

# THE LIFE HISTORY OF NĀŠIR-AL-MILLAT

WRITTEN BY

MIRZĀ AHMAD HĀSAN KĀTHĪMAINĪ



TRANSLATED BY

SHEIKH ABBAS RAZA



In the handwriting of *Al-Shaheed-al-Rāb'i; Mirzā Mohāmmad Kāmil-al-Dehlawī*  
(d.1225/1810)

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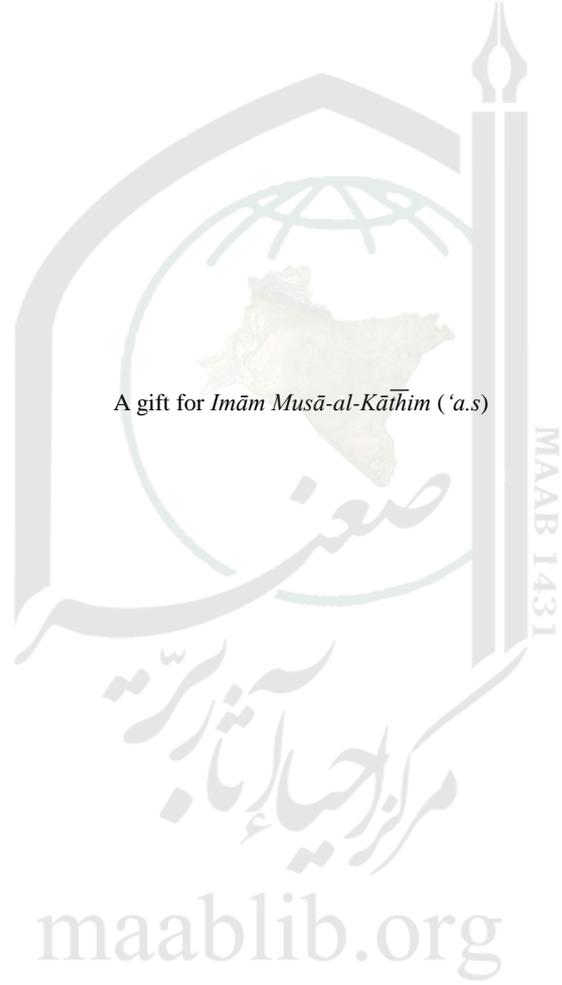
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A gift for *Imām Musā-al-Kāthim* ('a.s)

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## PUBLISHERS NOTE

The team here at The Indian Sub-Continental Literal Revival Centre takes pleasure in the publishing of their second, of hopefully many English books. There are thousands of books that have been written by the scholars of the sub-continent, however only a small number are available for us today. The centre aims to revive the works of past scholars and academics from the Indian sub-continent. Till today, we have published a number of books and magazines in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, including the life history of *Shaheed Thālith; Qādhi Nūrullāh Shustarī* in English.

There is no doubt that around the globe the most commonly used language is English. Therefore, the writing and publishing of works in English is vital. The life history of sub-continental scholars and their works is a topic rarely discussed, due its material either still being in manuscript form or in languages other than English.

We would like to take this opportunity to especially thank *Sheikh Abbas Raza* for his continues hard work, who has taken the weighty responsibility of English texts and translations upon his shoulders. This is the second of his books which is being published by the centre and we pray that may he continue producing such valuable works, so the world of English readers remains benefitting from him.

We ask *Allāh* to help us in this weighty and difficult task, so the world can see the efforts and hardships the scholars have gone through in the service of religion.

Manager

*Tāhir 'Abbās A'awān*



## TRANSLATORS NOTE

There is no doubt for every religion and school of thought one of the most important factors of their existence and survival is their heritage. The *Shi'ah* school, similar to other walks of life is rich in its heritage and what it has inherited from its academics. From the coming of *Islām* till today scholars have remained steadfast and persistent in their attempts in propagating the message of the most rightful of paths.

During the early months of us coming to the Islamic seminary in the holy city of *Qum*, we were blessed in meeting some scholars, who we can honestly say will remain our friends till we are alive. Amongst them were *Sayyid Mohsin Kashmirī*, *Mujtabā Sirīnejād* and *Shaykh Tāhir 'Abbās A'awān* (may *Allāh* prolong their lives).

*Shaykh Tāhir* a pious and humble individual and an expert in the textual works written by scholars of the Indian sub-continent. After writing his thesis, came to the conclusion that the *Shi'ah* scholars of the sub-continent collectively have written approximately 40,000 books, yet only a minute number of them are in our hands today. This is what caused him to establish a research centre in quest of finding and reviving their works.

This made us realise that the topic of heritage and the authorships of scholars was something that was hardly ever discussed and something not many people had much information about. Therefore, after seeing its importance we decided to begin working in this field.

This book is a translation of the book *Hālāt Nāsir-al-Millat* originally in *Urdu* written by *Mirzā Ahmad Hasan-al-Kāthīmanī*, discussing the life history of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain*. Even though there are other works about *Sayyid Nāsir Husain*, experts suggest that this particular book is most detailed and complete in its mentioning's.

As the original book is in *Urdu*, we have tried our best in translating it into English which is easily understood by the majority of readers. Those

places where we believed were in need of further explanation we have clarified them in the footnotes.

All non-English words have been transliterated in the form they are best pronounced, further details of which have been discussed in the Note on Transliteration section. Also, we have attempted to present the book, as was intended by the author, taking in to consideration what is most understandable in English. In the footnotes, any reference to the book *Sabikat-al-Lujain* is the work of *Sayyid Mohsin Kashmiri* who previously edited the original *Urdu* text.

We would like to thank our brothers *Sayyid Hadi Radhawī* and *Sayyid Mohsin Shāh* -may *Allāh* prolong their lives- who gave their valuable time in proof reading and amending the translation.

After reading this book we hope people realise the hardships and struggles scholars of the past have bared in order to pass on to us the message of the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('a.s) and they take an active role in propagating their efforts, so the world comes to know the value of *Shia* 'ism in terms of its knowledge and its effects on the world of sciences till today.

We hope that *Allāh* (swt) accepts this unworthy effort of ours and gives us the opportunity in continuing in producing such works.

*Sheikh Abbas Raza*

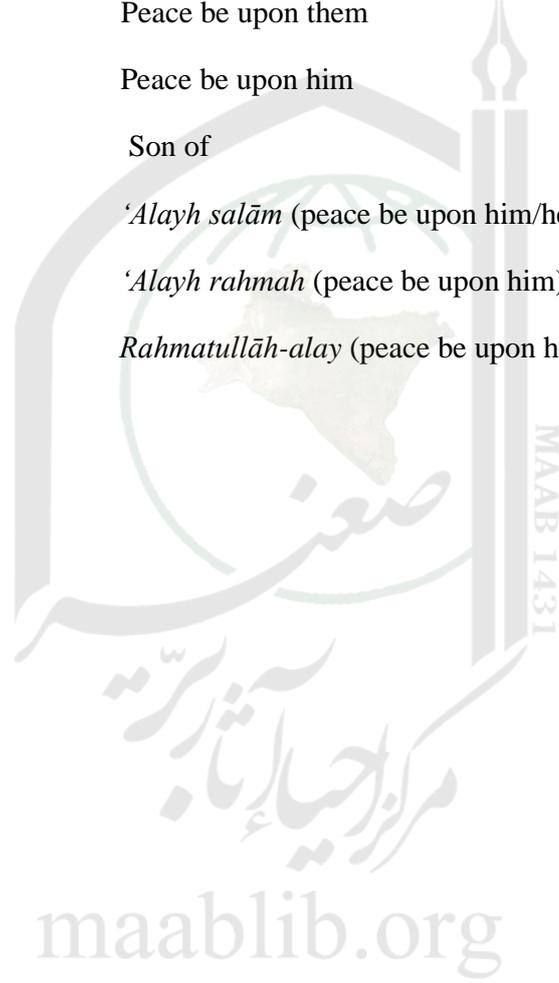
The Holy City of *Qum*

23/03/1438 = 23/12/2016

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## ABBREVIATIONS

( <i>s.w.t</i> )	<i>Subhānahu wa t'ālā</i> (the Sublime and Great)
(pbut)	Peace be upon them
(pbuh)	Peace be upon him
(bin/ibn)	Son of
('a.s)	' <i>Alayh salām</i> (peace be upon him/her/them)
('a.r)	' <i>Alayh rahmah</i> (peace be upon him)
(r.'a)	<i>Rahmatullāh-alay</i> (peace be upon him)





## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

(Consonants)			(Vowels)
ء	‘	ط	i Long : ı́ = ā
ا	a	ظ	ı̄ = ū or oo <sup>1</sup>
ب	b	ع	‘ <sup>2</sup> ı̄ = ī or ee <sup>3</sup>
ت	t	غ	gh
ث	ı̄h	ف	f Short : ı̄ = a
ج	j	ق	ı̄ = o,u
ح	h	ك	ı̄ = i,y
خ	kh	ل	l
د	d	م	m Doubled <sup>4</sup> : ı̄ = mm
ذ	ı̄h	ن	n
ر	r	و	w or v Diphthong <sup>5</sup> : ı̄ = aw
ز	z	ه	h ı̄ = ay
س	s	ي	y
ش	sh		
ص	s		
ض	dh		

<sup>1</sup> As, oo is used in English, in words such as soon.

<sup>2</sup> Before the letters; a, ā, i, ī, o and ū.

<sup>3</sup> Similar to oo, in English ee is also used like seen.

<sup>4</sup> I.e. gemination or consonant elongation mark.

<sup>5</sup> Meaning, when a word has two sounds. Similar to the words; coin and land.

All non-English words are in *Italic* and have been written as they are written in *Urdu*, regardless of if they are pronounced differently. We find some translators when transliterating do not differentiate between letters such as; ض, ظ, ذ and ز. They may write them all as the letter z. People from the sub-continent and *Irān* may have the same letters in their own alphabet, but may pronounce them all in the same way. And if a translator is from one of the backgrounds mentioned then they are likely to transliterate words as they are pronounced by themselves. As mentioned, every letter is pronounced in a specific way. Therefore, we believe the correct method of transliterating is in a way that if the reader sees a word transliterated they will straight away know how it is written in that language, without getting confused in those letters which are pronounced similar to one another.

Usually dots are placed underneath letters to separate them from other letters which are similar. For example, to differentiate between the letters ه and ح, a dot is placed underneath the letter ه, to show it is ح and not ه.

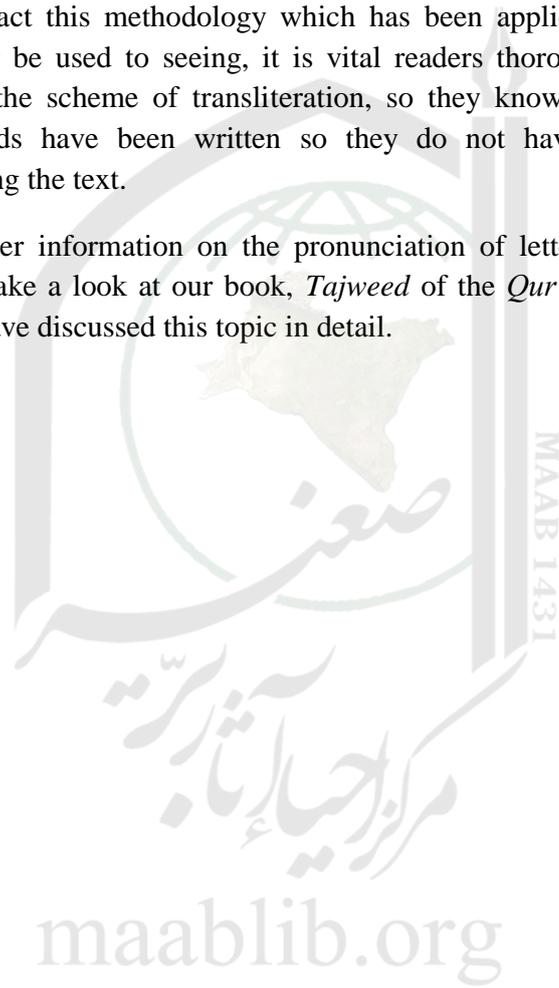
We on the other hand, have placed dots and lines above or below letters in accordance to how they are pronounced. For example, the letter ه is pronounced from the very bottom of the throat and is written simply as h. The letter ح on the other hand, is also pronounced from the throat however, from a place slightly higher than the letter ه. In order, to illustrate this, instead of the dot being placed under the letter we have chosen to place it, i.e. ĥ. The same formula has been applied for the letters س and ص, whereby ص is written š and the letters ت and ط, whereby ط is written ‘t’.

Also, the letters ظ, ذ and ث are all written as th. The letter ذ is simply written as th, with no addition signs. The letters ظ and ث on the other hand, similar to that mentioned above, due to the difference in the places of their pronunciation, there is a line either above or below the letters th, so the two can be told apart. For example, الحارث is written *al-Hārith*, with a line underneath the letters th and العظیم is written *al-‘Atheem*, with a line above the letters th.

The letters ع and ء are written as apostrophise ('). For the letter ع it is placed before the letters best denoting its pronunciation and for the letter ء it comes after. For example, العلم is written *al-'ilm* and المؤمن is written *al-mo'min*.

Due to fact this methodology which has been applied, is not what readers may be used to seeing, it is vital readers thoroughly read and understand the scheme of transliteration, so they know how and why certain words have been written so they do not have difficulty in understanding the text.

For further information on the pronunciation of letters, readers are advised to take a look at our book, *Tajweed of the Qur'aan-al-Majeed*, where we have discussed this topic in detail.





