

How Can Love of Imam (a.s.) Be Purified?

This is a psychological question that arises from the depths of human nature in every good and virtuous mind. It is necessary hence to understand and comprehend the question of love. What is this shining entity that the Lord has placed in the innate self that urges man towards advancement?

The definition of Love

Psychologists pen the definition of love thus: this is a disposition termed as 'instinct. It is possible to explain the words but impossible to convey an explanation through the mere use of phrases. It can also be said that it is the opposite of hatred. Psychologists also point out that 'love' is the mother of all the instincts present in a living creature. They add that the movements of the bodily parts, habits and attitudes, food, speech and action, making a living, thoughts, ideas, attraction and repulsion, social interactions i.e. the entire life revolves around the axis of love.

Love and Desires

Experts of psychology have erred in clubbing desires which abide by the orders of the carnal self along with the pure instinct of love. This then has become so common that the linguists and litterateurs divided love into two dimensions: true love and apparent love while Islam has maintained love to be a light which takes nobility towards greater heights.

The view of Islam and Quran

Beyond and above the experiences and quotations of the experts in psychology, Islam has elucidated certain complete and comprehensive definitions of love. Reflecting upon the verse of the noble Quran clears the expanse of the mind and we begin to understand the invigorating nature of love. And the verse is thus:

Surely I am a faithful messenger to you. Therefore guard against (the punishment of) Allah and obey me.

[Surah Shu'ara (26): Verses 107-108]

At first, this holy verse appears to explain the aim of appointment of Allah's messenger (s.a.w.a.), but deep reflection causes the profound secrets to appear upon the surface of thought. Another verse points towards the path - **And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds** [Surah Anbiya (21): Verse 107]. The mercy of God is infinite upon the good doers and the virtuous and its medium is the essence of the Messenger to the universe (s.a.w.a.). When you mention mercy, it is imperative to note that the love of the Lord of the Worlds deprives no creature of its bounties. To fulfill the conditions of this love, He appointed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) with a momentous trust. His trust was a message of trust named 'obedience. He kept the name of the religion as 'Islam' which brought safety, peace, harmony and security and above all the practice of the tranquility in the hearts. Whoever believed became eligible for this inner tranquility. Their intellects brightened, they could envision the higher stages and their feet gained the capacity to ascend heights. The rise in this spiritual awakening is called love. When the crown of nobility was placed on the head of humanity, a quiddity was placed in his innate nature which acted as a receptacle for His limitless love and mercy, so that he could

recognize his Lord, the hidden treasure. Allah has termed this ability as the light of love. (These two definitions of love are the two facets of the same coin). When you understand the manifestation of love under the title of trust, the covenant of trust placed upon the shoulders of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) begins to explain some of its meanings and implications.

Love and Trust

How beloved was the Messenger to Allah (s.a.w.a.) that He had made the mention of trustworthy commonly associated to him before his appointment! The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) fulfilled the demands of this love with every breath. The noble Quran has reiterated and confirmed this righteousness many times through the holy verse - Surely I am a faithful messenger to you.

Love and Piety

The trust, which the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) of Islam had promised to deliver to the worshippers, was this very piety and Godfearing nature. In his 23 year mission of Prophethood, he (s.a.w.a.) has performed this duty through his words, action and writing in such a complete and satisfactory manner that the Lord of the worlds has adorned it with the stamp of perfection. Piety, placing the fear of God in the hearts, takes man from humble beginnings rising beyond the sun into the pathways of the heavens. The stages are traversed step by step and he faces within himself difficulties and tribulations which plays within him the swirling paths of confusion and waywardness wherein there is no ease and comfort. But sitting down is despair while love implies the struggle to achieve the final aim.

Piety

Just as love is the guardian of trust, piety is the protector of love. There is a stumble at every step. It is piety that steadies man. Piety picks man up, cleans the dirt from his clothes, gives him strength and confidence, gives him the strength to act and makes his motivation firm; and if there is a veil on the love in his heart, it rips apart the veil. He becomes fearless due to his piety. As the Almighty Allah says

With it Allah guides him who will follow His pleasure into the ways of safety and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path.

[Surah Maedah (5): Verse 16]

Piety and Obedience

Just as piety is a guardian of love, obedience is those deeds on which piety is based. We have already mentioned in a preceding verse about 'obey me' in the last word on which the verse ends. Without obedience, piety cannot be understood. The word 'obey me' has opened up the pages of piety. Obedience is to act upon every order, to be vigilant at all times and careful in every era.

Imamat and Love

To keep the light of love shining, people have in every era of Imamat accepted the leadership of Imam (a.s.) and tried in earnest to follow the teachings of Islam as directed by these resplendent personas (a.s.), learnt how to steady themselves while falling and made efforts to purify their love for Imam (a.s.)

A complaint was made to Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) that the servants of the corrupt government live a life of ease and comfort while we who are on the truth bear such hardships and afflictions. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) gave him a bag of silver coins and said 'Go and fulfill your wish to live in ease and comfort'. When the person was leaving with this bag of silver coins, Imam (a.s.) put forth the condition - give back my love that you have in your heart. The person who loved Imam (a.s.) started trembling and the bag of silver coins slipped away from his hand. In tears he said- , in front of the love which is a guarantee for everlasting happiness this bag of silver coins holds no value. In this manner the purification of his love for Imam (a.s.) made his soul rise and his heart became true to his faith in the presence of the Imam of his time (a.s.) – the Imam (a.s.) who possesses the mirrors of truth of the entire world and the one who is aware of the condition of hearts. He is the representative of Allah and his caliph on this earth. Hence, the person was saved by the Imam (a.s.) from a great deviation. He could have lost the everlasting life for a few days of this world.

