

لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ

A short commentary on Sūrah 97 of the Qur'ān and the Night of Power

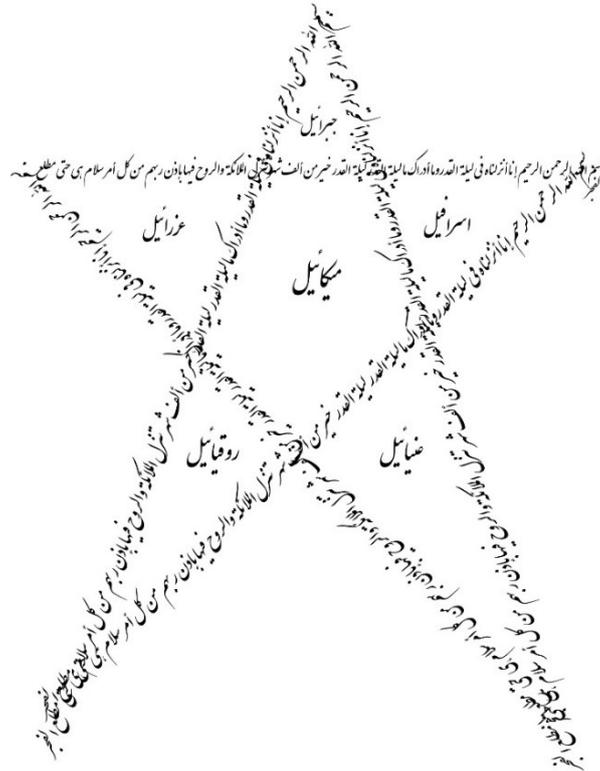
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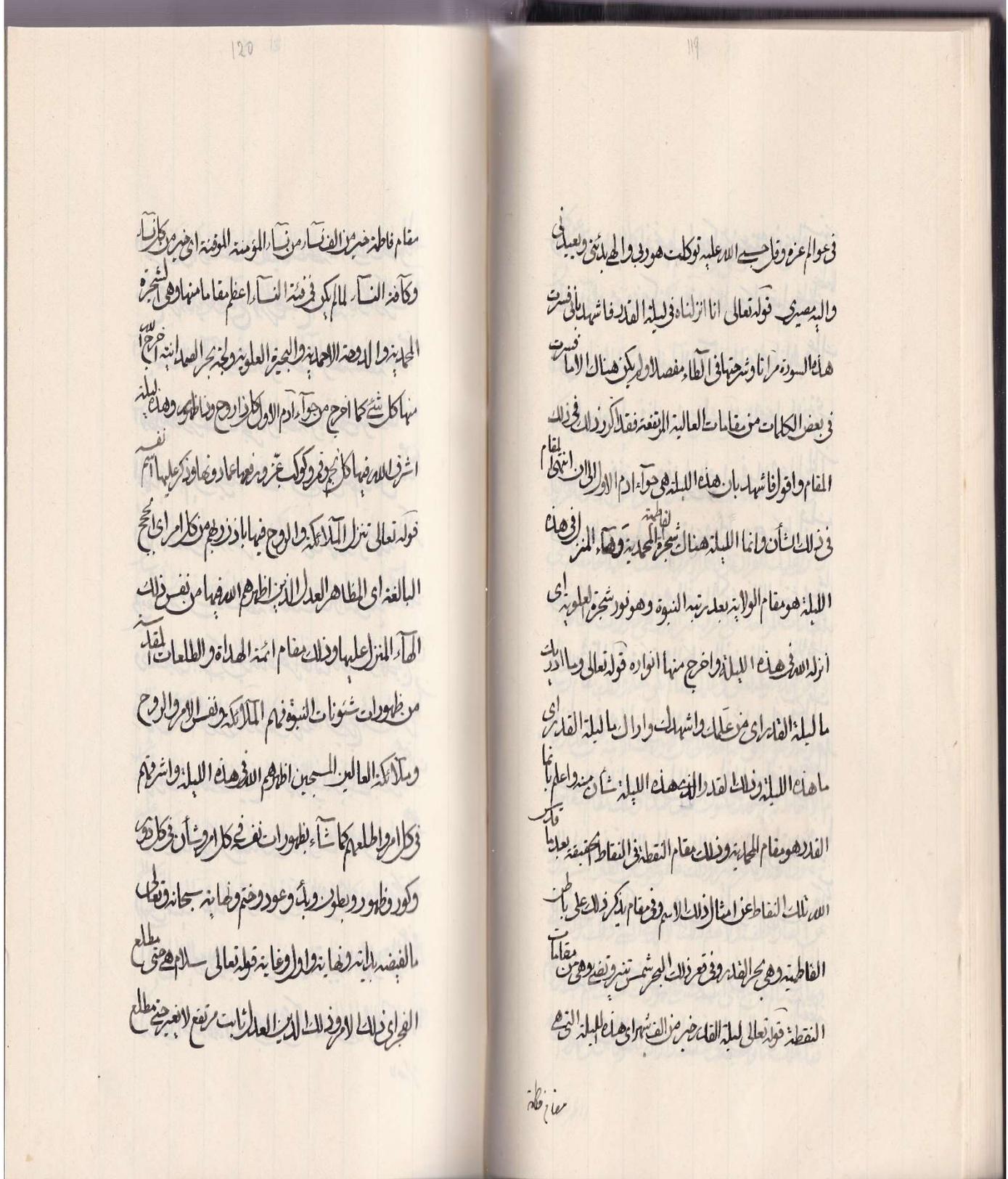
Ṣubḥ-i-Azal

