

The Planetary Significance of the Urs of Hazrat Inayat Khan

by Puran Bair



Zenith and Noon

“Zenith” is the moment when the sun is at its highest point for the day. This is the old definition of noon, before standard time zones were created. Without standard time zones, every longitude would have its own time. Time zones create an average time over 1/24th of the longitude of the globe, with the consequence that virtually everywhere there is a difference between the clock’s noon and the sun’s zenith.



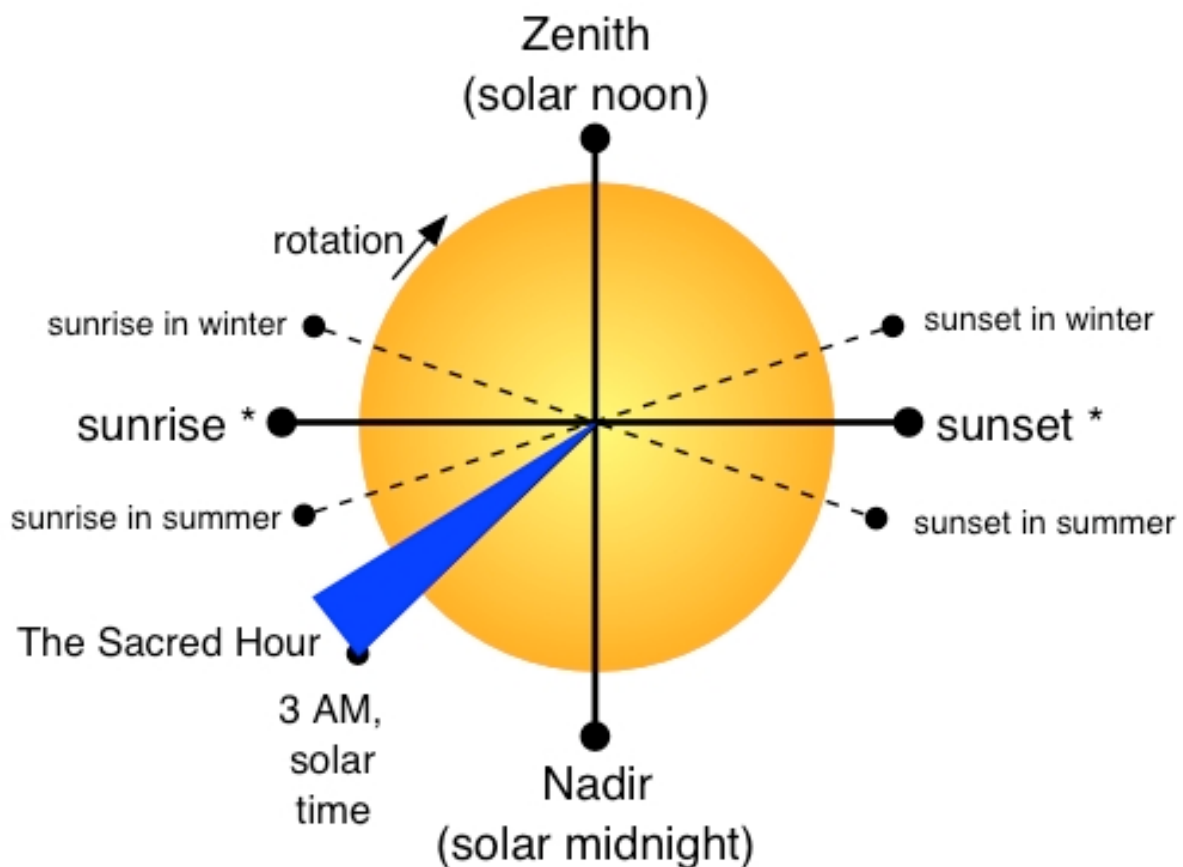
At the moment when the clock indicates noon in the Eastern Standard Time Zone of the US, the sun has moved past the zenith in Boston by 2 minutes. That is, the solar noon in Boston is 11:58 by the clock. In Washington DC, the sun is 21 minutes before the zenith. The solar noon in Washington is 12:21 by the clock. In Atlanta, the sun reaches its zenith at 12:51. These times can be checked at this website, where the zenith is called “sun transit”:

http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS_OneDay.html

The Sacred Hour

There is a tradition among Sufis that 3 AM begins a sacred hour in which the Masters meditate upon those on Earth whose solar time is between 3 and 4 AM. Thus the blessing of the Masters circles the globe continually. Those who are awake at that time to receive the blessing can participate consciously. We always do this on retreat.

Note that the sacred hour goes by solar time, so it will not correspond to the clock time. To determine the clock time for 3 AM solar time, one has to know the time of the zenith at one's location, and add 12 hours for the opposite time, the nadir, the solar midnight. Then add 3 hours to that.