## GLOSSARY

<i>Ahl-al-Bait</i>	literally means “the people of the house”, i.e. the immediate family of Prophet <i>Mohammad</i> which includes beside the Prophet, ‘ <i>Ali, Fā’imah, Ḥasan</i> and <i>Husain</i> .
<i>Ahl-al-Sunnah</i>	the followers of the four <i>Rāshidī</i> caliphs.
<i>Allāmah</i>	a title given to a person of great intelligence and intellect.
<i>Ansāb</i>	plural for the <i>nasab</i> meaning genealogy/lineages.
‘ <i>Āshurā</i>	the tenth day of the first Islamic month, <i>Muharram</i> .
<i>Āyatullāh</i>	this title usually given to a scholar able to practice <i>Ijtihād</i> .
<i>Azādāri</i>	gatherings of mourning and lamentation.
<i>Bushehr</i>	lies in a vast plain running along the coastal region on the Persian Gulf coast of south-western <i>Irān</i> .
<i>Divān</i>	Anthology of poems.
<i>Ḥadeeth</i>	a narration or tradition quoted by an infallible.
<i>Ḥanaftī</i>	one who is associated with the jurisprudential school of <i>Abu Ḥaneefah</i> .
<i>Ḥijāz</i>	also known as the ‘Western Province’, is a region in the west of the present-day <i>Saudi Arabia</i> .
<i>Hujjat-al-Islām</i>	a title given to a scholar.

<i>Husainia</i>	see <i>Imāmbārah</i> .
<i>Ijtihād</i>	the level of study when one is able to extract Islamic laws.
<i>Imām</i>	generally means 'leader' but is also used specifically for the twelve infallible apostles of the <i>Shi'ah</i> school of thought.
<i>Imāmbārah</i>	a place where mourning and grieving gatherings take place.
<i>Majlis</i>	literally means place of sitting and denotes the gatherings where the remembrance of the <i>Ahl-al-bait</i> take place.
<i>Majālis</i>	plural of <i>majlis</i> .
<i>Masjid</i>	mosque.
<i>Mātam</i>	lamentation.
<i>Meer</i>	see <i>sayyid</i> .
<i>Mohaqqiq</i>	researcher.
<i>Molvi</i>	clergyman.
<i>Musawī</i>	a <i>Sayyid</i> whose lineage goes back to <i>Imām Musā-al-Kāthim</i> ('a.s).
<i>Mufti</i>	one who offers decrees.
<i>Muhaddith</i>	an expert in the science of <i>hadeeth</i> .
<i>Muharram</i>	the first Islamic month.
<i>Mujtahid</i>	the title given to one who practices <i>ijtihad</i> , see <i>ijtihad</i> .
<i>Nasab</i>	singular for the word <i>ansāb</i> , see <i>ansāb</i>

<i>Nawāb</i>	an honorific title ratified and bestowed by the reigning <i>Mughal</i> emperor to semi-autonomous <i>Muslim</i> rulers of princely states in South Asia.
<i>Rabee`i-al-Awwal</i>	the third Islamic month.
<i>Rabee`i-al-Ukhrā</i>	the fourth Islamic month.
<i>Rajab</i>	the seventh Islamic month.
<i>Ramadhān</i>	the ninth Islamic month.
<i>Rijāl</i>	literally means ‘men’, but is the science related to narrators of traditions and their histories.
<i>Risālah</i>	treatise.
<i>Sādāt</i>	plural of <i>sayyid</i> .
<i>Šafar</i>	the second Islamic month.
<i>Sayyid</i>	the name given to one from the decedents of the holy Prophet’s bloodline.
<i>Sh`abān</i>	the eighth Islamic month.
<i>Shaheed-al-Thalith</i>	means ‘the third martyr’, but is specific for <i>Shaheed Qādhi Nūrullāh Shushtarī</i> .
<i>Šufī</i>	one attributed to the <i>Šufī</i> sect.
<i>Sultān</i>	a <i>Muslim</i> sovereign.
<i>Thi-al-Hajjah</i>	the twelfth Islamic month.
<i>Thi-al-Q`adah</i>	the eleventh Islamic month.
<i>Ziyārah</i>	a form of pilgrimage to sites associated with the holy Prophet, his family members and worthy companions



## THE AUTHOR



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*Mirzā Aḥmad Ḥasan-al-Kāthīmainī* (b.1328/1910 - d.1384/1964)



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The honourable *Hāji Mullā Mirzā Aḥmad Ḥasan* son of *Molvi Ṣafdar Ḥusain*, born in the year 1328/1910 on the eighth of *Jamādi-al-Ukhrā*. He was a renowned, knowledgeable and intelligent individual. His father *Ṣafdar Ḥusain* was famous for his traditional style of preaching, and included topics like the famous *Mukhtār Nāmāh*.

*Mirzā Aḥmad Ḥasan* lived in the *Kāthimain* village of *Lucknow* hence why he was named *Kāthimainī*. Other than attaining the position of *Ṣadr-al-Afādhil* was able to pass the government board exams and was also given certificates in English.

He was a teacher of Islamic studies in the *Shi'ah* college (*Lucknow*). A very skilled individual in Arabic text and poetry and has written elegies and poems of his own.

The author of *Mail'a Anwār* says, he has a published copy of one his books by the name *Sawāniḥ Ḥayāt Nāṣir-al-Millat*. Other than this, he was responsible for the publishing of an Arabic monthly magazine; by the name *Al-Adeeb*.

*Mirza Aḥmad* travelled from *Lucknow* to eastern *Uganda*; *Kampala* and was busy in fulfilling his religious duties there. In the year 1381/1962 he went to *Karāchi* where he was the head teacher in the *Wā'itheen Madrissah*.

Not long after, in the year 1384/1964, on Thursday the fifteenth of October he passed away <sup>6 7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> See, *Mail'a Anwār* by *Sayyid Murtadhā Ḥusain*, *Karāchi* edition, p.87.

<sup>7</sup> Also a couple of days before this book went for printing, we were informed that his grave is in the *Meveh Shāh* graveyard in *Karāchi*. A photo of his grave is on the bottom of the front cover and was attained by *Aqeel 'Abbās A'awān* with the guidance of the grandson of *Mirzā Aḥmad*; *Molānā Moḥammad 'Abbās Kāthimainī*.



## PUBLISHERS NOTE <sup>8</sup>

The death of his eminence, *Hujjat-al-Islām Šadr-al-Mohaqqiqeen Āyatullāh Molānā Nāsir-al-Millat* (The Helper of the Nation), *Sayyid Nāsir Husain Musawī Naishāpoorī* ('a.r) left the Muslim nation and the academic world in distress and sorrow, especially the *Shi'ah*. From *India* to *Arabia* all were in a state of mourning. From all sectors, private and personal, people and communities came together to commemorate this tragic event.

The believers gathered in *Sādāt Ganj*, a place indebted to this honourable man. As it was in this village, from the year 1303/1886 in the *Kufah* mosque (*Kāthimain*), *Nāsir Husain* would lead prayers on Friday and would give talks. There was not a single person from here that had not positively benefited or received his blessings. His compassion drew him towards the hurts and pains of the people and he was a helping hand for them in their troublesome times. Even children were amongst those who were bestowed compassion.

It was due to this love and affection, after hearing the news of his death, the sorrow and bereavement of the people was indescribable. Every house was full of grievors and there was lamentation amongst the women. Everyone felt as if the shadow of their father had been lifted from their heads.

In remembering this heart-breaking event, on an individual basis, many people organised gatherings of "*Fātiḥah Khāni*" for sending blessings to the deceased soul. Also collectively, similar gatherings for the same purpose were also arranged.

It was for a large gathering in particular, a committee was brought together, the leader of which was *Hakeem Sayyid A'aṭham* and the son of *Hakeem Meeran* who became a real-life illustration of the proverb; "*the*

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<sup>8</sup> This is the publishers note which was in the original book in *Urdu* and due to its historical features and benefits we have also translated it and brought it as it was published.

name chosen from the hat, was taken on my name” and was made its secretary. *Hakeem Meeran* says:

“this worthless being has no belonging, it was due to the spiritual bounties and countless hardships of the repented, everything -thanks to Allāh- was carried out smoothly and according to plan”

As prearranged by the committee, on the first of *Sh'abān* 1361/1942 in the *Kufah* mosque a *majlis* took place. The speech was given by “The Leader of the Orators and Speakers”, *Molānā Sayyid ibn Ḥasan Nunheravī* and was seen as a success. Even though due to rain, the ground was muddy and people struggled to attend, still three quarters of the hall was full of listeners. Nevertheless, on a collective level, the *majlis* was seen as a great and praiseworthy gathering but afterwards nothing was distributed to those who attended <sup>9</sup>.

In regard to this, the majority of committee members suggested the funds which were left from the *majlis* should be used in writing the life history of *Sayyid*, which should then be published and distributed free of cost - as it is something beneficial and classed as being related to the *majlis*. Furthermore, it would be a lasting memory of *Sayyid* and if, as it is believed, the funds are not enough for such a task then committee members with the aid of their fundraisers would have the responsibility of covering the remaining costs.

The task of writing the biography of *Sayyid* was given to *Mullā Molānā Aḥmad Ḥasan*, professor of *Shi'ah* studies in the Inter-College of *Lucknow*, and an important figure of the committee itself. He accepted this request. It was thought the book would be published quickly however, due to his heavy work load and other responsibilities, he was unable to give it his full attention. This stretched to the time that the sacred body of *Sayyid* was ready to be taken to *Āgrāh* <sup>10</sup>. As a result of the continuous requests and him realizing that for such work there will

<sup>9</sup> After *Majālis*, there is usually the custom of distributing something like food amongst the people who attend.

<sup>10</sup> As, for a period of time his body was entrusted in *Karbalāi Ameen-al-Dawlah Bahādur*. See chapter His Death, p.57.

not be another opportunity, he took the time out and in the short period of three to four days he wrote a life history of the deceased *Nāṣir Ḥusain* and then gifted it to the believers.

In its publishing process; the lack of time, the expense of materials and especially the scarcity of paper were some of the hardships which were faced, let alone other problems which cannot be described. Fortunately, once printed many people of *Sādāt Ganj* were able to acquire this ever-lasting memory.

Finally, as helper of the committee, I would like to thank all members and people who, in whatever way helped and contributed for this cause. A special thanks to *Molānā Aḥmad* whose pen saved me and lightened my shoulders from this weighty responsibility.

*Khādim Fidā Husain*

This *Musawī Sayyid* and extraordinary researcher has sanctified this book with the blessings of his forefather *Imām Musā Kāthim* ('a.s). In a sense, all citations orbit and revolve around him ('a.s). Like his great grandfather, next to his holy shrine, in the *Kufah* mosque he would also speak the truth from the pulpit and devoted his whole life in research and spreading knowledge. It was as if the people of *Sādāt Ganj* were living under the shadow of *Imām* ('a.s) himself and I personally have been granted the honour of being a caretaker of this sacred place.

With all that mentioned, we ask "*The door of Requests*"<sup>11</sup> to accept this humble effort of ours and for it to be a means of our forgiveness and mercy.

Brought up in the kingdom of '*Bāb-al-Murād*'

*Mirzā Aḥmad Ḥasan-al-Kāthimainī* (may *Allāh* forgive him)

9<sup>th</sup> *Rabee 'i-al-Awwal* 1342/1923

<sup>11</sup> Denoting the Arabic: *Bāb-al-Ḥawāij*, a title given to *Imām Kāthim* ('a.s) and others due to them being special mediums between the believers and *Allāh* (swt)-



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## THE MUSAWĪ LINEAGE

The progeny of *Imām Musā Kāthim* (‘a.s) is divided in to numerous branches from *Imām ‘Ali-al-Ridhā* (‘a.s) and his other sons. From them, was *Ḥamzah* entitled *Abu-al-Qāsim* and he was a very worthy and noble individual. In the book *Tuḥfat-al-Azhār fī Nasab Abnā’ A’imat-al-Athār* when mentioning him, the author *Ibn Shadqam Madanī* writes:

*“He was of high status, knowledgeable, educated, a possessor of respect and dignity from amongst his own people and others”*

In his life history it is recorded, alongside his great brother *Imām Ridhā* (‘a.s) he remained firm footed in his beliefs and faith and remained beside his brother in all his requests and affairs. The *Imām* (‘a.s) loved him very much and being separated from him was something he (‘a.s) could not bear.

Even when *M’moon ‘Abbāsī* forcefully ordered *Imām* (‘a.s) to be exiled to a distant land, he (‘a.s) took his brother with him. He remained at the service of *Imām* (‘a.s) and helped him until the end and never separated from him. To the extent, it was only a few days after that the *Imām* (‘a.s) was martyred from the oppressive hands of *M’moon*, he was also killed.



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## THE NAISHĀPOOR FAMILY

After *Ĥamzah*, his family remained in *Irān* and grew in number. In the fourth/tenth century the vast number of family members from his lineage were prominent and recognised individuals. They lived in *Naishāpoor* and were deeply respected and valued in the eyes of the people. The majority of the *Musawī* households that are in *India* are the branches of this family from *Naishāpoor*, who in different eras left *Naishāpoor* and migrated to *India*.

For example, the family of *Nawāb Sayyid Mohāmmad Ameen* famous by the name *Nawāb S'ādat Khān*; *Burhān-al-Mulk* and the fundraiser of the *Awadh*<sup>12</sup> government was settled in *Awadh* and *Bengāl*. His family is also a branch of this very family from *Naishāpoor*.

Similarly, the *Sādāt* of *Shamsābād*, *Barast* and *Karnāl* also originate from this *Naishāpoorī* lineage. The *Chishtī* of the *Ajmair* family are also said to be a branch of this very family, but *Allāh* knows best.

These were some of the profound, respected and recognised families of *Naishāpoor* who migrated from *Irān* to *India*. Here, it is worth mentioning another family of the *Sādāt* from *Kantoor*, a brief history of which follows:

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<sup>12</sup> Known in British historical texts *Oudh* or *Oude*, all derived from *Ayodhya*, is a region in the modern Indian state of *Uttar Pradesh* and a small area of *Nepal*'s Province 5.