Translated with introduction

By

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في عوالم عزم ونفاح حبه الاله عليه توكلت هو ربي واليه اني وابعد في
 واليه صيري قوله تعالى انا انزلناه في ليلة القدر فاشهد بان نزلت
 هذه السورة مرانا ونحيها في الظلمة فصلا لا يكون هناك الا ما
 في بعض الكلمات من مقامات العالوية الرفعة فقد اوردنا في ذلك
 المقام واقولنا شاهد بان هذه الليلة هي حواء ام الاله التي انزلت
 في ذلك الشان وانما الليلة هناك ^{الطاهرة} محجور المحجوبة وهما المنزلة
 الليلية هو مقام الولاية بعد نية النبوة وهو نور شجر العلوية اى
 انزل الله في هذه الليلة واخرج منها النور قوله تعالى وما ادرى
 ما الليلة القاه اى من علمك واشهدك وادراك ما ليلة القدر اى
 ما هذه الليلة وذلك لقد انزلنا هذه الليلة شأن من دعا علمها
 القدر هو مقام المحجوبة وذلك مقام التقطع في النقاط ^{تلك} المحجوبة
 الله تلك النقاط عن امثال اولئك الامم في مقام يدرك ذلك على باب
 القاطنة وهي من القدر في ذلك البحر شمس ونصف وهو من
 النقطة قوله تعالى ليلة القدر خبر من القدر اى هذه الليلة التي

مخارج

مقام فاطمة خيرة النساء من نساء المؤمنة المؤمنة اى من كان
 وكافة النساء لما لم يكن في فية النساء اعظم مقام منها في الشجرة
 المحجوبة والارضة العجوة والبيح العلوية ونحو بحر الصلابة اى
 منها كل شئ كما اخرج من حواء ام الاله الكل والروح والظاهر وهذه
 اشرف الاله فيها كما خرج في ذلك عز ورضها عاود وعواد كرهها ام
 قوله تعالى نزل الالام في الروح فيها اذ روحها من كل اى
 البالغة اى المظاهر العدل الذي اظهره الله فيها من نفس ذلك
 الهاء المنزلة عليها وذلك مقام ائمة الهداة والطلقات القدر
 من ظهورات شئون السوفهم الملائكة ونفس الاله والروح
 وملائكة العالين المسجين اظهروا الله في هذه الليلة واشهدهم
 في كل اى اظهروا كما شاء ظهورات نفس كل اى شأن في كل اى
 وكور وظهر ويطور ويبد وعود وضم وعناية سبحانه وتعالى
 ما يقضه اليه وعناية ولا وعناية قوله تعالى سلام هو من
 الفجر في ذلك الاله ذلك الذي العاليات رفع لانجيزه مطلع

From kalām al-muḥājir al-ṣādiq, pp. 119-20 (of 5041), Autograph MS: Cyprus, private hands.