The conditions for love of the present Imam (a.s.) in this era

There was a time when Imam (a.s.) was before us. The companions benefited from the knowledge and submission to Imam (a.s.). That time passed away in the year 260 AH and that word from the past and the voice that was raised on the day of Ghadeer is alive only in the hearts of the believers and the aware ones. Such people are few but spread across the globe.

The Imam of the time (a.s.) went into the Minor Occultation in the year 260 A.H. The government spies and the idolaters in the seats of power had spread their webs everywhere; a fact extensively covered in the books of history.

The year 329 A.H marked the final break with the chain of the special deputies and the major occultation began. Imam (a.s.) in his final epistle announced that my major *occultation has begun and the pious scholars will represent me in the affairs. They would base their rulings upon authentic traditions and exercise jurisprudence in their knowledge*'.

The word should trickle down from the special ones i.e. the people of knowledge and wisdom, the scholars, the jurists to the common people. Thus, the orders and the beliefs would spread. This is absolutely correct. But the question persists, how is purification of love of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) possible for everyone? Its connection is with the human self. How will a person accept the words of the people of knowledge and remembrance until his self becomes pure? Hence, it is necessary to have an inclination towards purification of self. This is only possible when we maintain a healthy and strong relation with the Book of Allah and His orders and prohibitions. We test our love for Imam (a.s.) in its light and see to what extent and in what quantity this love has entered our hearts.

With purity of self and Ummul Kitaab, the noble Quran

The Almighty has announced for the people who keep the majestic Book as friend.

And when you recite the Quran, We place between you and those who do not believe in the hereafter a hidden barrier.

(Bani Israel (17): Verse 45]

In this manner, he saves them from the world, its allurements and the entrapments on its pathways of deviation. He safeguards them and inculcates the love of the speaking Book i.e. the knower of the secrets of divine wisdom and enthroned one with the title of Imamate, in the hearts of the believers of the hereafter. And those who do not believe in the hereafter they be warned.

Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Nay, on the hearts there are locks.

[Surah Muhammad (47): Verse 24]

Purification of self

When the sound of contemplation upon the divine order of the Holy Quran falls upon the ear of the believer, he searches for the heavenly stages passing through the initial ones for which he finds in himself, a need to search for a better understanding of the Noble Quran. This is only possible when a loving friendly master of wisdom would guide him. All Praise is for Allah! With the coming of this thought, the heart of the pure souls turn towards the indication of their Imam (a.s.), attentive towards his voice. That Imam (a.s.) who despite being in occultation is present with us every moment and bestows upon us his love and grace. He guides us. Another verse of the divine word supported us and opened for us doors in our thinking the light of love that we should search and that verse is

Certainly We sent Our messengers with clear arguments, and sent down - with them the Book and the balance that men may conduct themselves with equity

[Surah Hadeed (57): Verse 25]

This satisfaction, which the entire world considers as nonexistent, Allah the High has gifted to the reciters of the Holy Quran and the people who stay connected to their Imam (a.s.). In such manner that the Book is placed on one side and the love of Imam (a.s.) i.e the scale kept as a wall on the other side and the people who have love in their hearts are kept safe. It is indeed sad the world has not done justice to the word 'scale' nor has it made an effort to understand it. Our Prophet is Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and our Imam (a.s.) of today is the successor of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) who is also "M-H-M-D". Love is placed in pure souls. It produces an inclination towards Imam (a.s.). It shows how to move towards Imam (a.s.), to have Imam's (a.s.) satisfaction, to know his (a.s.) indications, to know our duties towards him (a.s.) and how we can keep aflame the lamp of hopes in our heart. Remember the heart in which the love of Imam (a.s.) lives is completely akin to a bird who turns towards its nest at the onset of evening.

Purification of the love for Imame-Zamana(a.s.) and its fruitful consequences

In what a subtle manner has Allah placed the reflections of light in an earthy manner and in what a pleasant tone has He addressed man. O man! If you save this form then you will, ascending the stages, be able to roam the skies. The horizons of the earth will open before him if man contemplates upon the meaning of the following verse,

He it is Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers that they might have more of faith added to their faith and Allah's are the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Knowing, Wise.

[Surah Fath (48): Verse 4]

SHABAAN 1435 A.H.

How merciful is our Creator! He taught us the way to seek forgiveness, bestowed His benediction upon the repentant, gave us rules for safety against evil, made the words of the believer soft as silk and his style attractive, motivated him towards ways of transcendence, created in him a confidence that He would be satisfied with him easily made his remembrance in the Beautiful Names' a guarantee for cure and made Imam (a.s.) of the time the axis for His love and mastership.

Now, if man does not know the manner of purification of his love for Imam (a.s.) and the veil of his ignorance is not ripped apart, then he alone is responsible. The awareness has been sounded out and the lamps of intellect have been lighted in the innate nature regarding the Hidden Proof. Hence the condition for the love of Imam (a.s.) is that man should keep purifying it.