## THE KANTOOR FAMILY

From the lineage of *Abu-al-Qāsim, Hamzah* the son of *Imām Musā Kāthim* ('a.s) in the tenth generation there is the great *Sayyid Sharf-al-Deen Abu Tālib*. He is the elevated *Kantoorī* who joins this family to its origin of *Naishāpoor*. It was in the eighth/fourteenth century he along with his family left *Naishāpoor* and travelled to *India* during the rule of the *Tughlaq* dynasty <sup>13</sup>.

A son of *Sayyid* <sup>14</sup> became part of *Sultān Mohammad Tughlaq's* <sup>15</sup> army and not long after was granted a high post within it. During the time he was an officer he performed many worthy and good deeds which resulted in the King giving him a lot of respect and attention. The people of the court after seeing his quick transition started to burn with jealousy. This gave them an opportunity to fill the ears of the King with satanic whispers. They deceived the King so much, it caused him to have suspicions about him and due to the trickery of the enemy, he had him unlawfully killed.

Not long after, the truth transpired and the King realised his execution was based on false proofs, leaving him in great regret and sorrow. The enemies were punished and the father of the deceased *Sayyid, Sayyid Sharf-al-Deen Abu Tālib*, was offered condolences and given gifts and comforts as a sign of the King's devastating mistake. It is said, he was bestowed nine hundred plots, which were located on either side of the

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<sup>13</sup> Was a *Muslim* dynasty of Turkic origin which ruled over the *Dehli* sultanate in medieval *India*, Lombok, E.J. Brills First Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 5 pp.30, 129-130. Its reign started in 1320/1902 in *Dehli* when *Ghāzi Malik* assumed the throne under the title of *Ghiyāth-al-Deen Tughlaq*. The dynasty ended in 1413/1992, Edmund Wright (2006), A Dictionary of World History, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Oxford University Press.

<sup>14</sup> I.e. a son of *Sayyid Sharf-al-Deen; Abu Tālib*.

<sup>15</sup> Also referred to as, Prince *Fakhr Malik, Jaunā Khān* and *Ulugh Khān*; died on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March in the year 1351. He was the eldest son of *Ghiyās-al-Deen Tughlaq* of the *Tughlaq* dynasty, Douie, James M. (1916) *The Panjāb North West Frontier Province and Kashmir* Cambridge University Press, p. 171.

river *Ghāgharā* <sup>16</sup>. He, alongside his remaining relatives moved to *Kantoor* towards the western side of the river and made it the centre and dominant point for his own settlement, which till today is populated with settlers.

The loss of his son made him detached and distant from the world, hence why the rest of his life passed in worship and prayer. He became disconnected from the material world and it is said that due to his piousness, he was blessed with mystical attributes and wonders. Till today his grave in *Kantoor* is a monument of visiting for both the *Sunni* and the *Shi'ah*, a place where prayers are answered and requests are granted.

After he passed away, his son *Sayyid 'Iz-al-Deen Mohāammad* took his place. His wife was from his family and was amongst those who left *Naishāpoor* and came with him. After coming to *Kantoor* their son was born and they named him *Sayyid Abu-al-Muṭṭaffar; A'alā-al-Deen Ḥusain*. He was the first of the *Sayyid's* to be born in *Kantoor* and it was from him the lineage of the *Sādāt* continued. He enjoyed the honour of being *Sayyid* from both his mother and fathers side. This is why in the family trees of the *Kantoorī Sādāt* he is given the title, '*Sayyid-al-Sādāt*'<sup>17</sup> and *A'alā Buzurg* <sup>18</sup>. Another opinion suggests he was given such titles due to the high level of knowledge he possessed.

Nevertheless, the Almighty showered this family with mercy and blessings and in a short period its divisions became extensive and wide-spread. Its branches flourished so much, that today we find families from his bloodline settled in *Jarwal, Behrāj, Divān* in *Fatahpoor, Charkāharī* in *Lucknow* and it is this very household which gave the world grand personalities such as; *Allāmah Ghulām Ḥusain Kantoorī, Justice*

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<sup>16</sup> *Karnali*, also called *Ghāghara* is a perennial trans-boundary river originating on the *Tibetan Plateau* near the lake *Mansarovar*. It cuts through the *Himalayas* in *Nepal* and joins the *Shardā* river at *Brahmaghat* in *India*.

<sup>17</sup> Meaning "The Leader of the *Sayyid's*".

<sup>18</sup> Meaning "The Exalted and Great".

*Karāmat Husain, Allāmah Mohāmmad Quli, Firdaws Māb* <sup>19</sup> and *Nāsir-al-Millat*.



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<sup>19</sup> This is the title given to *Allāmah Meer Hāmid Husain*, the eminent father of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain*.



The purpose of writing this treatise is to discuss the life history of the last of them i.e. *Nāsir-al-Millat*. This is why details of the other family members have not been mentioned. However, short biographies of *Allāmah Mohāmmad Quli* and *Firdaws Māb* have been presented.





## ALLĀMAH QULI

In the *Kantoorī* family tree from the lineage of *Sayyid-al-Sādāt*<sup>20</sup> the name of *Allāmah Quli* is found on the thirteenth generation of decedents. His lineage till *Imām Kāthim* ('a.s) is as follows:

*Sayyid Moḥammad Quli* son of *Sayyid Moḥammad*<sup>21</sup> *Husain* son of *Sayyid Hāmid Husain* son of *Sayyid Zain-al-‘Ābideen* son of *Sayyid Moḥammad*<sup>22</sup> son of *Sayyid Moḥammad*<sup>23</sup> son *Husain*<sup>24</sup> son of *Sayyid Husain* son of *Sayyid J’afar* son of *S’aeed ‘Ali* son of *Sayyid Kabeer-al-Deen* son of *Sayyid Shams-al-Deen* son of *Sayyid Jamāl-al-Deen* son of *Sayyid-al-Sādāt Abu-al-Muthāffar A’alā-al-Deen Husain A’alā Buzurg* son of *Sayyid ‘Iz-al-deen*<sup>25</sup> *Moḥammad* son of *Sayyid Sharf-al-Deen Abu Tālib*<sup>26</sup> son of *Sayyid Moḥammad-al-Mahrooq*<sup>27</sup> son of *Sayyid Hamzah* son of *Sayyid ‘Ali* son of *Sayyid Abu Moḥammad* son of *Sayyid J’afar* son of *Sayyid Mahdi* son of *Sayyid Abu Tālib* son of *Sayyid ‘Ali* son of *Sayyid Hamzah* son of *Abu-al-Qāsim Hamzah* son of *Imām Mūsā Kāthim* ('a.s).

In this elevated family tree every individual is of a lofty status. However, it is unfortunate that due to the inattention of the people of their time, we do not have full access to their hardships and the detail of their struggles in the propagation of religion. All that can be found is what has been mentioned by scholars in their works and writings. For example, '*Allāmah Mufti; Sayyid Moḥammad ‘Abbās* and other scholars in various places have remembered and praised *Sayyid-al-Sādāt*.

<sup>20</sup> I.e. *Abu-al-Muthāffar A’alā-al-Deen Husain*.

<sup>21</sup> Famous by the name *Sayyid Allāh Karam, Sabikat-al-Lujain*, p.8.

<sup>22</sup> Famous by the name *Sayyid Bolāqī, ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> Famous by the name *Sayyid Mada’, ibid*.

<sup>24</sup> Famous by the name *Sayyid Meteh, ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> In *Sabikat-al-Lujain* his name is mentioned as, *Sayyid* famous by the name '*Iz-al-Deen* and *Moḥammad* is not mentioned.

<sup>26</sup> Famous by the name *Sayyid Ashraf’, Sabikat-al-Lujain* p.8.

<sup>27</sup> Entitled *Mahdi, ibid*.

Similarly, 'Allāmah Moḥammad Quli in his history of *Kantoor* sheds some light upon the great status, position and knowledge of his grandfather, *Sayyid Ḥāmid Ḥusain*. Nevertheless, it goes without saying this family has always remained in the service of knowledge, literature, religion and the Islamic nation.

'Allāmah Moḥammad Quli ('a.r) is a recognised and distinguished individual from this household. He was born in *Thi-al-Q'adah* 1188/1774 in *Kantoor*. His father was also a scholar and was accounted as one of the great academics of his time. It was under his guidance, his upbringing took place and he studied the text books of different sciences under renowned dignitaries of his time.

His religious studies however, took place under the mentoring of *Ghufrān Māb* <sup>28</sup> which enabled him to achieve the honourable level of *Ijtihād* and become an expert in research, especially in theology.

After completing his studies, he was approved the position of 'The Chief Judge' in *Meerat'h* <sup>29</sup> and it was here for a lengthy time he remained in the court making settlements and offering decrees. Towards the end of his life he returned back to *Kantoor* where he was busy in writing and inscription. He passed away on the ninth of *Muharram* in 1260/1844 and was buried in the *Ḥusainia* of *Ghufrān Māb* <sup>30</sup>.

His books are many in number however, those which really show his greatness and vast knowledge are:

1. *Fatuhāt Haidariah* 2. *Tāreekh Kantoor* 3. *'Adālat 'Alawī* 4. *Saif Nāsirī* 5. *Taqleeb-al-Makāi'd* 6. *Burhān-al-S'ādah* 7. *Tashieed-al-Matā'in* 8. *Maṣār'i-al-Afhām* 9. *Taqreeb-al-Afhām* 10. *Risalah Taqiyyah* and many others.

<sup>28</sup> *Sayyid Dildār 'Ali* (b.1166/1752 - d.1235/1819), his progeny is known as "The Family of *Ijtihād*". A student of the great *Waheed Behbhānī* (b.1111/1699 - d.1205/1790). For detailed insight to his life one is suggested to see, *Āīnah Ḥaq Namā* which was recently published in three volumes, in the holy city of *Qum* in Persian from the *Kitāb Shināsi Shi'ah* institute.

<sup>29</sup> A city in the Indian state of *Uttar Pradesh*.

<sup>30</sup> Located in *Lucknow*.

Many scholars and luminaries have praised his knowledge and books. Other than his authority in written works, he left behind three worthy and





educated sons: *Molānā Sirāj Ḥusain*, *Molānā 'Ijāz Ḥusain* and *Firdaws Māb*; *Allāmah Ḥāmid Ḥusain*.





## HIS EMINENCE *FIRDAWS MĀB*

*Firdaws Māb*; 'Allāmah Sayyid Hāmid Ḥusain was the youngest of 'Allāmah Moḥammad Quli's sons. He was born in Meerat'h on the fifth of Muḥarram in the year 1246/1830. His introductory studies took place under the teachings of his noble father, but he was only fourteen years old when the shadow of his father was taken away from him. As a result, he turned to the supreme academics and authorities of his time, these included the likes of: Mufti Sayyid Moḥammad 'Abbās Shushtarī<sup>31</sup>, Sayyid-al-'Ulamā'; Sayyid Ḥusain<sup>32</sup> and Sulīān-al-'Ulamā'; Sayyid Moḥammad<sup>33</sup> to continue his studies.

After a short time, he completed his studies and reached the stage of *Ijtihād* after which he turned his attention to research and writing. The first thing he did was pick up those works of his father which had not been published. These included *Fatuhāt Haidariah*, *Risālat Taqiyyah* and *Tashieed-al-Matā'in*, all of which were in the form of unorganised draft manuscripts for a long time. He arranged them so that they could be published. Not long after, they were printed and acknowledged in the eyes of both the *Sunni* and the *Shi'ah*.

It was during this time, from the oppositions, the book '*Muntahā-al-Kalām*' was announced. It was propagated with the slogan; *this is the book, the Shi'ah will not be able to answer till the day of judgement!* Also, during this time the *Sulīān* had made *Awadh* and unbearable place to live, hence the great scholars from there were unable to give the attention to such problems which they required.

Sayyid Hāmid Ḥusain took the responsibility of answering this book on to his own shoulders and in a few months wrote the refutation of *Muntahā-al-Kalām* by the name; *Istiqsā'-al-Afhām*. Both the author and

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<sup>31</sup> (b.1225/1810 - d.1306/1888) the author of three hundred and fifty books and a famous student of Sayyid-al-'Ulamā'.

<sup>32</sup> (b.1212/1797 - d.1274/1857) the youngest son of Sayyid Dildār 'Ali.

<sup>33</sup> (b.1199/1784 - d.1284/1867) the eldest son of Dildār 'Ali.

others were left astonished. Even after numerous attempts, till today the opposition has not been able to give its answer!

Following this, he wrote a comprehensive book by the name *Shawāriq-al-Nuṣoos*, which was compiled in numerous bulky volumes. This was also praised and acknowledged by both supporting and rival parties. Subsequently he continued writing small and large treatise, all of which contained oceans of knowledge and wisdom.

Out of all of his books, it was '*Abaqāt-al-Anwār*, which really illustrated his authority in knowledge and awareness. This is the very book that made him reach such a grand position amongst the ranks of religious luminaries. A book which without a doubt is seen as one of the greatest proofs and elements of the *Shi'ah* school of thought. Even though the book was compiled in numerous large volumes, it remained incomplete. For its compilation he gathered a huge treasury of books which till today, remain in his memory.

In 1283/1866 when he was granted the opportunity of travelling for pilgrimage and visiting the holy shrines, he took this opportunity to also visit the famous libraries of *Irāq* and *Hijāz*. This enabled him to attain a large number of rare manuscripts; the majority of which he himself copied and wrote from the originals. After returning from his travels he remained busy writing till the end of his life.

Amongst the specialties of his life, it is worth mentioning, that due to his consistent efforts in research and textual works, his living standards were very simple and refrained him from acquiring worldly possessions. His days and nights only allowed him to give four or five hours to other tasks, the rest was devoted to literature.