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الفجر الى المظهر والنقطة في الفيضات الحقة لما اذ ذلك الظهور الى
 مطلع فجر الالهية وصباح الارض اصباح الحقيقة فاذا اذرك هذه
 اللبلة وذلك لها وتلك الارض الحقة المرتفعة المشعة بطورها
 الاحدية فادرك ذلك الفجر بطور نقطة الرابطة في شهور الحظرات
 المحيية لما لم يكن غير هذه النقطة من البعد الى اختلاف اقل واحد من
 ادلاء الحقة في كلامه الاعر شبه ذلك اولنا محمد واخرنا محمد وما ذكر
 في مقالاته من اشارات الحقة كما طلعت اشاراته في حديث العبد
 وذلك مجرى باذن الله غير الله ظاهر اغالبا قادرا هو الذي يخرج روح
 عزه في اولياته ونور ارادته في بقائه اذ يخرج من ذلك البحر
 غره واصدق قدسه لا يرفع بما اظهر كل عبد وبقائه بما عرف كل مؤمن
 ويستعمل بما اوجد كل مصدق والله هو الشاهد على عبادده وهو
 الولي المحيد فقد اشار تعالى في تلك الارض الحقة وايات الحقة
 ما لا يعرف غيره ولا يحيط به سواه فاشهد تجليها لما اظهر من جلده
 وارضاء اخيه الله لك من خواطر الحكمة لما ارض علمه لا يكشفها
 لاحد

From *kalām al-muḥājir al-ṣādiq*, p. 121 (of 5041), Autograph MS: Cyprus, private hands.

هو الوهاب

Translator's introduction

The *kalām al-muḥājir al-ṣādiq* (The Words of the Truthful Immigrant) is an extensive compilation and anthology of Mīrzā Yaḥyā Nūrī Ṣubḥ-i-Azal's (d. 1912) correspondences, missives, responses and doxologies addressed to a myriad of individual believers in the Bayān (as well as several non-believers) during the later years of the Cyprus exile (roughly the 1890s to late 1911 when due to illness some several months before his passing in late April 1912 Ṣubḥ-i-Azal ceased from writing altogether).¹ The present **BnF** (*Bibliothèque nationale de France*) **MSS** collection of this specific anthology (in the hand of Riḍwān-^ʿAlī, the author's son) is represented by ten **MSS** volumes,² all of which are presently online and can be accessed via the **BnF's Galicia** website.³ In 2016 we were sent a scan on disk of the original autograph of the entirety of this work in the hand of the author which runs to well over **five-thousand** (5000) pages in the original. Elsewhere at a later time we may offer a catalogue and description of the complete contents of this extremely important, late (and possibly final) compilation of the (shorter) works of the Mirror of the Bayān and successor to Siyyid ^ʿAlī Muḥammad Shīrāzī, the Primal Point, the Bāb (d. 1850), which in two of its specifically Persian-language volumes has been labeled *āthār al-azaliya* ('*The Pre-Eternal Traces*' or '*The Works of Azal*'). The bulk of these volumes, however, are in Arabic. It should be noted that several quranic commentaries of various length -- besides those already catalogued as having been penned by Ṣubḥ-i-Azal as independent pieces -- exist within this larger collection. The piece translated here below is one of these, and just in this single item alone a few parallel quranic commentaries are offered in the space of **thirty-seven** (37) pages.⁴ Innumerable prayers, litanies, doxologies and shorter treatises or tablets (*alwāḥ*) compose much of the rest of this massive compilation.

The item translated here only consists of three pages (or a *folio* and a half) taken from the larger **thirty-seven** (37) page correspondence-quranic commentary (114-51) which is addressed to an individual (on 114) referred to as ‘*Abd’ul-Wahīd*.⁵ The piece itself commences with the benediction formula of ‘*He is God, the King, the Donor*’ (هو الله الملك الوهاب)⁶ followed by a doxology of three lines with the piece commencing properly with a gloss on **Qur’ān 4:113** which continues for nearly five pages until the commencement of the commentary on **Qur’ān 97** which is the subject isolated here from the larger treatise. After quoting the *sūrah*’s first verse, Ṣubḥ-i-Azal begins by informing his interlocutor that previously he had already composed an extensive commentary on **Qur’ān 97** in Ṭā’ (ط) (meaning, Tehran)⁷ which he will summarize here.