Dear readers! This message of love is Islam. This is a support for anxious hearts. When a believer notices corruption, immorality, alcohol and gambling rampant among the masses, he feels afraid. What path should he choose to come near to his Imam (a.s.)? How should he save the essence of his love from filth? He seeks the help of his Lord in strengthening his love for Imam (a.s.) as he faces dread in visions of the victims of terror, the cries of the orphans, the grief stricken visages of widows, the plaintive size of the wounded, the sobbing of the helpless and the rain of blood. O Allah, save us! Be our guide! The Almighty replies,

And seek assistance through patience and prayer, and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones

[Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 45]

For the rest, it is neigh impossible. This verse is like a fort. Worship without the love of Ahle Bait (a.s.) is meaningless. Imam (a.s.) is an enclosure as Allamah Iqbal had said it of the first Muhammad (s.a.w.a.), it is equally true for the Muhammad of the age (a.s.).

If you be faithful to Muhammad then we are yours, The world is yours, the Tablet and Pen is yours, O Imam (a.s.) in occultation! Take us in your embrace, the voices for succor, the voices of love and belief for the orphans and the widows, the wounded, the helpless and the unaided. We are ashamed that we fall short in fulfilling the rights of love but our hope is only with you and we are neither hopeless nor helpless since it is your holy presence which supports the universe and you are the helper.

Recognition Of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) – Importance, Obstacles & Means

There is a well-known tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which has been reported by both the Shia scholars as well as the opponents.

The Noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) says: "One, who dies without recognizing the Imam of his time, dies a death of ignorance and disbelief."

A death of ignorance and disbelief means that on the Day of Judgment, there will be no ground for salvation for the one who does not recognize the Imam of his time. The person will be subjected to severe torture on the Day of Judgment. The fate of a person depends upon the belief on which he/she departs from this world which necessitates that one should die as a Muslim and with unconditional faith. For that to realize, it is obligatory to recognize the Imam of the time.

Recognizing Divine Monotheism

The importance of recognizing the Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) isn't restricted to the topic of Imamate only. Rather, it is also essential to recognize Imam (a.s.) to completely understand the principle of Divine Monotheism (which is the foundation of every belief and action).

Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) says: "Surely the one who recognizes the Imam of the time from us Ahle Bait (a.s.) recognizes Allah and worships Him (in the true sense)." [Al Kaafi by Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Yaqub al

Kulaini (r.a.), vol. 1, p. 181]

Recognition and Worship

The sole purpose of a person's life is to worship Allah. In order to worship Him, it is necessary to recognize Him which in turn necessitates the recognition of Imam. Hence, recognizing the Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the most essential need of life.

Some believe in treading the middle path. In other words, they don't totally reject the Imam of the time nor do they completely acknowledge him. They feel secure in this way. For such people, Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says:

"Deviated are the ones who don't recognize us, or reject us, until they return towards this guidance of obeying and following us, which Allah has made obligatory. And if they die on deviation Allah will treat them in the manner He wishes."

[Al Kaafi, vol. 1, p. 187]

Lack of recognition is ignorance and disbelief. Also, merely to refrain from accepting it (i.e. not believing in it) is erroneous and going astray. In both situations, the result is the same: ignominy in the hereafter.

The Importance of Recognition

Islam doesn't approve blind faith. On the contrary, it encourages and invites people to ponder, deliberate and explore. Islam does not advocate one to follow his ancestors blindly or strictly adhere to stereotypical customs. Every principle and command of Islam stands firm on sound

knowledge. In Islam, the light of recognition burns brightly in a faithful heart and based on this, the excellence of faith and ranks are determined.

Hence, Imam (a.s.) says: "Some of you have offered more prayers than others, some have done more pilgrimages than others, some have been more charitable than others, some have fasted more than others but the best among you are those who have more recognition than others." (Sifaat al-Shiah by Shaikh Saduq (r.a.) p. 93, H. 28]

Recognition is the soul of Islam. The quality of the actions depends on the strength of one's recognition and on the rightful foundations it is based on. Sincerity in actions will further enhance recognition.

So important is the status of recognition in the holy religion of Islam that no deed will be accepted without it.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says: "Allah will not accept any deed (performed) without recognition and recognition can only be attained through actions. The one who possesses recognition will be guided to action and one who does not act is devoid of recognition."

[Al Kaafi, vol. 1, p. 44, H. 21]

In brief, recognition without actions is like a bee without honey. Since one is not aware of the consequences, what will the one who doesn't tread carefully know what fear is? Yes, it is true that a learned person faces regular impediments in his lifetime. We will discuss a few of them.

Obstacles in the Path of Recognition

All of us wish to recognize Allah, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his infallible Ahle Bait (a.s.), keep worshipping and attain high ranks. If we indeed want to scale the highest rank of recognition and live our lives with recognition then we need to understand these obstacles which deprive us of the great blessing of recognition. In that case, we must seek help from Allah, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Ahle Bait(a.s.) to get rid of these obstacles and take effective steps. We pray to Allah to help us identify these obstacles and completely shield us from it.

1. Desires

The biggest impediment in the way of recognition is the evil soul and the wanton desires it harbours. Chasing these desires digresses one from the right path.