When he would get tired from sitting, he would continue reading and writing whilst lying down. It is said, due to the continuous weight of placing books on his chest his torso became surged!

He became immersed in knowledge. As a result of his countless hardships and struggles in his final days he became very sick and was

suffering from a multitude of illnesses. Even this was not able to change his attitude towards his work. When, due to weakness, he was unable to write himself, he would dictate to his scribes and they would write for him. His last day was also spent busy in the service of knowledge, in fact the day he passed away he was not at home, but in his library.

The following are some of his valuable works:

1. *Istiqsā'-al-Afhām* 2. *Shawāriq-al-Nuṣoos* 3. *'Abaqāt-al-Anwār* 4. *Kashf-al-Mua'dhalat fī Hal-al-Mushkilāt* 5. *Al-'Adhb-al-Battār fī Tafseer-al-Āyat-al-Ghār* 6. *Iḥām Ahl-al-Main fī Rad Izālat-al-Ghayn* 7. *Al-Najm-al-Thāqib fī Masalat-al-Hājib* 8. *Al-Duru-al-Sāniyya fī-al-Munshā't-al-'Arabiyah* 9. *Zain-al-Wasā'il ilā Tahqeeq-al-Masā'il* 10. *Al-Tharā''i fī Sharḥ-al-Sharā''i* and others. Many of these books are compilations of numerous volumes and are a true sign of his knowledge and intellect.

He passed away on the eighteenth of *Ṣafar* in the year 1306/1888 and was buried in the *Imāmbārah* of *Ghufrān Māb (r. 'a)*. He left behind two sons who were true memories of his ocean of knowledge and wisdom; *Molānā Thākir Ḥusain* and the great *Nāsir-al-Millat*.

Here, it is worth mentioning the words of renowned and elite scholars of the fourteenth/nineteenth century and the way in which they remember this family's dedication and devotion, in particular *'Allāmah Moḥammad Quli* and *Firdaws Māb*.

His eminence, *'Allāmah al-Ḥāj Shaykh Moḥammad Mahdi* entitled *Shams-al-'Ulama'*, in his letter to some of his companions writes the following:

*"Can you go or not? If you can, then definitely go. It is a household of Sayyid'ss with many virtues. Visit the sons of 'Allāmah Sayyid Moḥammad Quli, Molānā Sayyid 'Ijāz Ḥusain and 'Allāmah Sayyid Ḥāmid Ḥusain and his son Molānā Sayyid Nāsir Ḥusain. This great household is a family from the children of the Prophet. The services that they have provided for the rightful path of the Iḥnā' 'Ashariyyah school*

*of thought are similar to those of Sayyid Murtadhā; ‘Alam-al-Hudā, ‘Allāmah Hillī and ‘Allāmah Majlisī. After them no one has been able to reach such a high-rank. It is my request, on my behalf you go to the graves of ‘Allāmah Sayyid Hāmid Husain and his noble father and brother to recite a Surat-al-Fātihāh. Beside their graves pray for me and my children”*

After this letter, in regards to ‘Allāmah Mohāmmad Quli and Firdaws Māb, nothing is left to be said as, it clearly illustrates their position in the world of knowledge and the views of such great scholars about them.



## HIS EMINENCE NĀSĪR-AL-MILLAT

From what has been mentioned previously, it should be clear whose son and grandson he (*Nāsir Husain*) is.

As this book is specific to the life, essence and attributes of *Nāsir Husain* his biography will be presented in detail as a gift for readers.



## His Birth and Sacred Name

He was born on Thursday the nineteenth of *Jamādi-al-Ukhrā*<sup>34</sup> in the year 1284/1867, at the prime time of the morning prayers in the city of *Lucknow*<sup>35</sup>. This was equivalent to the birthday of Prophet *Isaac*. This is why, his noble uncle *Molānā Sayyid 'Ijāz Ḥusain* named him *Ishāq*. But at the time he was born, involuntarily his father said, because my name is *Hāmid Ḥusain* this child should be named *Nāsir*<sup>36</sup> *Ḥusain*. Hence, the name *Nāsir* was chosen.

As it was the family tradition, alongside his name he was given the agnomen<sup>37</sup> *Abu-al-Fadhl* and he was entitled *Najm-al-Deen*. This striking of good luck and the miraculous words *Firdaws Māb* were soon to be the mirror image of this new-born.

He was named *Nāsir Ḥusain* and really was a true helper of *Ḥusain*. He was given the agnomen of *Abu-al-Fadhl* and really did live up to it. He was entitled *Najm-al-Deen* and was a real shining star of religion. In conclusion all the names that were attributed to him, he was a living exemplification of them.

## His Childhood

From his early childhood he was the bearer of remarkable skills and attributes. Even though his nature was not infallible, it was infallible-like.

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<sup>34</sup> Some writers are seen to write *Ukhrā* as *Thānī*, this is incorrect. The reason for this being in Arabic *Thānī* means second and therefore suggests for there to be a third, when this is not the case. *Ukhrā* however, means other and is more accurate as it does not denote for anything to follow, i.e. third.

<sup>35</sup> *Sabikat-al-Lujain*. p. 16.

<sup>36</sup> Meaning helper.

<sup>37</sup> In Arabic denotes *Al-Kunyah*.

His cleverness, wisdom, intellect, intelligence, insight, understanding, awareness and mindfulness were all shining through, even at a young age. Whether it was something he inherited or a result of the environment he was in, unlike other children he did not have the urge and ambition for playing and if due to the constant requests of other children he was forced to take part, he would only play those games that had something to do with reading or writing. It was in such competitions he would show his level of knowledge and leave onlookers astonished and amazed.

### His Education

From the outset *Firdaws Māb* was steadfast about his future. This is why, at the end of his fourth year and the start of his fifth i.e. in the month of *Ramadhān* in the year 1288/1871 his education commenced and the seeds of understanding and knowledge began to grow.

Those stages other children were unable pass through in months he finished in days. Only some years passed that he was able to thoroughly read and write *Urdu*. After completing the study of his mother tongue, it was now time for Persian and Arabic. *Molvi Luīf Husain*, a capable individual who was considered a knowledgeable scholar became responsible for his teaching and the studying of introductory books began. His level of understanding was very high and his sharp memory was a God given gift. These skills, with the guidance of *Molvi Luīf Husain* led to his initial education being completed in a short period of time.

Now came the time for his intermediate studies. *Firdaws Māb* had him enter the circle of students of his own teacher, '*Allāmah Mufti Sayyid Mohāmmad 'Abbās*.

His eminence *Mufti 'Abbās* was a complete and wide-ranging bearer of knowledge. A leading personality in jurisprudence, commentary,

principles of narrations, history, literature, theology and other sciences. He was also a master of poetry in *Urdu*, Persian and Arabic and has his own *Divān*. He has works in numerous different science that until today can be found in all corners of *India*, the worth of which were affirmed by both *Sunni* and *Shi'ah* scholars.

In summary, there are only a minute number of people who have passed in *India*, with such high calibre like the eminent *Mufti 'Abbās*. This was the reason why, *Nāsir-al-Millat* was proud and honoured by this studentship, and on numerous occasions from the pulpit he would remember *Mufti 'Abbās* with pleasant and respectable words that truly illustrated his high status and position. It is obvious, when the teacher is such, and the student is the same, then there is never an end to learning and teaching. From one, the waves of knowledge would come in and be flooded in to the mind of the other. Neither did it fulfil the heart of the one giving, nor the one receiving. Nevertheless, the vital steps to attain the level of *Ijtihād* were passed and another student of *Mufti 'Abbās* was dispatched to the nation.

### Completion (of Education)

Now that he had attained the level of *ijtihād*, the grandeur of *Firdaws Māb* wanted him to flourish even more. Until now, all that he had attained by teaching and learning (in his eyes) was not enough. This is why *Firdaws Māb* himself took the responsibility of his further studies. If this star became the moon at the hands of *Mufti 'Abbās*, then he was soon to become the sun at the hands of *Firdaws Māb*.

## The Method of Completion

The ordinary system of education is that a student begins studying books that are small and easy to understand then books that are of an intermediate level and then finally move on to those that are larger and more difficult. Everyone would agree this was the correct and normal way of learning. *Firdaws Māb* on the other hand, had a different view. He believed, if one was to study books in their traditional fashion then it was likely that when they would reach the stage of reading books of a higher level and come across the criticisms that were mentioned in them, they would not remember that which was mentioned in previous books. This would result in them not being able to understand the argument and therefore be unable to find its answer.

In an attempt to solve this problem, when he would teach *Nāsir Husain* he would present the argument from more advanced books and in the answer he would also refer to the views of previous scholars. This method would allow the student to grasp a better view of the argument itself and the different dimensions in which writers have answered it. Then, after considering all the views, one would be able to reach a more evaluated outcome and more importantly, making them abler to practice and perform such extractions.

Other than this, *Firdaws Māb (r. 'a)* also believed that by teaching and not just learning, discussions and rules would become more clear and understandable. Therefore, *Firdaws Māb (r. 'a)* would have *Nāsir Husain* become the teacher and he himself would sit as a student and would listen. Then, as a student would, he would criticise and ask questions for further explanation and *Nāsir Husain* would answer. This method allowed him to have an even deeper hold on the material and similarly enabled him to present the same argument in numerous forms. All in all, resulting in a greater and more complexed understanding of every law and argument.

## Vacuity

It was this impressive upbringing which allowed him to reach these lofty stages of knowledge and advancement, and be able to fulfil the desires of *Firdaws Māb*. It was only when *Firdaws Māb* saw him possessing such attributes did he give him the permission to practise *ijtihād*.

It is important to note, *Nāsir Ĥusain* was able to pass through all of these stages so rapidly that an ordinary person would still be busy in studying elementary books. So much so that in the beginning of the year 1300/1883 when he was only sixteen years old, he was recognised as a certified *mujtahid*.

## After Vacuity

The time of schooling had now come to an end. Even though when he was a student himself he would teach the odd class. However now, it was time for him to channel his spring of knowledge in to a river. Regardless of age, religion and race, all those thirsty for knowledge were coming from all four directions to quench their thirst of knowledge. The young, the elderly, *Sunni*, *Shi'ah*, all were coming thirsty and leaving more satisfied than ever. This was all during the time *Sayyid* was young and his ability in propagation was at his peak.

Throughout the day and night, he would be busy in teaching intermediate and higher level books in numerous different sciences, to the extent, he would give fifteen or sixteen lessons a day! Although, due to other duties this only continued for around one and a half years. Even when he became old, he would still teach five to seven lessons every day. Not to mention that even before he passed away he still taught one or two lessons a day.

Regardless of this workload his personal studying and reading was given its own time and importance. Something that remained with him from his days as student until he passed away.

All in all, even though after completing his studies, he endowed his knowledge at the disposal of those who wanted it. It was not something however, soon to finish, as his continuous studying, forever added and increased his knowledge allowing people to benefit and make the most from it.

### Being Entitled *Šadr-al-Mohaqqiqeen*

The efforts and hardships within these two and a half years, only God knows the extent to which they elevated him. On the one hand his lessons and teachings were like a sharpened sword no longer in need of effort, their attributes spoke for themselves and on the other hand, the great extent of his reading and studying increased his knowledge and information to an unfathomable level. Like a cloud standing quenched from drinking water of the sea.

It was only a matter of time, when *Firdaws Māb* saw that this was the situation, he allowed for some of the weighty responsibilities that were on his shoulders to be shared with him. It was as if all the duties of *Firdaws Māb* were being forwarded for him to fulfil. Gradually all those areas of activity which were once the responsibility of *Firdaws Māb* were now becoming the duty of *Sayyid*. From amongst these numerous obligations the most important was the helping and advising of *Firdaws Māb* in his writings.

Now *Firdaws Māb* was taking full assistance from him in writing '*Abaqāt-al-Anwār*' and it was during this time of helping his father the famous book *Sabāyik-al-Thahabān*, in the science of *rijāl*; a compendium

of forty-eight volumes was written. A lasting memory of the time when he was helping his father, so to speak.

A substantial part of this great book was written during the lifetime of his eminence *Firdaws Māb*. Also, it was during this time he wrote an index for the book on *Nasab* by *Sam'ānī* and other than this, on the primary book, '*Abaqāt-al-Anwār*, *Sayyid* also picked up his pen. He wrote in such a way that *Firdaws Māb* himself was left astonished and it was on this basis, after seeing his credibility and worth, *Firdaws Māb* gave him the title *Šadr-al-Moḥaqqiqeen*.

### Preaching and giving Speeches

*Till the clouds don't shower with rain; they don't rain  
and when they do, they flood the land.*

On one side precise penmanship was in motion and from the other the talented tongue. This meant, parallel to his literary works *Sayyid* was also busy in propagating religion through his talks and lectures. Similar to his expertise in writing, in dialogue and discussion the people's ears were glued to listening to the great delivery of his eminence.

### After the Passing of *Firdaws Māb*

Until now, all that mentioned was *Sayyid* and his activities in the shadow and lifetime of *Firdaws Māb*. Now, is the time of his life when his father was no longer with him.

After he completed his studies, for five years he remained busy in helping his father in the writing of '*Abaqāt-al-Anwār* and in the year

1306/1888 when his father passed away, he was only twenty-one years old.

After the passing of *Firdaws Māb*, not only did he have his father's responsibilities, due to the requirements of his time his own duties multiplied several times over.

### The Field of Action

*Firdaws Māb* in his life, due to the extent of his writings, had in essence endowed himself to the world of literature and textual works. He cut himself off from the world and meeting with people. But after his death, *Sayyid Nāsir Husain* noticed some changes in time and realised he was not able to do as his father did. The altering in the conditions of the country meant for a drastic revolution. (The country) was no longer a kingdom, it was British.