Thematically Ṣubḥ-i-Azal approaches **Qur’ān 97** in an identical hermeneutical fashion as the Bāb does in his own commentary on this specific *sūrah*⁸ (as well as other similar items) in that all key referents of the quranic chapter’s symbology are held to signify a Theophany of Persons, here specifically Muḥammad, Fāṭima, ‘Alī and the Imāms (ع). This line of commentary is in keeping with a key, central feature of Bābī theology *qua* theophanology which asserts the radical transcendence of the Godhead whose atemporal divine will can only ever be known temporally via Its theophanic self-disclosures (*tajalliyāt*) among those human talismanic-temples of *hierohistory* who act as the *loci* of Its manifestations (*zuhūrāt*) to creation and stand as the inaugurators to its never-ending and ever-renewing religious dispensations (*adwār*) throughout the ages and epochs of time, and to which all divine matters for the human subject are referable -- as well as inferable. Thus, all scriptural registers, and especially in this commentary, are referable to these Theophany of Persons. In other words, here we are dealing with High Imamology and an exclusively Shi‘ite theosophy of the Perfect Human (*insān al-kāmil*) that as it crescendos and builds up to its chorus, as we shall presently see below, erupts into an outright sophiology of the Perfect Woman where the names of Eve and Fāṭima correspond, become synchronous and amphibolous divine realities instantiating the greater divine constellation of the creative process itself such that Fāṭima here becomes to the ‘*creation*’ of Her Holy

Progeny (ع) and the true believers what Eve is as the ‘*mother to all living things*’.⁹ Hence the **Night of Power** (*laylat’ul-qadr*) becomes at its center the *symbolique* of Fāṭima as well as Eve¹⁰ underneath whose shadow occur the Imāms (ع) (and, by inference, the entire lineage of Abrahamic prophet-messengers from Adam to Muḥammad), suggesting thereby that She -- whether in Her epiphany as Eve in the beginning of the epi-cycle (*kawr*) or as Fāṭima at its culmination -- is the moving pivot (*quṭb*) of the Paracletian Spirit;¹¹ for, as this commentary explicitly underscores; and as the **Fāṭimiyyic interiority** (*bāṭin al-fāṭimīya*) to the station of the **Point** (*nuqṭa*);¹² She is the **Ocean of Power** (*baḥr al-qadr*), the **Lofty Tree of the Most Praised** (*dawḥa al-aḥmadiya*), the **‘Alawid Lake** (*buhayra al-‘alawīya*) the **Oceanic Depth of Everlastingness** (*lujja baḥr al-samadānīya*) and the **Muḥammadan Tree** (*shajara al-muḥammadiya*) itself.

As per the versification of the **Sūrah of Power**, the translation below is divided into five paragraphs. Sūbh-i-Azal’s citation of the verse, which begins each time with *qawlahu ta’ālā* (High be His Locution), is given first followed by his commentary. The endnotes provide clarification whenever ambiguity has arisen. Key words and phrases transliterated from Arabic into English have been placed inside parantheses. Occasionally whenever an alternative reading of a word has come up, it has been placed inside square brackets. Key concepts have been boldfaced. In conclusion here, we would like to point out to a few of our online detractors whose actual knowledge of the Bayānī texts is either virtually non-existent or extremely shallow and superficial, not to mention based on imprecise and quite inaccurate English translations (or otherwise badly contaminated and biased by the generally warped Bahā’ī perspectives which has beclouded their vision and possessed their obviously limited horizons); that in this short piece, just as with the Primal Point before him, it is indeed Sūbh-i-Azal himself who is articulating and laying out key features of our Fāṭimīya doctrine with its high sophiology around Eve and Fāṭima. All we have done throughout is to elevate the themes, motifs, subjects and overall horizon which they gave explicit voice to over a hundred years ago unto a higher octave