Allah, the Almighty says: **"Have you then considered him who takes his low desire for his god, and Allah has made him err having knowledge and has set a seal upon his ear and his heart and put a covering upon his eye. Who can then guide him after Allah? Will you not then be mindful?"**

[Surah Jaasiyah (45): Verse 23]

Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) says:

"Desires are a hunting ground for Shaitaan."

(Ghurar al-Hikam by Shaikh Abd al-Waahid *al-Aamudi (r.a.)*, 583]

"The calamity of the intellect is chasing wanton desires."

(Ghurar al-Hikam, 396]

"Frequenting those who run after desires makes one lose his faith and invites Shaitaan."

[Nahj al-Balaagha by Sayed al-Razi (r.a.), Sermon 86]

"When a person falls in the love of this world it blinds him and affects his heart. Then he sees but with an eye devoid of insight, hears but with inattentive ears. Desires have cut asunder his intellect, and the world has rendered his heart dead, his self has dominated him while he is a slave of what he possesses. Wherever it turns, he turns with it and wherever it proceeds, he proceeds with it."

[Nahj al-Balaagha, Sermon 109]

"Wisdom and cravings cannot be at one place

(Ghurar al-Hikam, 2356]

"Make your heart attentive towards piety. Oppose your inner desires: you will overpower Shaitaan."

(Ghurar al-Hikam, 1057]

Following desires is a big obstacle on the way of recognition. There are few ways of attaining it viz. 1) Intellect 2) Eyes 3) Ears.

One understands the realities with the help of intellect. Seeing with the eyes and reading a book makes things clear for us. Listening from the ears causes the advice to percolate down to the heart. Seeking inner desires conceals all these faculties or makes them weak because of which things cannot be seen in the right perspective. If spectacles are murky then the view becomes unclear. If the dust of desires settles on the mirror of the heart, then an individual becomes negligent of the truth.

If we are negligent of recognizing the Imam of the time - Hazrat Hujjat Ibn Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) - or have little understanding about him, then one of the reasons ascribed for it is seeking of inner desires. The desires have corrupted the heart to such an extent that the pure recognition of the Infallible Imam cannot find a place in it.

If Allah removes this obstacle from our hearts and reveals the reality of this world to us, we can rid ourselves from seeking inner desires. For this, one needs to sincerely pray constantly to Allah.

Dua No. 8 of Imam Zainul Abedeen's (a.s.) from al-Sahifaal-Sajjadiyyah can prove to be the best guide in this regard.

2. Sins

One of the biggest barriers in the way of recognition is sins. Allah, the Almighty says in Quran: **"Nay! Rather, what they used to do has become like rust upon their hearts."**

(Surah Mutaffefeem (83): Verse 14]

SHABAAN 1435 A.H.

While explaining this verse, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

"Committing one sin after the other blackens the heart."

[Mausuah al-Aqaed al-Islamiyyah, vol. 2, p. 171]

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "When a believer commits a sin a black spot appears on his heart. If he repents, the spot disappears and his heart is *clean again*. But if the sinning increases this spot keeps growing. This is the rust which Allah has referred to in his book: **"Nay! Rather, what they used to do has become like rust upon their hearts."**

[Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 271, H. 13]

Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) says: "The thing that corrupts the heart the most are sins."

(Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 375)

Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) says: "There's nothing more painful for the heart than sins."

[Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 375]

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "When a person commits a sin then he forgets those things which he knew earlier."

[Mausuah al-Aqaed al-Islamiyyah, vol. 2, p. 172]

Misdeeds blacken the heart, make the face dull and weaken the deeds.

"The heart is left lifeless due to four things. One of them is excessive sins."

[Ibid]

In Islam, the heart has been declared as the hub of knowledge, understanding, insight and faith. **"They possess hearts but do not understand". "Faith has not even entered your hearts." "Have their hearts been locked?"** The heart is the first and most affected by sins. So when the center of understanding and intelligence is affected, recognition too will be affected as a consequence. Thus, sins turn out to be the biggest obstacles in the way of recognition. If we want to gain true recognition of the Imam of our time, Hazrat Hujjat Ibn Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.), we should sincerely repent and seek forgiveness from Allah, beseech Allah, by making Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and his holy Progeny (a.s.) as a medium, pray earnestly for forgiveness and take stern precautions to keep away from sins in the future. Further, pray to Allah to grant special favours because recognizing Imam (a.s.) is a precious fortune.

The obstacles on this path have to be removed and it needs to be protected from every kind of harm so that this precious treasure can be presented on the Day of Judgment, the benefits of which will be a cause of saving oneself from the difficulties of the hereafter. It's certain that it is not easy to abstain from sins without the special favours (taufeeq) granted by Allah and support of Imam (a.s.). It is only with the special favours of Allah and support of Imam (a.s.) that a person can walk through the thorn-filled jungle of sins without getting his attire pricked. This special favour can be attained through good deeds, uncorrupted intentions, sincerity of the heart and consistent supplication.

As heart is the hub of recognition and intelligence, it needs to be saved from hardening because no seed germinates on a rock-strewn ground. A seed needs a soft ground to sprout and take

root. The heart that has hardened due to frequent sinning, material love of the world, anger, belying the Divine signs and oppressing others will not bear the fruits of recognition. The orchards of intelligence and certainty will not bloom. The hardened hearts do become softer while pleading in front of Allah and crying in embarrassment for the sins committed, much like the rains that breathe life into a dead piece of land. Similarly, the tears of regret, atonement and repentance give life to a dead heart. It cleans off the rust and the dust in such a manner that the heart becomes a shining center of love for Allah and the holy ones.