*Awadh* was destroyed and the (good) old traditions were being wiped away. The country was being westernised and overpowered by British ideology. The English language was considered the peak of worldly excellence and success. Everyone became busy in the race of the survival of the fittest.

The deprived *Shi'ah* school was seen struggling and weak in this difficult battle. They had no organisation, no social stability, no leader, no guide, like a wild camel it was being pulled from here to there. There was not a level where the entrance of absurd and strange traditions had not taken place. Due to the lack of knowledge and intellect (of religion) people were caught up in the whirlwind of anti-religion concepts.

The situation was so bad, refuge to *Allāh!* Between brothers, fathers and sons, the concept of unity was vanishing and the nation was segregating and in divide. There was the need for a person to take the people out of this devastating state and revive the nation to how it was

previously. For this task in hand, *Sayyid Nāsir Ḥusain* was most able and therefore was selected. As this was the situation, he respectfully left aside the methodology of *Firdaws Māb* and for the refinement of the nation, stepped in to the battlefield to counter these complications.

His activities were unlimited. From one side he was busy in writing, studying, delivering speeches and answering questions, something which he was already occupied with and on the other, he was providing services for the people and fulfilling their needs. Not only this, networking and communication with the government was also important. As, if it was not handled with care the outcome would be problematic. Nevertheless, his organisational and management skills enabled him to act out all his duties in the best possible way.

### The Nations Rectification

The change in time and the weakening of the people was paining his heart. The poor condition of the nation caused him and his contemporaries to awaken and unify so they could tackle these difficulties collectively. It was their unity and teamwork which made them successful. For this rectification, the astounding plan he sketched is a part of his life which is worthy of being written in gold. An overview of it is as follows:

### The *Shi'ah* Conference

Considering the situation and the circumstances of the time, *Sayyid* and his contemporaries realised it was vital to re-join and unify the people. In a democratic government, until the people are not under one notion their voices would not be able to be heard and if they cannot have

their ideas reach the ears of the government then how do they expect the protection of their rights?

It was something obvious. Hence it was circulating in everyone's mind. Even though this was the case, it was not clear on how this social network was to be formed. It was a strike of good luck that alongside him, his contemporary scholars which included the likes of *Molānā Sayyid Āqā Hasan* and *Sayyid Najm-al-Ĥasan* (may *Allāh* elevate their position) all came together and stood as one.

Now the people were given whatever they asked for. The nation was all for the support and provision of this scholarly team and it was due to this, an official representation of the people was constructed in order to preserve and maintain their rights.

This was the "All India Conference" which was the result of the struggles of *Sayyid* and his companions. Its establishment allowed the voice of the *Shi'ah* to be tunnelled and passed on to where it was needed and in fact, it was the light that was to forever shine through the ages.

### The *Shi'ah* Orphanage

It is amongst these amendments and improvements that *Sayyid* with the help of *Qudwat-al-'Ulamā'* and *Najm-al-'Ulamā'*<sup>38</sup>, felt the need to take care of *Shi'ah* orphans. They decided there was a need of an orphanage where these poor children, who had no immediate family would be able to stand on their own feet and support themselves. More importantly, they were the future and frontrunners of tomorrow.

As a result of the hardships of *Sayyid* and his respectful contemporaries the foundations of the "All *Shi'ah* Orphanage" were placed. While *Sayyid* was alive the orphanage was run under his

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<sup>38</sup> i.e. *Molānā Sayyid Āqā Hasan* and *Molānā Sayyid Najm-al-Ĥasan*.

management. The outcome of it was, thousands of fatherless children were brought up and raised in this establishment and were given the opportunity to progress and reach their full potential. So much so, in nearly every city one could find children that had been brought up in this institution.

### The *Shi'ah* College

During the time *Sayyid* had an active role in the *Shi'ah* conference he saw the way in which the Muslim University in *'Ali Gharh* was treating the *Shi'ah*. He realised the importance for *Shi'ah* youth to also have such means of attaining knowledge and a place where Islamic sciences could also be taught. This dream had not become a reality until, the great leader of *Panjāb*, *Nawāb Sir Fath' 'Ali Khān Bahādur*, who had a very high rank in the *Aywān* government and due to his great work, *Sayyid* had a lot of trust in him, requested that for the preservation and maintenance of the *Nāsiriyyah* library he build a bigger building.

Due to his courtesy and attention to such matters, *Sayyid* thanked him and respectfully said:

*“if you care for me, then instead of building a new construction for the library, it was more worthy to build a centre for schooling the nation”*

After hearing this, the *Nawāb* promised for such actions to be implemented. Not only did he promise, he personally became active to hasten in the completion of this worthy task. Not long after, with the funding of the *Nawāb* and the leadership of *Sayyid* the structure was complete and ready to be used.

The luminaries of the time also played their role. A vast number of people gathered and with the help of the government, the *Shi'ah* College was established. Even today its foundations are firm and it is located next

to the *Gomati* river <sup>39</sup>. Every year thousands of *Shi'ah* children are coming through, completing their studies and striving in the path of further success.

### The *Shi'ah* Arabic College

This college was in fact a branch of the *Shi'ah* college but in its method of teaching Islamic and Arabic studies was of such a high calibre, it was self-governed. Every year this learning centre was producing students qualified in the Arabic language, to the extent many of its pupils are amongst the finest and most recognised personalities of *India* today. There is no doubt all of these learning facilities were of such high standard because of the management of *Nāsir Husain* himself.

### The Writing Office

Other than the departments previously mentioned, for the propagation of subjects including religious proof and evidence he established this vital sector for textual works. From here, a magazine by the name of *Al-'Awārif* was started and continued for a lengthy time. Other valuable and weighty books were also published from here. Again, all of which was possible as a result of the help and support of his eminence.

This department remained active for a long time and even though now it is closed, the books that were published and distributed still bear witness to his service for the nation.

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<sup>39</sup> The *Gomti*, *Gumti* or *Gomati* River is a tributary of the *Gangā* River.

### In Memory of the Deceased

It was by taking these steps, he was able to keep the people at peace. Moreover, parallel to all of this he remained steadfast in keeping the memory of past scholars alive. He had the firm belief that those who struggled and went through hardships to pass on the message of the most rightful path, their names should shine bright. For example, *Ghufrān Māb* ('a.r) who is remembered as the "Reviver" of *Awadh* and his book *Imād-al-Islām*, a world-renowned and recognised book in theology, were amongst people who should always be remembered.

These were his aims, he wanted to let the world see the ornaments of *Shi'ah* literature and writing. Those things, that until now people were unable to see. Another example, is at the time of the *Husainī* remembrance movement. A high official sent him a sum of five-hundred *Rupees* and wrote, in whichever way he thought the money should be spent for the *Husainī* remembrance movement, he was free to do so.

He sent the whole amount to trusted members of the campaign and himself went to his library which held a rare book by *Ghufrān Māb* by the name, *Ithārat-al-Ahzān* a book discussing the event of *Karbalā*. More, this was the only manuscript of the book that was available and other than the *Nāsiriyyah* library it was nowhere else. He sent the book and alongside it a message saying, in his eyes this is a great time to publish and propagate this rare book. Likewise, for other scholars and personalities he considered it as his responsibility to revive their works.

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#### The Shrine of *Shaheed Thālith*

With his definitive goal of making sure the name of past dignitaries was to shine bright, one of the most important tasks *Nāsir Husain* was able to complete was the refurbishment of *Shaheed Thālith; Qādhi Nūrullāh Shushtarī* ('a.r)'s shrine.

This martyr was the author of the famous *Ih̄qāq-al-Haq*, a refutation of *Ibiāl-al-Bātil*, which until today is an answer which has left the opposition speechless. The shrine of *Shaheed* was coming to a stage where other than the people of knowledge, hardly anybody knew of it! *Sayyid* also went to the trouble of adding this valuable book as part of the Arabic school's syllabus.

Alongside this, he informed the people about the efforts and hardships of *Qādhi Nūrullāh*, this aided in the help of rebuilding and reviving his holy shrine. Once refurbishment works were complete, *majālis* and gatherings would be held there. It was because of his consideration, today the name of *Qādhi Nūrullāh* is alive throughout *India*. Every year renowned speakers and reciters would come to talk. People travelled from long distances to take part in *majālis*, *mātām* and the recitation of the holy *Qur'ān*.

### Reviving the Command of the *Ahl-al-Bait*

In propagating religion, similar to his other deeds, he was very determined. In relaying the virtues and tragedies of the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('*a.s*) he used various mediums to pass on their message. Until now, the virtues and tragedies of the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('*a.s*), were limited to *Imām 'Ali* and *Imām Husain* ('*a.s*).

He made sure that on every birthday and martyrdom day of the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('*a.s*) there was gatherings held and people were informed to attend. To whichever date a specific infallible was attributed, on that day the biography, virtues and tragedies of them were said. On the birthdays of the infallibles he implemented the reading of poems, something which until today still takes place and poets regardless of their beliefs and race come together to share their talents.

Now we find, it was because of these gatherings and *majālis* even young children are aware of the birth and death dates of the Prophet and the twelve *Imāms* (pbut). Also the organising of these large programs on their specific dates, still continue until today.

### The Correction of Customs

Due to the influence of non-Islamic traditions, the nation for a long time was stuck in practicing unworthy acts. Especially in wedding ceremonies, people were busy in practicing inappropriate and unlawful traditions. This acted as a barrier and caused for their lack of progression and improvement. In order to rectify these problems *Sayyid* made huge efforts. Both in written form and verbally.

But due to the fact that these customs were, so to speak, set in stone and the changing of such ideology was not going to happen overnight. He did not pursue the issue with great force, more by remaining calm and patient, to an extent he was able to reach his intended goal.

### The Extension of Bereavement Ceremonies

Due to the narrow mindedness and fanaticism of opposing governments, never were the *Shi'ah* ever able to carry out their mourning processions in peace. This was the reason why in places such as *Lucknow*, mourning processions for *Imām Husain* ('a.s) were taking place in very limited circumstances and used to finish on the twelfth of *Muharram*.

During the *Awadh* rule, when the *Shi'ah* were allowed the chance to breathe, there was a slight improvement, in the sense, bereavement

gatherings continued for forty days until the twentieth of *Šafar* <sup>40</sup>. Alongside this he kept his vision of propagation at the forefront of his actions. Firstly, he expanded the duration of grieving until the twenty-eighth of *Šafar*, which marks the passing of the holy Prophet and *Imām Ḥasan* (pbut) and announced them as “the days of grieving”.

Later on, this date was further extended to the eighth of *Rabee’i-al-Awwal*, denoting the martyrdom of *Imām Ḥasan ‘Askarī* (‘a.s). It was the eighth of *Rabee’i-al-Awwal* that was then considered the last day of the mourning season. The fruits of his efforts are still seen today, as people still gather in *Kāthimain* in *Lucknow*, day and night, to hold *majālis* and remember the tragedies that took place.

It was during this time, he readjusted some important aspects of the processions that were held on *Āshurā*, ‘*Arb’aeen* and the twenty-first of *Ramadhān* <sup>41</sup>. This included the amending of some rituals which were in reality, detrimental to the concept of *azādāri* and because of his efforts the door to these innovations was shut.

This however, was no easy task. Whilst *Nāsir Ḥusain* was trying to amend these problems, corrupt people from the opposing party, tried their utmost to stop him from succeeding. This resulted in the people of *Lucknow* to come under a lot of pressure and difficulties, not to mention the increased danger this caused them.

Regardless of all of this, his patience, humanity and spirituality allowed him to face the opposition and guide the people to improve the ways of expressing their love for *Imām Ḥusain* (‘a.s).

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<sup>40</sup> Referred to as *Arb’aeen* amongst Arabs and Iranians and *Chehlum* in the Indian sub-continent.

<sup>41</sup> The day of the martyrdom of The Leader of the Faithful; *Imām ‘Ali bin Abi Tālib* (‘a.s).

### The *Husainī* Frontier

Towards the end of his life, a few years before he passed away, the opposition once again started praising the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) in order to get rid of the concept of *azādāri*. So much commotion and discourse was caused. Approximately eighteen-thousand people were imprisoned, people lost their lives and properties. But once again, regardless of the extreme complications and attempts of the enemy, *Sayyid*'s feet were set firm and his pure intentions were not at all disturbed. These struggles allowed the people to hold their heads high both as believers in religion and as people of the world.

### The *Husainī* Memorial

For the sixty-first year of *Hijrah* <sup>42</sup>. A *Husainī* memorial was taking place. A major part of its planning and organisation was the work of *Sayyid*. It was unfortunate his life did not aid him, for in the same year he passed away. Nonetheless, his passing caused for another memorial which will (also) never be forgotten.

### His Services in Science and Literature

That which was previously mentioned, was all in relation to *Sayyid*'s efforts in terms of the people and him rectifying social affairs. Not to mention, corresponding to this was his unlimited amount of work(s) in the field of knowledge and wisdom.

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<sup>42</sup> The 1361<sup>st</sup> year of *Hijrah*, denoting the passing of one thousand and three hundred years from the 61<sup>st</sup> of *Hijrah*.

There is no Arabic school in *India* which is not indebted to his hard work and dedication. It was down to his determination and efforts that even though *India* was far away from *Arab* lands, it was still able to pay great service to Arabic language and literature. This caused for the establishment of many organisations specific to this cause. Amongst them was *Behjat-al-Adab*, which was founded during his younger days and was run by his brother-in-law *Molānā Mohāmmad Mahdi*.

Towards the end of *Nāsir Husain*'s life another establishment by the name *Nādi-al-Udabā* was also founded which was run by his eldest son *Nāseer-al-Millat* and was over-looked by numerous knowledgeable scholars and academics including the likes of his youngest son *S'aeed-al-Millat*.

