than anything else, namely his own self, this your great scholar does not know. (F 17/30) (p. 148)

Rumi says: Purify yourself from the attributes of self,
so that you may see your own pure essence! (M I 3460) (p. 173)

Chittick writes: Only when man's ego is truly obliterated and annihilated may he properly say "I". But then he is not saying it, for his attributes have been replaced by God's Attributes. At this stage of subsistence on God man truly "carries the Trust" and becomes God's vicegerent on earth, the full and conscious manifestation of His Being. But when a man says "I" before reaching this station, he is affirming the existence of his own self. Even if he is a believer he is saying, "I exist and God exists." But this contradicts the *shahâdah*, which states that 'There is no reality but the Real.' Since "I-ness" is a reality, man's I-ness is unreal. In truth "There is no I but I." But here it is no longer man's "I", it is God's "I". As long as man's ego and selfhood exists, he is an unbeliever and an idolater, for he continues to affirm—in practice if not in theory—that there are two real existents, two "I's." (p.191)

Rumi says: With God, two I's cannot find room. You say "I" and He says "I". Either you die before Him , or let Him die before you; then duality will not remain. But it is impossible for Him to die, either subjectively or objectively, since He is *the Living God, the undying* (XXV 58). He possesses such gentleness that were it possible, he would die for you so that duality may vanish. But since it is impossible for him to die, you die, so that He may manifest to you and duality may vanish. (F 24-25/36) (p. 191)

Chittick writes: At the highest stages, "union" is equivalent to "subsistence" [Baqa] in God. Subsistence in turn is the other side of annihilation [fana]: Annihilation, or the negation of self, ['anê hu(n) khudi karo rasoi' in the sixth verse of the ginan, Abdhu man jite of Pir Hasan Kabirdin] results in subsistence, or the **affirmation of Self**. Union with God is self-affirmation, so separation from Him is self existence [hu(n) khudi]. As long as man continues to live under the illusion of the real existence of his own ego, his own selfhood [hu(n) khudi], he is far from God. Only through the negation of himself [anê hu(n) khudi karo rasoi] can he attain to union with Him. (p.232)

Rumi says: Union with Him is the Night of Power (Koran XCVII), separation from Him the night of the grave—the night of the grave see miraculous a generosity and replenishment from the Night of His Power (D 6169) (p. 233)

I have heard many talks on the topic of Laylat al-Qadr, the Night of Power, but the teaching of Rumi that 'Union with Him is the Night of Power' is a great insight because it is completely consistent with the teaching of Noor Mowlana Sultan Muhammad Shah (a.s.) that every night is Laylat al-Qadr for true mu'mins who perform productive bandagi with full concentration. In their ascent through bandagi they experience union with the Beloved and then come back to this world. Every night is Laylat al-Qadr, the Night of Power, for them. Let us hope, act and pray that we all be blessed with such a lofty status in our personal searches.

The following excerpts from Chittick's book. 'The Sufi Path of Love' clearly describe the potential of each lover of God. The upward journey is long and arduous but the

rewards are immense. These two paragraphs also set the stage for the description of unveiling which occurs in the spiritual journey as described by Ibn al-'Arabi in the next section.

Chittick writes: God's Love, through which the world comes into existence, manifests itself in keeping with two fundamental categories of Attributes: those of Severity and Gentleness. As we have already seen, the whole universe—all its oppositions, conflicts, and variegations—derives from the harmonious interaction of these two Attributes. For the lover, they manifest themselves as separation and union. Hence, both separation and union are performing the same task: making the Hidden Treasure manifest. Through their interplay man is led ever upward towards the full and complete manifestation of the Attributes which are reflected within himself.

In describing the innumerable spiritual stations and states experienced by the lover, the Sufi poets employ a wide range of images and symbols. Although these are drawn from the world of "forms," these are chosen deliberately for the particular "meanings" they express—meanings that are unveiled for the Sufi in his visions and ecstasies. Many of them take on the character of technical terms in Sufi literature. (p.233)

3. **Illumination of the Heart (Qalb)**

(Source: Ibn al-'Arabi's *Metaphysics of Imagination: The Sufi Path of Knowledge* by William C. Chittick, State University of New York Press, 1989)

Chittick writes: Unveiling takes place when God illuminates the heart, enabling it to see into the unseen world. "Opening" (fath, futuh) as discussed in the introduction, is for God to "open the door" to the unseen world through disclosing Himself to the heart, or to "open up" the heart to direct knowledge of Him. The term also signifies the beginning of something, and it is often used to refer to that stage of spiritual ascent when a person enters into the realm of unveiling. The door is opened for him, and he no longer has to follow an authority outside himself. (pp.222-3)

Ibn al-'Arabi says: "If the seeker desires divine loci of witnessing and lordly sciences, he should multiply his nightly vigils and continually multiply within them his concentration (*jam'iyya*). If scattered lights should appear to him such that between each light darkness is interspersed, and if those lights have no subsidence but disappear quickly, this is one of the first marks of acceptance and opening. Those noble lights will never cease becoming manifest to him through his acts of spiritual struggle (*mujahada*) and his striving until a greatest light is unveiled for him. Then the obstructions which prevent people from reaching these knowledges will be removed and mysteries of which he had nothing in himself and by which he was not described will be unveiled for him in their stations. (II 626.3) (p.223)

Please read the [Candle Post No. 119](#) titled 'Unveiling or Self-Disclosure of God' to get a perspective from our ginanic literature.