Currently, the worry of earning a livelihood has made the lives so busy and occupied that the doubts and uncertainties have cropped up and influenced the thoughts in such a manner that staying steadfast in the way of faith has become an onerous task. In these conditions, lack of remembering Allah, the extravagant lifestyle, undue spending in the name of customs and traditions, opposing commandments of Allah in order to save oneself from being criticized by a handful of people, excessive desires, chasing the world, being proud and boastful at every step, selfishness, pretentiousness, wanting more and more despite being comfortably placed, estrangement from being content, getting upset over small things, getting angry at every step and mouthing profanities, oppressing the weak, extreme interest in sports and entertainment, encouraging prejudice and hatred, needless arguments and talks, showing-off one's knowledge for getting prominence, flaunting one's capabilities to impose fear on supporters, materialism and stubbornness, carelessness about the prohibited and permissible food, overeating and gluttony... are the causes that make one negligent of Allah and those close to Him. These factors harden the heart. They fade the light of recognition and at times negligence and sins leads one astray.

There are more obstacles like these that come in the way of recognition. For that, one has to stay alert and protect oneself from these obstacles to save recognition.

Means of Recognition

Besides knowing the obstacles, it is also necessary to know the ways and actions that cause increasing in recognition. Once the obstacles are lifted and the ground is softened, it is necessary to cultivate recognition on it. Following are some important points:

Allah's favour

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "When Allah wishes to grant blessings and goodness to a slave He grants him depth and foresight in religion and inspires him towards guidance."

[Mausuah al-Aqaed al-Islamiyyah, vol. 2, p. 136, H. 1795]

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says: "Certainly, when Allah wishes to grant blessings and goodness to a slave, He plants a white spot in his heart, He opens (the ears of) his heart and appoints an angel for him who keeps guiding him towards the right path."

[Behaar al-Anwaar by Allamah Shaikh Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (r.a.), vol. 70, p. 57, H. 30]

Sincerity

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "When a person worships Allah with sincerity for forty days, the wisdom in his hearts flows out through his speech."

[Oddat al-Daaee by Ibn Fahd al-Hilli (r.a.), p. 218]

Imam Ali ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) says: "With sincerity comes divine foresight."

(Ghurur al-Hikam, 6211]

A person's recognition will increase with his sincerity. To perform actions with total sincerity is our duty and the responsibility to initiate fountains of wisdom and recognition in our hearts lies with Allah. Most certainly Allah fulfils His promises and grants more than expected.

Love of Ahle Bait (a.s.)

There is no stage or phase in religion where love of Ahle Bait(a.s.) is not required and this love removes all difficulties.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "Those who desire wisdom should love my Ahle Bait(a.s.)."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 27, p. 116, H. 92]

He (s.a.w.a.) also says: "Know that the one who loves Ali, Allah will fortify the wisdom in his heart and he will say the right things." (Fazail al-Shia by Shaikh Saduq (r.a.) vol. 1, p. 46) Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says: "One who loves us Ahle Bait and fortifies our love in his heart the springs of the wisdom gush forth from his tongue."

[Al-Mahaasin by Ahmed Ibn Muhammad al-Barqi (r.a.), vol. 1, p. 134, H. 167]

It's very evident that Allah has deposited all the treasures of knowledge and recognition with Ahle Bait (a.s.). They are the center of its secrets and mysteries. They are the gate to the city of knowledge. It was in their house where the Holy Quran was revealed. Ahle Bait (a.s.) are the Light of Allah; they are absolute radiance. There's no darkness in them. They are light, their speech is light and their love is brilliant. Their knowledge and recognition, too, is light. If this luminous love enters the heart, it will dazzle with its recognition and wisdom and become the place of the rising radiance.

Actions

One of the causes of recognition is to abide by the religious laws strictly. Following these laws will open up the ways of recognition. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says:

"One who acts according to his knowledge, Allah will teach him what he doesn't know."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 40, p. 128, H. 2]

We find in the Holy Quran: "**And be careful of (your duty to) Allah (and) and Allah will teach you...**"

[Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 282]

Piety is attained by following the Islamic teachings. There are things which a person achieves with sheer hard work, and some things are granted to him by Allah. It is obvious that no recognition will be better and reliable than the one from Allah.

Prayers

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "Those who offer prayers will be presented with the love of angels, guidance, faith and recognition."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 82, p. 233, H. 56]

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "Allah's satisfaction, the love of angels, the love of Prophets, recognition and attainment of true faith lies in reciting the night prayers (namaz-e-shab)."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 87, p. 161, H. 152]

If we want to achieve the recognition of the Imam of our time, then we need to strictly offer prayers at their prime times and be regular in reciting night prayers. The period before Morning Prayer is the ideal time for acceptance of prayers and forgiveness of sins. The best blessings of Allah are revealed at this time. We must send salutations to Imam (a.s.) daily after the morning prayer and request him to keep us safe from committing sins and help us do good deeds.