Translation

يا الله

...High be His Locution, “*Verily We have revealed it in the Night of Power!*” (97:1) And I bear witness that I once commented and extensively elucidated upon this **Sūrah** in Ṭā’ (ط), and in there was naught except what I explicated regarding some of the locutions amongst the high, the elevated matters, so I will repeat it at this point. And I say and bear witness to this that the Night is the Eve of the first Adam unto the culmination of the matter. And as for the Night, there is the **Fāṭimiyic Muḥammadan Tree** (*shajara al-fāṭimīya al-muḥammadiya*); and the revealed [letter] **Hā’** (هـ)¹³ in that Night is the station of **Providential Guidance** (*maqām al-wilāya*) after the rank of **Prophecy** (*nubuwwa*), and that is the Light of the ‘**Alawid Tree** (*nūr shajara al-‘alawīya*); meaning, God hath made it to descend¹⁴ in that Night and produced from it His lights.¹⁵

High be His Locution, “*and what will make thee comprehend what the Night of Power is?*” (97:2); meaning, in your knowledge, such that you will bear witness and comprehend what the **Night of Power** is; namely, what this **Night** [represents]; and, that is, the **Power** to which this Night derives its [qualifying] state. And know that the **Power** (*al-qadr*) is the Muḥammadan station (*maqām al-muḥammadiya*), and this is the station of the **Point** (*nuqṭa*) among the points of Reality (*nuqāṭ al-ḥaqīqa*) after God hath sanctified those points from the similitudes of that Name; and in one place this [station] is mentioned as the **Fāṭimiyic interiority** (*bāṭin al-fāṭimīya*),¹⁶ for She is the **Ocean of Power** (*baḥr al-qadr*);¹⁷ and in the depth of that **Ocean** the Sun is beaming and shining, and it [or ‘She’] is among the stations of the Point.

High be His Locution, “*the Night of Power is greater than a thousand months*” (97:3); meaning, that **Night**, [which] is the station of Fāṭima, is greater than a thousand women among the believing and confirmed women; that is, greater than all the women and the totality of women [of the world] inasmuch as none of the women [of existence] are in a category greater in station than Her’s, for **She is the Muḥammadan Tree** (*hīya shajara al-muḥammadiya*) and **the Lofty Tree of the Most Praised** (*dawḥa al-aḥmadiya*) and **the ‘Alawid Lake** (*buhayra al-‘alawiya*) and the **Oceanic Depth of Everlastingness** (*lujja baḥr al-samadāniya*). God hath produced from Her all things just as from the Eve of the first Adam was produced every possessor of spirit and appearance. And in this **Night** God hath dignified every star, moon and planet, granderous and elevated it is [i.e. the Night] above what is below [or ‘other than’] it.

High be His Locution, “*The angels and the Spirit descend therein by the permission of their Lord in every matter*” (97:4); meaning, the Decisive Proofs (*ḥujjaj al-bāligha*), that is, the **Manifestations of Justice** (*al-maẓāhir al-‘adl*),¹⁸ Those Whom God manifested from the Soul of that revealed [letter] **Hā’** (هـ) in it; and that is the station of the **Imāms of Guidance** and the Sanctified Dawnings from the Manifestations of the grades of Prophecy, for They are the angels and the Soul of the Command (*nafs al-amr*) as well as the Spirit (*al-rūḥ*) and the glorifying archangels. God manifested Them in this Night and dignified Them in every matter and made Them to Ascend as He willed as the manifestations of His Logos-Self in every command and state in every dispensation (*dawr*), epi-cycle (*kawr*), manifestation (*ẓuhūr*), interiority (*butūn*), initiation (*bad’*), return (*‘uwūd*), seal (*khatm*) and termination (*nihāya*).¹⁹

High be His Locution, “*Peace, She is, until the break of Dawn!*” (97:5) That is the Religion of Justice (*al-dīn al-‘adl*) immutable and elevated which nothing changes until the break of Dawn, that is, unto the Manifestation of the Point in the True Resurrections (*qīyāmāt al-ḥaqqā*) wherein that Manifestation is the first locus of the Arising Dawn of the Exclusive Oneness (*al-ẓuhūr awwal matla’ al-fajr al-aḥadiya*) and the Morning of the Command (*ṣabāḥ al-amr*) among the