4. Experiences of Enlightenment (1)

(Source: The Holy Qur'an)

Let us first read the followings ayat from the Holy Qur'an about the luminous hand of Prophet Moses (a.s.):

Transliteration	English Translation
Qaala 'in-kunta ji'-ta bi-'Aayatin fa'-ti bihaaa-'in kunta minas- saadiqiin. (7:106)	He (Pharaoh) said: "If thou hast come with a sign, then bring it, if thou art of the truthful ones." (7:106)
Fa-'alqaa 'Asaahu fa-'izaa hiyu su'-baanum-mubiin! (7:107)	So he (Moses) threw (down) his rod, and lo! It was a serpent clearly seen. (7:107)
Wa naza-'a yadahuu fa-'izaa hiya bay-zaaa-'u lin-naa-ziriin! (7:108)	Then ⁸⁶⁷ drew he (Moses) forth his hand (out of his bosom) and lo! It was white (shining bright) to (all) beholders. (7:108)

How is the Holy Imam's Hand Symbolized in the External World?



The inspiration for the Aga Khan Foundation logo comes from the right hand, a universal symbol of skill, achievement and caring. The fingers symbolize the five pillars of Islam and the five senses of human kind. The symbol was designed in 1978 by Zahour Ul-Akhlaq of Pakistan.

In the story of Prophet Moses (a.s.), the mu'mins in his time could see his luminous hand with their inner eye. Outwardly, we see the hand of Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam as the logo of the Aga Khan Foundation. If the mu'mins in the time of Prophet Moses (a.s.) could see his luminous hand, why would it be not possible for us to see the luminous hand of Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam with the eye of our spiritual hearts?

Experiences of Enlightenment (2)

(Source: 'Early Shi'i Thought—The Teachings of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir' by Arzina R. Lalani, I. B. Tauris, London (2004))

Let us read the following excerpts from the Epilogue of the above-mentioned book:

There is one aspect of the role indicated by his epithet Bâqir al-'Ilm, the one who 'splits open' knowledge. In addition to his importance in the transmission of formal knowledge, he also played the role of a spiritual guide. The Shi'i tradition discussed on chapter four, highlights in particular this characteristic of the imamate, where the concept of 'light' becomes associated with the spiritual quality of an imam's knowledge and his role as a spiritual guide. These two complementary dimensions of knowledge, formal and spiritual, are what makes an imam an imam. It is clear that al-Bâqir's role was perceived as that of a guide and initiator into the inner paths of knowledge and wisdom. This knowledge is experiential and spiritual, realised within the heart of each individual believer.

An illustration of this role of the imam as an embodiment of the knowledge that he radiates can be gleaned from the following account of the dialogue between al-Bâqir and Jâbir al-Ju'fi:

Jâbir related that he once visited Imam al-Bâqir's house and found him reciting words of praise with prayer beads in his hand. Jâbir said within himself, in the awe of the imam's presence, "Truly you are great. Jâbir's account continues:

The Imam raised his head and said to me, 'Truly he is great whom He has made great; and he is knowledgeable whom He has made knowledgeable, through what has come from Him to me. I am the servant of God, glorified and exalted be He!'

I said within myself, 'This is [but] the veil: so what will the Veiled be like!' Then he raised his head toward to me, and I saw a tremendous radiance, a dazzling light that my sight could scarcely bear, and my intellect could scarcely comprehend. Then the imam said [speaking to God], 'This is indeed one of Your Friends.' He then asked me, 'Shall I give [you] more? I said 'This is enough for me'. (pp.127-128)

5. Conclusion:

I have the following excerpts which provide a great synthesis for all of the above content from 'The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam' by Cyril Glassé, HarperCollins pbk. ed., 1991):

All spiritual methods also necessarily involve the practice of virtues, summarized in the concept of *ihsan*, the surpassing of self, which a Sacred Hadith defines thus: "Worship God as if you saw Him, for if you do not see Him, nevertheless, He sees you." To this the Sufis add: "And if there were **no** you, you would see", and make the summation of mystical virtue the quality of "spiritual poverty" (*faqr*). By *faqr*, they mean emptying the soul of the ego's false "reality" in order to make way for what God wills for the soul. They seek to transform the soul's natural passivity into re-collected wakefulness on the present, mysterious active as symbolized by the transformation of Moses' hand. Humility and love of one's neighbor cut at the root of the illusion of the ego and remove those faults within the soul that are obstacles to the Divine Presence. "You will not enter paradise", the Prophet said, "until you love one another". The disciple should live in surroundings and in an ambience that are aesthetically and morally compatible with spiritual interiorization, in the sense that "The Kingdom of God is within you". The need for such supports for the spiritual life can be summed up in the Hadith: "God is beautiful and He loves beauty. Ibn 'Atâ Allâh wrote:

Among the attributes of your human nature, draw away every one that is incompatible with your servanthood, so that you may be responsive to the call of God and near His Presence.