Lawful Food

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: "One who eats food from lawful earnings for forty days, Allah will fill his heart with light and fountains of wisdom will flow from his heart."

[Mausuah al-Aqaed al-Islamiyyah, vol. 2, p. 149]

The heart which is illuminated due to the intake of lawful provisions is likewise hardened by unlawful food. It is not just in the apparent sense that the food becomes lawful or unlawful but it also implies the manner in which the money was earned to buy the food. Was it through lawful means or otherwise?

There is a lot of emphasis in Islam on earning lawful sustenance. The one who earns lawful sustenance is equated with the one who strives in the way of Allah. Unlawful and prohibited provisions close the doors of the heart.

Imam Husain (a.s.) while addressing the army of Umar ibn Saad (1.a) in Karbala said,

"All of you are disobeying me and not paying attention to what I am saying. It is because your stomachs are filled with prohibited food and your hearts have been sealed."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 45, p. 8]

Supplications

Supplications are of uttermost importance in attainment of recognition. There is nothing a person can't achieve if he sincerely asks from Allah the Omnipotent. Major sins are forgiven through supplications and highest of ranks can be achieved through it. From among the supplications of Infallible Imams, there are some wherein, light, foresight, guidance and recognition are sought.

One of the responsibilities in the period of Imam's (a.s.) occultation is to recite the Ziyarat of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). The Ziyarat of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) is traditionally recited after every prayer and congregation. But there is one Ziyarat which the Imam (a.s.) has himself stressed upon and that is Ziyarat Aale Ya Seen. Janab Shaikh Abbas-e-Qummi (r.a) has declared in Mafatih-ul-Jenan that this is the first Ziyarat of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) following which there is one supplication which starts like this:

"O Allah I beseech You through Your merciful Messenger and the word of Your Light Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.), fill my heart with the light of certainty, enrich it with light of faith, my intellect with the light of honest intentions, my determination with the illumination of knowledge, my strength with the illumination of action, my tongue with the illumination of

honesty, my religion with the illumination of insight from You, my sight with the illumination of brightness, my hearing with the illumination of wisdom, and my faculty of love with the illumination of sincere loyalty to Muhammad and his Household, peace be upon them."

Besides, it has been strongly recommended to recite this frequently in the period of occultation:

"O Allah introduce Yourself to me because if you do not introduce Yourself to me, I will not recognize Your Prophet (s.a.w.a.). O Allah! Introduce Your Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to me because if I do not recognize Your Prophet (s.a.w.a.), I will not recognize Your Proof (Imam). O Allah! Introduce Your Proof. For, if I do recognize Your Proof I will deviate from my religion".

O Allah! In this last era, help us recognize Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) the most. Remove the obstacles in the path of recognition and provide us with the best of opportunities to recognize him (a.s.).

Aameen! All praise is due to Allah.

Books Written On Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) - Prior To Major Occultation

The geographical boundaries are interconnecting with each other and the world is being brushed with a new color. The winds of injustice are blowing and the sea of oppression is brimming. The conditions of a new revolution are clearly visible i.e. the aid and helper of the weak and oppressed, the destroyer of the palaces of the oppressors and the unjust, the only remnant from the proofs of Allah, Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will reappear and demolish the palaces of oppression. He will establish the government based on the foundations of justice and freedom. Injustice and oppression will not find respite. Prejudice, conflicts and injustice will be annihilated. Destruction and violence will be eradicated from the world.

Presently 1,175 years have passed since the powerful hand of God has been hidden under the sleeves of occultation. He will end the occultation, reappear and spread the rays of justice and uproot human evils and corruption.

The news of reappearance of this great Messiah was heard from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) from the advent of Islam till date and the hopeful news of the victory of truth over falsehood has echoed in every era of history.

The discussions found in the books of various religions and laws of the world have compelled every truth seeking researcher to accept the fact that all the divine messengers have drawn a celestial picture of this universal savior for their nations and have breathed the spirit of awaiting him in their followers.

Even though, except for the Noble Quran, all the previous divine books have been subject to alteration, there are enough proofs available in these books from the teachings of the messengers concerning the belief of Mahdaviyyat. (For details, please refer the book - 'He will certainly come' by Ali Akbar Mahdipur).

More than two hundred verses have been revealed concerning the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). (Please refer the book 'The Promised One in Quran' by Ali Akbar Mahdipur)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has explained each and every condition of this divine savior in his numerous traditions through divine revelation. He has narrated about his ethos, his appearance, pedigree, reappearance, conditions of reappearance and other aspects related to him. In the light of these traditions, the belief of Mahdaviyyat was explained by Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) along with other beliefs and was further explained in the era of all Imams (a.s.).

Numerous companions of Imams (a.s.) have penned down traditions related to this divine savior which were narrated by the infallible in their books and many companions have mentioned about the birth, occultation, reappearance and conditions of reappearance before the sun of Imamate rises. We are mentioning a few books along with their authors:

Books written before the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

1. Abu Ishaq Ibrahim Ibn Saleh alAnmaati

He was from the companions of Imam Baqir (a.s.) and has written many books. These books were destroyed in the course of time, however even after centuries one book still remains which is 'Kitab al-Ghaibah.