Mornings [or ‘becomings’] of Reality, for when you comprehend this Night and that [letter] *Hā*’ (ح) and those true, elevated and victorious Letters²⁰ of the manifestations of the Exclusive Oneness, you shall comprehend that Dawn by the Manifestation of the Point of Divine Lordship within the grades of the Muḥammadan instantiations (*laḥazāt al-muḥammadiya*) inasmuch as there is naught besides this Point from initiation unto termination. Wherefore saith one amongst the Proofs of the Truth²¹ in His locution, Most Grandeurous of its like,²² “Our beginning/firstness is Muḥammad and our finality/culmination is Muḥammad”.²³ And what is mentioned in His rank of the indications of Truth is as the dawning of His indications in the *ḥadīth* of Justice, for this is a current [or ‘stream’] in that naught other than God is Manifest, Predominant and Capable. He is the One Who stirs the Spirit of His Grandeur in His vicegerents and sends down the Light of His Volition within the Ocean of His Power so that there is produced from that the Ocean of the Vivified Animation of His Tremendousness and the Pearls of His Sanctification because every servant is upraised [or ‘elevated’] by what is manifested; and splendified by what is noeticized are all those tested; and made lofty by what is uncovered is every sincerely truthful one, for God, He is the Witness over His servants, and He is the Patron (*al-walī*), the One Praised (*al-ḥamīd*)!...

Notes

¹ See E.G. Browne, *Materials for the Study of the Bābī Religion* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1918), 310.

² **Arabe 6396, 6398, 6431, 6483, 6629, 6645, 6646, 6649, 6650 & 6652**, see also our *A preliminary list of the MSS of the works of Ṣubḥ-i-Azal held at the Bibliothèque nationale of Paris*, online <https://archive.org/details/apreliminarylistofthemsssofthewor> (accessed 14 April 2022).

³ See <https://gallica.bnf.fr/> (accessed 14 April 2022). The present item is found in **Arabe 6396**, *folios 103b-136b* with the commentary isolated and translated here occurring at **108a-110a**.

⁴ These include (in order) **Qurʾān 4:113, 97, 2:255, 49:1-2, 2:260, 62:9-11, 7:69, 42:51-3, 4:164, 33:53, and 9:1-3**.

⁵ Note that the *abjad* numerical value of this name is 135 which is equivalent to Fāṭima. We mention this given that in the commentary on **Sūrah al-Qadr** that follows, Fāṭima (ع) occupies a pivotal role in it.

⁶ The *abjad* numerical value of this benediction formula (composed of four words and seventeen letters) is 243 which is Fāṭima (135) plus *ḥaqq* (truth) (108).

⁷ This would have been the period from his appointment as Mirror by the Bāb in 1849 until his flight to Baghdad in late 1852 following the botched assassination attempt by the Bābīs on the life of Nāṣiruddīn Shāh. The present location (or even existence) of this early extensive commentary on **Qurʾān 97** by Ṣubḥ-i-Azal is at this time unknown.

⁸ <https://thepriampoint.com/showPict.php?id=qadr&ref=0&err=0&curr=0> (accessed 14 April 2022).

⁹ That is, in the Hebrew denotation of her name as the acrostic to אֵם כָּל הַיָּמִים ‘*em kol chai*’. In the greater Bābī constellation of things, this correspondence and synchrony between Eve and Fāṭima was already made by the Bāb himself in his *Commentary on the Sūrah of the Cow*, and to which we as well as are giving a contemporary voice in an even higher octave and tenuity in an ongoing, extensive work entitled ‘*The Effulgences of Wisdom*’ (*majālī al-ḥikam*) as a Bābī response to Ibn ‘Arabī’s *fuṣūs al-ḥikam* and the late Ḥasanzādiḥ Amūlī’s purported final chapter to Ibn ‘Arabī’s work; see the English version of our first chapter already published, ‘*The Effulgence of Vivification in the Wisdom of Eve*’, online <https://archive.org/details/1-the-effulgence-of-vivification-in-the-wisdom-of-eve-1.1> (accessed 14 April 2022). We are at a loss to understand how Ḥasanzādiḥ Amūlī missed this pivotal correspondence in his celebrated *faṣṣ ḥikma ‘ismatiya fi kalima fāṭimīya* (Qum: Dār al-Hādī, 1420 AH/1999 CE) because just as Adam corresponds to Muḥammad in the *Bezels of Wisdom*, and *vice versa*, given the principle, Eve (when positively represented) must correspond to Fāṭima in any ostensible completion of the *fuṣūs al-ḥikam*. In our short piece, Ṣubḥ-i-Azal outright makes this correspondence, which then functions as the foundational principle to our own work.