As he also points out, the path is surpassing the self:

The source of each disobedience, indifference, and passion is self-satisfaction. The source of every obedience, vigilance, and virtue is dissatisfaction with one's self.

As we approach the launch of the Diamond Jubilee of Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam, May Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam fill all our spiritual hearts with his NOOR and nothing else! may we all be blessed with Zaheri-Noorani Didar and many, many Batini-Noorani Didars in our personal search for higher spiritual enlightenment through the Noor of Mowlana Hazar Imam. Ameen.

Dhikr Section: New Luminous Dhikr Titled Noore Ali, Noore Karim

Since we are in the theme of Imamatus and enlightenment, the luminous dhikr titled Noore Ali, Noore Karim is most appropriate as we approach the launch of the Diamond Jubilee. The aspect of Noor (Light) makes the Ismaili Imamatus unique, therefore, let us perform the luminous dhikr of Noore Ali, Noore Karim with utmost humility and tenderness of the heart (length 2 min 47 sec; 3.8 MB). Let this dhikr ring in our spiritual hearts and create an aspiration to actualize the Light of the Holy Ahlul-Bait and Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam so that our spiritual hearts are filled with this NOOR and nothing else. Ameen. The lyrics for the 40 beads are given below:

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Download [Noore Ali Noore Karim sound track](#) in mp3 format

Noore Ali, Noore Muhammad; (12 times)

[The Light of Ali and Light of Muhammad (are one)]

Noore Ali, Noore Karim; (12 times)

[The Light of Ali is the Light of Karim Shah (through the Chain of Imamatus)]

Noore Karim, Hazar Imam (12 times)

[All the above Lights are One Light which is in Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam]

Noore Ali, Noore Muhammad; (1 time)

[The Light of Ali and Light of Muhammad (are one)]

Noore Ali, Noore Karim; (1 time)

[The Light of Ali is the Light of Karim Shah (through the Chain of Imamatus)]

Noore Karim, Hazar Imam (2 times)

[All the above Lights are One Light which is in Noor Mowlana Hazar Imam]

Al-hamdu lillahi rabbil 'alamin

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds!

Reaffirmation of Baiyat:

Let us also reaffirm our baiyat to our Holy Imam, NOOR Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini Hazar Imam by reciting the Shahada from the second part of our Holy Dua:

"La ilaha illallah, Muhammadur-Rasoolullah, 'Aliyyun Amirul-Mu'mineen 'Aliyullah, Mowlana Shah Karim ul Hussaini, Al-Imamul Hazarul Maujood."

"There is no deity except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, 'Ali - the master of believers - is from Allah. Our Lord Shah Karim Al-Hussaini is our present and living Imam"

Angelic Salwat Nazrana:

Let us now start presenting a nazrana of at least **101 salwats** or **continuous salwat for 3 to 5 minutes** to our beloved NOOR Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini Hazar Imam for the fulfillment of our noble wishes. May our beloved Mowla continually keep us on the Right Path. Ameen.

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Listen to Real audio streams online:

[\[33 times\]](#) | [66 times](#) | [99 times](#) | [198 times](#) | [990 times](#)

or download [33 salwat sound track](#) in mp3 format

[Allâhumâ salli alâ Muhammadin wa âle Muhammad \(1\)](#)
(O Allah! Bestow Peace on and through Muhammad and his Descendants)

[Allâhumâ salli alâ Muhammadin wa âle Muhammad \(2\)](#)
(O Allah! Bestow Peace on and through Muhammad and his Descendants)

[Allâhumâ salli alâ Muhammadin wa âle Muhammad \(3\)](#)
(O Allah! Bestow Peace on and through Muhammad and his Descendants)

[Allâhumâ salli alâ Muhammadin wa âle Muhammad \(4\)](#)

[Allâhumâ salli alâ Muhammadin wa âle Muhammad \(5\)](#)
(O Allah! Bestow Peace on and through Muhammad and his Descendants)

Al-hamdu lillahi rabbil 'alamin.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds!

May NOOR Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini Hazar Imam (a.s.) grant peace, prosperity, happiness, barakat, higher spiritual enlightenment, spiritual & luminous tayid (help) and empowerment to you, your family, your Jamat and the worldwide Jamat! Ameen.

Rakh Mowla je Noor te Yaqeen (Certainly, we trust in Mowla's Light only)

Haizinda – Qayampaya

(Our Present Imam is Living and His NOOR is Eternal)

Your spiritual brother in religion,
Noorallah Juma (noor-allah@salmanspiritual.com)
SalmanSpiritual.com
Friday, June 16, 2017