[Rijaal of Shaikh Tusi,p. 1104; al-Fehrist of Shaikh Tusi,p. 30; Rijaal of al-Najaashi,p. 15 and Rijaal of Ibn Dawood, p. 32 narrated from the books on Imam Mahdi (a.s.) written by Ali Akbar Mahdipur, vol. 1]

Al-Anmaati wrote this book more than hundred years before the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

Ayatullah Khomeini (may Allah sanctify his grave), after analyzing the traditions narrated by Abu Ishaq al-Anmaati concludes that three people by this name have been found in history, out of which the author of the book 'Kitab al-Ghaibah' is a reliable and trustworthy person and apart from this Abu Ishaq Ibrahim Ibn Saleh al-Anmaati was the companion of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and followed the Waaqefiyyah religion.

[Mo'jam Rijaal al-Ahadees,vol. 239, p. 1]

2. Abul Fazl Abbas Ibn Hisham Nasheri

He was famous as Ubais. He was from the companions of Imam Reza (a.s.). He has also authored a book called 'Al-Ghaibah. [Rijaal-e-Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 384 and Rijaal-e Najaashi (r.a.), p. 280]

He expired in the year 220 A.H. This book was written approximately three decades before the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

3. Ali Ibn Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Fazzal

He was the companion of Imam Hadi (a.s.) and Imam Askari (a.s.). He has written 30 volumes out of which two volumes are dedicated to Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). a. Kitab al-Ghaibah b. Kital al-Malaahim

His father Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Fazzal has also written a book on the conditions of reappearance named 'Kitab al-Malaahim'

[Rijaal-e-Najaashi (r.a.), p. 1257 and p. 36]

4. Abul Hasan Ali Ibn Hasan Ibn Mohammad Taaei Jarmi

He was the companion of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and he has written a book called 'Kitab al-Ghaibah'. He was also on the Waaqefiyyah faith, yet Najaashi has addressed him by the title of Faqih and has termed him as reliable and trustworthy with regards to traditions.

[Rijaal-e-Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 357 and Rijaal-e-Najaashi (r.a.), p. 255]

5. Abul Hasan Ali Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ali Sawwak

He too belonged to the Waaqefiyyah sect however Najaashi (r.a.) has addressed him as 'reliable', 'trustworthy' and 'true narrator. He has also written a book called 'Al-Ghaibah.

[Riaalse [Rijaal-e-Najaashi (r.a.), p. 256]

He lived in the time of Imam Reza (a.s.).

6. Abul Hasan Ali ibn Umar E'raaj

He also belonged to the Waaqefiyyah sect. His book was named as 'Al-Ghaibah. [Rijaal-e-Najaashi (r.a.), p. 41 and Al-Feherist of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 81]

He also lived in the time of Imam Reza (a.s.)

7. Abu Ali Hasan Ibn Mohammad Ibn Samaa

He was companion of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and belonged to the Waaqefiyyah sect. His book is also named Al-Ghaibah. He expired on the 5th Jamadi ul Awwal in 263 A.H.

8. Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Hamza alBataain

He was from Waaqefiyyah sect and his father was companion of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and was counted among the chiefs of the Waaqefis. He wrote many books. Some of them are as follows:

- a) Kitab al-Ghaibah
- b) Kitab al-Raj'ah
- c) Kitab al-Qaem al-Sagheer
- d) Kitab al-Malahim

The book 'Kitab al Qaem-as-Sagheer' indicate that he had written 'Kitab al Qaemal-Kabeer' which did not reach Najaashi (r.a.).

(Rijaal-e-Najaashi (r.a.), p. 37, Mo'jam Rijaal al-Ahaadees by Sayed Abul Qasem al-Khoee (r.a.), vol. 5, p. 14]

Who are Waaqifis?

Of all the authors mentioned above, five belonged to the Waaqefiyyah sect.. Terminologically, they are considered as believers in 7 Imams (a.s.). According to Waaqefis, Imam Musa Ibn Jafar (a.s.) is Qaem and the promised Mahdi. However, a few believe that Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) has died and will be enlivened again and will conquer the entire world, while others say that he (a.s.) came out from the prison of Sindi ibn Shaahik (1.a) and no one saw him and the soldiers of Haroon put the people in doubt that he has not died but disappeared.

[Al-Najm al-Saaqib, vol. 1, p. 272 - Printed by the Holy Mosque of Jamkaraan publications Spring of 1389]

We have discussed the Waaqefiyah books in this article because the traditions regarding Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) have been mentioned in series of books half a century before his birth and these traditions were narrated from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Imams (a.s.) and since they believed in 7 Imams (a.s.), they have included these traditions in their books.

We wish to draw the attention of the readers towards the holy existence of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and his occultation and not towards the beliefs and path of Waaqefi scholars and writers.

9. Abu Saeed Ibaad Ibn Yaqoob Ravajani

Shaikh Tusi (r.a.) and other Shia historians have termed Ravajani as Sunni. However, all Sunni scholars are unanimous that he was a Shia.

[Al-Feherist of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 149]

Sam'aani has attributed Ravajani with titles like Shaikh, scholar, truthful and Shia traditionalist.

[Al-Ansaab of Sama'ani, vol. 6, p. 170]

Ibn Hajr al-Asqalaani has termed him as Shia exaggerator (Ghaali) but has emphasized on his truthfulness and loftiness.