These organisations were a great medium for discussing Arabic poems, poets, literature etc. and it was from the *Nādi-al-Udabā* centre a treatise in Arabic used to be published. It was because of this upbringing by *Sayyid, Lucknow* gave out such experts and dignitaries in Arabic language, who even the Arabs themselves were forced to accept their calibre.

According to what is mentioned in authentic reports and eye-witness accounts, when his student; *Molānā Shabbeer Husain* who was a *Mujtahid*, went to *Irāq* and for the passing of the great *Mujtahid Āqā Šadr* recited an elegy, it is said the Arab experts of poetry and literature were left dumbfounded and could not believe these were the poems of someone who was from *India*.

*Urdu* and Persian literature is also indebted to the likes of *Nāsir Husain*. *Bazm Nāsirī* was the name given to the gatherings held under the supervision of himself, which made not hundreds but thousands of individual poets. The poems and works of whom have Arabic specialist in amazement till today. From the many who learnt the art of poetry in this *Bazm Nāsirī*, was the famous '*Azeez Laknavī*'<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> See, Aziz Laknavi, *Hayāt aur Kārnamē* by *Sayyid Mas'ood Rizvi*.

## Comprehensiveness

In numerous sciences and subjects he was second to none. His level of understanding and intellect was something beyond calculation. Logic, philosophy, language, literature, jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, theology, history, *hadeeth* and commentary, were some sciences in which he was considered an expert.

Also, those sciences, the experts of whom had become extinct or were becoming extinct like; *al-ramal*, numerology, *al-jafar*, chemistry and *al-shānah*. Or sciences which were considered new and contemporary like philosophy, astronomy, nature and geography were also amongst those sciences he had a complete understanding of.

It is not surprising, when someone would come to know the extent of his knowledge they would be left startled. Medicine was also an area of his expertise. He would often prescribe himself, with the advice of some doctors.

Leaving all that as been mentioned to one side, in the world of politics his insight and vision was great. Sir *Sayyid Ridhā 'Ali*, who was accounted as an important intellectual figure of his time, in his bereavement letter for the passing of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain*, writes:

*“In 1358/1939, I became aware of some of the deceased’s works. His death was a difficult test for all the Shi’ah. During this time, I was a leading committee member. The patience, steadfastness and firmness that I found in his political views were something that I did not see in any other person. He would be prepared to both refute and accept different points; but all aspects needed to be presented with firm proofs and once his mind was fixed then it was like a Himalayan mountain firm in its place”*

*Molānā Abu-al-Kalām Āzād* <sup>44</sup> similarly, in describing his political greatness in his letter writes:

*“It is unfortunate that nor are counters able to count and nor does this letter have the capacity to illustrate the extent and detail, nor can a lengthy book describe what he has achieved. Therefore, a summarised statement will have to make do. The reality is, after Moḥaqqiq Ṭoosī* <sup>45</sup> (*a.r*) till now such a well-rounded and complete individual has not been seen, and if he is given the title of *The Indian Ṭoosī*, then it is by no means farfetched”.

### Persona

It was the outcome of his expertise and knowledge in so many sciences which caused for his flags of all-roundedness to be held high in places such as *Irāq*, *Irān* and *Egypt*, and made him the referral point of grand scholars. *Molānā Anees Ahmad ‘Abbāsī*, the editor of the *Ḥaqeeqat* newspaper, in his editorial dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> of *Rajab* 1361/1942 in expressing his grief writes:

*“The city of knowledge; Molānā Nāsir Husain is not only limited to India. More, his wisdom reaches Irāq, Irān and Egypt. If their academic authorities got stuck or had difficulty in religious affairs, they would refer to him”.*

It is normal for someone of such great status to be the main talking-point of scholars and academics. From them, the following are some

<sup>44</sup> (b.1306/1888 - d.1378/1958) was an Indian *Sunnī* scholar and a senior political leader of the Indian independence movement.

<sup>45</sup> (b.597/1201 - d.673/1274) a Persian polymath and prolific writer: An architect, astronomer, biologist, chemist, philosopher, physician, physicist, scientist, theologian and *Marj'a Taqleed*. See, Badakchini, S.J. (2005) *Paradise of Submission: A Medieval Treatise on Ismaili Thought*, Ismaili Texts and Translations, 5 London: I.B. Tauris in association with the institute of Ismaili Studies, pp.2-3.

excerpts that have been selected for it to become clear for readers the greatness of *Sayyid Nāsir Ḥusain*.

The grand *Mujtahid* of *Irāq* his eminence; *Mirzā Mohāmmad Taqi Shirāzī* <sup>46</sup> ('a.r) whose law-giving had people from *Irāq* to *Irān*, from the ordinary to the King all bowing their heads in obedience, in a letter to him writes:

*“May Almighty Allah with His help safeguard you from all misfortunes. May the special sight of the Imām of our time -may Allah hasten his reappearance- remain on you. May you continue strengthening the foundations of religion and may your efforts in the propagation of religion carry on being recognised”.*

His eminence *Allāmah Noorī* <sup>47</sup> ('a.r) in his letter writes:

*“It has come to my attention by those who come and go, you are not looking after your health, a possession that is of Allah. The reports I am getting about the little food you are consuming are not good. You should not make your body so weak. You are carrying a heavy load on your shoulders; bringing up the orphans of the Prophets household. For this, strength and liveliness are vital”.*

In another letter he writes:

*“I am extremely sorry that around me no one (like you) is a helping hand for me and I doubt that in any time, there will be anyone like you”.*

Further on he says:

*“In the biographies of the Ahl-al-Sunnah scholars there is the mentioning of Ismā'eel Anmāṭī, search for him. From the books discussing their scholars, I have none”.*

<sup>46</sup> (b.1256/1840-1841 - d.1338/1919-1920), known as the Second *Mīrzā* or the *Mīrzā Kuchak* (meaning *Mīrzā Junior*), an authority and *Marj'a*. The political leader of the Independence Movement in *Irāq* in thirteenth and fourteenth/nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

<sup>47</sup> (b.1254/1838 - d.1320/1902) popularly known as *Muhaddith Noori*, was a top *Shi'ah* Islamic cleric and father of Islamic *Shi'ah* Renaissance.

*Sayyid Ismā'eel* <sup>48</sup>, famous by the name *Āqā Śadr* ('a.r), in an honourable letter writes:

*“If only I had the opportunity of being present with his eminence, so I also could have been able to make use of his knowledge, speech, action and qualities”.*

*Molānā Molvi Ĥusain Miyā*, the custodian of *Pohlwāri Shareef*, at the time of his death in his letter of bereavement writes the following:

*“The death of his eminence, Nāsīr-al-Millat has caused sorrow for many in India, Irāq and other Islamic countries. The sun of knowledge has set. Misfortune for the library, all of its corners, the pages of all its books, and the lines of all the rare manuscripts were the light of his eyes.*

*After his passing, blindness is looking for knowledge, the real sitters of the throne and the real bearers of intellect are looking for those capable. Woe! Will time ever see such a person ever again? I remember in the time of his father-may Allah enlighten his grave- I went to visit him; what courtesy he showed me.*

*I am a follower of the Ĥanaḩī school of thought with Śuḩī ideology, something which is embedded within me. But through this letter I would like to say, his eminence Nāsīr-al-Millat was a great jurist. Such a jurist and person of insight, I doubt others of such attributes exist in this time. I came to know of him in Irāq and the port of Bushehr in Irān”.*

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<sup>48</sup> (d. 1337/1919 or 1338/1920) was a Lebanese *Grand Āyatullāh* (literally "sign of *Allāh*"), a title which is used in *Irān* and *Irāq* and other places referring to a Twelver *Shi'ah* scholar who is a fully qualified *Mujtahid* who asserts authority over peers and followers by virtue of sufficient study and achievement of the level of necessary competency needed to obtain permission (*Ijāzah*) to practice *Ijtihād*, Moohan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, Yale University Press, 1985.

## Character

This was his worth in the world of knowledge. His ethics were a mirror image of that of the *Imāms* ('*a.s.*). For further explanation, even a larger book would not do justice. The reason for this being, every aspect and dimension of his character requires detailed description and what was mentioned was only a selection from the words of scholars, so readers can a grasp an idea of his great status in the world of knowledge and intellect.

Asceticism, piety, righteousness, ambition of worship, sense of responsibility, reliance, contentment, effort, courage, patience, tolerance, assurance, confidence, truthfulness in speech, humility, remission, forbearance, compassion, beneficiation, helping orphans and the needy, upbringing, freedom from rulers, justice, fulfilling promises, hosting guests, suffering with those suffering, giving relief to the oppressed, good character with enemies, respecting the people of knowledge, extreme compassion for seekers of knowledge, respect and reverence for his contemporaries, enthusiasm, hatred of self-praise, avoiding position and status, preceding in offering peace, even with the young, an active temperament, a liker of cleanliness, dignity, placidity, integrity, promoter of good ethics, peace-lover, healthy living, punctuality, perseverance in his actions and determination, are some attributes that one could see shining through him. For every-single attribute there is a story that goes with it, but unfortunately this small treatise does not have the capacity for their description.

In summary, it is clear in the light of moral character he had an elite position and was a living example of a true representative of the *Imām* ('*a.s.*).

## Other Qualities

In the last section of this treatise there is the mentioning of some other attributes and qualities specific to his character.

### Mind and Memory

These specific qualities were in essence to do with his character and personality. Similarly, it was his mind and memory that separated him, not from just tens and hundreds or thousands, but millions. His amazing ability of memorizing was really a God given gift and was something, a comparison of which has not been seen in centuries. In relation to this, there are countless accounts quoted by both the *Sunni* and the *Shi'ah*.

He had memorised both the holy *Qur'ān* and the *Nahj-al-Balāghah* <sup>49</sup> <sup>50</sup>, but never claimed to such. Other than this, large books and compendiums such as the history and commentary by *Tabarī* <sup>51</sup>, the *Shi'ah Kutub Arba'ah* <sup>52</sup>, *Bihār-al-Anwār* <sup>53</sup>, *Wasāi'l-al-Shi'ah* <sup>54</sup>, *Sunni* books of traditions and narrations and many others.

<sup>49</sup> This is similar to that which is mentioned by the deceased *Allāmah Fidā Husain Qarashī Yamānī* who writes, he has read the sacred *Nahj-al-Balāghah* with his father seven times and he had the majority of it memorised, *Sabikat-al-Lujain* p.17.

<sup>50</sup> "The Peak of Eloquence" is the most famous collection of sermons, letters and narrations attributed to *Imām 'Alī ('a.s.)*. Compiled by *Sayyid (Shareef) Radhi; Abu-al-Hasan Mohammad ibn-al-Husain-al-Musawī* (b.359/970 - 406/1015) he was a scholar and poet and his grave is in *Kāthimain*.

<sup>51</sup> *Abu J'afar Moḥammad ibn Jareer al-Ṭabarī* (b. 224/839 - 310/923) was a prominent and influential Persian scholar, historian and exegete of the *Qur'ān* from *Ṭabaristān*, modern *Māzandarān* Province in *Irān*, who composed all his works in Arabic, Lindsay Jones (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of religion*, vol. 13, Macmillan Reference USA, 2005, p. 8943 .

<sup>52</sup> Literally means "four books", but refers to: 1. *al-Kāfi* by *Shaykh Kulaynī*, 2. *Man la Yahthuroh-al-Faqih* by *Shaykh Ṣudoq*, 3. *Tahtheeb-al-Ahkām* and 4. *Istibsār* by *Shaykh Ṭoosī*.

<sup>53</sup> A compendium of *ḥadeeth* compiled by *Allāmah Moḥammad Bāqir Majlisī* (b.1025/1616 - d.1110/1698) was a renowned and very powerful Iranian Twelver Shi'a cleric, during the

It was easy from him to say, for example; this particular fragment is mentioned in such a such book, in such a such volume and in such a such chapter. Or, this is mentioned in this edition, and taken out in this edition (as for a short period, books that were published in *Egypt* had undergone alterations and cancelations). Or, this content is mentioned in such a such book in such a such places. And the places where jurists or theologians have used a particular method of proving a specific point, all were at the tip of his tongue.

It is obvious, if this was the case for memorizing books and their details, then there is no doubt it was the same for poetry. Any poem, in *Urdu*, Persian or Arabic that he heard once it stayed with him.

In brief, he was a living encyclopaedia. Anything that was enquired from him was answered immediately. This was the very reason great intellectuals would refer to him and the scholars of *Irāq*, *Irān* and *Egypt* would have their problems solved by him.

### Reading Books

He had the habit of studying and reviewing books from a young age. Anytime that was spared from reading text books was given to reading other books. After finishing his education, he considered it his duty studying these (other) books. Winter, summer, autumn, all twelve months of the year, every day from ten o'clock until two o'clock in the afternoon he stayed in his library and was busy in reading and writing.

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Safavid era. He has been described as "one of the most powerful and influential *Shi'ah* 'Ulamā' of all time", whose "policies and actions reoriented Twelver *Shia*'ism in the direction that it was to develop from his day on. See, Moojan Momen, *Introduction to Shi'i Islam* (Yale University Press, 1985) p.114 quoted in *Soul of Iran*, p.174.

<sup>54</sup> Another compilation of *hadeeth*, compiled by *Mohammad bin al-Hasan bin 'Ali bin al-Husain al-'Āmilī* commonly known as *al-Hurr-al-'Āmilī* (b.1104/1693 - d.1033/1624) was a *Muhaddith* and a prominent Twelver *Shi'ah* scholar.

Only on Friday's, the birthdays and martyrdom days of the infallibles he would not go to the library, otherwise all other days of the year were spent in the library with compassion. His timetable was so strict, students and government officials would consider this when wanting to visit him. In times of illness his strict timetable would not change, until he was unable to sit or stand.

Even seven or eight days before he passed away and he was not in the best of states, he still continued going to the library. It was only when the illness of his death became so sever his going to the library came to an end. His love for reading was so much that, in the night till he had not read or studied something he could not sleep. When ill and unable to read he would have the desired book read to him.