¹⁰ Note here that in a kabbalistic play on the letter’s of the Hebrew acrostic for Eve’s name as found in **Genesis 3:20**, we can actually derive the Hebrew word for ‘power’ (כֹּחַ) from its third and fifth letters whose *gematria* is, significantly, **twenty-eight (28)**.

¹¹ Here in this commentary identified as the Imāms (ع).

¹² Meaning, the animating reality of the Muḥammadan Reality (*ḥaqīqa muḥammadiya*). This would obliquely invoke the famous *ḥadīth qudsī* which we have cited many times elsewhere, to wit:

“O Aḥmad, were it not for you, I would not have created the universe; and were it not for ‘Alī, I would not have created you; and were it not for Fāṭima, I wouldn’t have created either of you,”
(my trans.)

يا أحمد لولاك لما خلقتُ الأفلاك، ولولا علي لما خلقتُك، ولولا فاطمة لما خلقتُك

In al-Baḥrānī’s ‘*awālim al-‘ulūm*, vol. 11 (Qum: 1415 AH/1995 CE), 43-44.

¹³ Of *layla* (ليلة), ‘night’.

¹⁴ Meaning, the reality of the Providential Guidance (*wilāya*).

¹⁵ Meaning, the Fourteen Infallibles (ع) and specifically the Twelve Imāms (ع) among them.

¹⁶ Presumably an oblique reference to the *ḥadīth* attributed to the sixth Imām (ع) and famously cited by Furat ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī in his *ḥadīth*-based *tafsīr*, which the Safavid sage Qāḍī Sa‘īd al-Qummī has summarized. To wit,

...As for the dusk (*al-maghrib*), it is the time of Fāṭima, upon Her peace, inasmuch as She is the Night of Divinity (*al-laylat’ul-ilāhīya*) and the Night of Power (*laylat’ul-qadr*); and within the commentary of Furat ibn Ibrāhīm [al-Kūfī] a tradition is transmitted from [the sixth Imām] al-Ṣādiq, upon Him be peace [which says]: verily “the Night” (*al-layla*) is Fāṭima the Radiant (*fāṭima al-zahrā*) and “the Power” (*al-qadr*) is God Most High (*allāh ta‘ālā*), because She is, upon Her be peace, the Night of God (*laylat’ullāh*); for when She was born the Prophet offered a single cycle of prayer (*rak‘atan wāḥida*) in thanksgiving to God, and that became the prayer of dusk (*ṣalāt al-maghrib*) Who is Fāṭima, upon Her peace...(my trans.)

Qāḍī Sa‘īd al-Qummī, *sharḥ tawḥīd al-ṣadūq* (Commentary on the **Kitāb al-Tawḥīd** of Ibn Babūyah al-Ṣadūq), vol. 1 (Tehran: 1415 AH/1994 CE), 600. Note that whereas in this *ḥadīth* attributed to the sixth Imām ‘*al-qadr*’ represents God, in Ṣubḥ-i-Azal’s gloss it is Muḥammad who represents the Power. This is consistent with certain earlier Shi‘i esoteric glosses of *ghulāt* provenance around scriptural symbolism, but especially all of the Bābī ones wherein all positive referents of scriptural symbology always apply to the Manifestation of God (*zuhūr allāh*) as the Divine Speaker (*nāṭiq*) who is the embodied divine immanence (*tashbīh*) and embodied ‘word’ (*kalima*) or *logos*, and not to the *deus absconditus* or Godhead who is radically transcendent (*munazzah*) and about whom nothing can be positively (or negatively) referred or inferred.