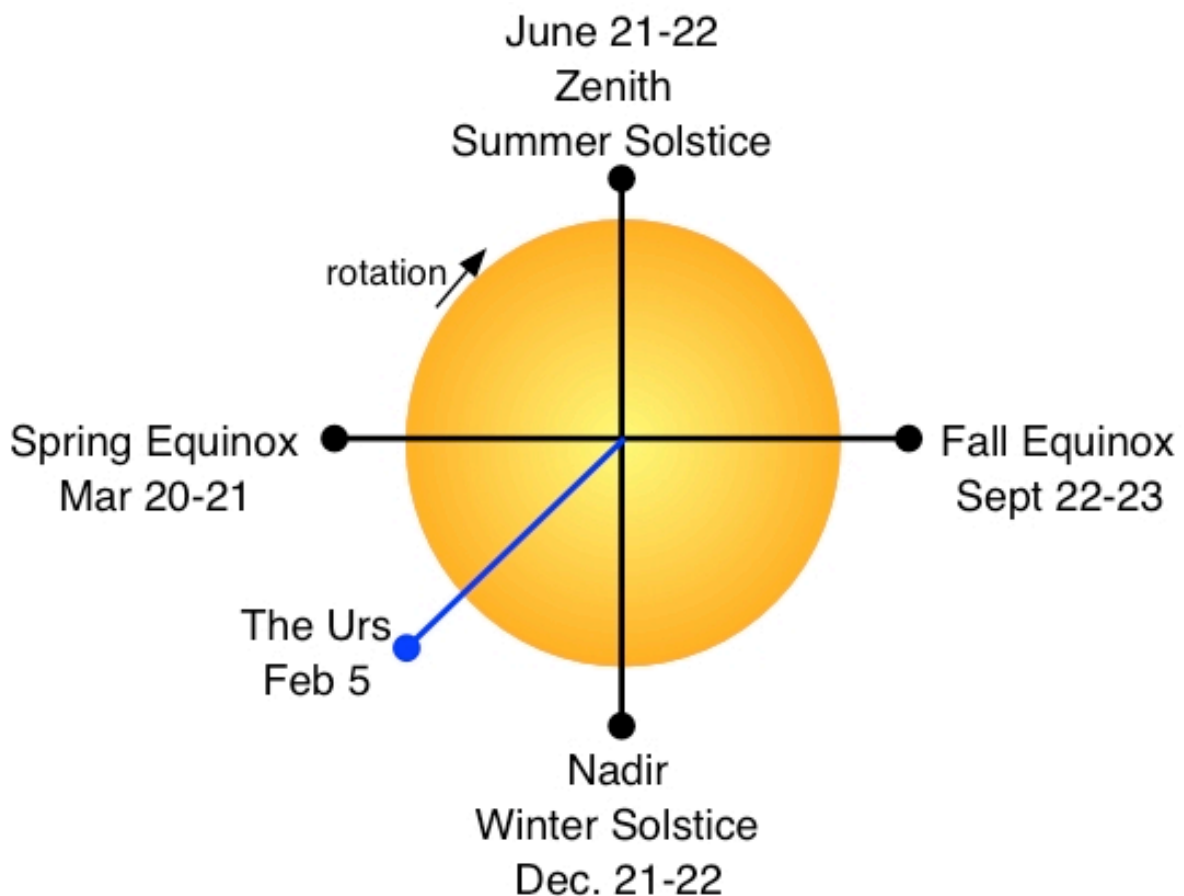
* sunrise and sunset occur 6 hours before and after noon only on the Equinox.

In the summer, the sunrise occurs before 6 AM, solar time. In the winter, it occurs after 6 AM. The sunset always occurs at the same number of minutes away from solar noon as the sunrise was. For example, if the sunrise in the winter is at 7 AM, then the sunset will be at 5 PM. If the sunrise was at 5 AM in the summer, then the sunset will be at 7 PM, solar time.

The Yearly Cycle and the Urs

We see that the 3 AM point on the daily solar cycle is a sacred moment which begins a period of meditation. What would correspond to this point on a yearly calendar?

We start with the solar calendar, where the summer solstice is equivalent to solar noon. In the northern hemisphere, that occurs on June 21-22, depending on the year. The nadir is the point in the yearly cycle that corresponds to midnight in the daily cycle. In the northern hemisphere, that occurs on December 21 to 22, depending on the year.



The 3 AM point on the daily cycle would correspond to a point on the yearly cycle that is midway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, which in the northern hemisphere is **Feb 5th**, the Urs (anniversary of the death) of Hazrat Inayat Khan !

Corresponding to the onset of the Sacred Hour, the Urs begins a day of sacred observance, spent in prayer and meditation, for the whole planet.