His library consists of thousands of books in numerous sciences and subjects. It is difficult to find a book that has not been read and annotated by his eminence as, regardless of the topic, any book which came in to his hand has been summarised and marked by him.

### The *Nāsiriyah* Library

Consequently, if anything regarding his library is also mentioned then it will not be out of place. His library is the memory of his forefathers and for Islamic knowledge is a rare treasure of treasures. No matter how much pride *India* takes in it, it does not do it justice. As it holds some rare books one is unable to find anywhere else.

This goldmine was started at the hands of his eminence *Allāmah Moḥammad Quli* ('a.r), after which *Firdaws Māb*, with a lot of research and hardships, collected many rare books and made a considerably large contribution. This included the compilation and transcribing of many important books and manuscripts from different libraries from around the

Islamic world. At the time of his death there were around ten thousand books.

Now came the time of *Nāsir Husain*. only God knows to where he expanded it. Due to his efforts -thanks to *Allāh*- the library now holds approximately forty-two thousand books! One will find books on every subjects in arts and sciences. But the collection of books specific to Islamic knowledge is indescribable. This being the determining factor, separating it from others libraries and making it one of a kind.

*Molvi Anees Ahmad 'Abbāsī* the editor of the *Haqeeqat* newspaper, in his article dated 21<sup>st</sup> of *Rajab 1361/1942* in describing *Sayyid Nāsir Husain* and the *Nāsiriyyah* library writes the following:

*“Regardless of whichever school a person is associated to, they are sure to praise his knowledge and intellect. Only one who is aware of the way in which -until his last breaths- he spent his whole life in seeking, spreading and in the service of knowledge. His habit of reading was not restricted to a certain science or subject, as is apparent from his library in Kajwah in Lucknow. The library holds thousands of books in a range of different disciplines many of which have been annotated and commentated by Sayyid himself*

*Similarly, around thirty years ago, the famous Egyptian scholar and editor of the treatise al-Minār, Allāmah Rasheed Ridhā came to head the annual meeting and Sayyid Nāsir Husain took him to visit the Nāsiriyyah library. He was so amazed after seeing this treasure of books, he said, if only the deceased Allāmah Shiblī N'omānī knew, if in his travels to India he did not visit the Nāsiriyyah library and had come back without going there his traveling to India would have been useless.*

*Even scholars and academics from Europe that have visited this library and have seen the thousands of books in Arabic, Persian and Urdu have similar remarks. On one occasion Molānā Abu-al-Kalām Āzād the leader of the congress, said in front of me, the reason for why Lucknow is the centre of knowledge is because of Molānā Nāsir Husain's*

*library. After seeing this library, it is clear the level of book recognition this individual had”.*

## Speeches

Alongside having knowledge, it is vital for one to have good oratory skills, as without them the benefit of knowledge is reduced. This was another God-given gift he possessed, and he was not just an expert, more a *Mujtahid* in this art.

Many speakers have come and gone, but his position in this field was something special. His delivery was not so simple, for it to be seen as useless and not so complex and full of poetry and grammar so no one would understand. His style was such, listeners would listen keenly and with full concentration. His speeches were beautifully arranged and the points mentioned would be described and proved in wonderful manner. God knows the way in which he used to speak that listeners would become so excited and thrilled whilst listening to him. Listening to him speak, was as if one was hearing the poems of an elite poet but with the proofs and evidences of a divine academic.

His talks were usually held in the *Masjid Kufah* mosque. This mosque was connected to the *Kāthimain*-like shrine mosque and is part of this endowed land. (This mosque) is a life like replica of *Masjid Kufah* and is a memory of the last King of the *Awadh* dynasty, *Wājid ‘Ali Shāh Bahādur*.

From 1303/1886 until a couple of years before he passed away, *Sayyid* used to deliver speeches at this mosque. After his death, his younger son *S’aeed-al-Millat* -may *Allāh* protect him- took his father’s place and until now this is continuing.

It was in this mosque, every Friday he would lead prayers and then would give talks. In the holy month (of *Ramadhān*), everyday prayers

and speeches were held. Other than this, during other important days throughout the year similar speeches and talks were also given.

On the thirteenth of *Rajab* and the eighteenth of *Thi-al-Ĥajjah* the day of *Ghadeer*, his talks were held at the *Imāmbārah* of *Nāthim*. On the fifteenth of *Sh'abān* and the twenty-fifth of *Thi-al-Q'adah*, on the day of *'Eid Dah-al-Ardh* his talks were held in the *Majid Kufah* mosque. On the seventeenth of *Rabee'i-al-Awwal*, he would first speak at the *Ikrāmullāh Imāmbārah* and then in the *Nāthim Imāmbārah*. During these occasions there used to be vast gatherings. People used to travel from long distances with the intention of seeking knowledge and used to leave full with pearls of wisdom.

### Regulation of Time

It is according to a person's lifestyle, one assigns times for every task which determines how much time is spent on each task. Similarly, taking into consideration the amount of work and responsibilities *Sayyid Nāsir Ĥusain* had he was no different. The following is a timed schedule of his routine towards his later years:

After the morning prayers we would become busy in prayers. For a long time, he would pray different supplications and *ziyārāt* and especially act out the rituals of *'Āshurā*. After finishing these lengthy acts of worship, his servants, sons, daughters, associates, relatives, and other members of the household would come to greet him. This specific time was spent with them discussing any matters related with the house and it was during this time breakfast would be served.

At exactly nine o'clock he would drink *Khāsah*<sup>55</sup> then by nine-thirty he would leave and go and sit in the lounge. This was the time for open

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<sup>55</sup> Literally means special. It was first used in the *Mehr Afrooz wa Dilbar* tale by 'Isawee *Khān Bahādur* in 1159/1746 which compiled by Doctor *Mas'ood Ĥusain Khān* and published by Educational Book House in *'Ali Gharh* in the year 1386/1966. To our research

meetings. There was a lot of rush caused by people with questions and those in need. He used to meet everyone and would try his utmost to solve their problems. Important questions were also answered, either by dictating them to his scribe or posting them later on.

By ten o'clock and sometimes ten-thirty he would finish his dealings with the people and would make his way to the library and once he arrived he would occupy himself in reading and writing works. In the room he used to sit, servants did not have permission to enter unless it was for something important.

Until three o'clock he would finish his textual works and would pray. After praying and reading some supplications he would have a cup of tea. It was during this time he would give lessons in a range of different sciences.

At four o'clock and sometimes four-thirty he would go back to the library. During his trips to and from the library or any time he had free he would read the newspaper. After returning from the library he would once again go into the lounge. This time was reserved for meeting specific individuals, appointments of which had been taken prior to their meeting. Also, if he wanted to go and meet someone, he would go at this particular time. In addition, he would also spend this time to go through any letters and any requiring urgent replies were sent straight away. All in all, until the evening, this was how the hours of his days were spent.

In the evening, the evening prayers were prayed in congregation and after some supplications he would sit down with his followers and companions to answer any questions and enquires. This session would carry on until eight o'clock and students would be present to make use of it.

Until ten o'clock numerous lessons would take place. Once these came to an end, he would go home and after a little reading he would

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and understanding this a special type of water which is drunk by profound and grand authorities, but whether it is mixed something or simply just water is not clear.

relax. Then, in the last part of the night he would wake up and begin the recommended prayers and his acts of worship would continue until the morning.

This was his daily routine. Many times he would take part in gatherings, *majālis*, rituals of circumcision, meetings with leaders and dignitaries etc. Therefore, in order to make sure everything was given the time it required throughout his day he would allocate time for them so his routine did not suffer and everything ran smoothly.

Every week on Friday, after concluding from the open meetings, those letters that were collected during the week and needed answering he would become busy in answering them and by mid-afternoon he would start preparing for his talks which were held in the *Masjid Kufah* mosque. Due to the backlog of some questions, sometimes he had no time to prepare his speeches, he would then sit on his stretcher <sup>56</sup> and on his way would prepare his speech.

Since his talks started in the *Masjid Kufah* mosque the topic of speech always had the verse, “*And I did not create the Jinn and mankind except to worship me*” <sup>57</sup> as its main topic and every day he would commence his speech with a new sermon that amazed the people of knowledge and other listeners.

### Punctuality

His strict adherence to time and punctuality was so much, it became a proverb amongst the people. If he had promised to meet at a certain time, then he would arrive exactly on time, not a minute early and not a minute late. This punctuality sometimes caused him problems and difficulty but, time was something of great importance to him in his dealings.

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<sup>56</sup> Or *Howdah*, an apparatus used in the past to carry people.

<sup>57</sup> Holy *Qur’ān*: chapter *al-Thāriyāt* verse no. 56.

## Titles

He was given many titles; *Šadr-al-Mohaqqiqeen* was a title given to him in his early twenties, as mentioned previously. Not long after, when his services in knowledge and religion started to spread, the grand *Mujtahid* of *Irāq*, *Mirzā Moḥammad Taqī Shirāzī* ('a.s) after accepting his authority and status gave him the title *Nāsir-al-Millat*.

Also, the British government after, seeing his divine capability, gave him the title of *Shams-al-'Ulamā'*. Even though, this title can be given to many, what is important to take notice of is, when he was given this title, the governor of the *Uttar Pradesh* province was his excellency Sir James Mistan; in the letter he wrote to *Sayyid* he clearly mentions his virtues, knowledge and intelligence and goes on so say his value is much more than the title of *Shams-al-'Ulamā'*, but what can one do when in the governing system there is no title higher than this.

Being a humble and modest man he did not like the titles that were associated with him. However, the titles given by *Firdaws Māb* and *Mirzā Shirāzī*, due to their eminence he considered them as a blessing.

## Income and Expenditure

His sources of income were either the grants from *Haidarābād* and other places, or from the income of lands he inherited from his forefathers, all of which was spent on his library and literary works. Any charity that came into his hands was given to those in need. The management of his personal property and assets was in the hands of his nephew *Molānā Sayyid Ḥasan 'Abbās Kantoorī* and any earnings from them were controlled by another nephew *Molānā Sayyid Sājīd Ḥusain*. The majority of his personal expenditure was spent on the poor and needy.

### Clothing, Food ...

Even though he lived a very plain and simple life, he was very strict in his purity and cleanliness. Therefore, his clothes were always very clean and tidy but not expensive. His food was also very simple and used to be of a very basic standard. Little eating was one of his specialties. For a long time, his main meal of the day was the breakfast; he used to have at nine o'clock in the morning. One thing he admired were pleasant fragrances, hence he always carried a bottle of cologne with him and to guests, he would usually gift cardamom or perfumes.

### Classifications and Authorships

Writing was an important aspect of his sacred life. In his days of youth, he would write articles and distribute them; as he got older they changed in to larger books and compendiums. Even though the books which are published in his name are not many, they are not few either. As if one looks at his extremely demanding lifestyle and circumstances then even those seem like a lot. The specialty of his books is that they are a mirror image of his vast knowledge and linguistic skills that have no comparison. This is not a place for detailed dissection, but the following is a summary of some of his valuable works:

#### i. *Al-Mufrad fi Masalat Wujoob-al-Surah* <sup>58</sup>

In the prayer after reciting the chapter *al-Hamd* is it obligatory to recite another chapter? This book is written particularly for this ruling and reflects his peak of jurisprudential understanding. This was his first

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<sup>58</sup> *Sabikat-al-Lujain*, p.20.

ever literary work and was the basis on which *Mufti Meer Mohāmmad ‘Abbās* and his eminence *Firdaws Māb* granted him the permission to practice *Ijtihād*.

ii. *Asbāgh-al-Nā’il fi Tahqeeq-al-Masā’il*

[*Asbāgh-al-Nā’il be Tahqeeq-al-Masā’il*] <sup>59</sup>

This book is also in jurisprudence and is a very detailed analysis which is compiled in nine volumes. It consists of all the chapters of jurisprudence and explains them with his particular insight. This is a book of his younger days and is worth reading.

iii. *Inshā’* <sup>60</sup>

This is a compilation of some linguistic articles and Persian letters on various topics which were written to and from the scholars of *Irān* and *Irāq*. In fact, the level of grammar and etymological skills that have been used is so high, it was these very scripts that were used in “higher-level” Persian language exams.

<sup>59</sup> This is the name of the book mentioned in *Sabikat-al-Lujain*, *ibid*.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*.

iv. *Al-Munshā't-al-'Arabiyyah* <sup>61</sup>

This is a compilation of his Arabic articles and letters he wrote to scholars of Islamic countries. It also consists of those subjects and areas that students should consider as their main focus when studying.

v. *Divān-al-Sh'ir*

This is a classification of Arabic and Persian poems he has said on countless occasions for the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('a.s). Every stanza within it is eloquent and expressive. His expertise in the art of poetry requires deep analysis which cannot be illustrated here.

مالی اری لیلتی حفت بانوار      کانها بضی ه السما ذات اقمار

In relation to this stanza, some linguistic experts of *Egypt* and *Syria* in praising it went to the extent to say that if they were put next to the stanzas of the world renowned poet 'Imra'-al-Qays' then one would not be able to differentiate whose is whose.

vi. *Al-Khutab* <sup>62</sup>

As mentioned previously, he had the habit of beginning all of his speeches with a new sermon, this is a classification of all those sermons which are compiled in five volumes. This also is something of great value and is worthy of being part of a student's syllabus.

<sup>61</sup> In *Sabikat-al-Lujain*, p.19, the name has been mentioned as "*al-Atīmār-al-Shāhiyyah fi-al-Manshāt-al-Arabiyyah*".