¹⁷ Elsewhere in this text on **page 143** of the autograph (**129a** of the Paris text) as he is commenting upon “to Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth” of **Qur’ān 2:255** (i.e. the Throne Verse), Ṣubḥ-i-Azal corresponds the **Ocean of Power** (*baḥr al-qadr*) to the level of the Divine Volition (*al-irāda*) and the ‘celestial’ earth and states, “what is [found] in this earth is the Fāṭimīyic Tree” (*shajara al-fāṭimīya*), concluding this sub-section of commentary by calling it among the “*lāhūtī realities*” (*ḥaqā’iq al-lāhūtīya*); see the relevant discussion of this pivotal trope in the Shaykhī texts discussed by Henry Corbin which makes of Fāṭima the “Super-Celestial Earth of Lāhūt” in *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdaean Iran to Shi‘ite Iran*, (Trans.) Nancy Pearson (Princeton: 1977), esp. Chapter II, *passim*.

¹⁸ Meaning, the Imāms (ع).

¹⁹ This is suggestive of an inferred doctrine throughout the Bayānī writings such that it is the principle archetype of the Shi‘ite Infallibles (ع) Themselves Who have manifested in every hierohistorical dispensation of the past and Who will ‘return’ in all subsequent ones throughout the aeons of time. This, in itself, significantly nuances those orthodox claims and interpretations regarding the doctrine of Islam’s spatiotemporal historical ‘finality’, leaving the door wide open to never-ending future Muḥammadan ‘revelations’, ‘manifestations’ and ‘dispensations’ in the paraousia/return of these principle archetypes of the Shi‘ite Infallibles (ع) Themselves from age to age. We will return to this topic elsewhere. Be that as it may, this notion in itself completely invalidates all legitimacy claims made by the Bahā’īs to the legacy of the Bayān and instead (especially given the entrenched Islamophobia and particularly Shi‘iphobia that informs much of their doctrine beginning with its founder who thoroughly sunnified and disfigured Bābism beyond recognition) characterizes them as its actual ‘covenant breakers’ (*nāqīdīn ‘ahd’ullāh*) in identical fashion as those *nawāṣīb* (haters) and

enemies of the *ahl al-bayt* (ع) in early Islamic history would be. On this point, it is quite telling that in his Persian commentary on *al-fātiḥa*, the Bāb identifies a penultimate nemesis and ‘antichrist’ (*dajjāl*) who will nearly (but not completely) wipe out the Bayān with the ‘return’ of Abū Bakr (ج), see <https://archive.org/details/tafsir-hamd-persian-1> (accessed 14 April 2022). Elsewhere Şubḥ-i-Azal outright identifies his half-brother and rival, Bahā’ullāh (d. 1892), the founder of Bahāism, as indeed being the ‘return’ of Abū Bakr. For our part, we have identified the Bahā’ī founder as the ‘return’ of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ج) and Abū Bakr (ج) both in one person, labeling him as **Abū Nakba** (the Father of the Calamity).

²⁰ Meaning, the Imāms (ع).

²¹ That is, the Imāms (ع).

²² This phrase is omitted in the Paris **MS** by its copyist.

²³ Ḥadīth attributed to the 4th Imām (ع) on the authority of His son, the 5th (ع), cited in *biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 26 (Beirut: 1403 CE/1983 CE), 16. The full ḥadīth is as follows, to wit:

Do not be astonished by the Power of God: Muḥammad is I, and I Am Muḥammad, for Muḥammad said, “O people, do not be astonished by the Command of God: I Am ‘Alī and ‘Alī is I.” And all of Us are One from One Light and Our spirits are from the Command of God: our beginning/firstness is Muḥammad and Our mid-point is Muḥammad and Our finality/termination is Muḥammad, and all of Us are Muḥammad (*my trans.*)

لا تعجبوا من قدرة الله أنا محمد ومحمد أنا، وقال محمد: يا قوم لا تعجبوا من أمر الله أنا علي وعلي أنا، وكلنا واحد من نور واحد وروحنا من أمر الله، أولنا محمد وأوسطنا محمد وآخرنا محمد وكلنا محمد