<sup>62</sup> In *Sabikat-al-Lujain*, p.19 it is referred to as "*Divān-al-Khuṭab*".

vii. *Al-Mawā'ith* <sup>63</sup>

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This is a compilation of some of his selected speeches. It consists of topics such as; *hikmat* and ethics which is nothing less than an ocean for those thirsty for knowledge.

viii. *Musnad Fātimat bint-al-Ḥusain*

This is a classification of all those narrations which have been quoted by her eminence *Fātimah* the daughter of the 'leader of martyrs' *Imām Ḥusain* ('a.s); alongside them he has commented and annotated were he deemed necessary. In the science of *ḥadeeth* it is a rare piece of literature in which his in-depth detail and insight can be seen.

ix. *Nafahāt-al-Azhār fi Manāqib-al-Ai'mat-al-Aḥār* <sup>64</sup>

This is his work in the science of *ḥadeeth* which has made him stand shoulder to shoulder to *Allāmah Majlisī* ('a.s). It is a very extensive book in the merits of the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('a.s). It is compiled in sixteen volumes and is a sign from the many signs of his ability in knowledge and research.

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<sup>63</sup> In *Sabikat-al-Lujain*, p.20 it is said that this book is compiled in some volumes.

<sup>64</sup> In *Sabikat-al-Lujain*, p.20 the name of this book is mentioned as "*Nafahāt-al-Azhār fi Fadḥā'il-al-Ai'mat-al-Aḥār*" and is said to be the virtues of the *Ahl-al-Bait* ('a.s) as mentioned in the books of the *Ahl-al-Sunnah*.

### x. *Fihrist Ansāb Sam'ānī*

The book '*Ansāb*' by *Sam'ānī*<sup>65</sup> is a renowned and detailed book in the science of *Rijāl*. In it, one individual has been mentioned numerous times with different names and titles. In his index to this book, *Sayyid* has mentioned all those volumes and all those pages where one particular person, with all their different names has been mentioned. It is as if he gathered an ocean into a jug.

To an ordinary person it may seem what he has done was nothing special, but its value is only apparent to experts in this field. The extent of it becomes clear when, once a famous scholar<sup>66</sup> who was writing on the topic of biography came to his library to study the book of *Sam'ānī*. *Sayyid* gave him the book and he began to read it. He spent the whole day going through it but could not find what he was looking for. The next day he came again and went through the book once more, but again was unable to find what he was looking for. The third day, in the evening when he was returning the book, *Nāsir Husain* asked him, what are you looking for? He told him what he was searching for and that even after three days of searching in this jungle he was unable to find it. He told him to wait and asked for his classified index to be given to him. He said to him, what you are looking for, will be found in this. And in a matter of minutes he found it.

After seeing this, he was forced to express his relief and went on to praise the services and aid that *Sayyid* had done for *Islām* through such works. He compared him to the *Khidhr* in the path<sup>67</sup> and he was able to find something he was looking for, for the past three days in a blink of an eye. This index is a reminder of him today, in the days he was the helping hand of *Firdaws Māb*.

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<sup>65</sup> (b. 506/1112 - d. 563/1167) famous for his book in the science of *Rijāl*; *Al-Ansāb*.

<sup>66</sup> This according to what is mentioned in *Mail'a Anwār* this "famous scholar" is *Shiblī N'omānī*, see *Mail'a Anwār*, pp.662-663.

<sup>67</sup> This is an indication to what is famous about the noble *Khidhr*, that if one is lost or in need of help then he comes for their assistance.

xi. *Sabāi 'k-al-Thahabān*

This is a very complex classification in the science of *rijāl*. Compiled in forty-eight volumes, it is a mirror of his painstaking efforts in research. This also is a book of his early days, when he was helping *Firdaws Māb* in writing and classifying. From all the books of *rijāl* he has mentioned the histories of thousands of narrators. Truthfully, this book is a rare treasure in such a science.

xii. *Ithbāt Rad-al-Shams li 'Ali*

This treatise discusses the event of when the sun returned for *Imām 'Ali ('a.s)*. With the use of both intellectual and traditional proofs he has proved, this was a reality and did take place.

xiii. *Al-Nijāh*

This book, although small is very beneficial and was written in the later part of his life and discusses the issue of wedlock of *Um Kulthoom*.

xiv. *Ifhām-al- 'Adā' wa-al-Khuṣoom fi 'Aqd Um Kulthoom*

This book was also written in his later days again on the issue of the wedlock of *Um Kulthoom* but is detailed and researched. It discusses this claim in the light of jurisprudence, history and other aspects. Both intellectual and traditional evidence are used, and like the light of the day

clearly shows that this claim is false and baseless. All that the opposing schools have mentioned, is refuted through references in their own books.

#### xv. *'Abaqāt-al-Anwār*

This book is a refutation of the seventh chapter of the book *Tuhfat Ithnā 'Ashariyyah*. The author of *Tuhfat* references some verses and narrations and say the *Shi'ah* use them to prove that the first caliph was *Imām 'Ali*. He goes on with his false speculation to suggest the narrations mentioned are unauthentic and similarly, tries to prove the verses in their meaning do not prove such claims about *Imām 'Ali* ('a.s). The name of this book has been mentioned in the list of books of *Firdaws Māb*, as, in reality it is his work.

The target was, to write one volume for every verse and two volumes for every *hadeeth*. The first volume would be in proving the authenticity of the narration in terms of its narrators and the second in proving its meaning and connotation. As a result, when completed the book is of thirty volumes.

This was the task in hand. They realised the arguments mentioned in the section of verses were something people may be able to find in other books, but the research and detail of the traditional proofs was something they would not be able to attain. Therefore, the section of *hadeeth* was his priority during his youth. Such a detailed book and such a short life, would it ever be completed? <sup>68</sup> This was the reason why the section of *hadeeth* was started first.

On the narrations of *Wilāyat*, *Noor*, *Ṭayr* and *Ghadeer* seven volumes were written and as predicted by *Firdaws Māb*, his life did not aid him and he passed away leaving the book incomplete. But by the mercy of God, he was granted such a son, who in knowledge, research, well-

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<sup>68</sup> Quote of *Firdaws Māb*.

roundedness, and intellect surpassed his father. After his father, he continued with the same methodology founded by *Firdaws Māb*.

*Firdaws Māb* wrote seven volumes. *Nāsir Husain* then wrote eight large volumes on the narrations *Manzilat*, *Tashbeeh*, *Madinat-al-'Ilm* and *Thaqalain* with no change in detail and precision, as was started by *Firdaws Māb*. Their works were so alike; the two text could not be told apart. This was what caused some bewilderment amongst scholars, as when they put next to each other the works of *Firdaws Māb* and *Nāsir Husain*, they were unable to differentiate between the two.

Nevertheless, *Nāsir Husain* also passed away and the book was still incomplete. Now it was the turn of *S'aeed-al-Millat* and the responsibility was on his shoulders. The blessings of *Allāh* and the prayers of the scholars remained alongside him. It was his good fortune that he was now at the forefront of a task his father and grandfather had devoted their valuable lives to. God willing, the time of its completion is close so the jewels of their hardships can shine.

Up to now this was a brief history about *'Abaqāt* and what has been written in it. Now it is vital to mention the importance and value of the book itself. In order to explain this, it requires a large treatise and is impossible to do here. However, what can be said is; when the elite scholars and academics of the Islamic world saw this book they said, until today the world of knowledge and research has not laid eyes upon such a book. From *Egypt*, to *Syria*, from *Syria* to *Hijāz*, from *Hijāz* to *Irāq*, from *Irāq* to *Irān* and from *Irān* to *Afghānistān*, from all four corners, the books fame was apparent.

But look at the humbleness and modesty of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain*, even though he wrote more than his father in terms of quantity, he still wrote his father's name as the author without any mentioning of his own name and until today the world thinks, all of its volumes were written by *Firdaws Māb*.

## His Death

Old age, malnutrition, working for sixteen hours a day and constant day to day struggles brought numerous illnesses. His health day by day was detreating, until even the medicine were of no use to him. In the end, on the first of *Rajab* in the year 1361/1942, he left this world and his veil of affection was taken away from our heads and the nation became orphaned.

That day in *Lucknow* was nothing less than '*Āshurā*', the news of his passing reached the people like lightening. Anyone who came to know would run to his place of his teaching, where they would see many people gathered, mourning the loss of this great dignitary. If this was the condition of the people, then how would family members be? *Nāseer-al-Millat* and *S'aeed-al-Millat* were in such a state, one is unable to describe.

Nevertheless, the funeral was attended by twenty-five to thirty thousand people and after the prescribed rituals (of the dead body), the prayers were led by *S'aeed-al-Millat* and in accordance to his will, his scared body was entrusted in the *Kabalāī* (graveyard) of *Ameen-al-Dawlah Bahādur*.

## His Will

He wrote his will many years before he passed away and it consisted of many requests which covered various areas including: his forefathers, household, associates, servants, library, books and others. The following are some of the points mentioned:

Firstly, he requested that after his passing, his lovers, and family to be God wary, abide by the laws of the Almighty and to be patient.

Secondly, after he passes away he be remembered by those names and titles he was given in his life time and that no new ones be attributed to him.

Thirdly, when he would be remembered then it should not be exaggerated and for the people who remembered him they were requested to recite a *Surat-al-Fātihah* once, and *Surat-al-Tawheed* three times, with the intention of its reward to reach him.

Fourthly, he says: if I die in *Lucknow* then my bath should not be given in the river, more it should be performed in *Karbalāi Ameen-al-Dawlah Bahādur* and it should be entrusted there for some days after which his body should be buried in the shrine of *Shaheed-al-Thālith*. In a way so the grave is not higher than the ground, so it doesn't disturb those visiting.

Fifthly, in processions, gatherings of *Qur'ānic* recitation and other programs, expenditure should be minimal like the *Qur'ānic* gatherings of *Firdaws Māb* without the (un-Islamic) customs of *Lucknow* and *Kantoor*. If my devotees want to hold *Majālis* then they should do so with the upmost purity of intention, simplicity and little expenditure as their main focus.

Other than these, there are other points he mentions which really illustrate his purity, greatness and self-worth.

### His Children

The Almighty blessed him with numerous children, three daughters and two sons, *Nāseer-al-Millat*; *Sayyid Mohāmmad Nāseer* and *S'aeed-al-Millat*; *Sayyid Mohāmmad S'aeed*. All of whom were married, as the family tradition, within the family.

His eldest daughters husband was *Sayyid Abu Mohāmmad* the leader of *Jarwal* who passed away many years ago and his wife is the owner of the house. His second daughters husband was of a high position in *Haidarābād* and his youngest daughters husband was *Sayyid Nazeer Husain*, the bearer of many great attributes.

Both *Nāseer-al-Millat* and *S'aeed-al-Millat* completed their education during his lifetime and they attained *ijtihād* from *Najaf (Irāq)*. In the same way that after *Sayyid* himself completed his studies he refined himself under the mentoring of *Firdaws Māb*, they also attained their refined precision and attention to detail under his upbringing. This was something necessary for him because he had the peace of mind and was aware of their capabilities and therefore was able to give them some of his responsibilities. This was because of the lengthy time that they were under his wing, they knew the value and worth of knowledge. To remain just, he gave both of them half and half of his responsibilities. Social and political duties were handed over to *Nāseer-al-Millat* and religious affairs to *S'aeed-al-Millat*.

A couple of years ago from now, when the nation was going through the twists and turns for the *Husainī* frontier and were under a lot of pressure and passing the test of life and death for this great cause, it was due to this *Husainī* frontier both religious and political stands were being put to the test. *Sayyid* bared for the both, one after the other going to prison so that both political and religious aspects of this movement could be represented.

After this all of three of them with their struggles and hardships resulted in success and allowed the *Shi'ah* to once again live a respectful life. Till now all essential needs of the people are fulfilled due to these two individuals, may *Allāh* reward them and continues blessing them for the guidance of the nation.

Finally, as it was one of the requests of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain* in his will himself, readers are requested to recite *Surat-al-Fātiḥah* once and *Surat-al-Tawḥeed* three times with the intention of its reward for his soul.





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FIG I: A rare full-body photograph of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain* sitting. Attained by *Sayyid Mohsin Kashmirī* from the *Al-Adeeb* magazine.



FIG II: Another rare photo of *Sayyid Nāsir Husain* in his later days.

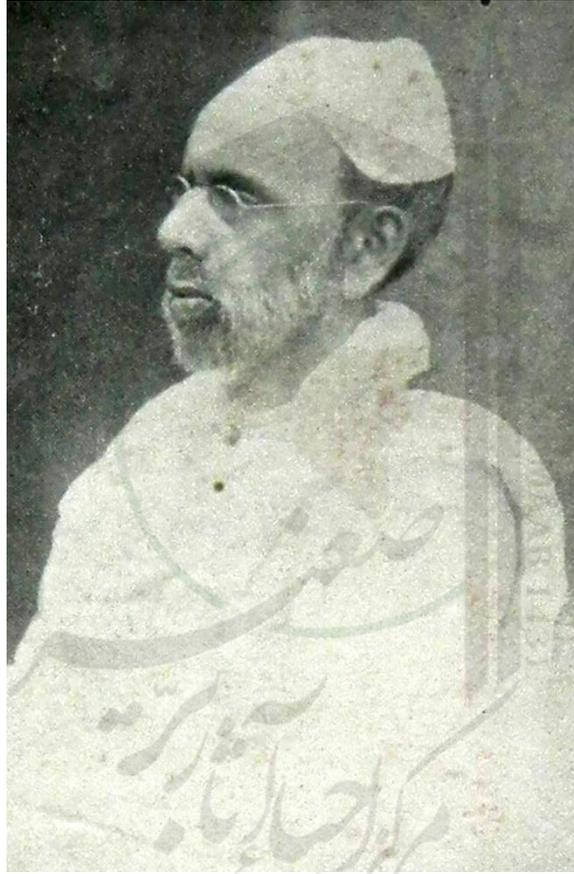


FIG III: His eminence *Sayyid Nāsir Husain*.

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