[Tahzeeb al-Tahzeeb, vol. 3, p. 74]

Zahabi has brought many proofs of Ravajani being a Shia Ghaali but through the references of Abu Haatim and Daarqutni, he has narrated his sincerity and has remembered him by the titles of 'reliable' and 'truthful'.

[Mizan al-E'tedaal, vol. 2, p. 379]

According to Sunni scholars, Ravajani was reliable and authentic. Hence, Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn Dawood have narrated traditions from him.

[Siyar-o-A'laam al-Nubala, vol. 11, p. 537 and : Mizaan al-E'tedaal, vol. 2, p. 397]

Abu Haatim Raazi has heard traditions from him.

[Al-Jarh wa al-Ta'deel, vol. 6, p. 88]

Thus, all the historians have considered him reliable and have honored him with titles like 'memorizer of Quran' (Haafiz); 'Proof (Hujjat)' and 'Truthful (Sadoog)'

[Shadharaat Al-Zahab, vol. 2, p. 121]

Ravajani, on whose reliability everyone trusts died before the birth of Imam Mahdi (atfs). He authored the book 'Akhbar alMahdi' and expired in 250 A.H.

[Al-Fehrist of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 149 and AlZareeah by Aqa Buzurg Tehrani (r.a.), vol. 1, p. 352]

Ravajani became blind in the last part of his life. However, he had intense love for Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) to the extent that he always tied a sword to his head so that he fights in presence of Imam (a.t.f.s.) if he reaches the time of reappearance Zahabi narrates from Qasim Matarraz that Ravajani was asked that why have you tied a sword to your head. He said: I have provisioned it so that I may fight along with Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

(Siyar-O-A'laam al-Nubala, vol. 11, p. 538, Mizaan al-E'tedaal, vol. 2, p. 379]

This incident has been narrated by the Ahle Tasannun with correct chain of narrators, which show that he held Shia beliefs, the one that is deeply rooted.

There are many concepts that have been narrated in the Ahle Tasannun books from Ravajani which indicate that he was a Shia. In short, Tabari has heard from him directly that 'a person, who does not distance himself from the enemies of Ahle Bait (a.s.) after every Namaz, will be raised with them (enemies) on the Day of Judgment. :

[Tahzeeb al-Tahzeeb, vol. 3, p. 75]

Hence Allamah Mamqaani (r.a.) has emphasized on him being a Shia and has brought many proofs regarding the same.

[Tanqeeh al-Maqaal, vol. 2, p. 124]

And Abul Faraj Isfahani has included him among the chiefs of "Zaidiyyah" sect.

[Maqaatil al-Taalebeen, p. 384]

10. Abdullah Ibn Jafar al-Himyari

He was companion of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.).

[Rijaal of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 432]

He has dedicated many of his writings to the topic of Imam Zamana (a.s.)

- a. Qurb al Asnaad ilaa Saahib al Amr (a.s.) [Rijaal al-Najaashi, p. 220]
- b. Al-Ghaibah wa al-Hairah (Rijaal of Najaashi (r.a.), p. 219)
- c. Al-Ghaibah wa al-Masaailah (al-Fehrist of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 132).
- d. Al-Fitrah wa 'al-Hairah (al-Fehrist of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 132]

Probably, the second name is similar to the third or the fourth. The books of Abdullah Ibn Jafar al-Himyari which still exist are as follows: a. Qurb al-Asnaad from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) b. Qurb al-Asnaad from Imam Kazim (a.s.) c. Qurb al-Asnaad from Imam Reza (a.s.)

All the three books have been published in one volume under the title 'Qurb al Asnaad'. Najaashi (r.a.) has accredited another two books of Qurb al-Asnaad to al-Himyari but they have not reached us. They are: a. Qurb al Asnaad ilaa Abi Jafar Ibn ar-Reza. Imam Jawad (a.s.) b. Qurb al Asnaad ilaa Saahib al Amr (a.s.)

[Rijaal of al-Najaashi (r.a.), p. 220]

Abdullah Ibn Jafar was alive till the middle of the Minor Occultation

11. Ali Ibn Mahziyaar Ahvaaz

He was the companion of Imam Reza (a.s.), Imam Jawad (a.s.) and Imam Hadi (a.s.). He became the representative of Imams (a.s.) after the death of Abdullah Ibn Jundab. :

[Rijaal of Shaikh al-Tusi (r.a.), pp. 381, 403 & 417 and Rijaal of Allamah Hilli (r.a.), p. 92-93]

He corresponded extensively with Imam Jawad (a.s.) and narrated many traditions from him. He has narrated many traditions from Imam Hadi (a.s.) as well.

[Al-Imam al-Jawad, pp. 270-281 and Imam Hadi, pp. 325-329 from Syed Mohammad Kazim Qazvini]

Ali Ibn Mahziyaar's 33 volumes exist as remembrance. Al-Najaashi (r.a.) has enumerated names of all the books. Two volumes have been written on Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and the signs of reappearance. One is named 'Al Qaem' and the other "al-Malaahim. Ali Ibn Mahziyaar was alive till 226 A.H. but he did not see Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.).

[Rijaal of al-Najaashi (r.a.) pp. 253 & 549]

12. Ibrahim Ibn Ishaq-e-Ahmari

He was alive in the era of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) and wrote one book called 'Al Ghaibah [Rijaal of Najaashi,p. 19]

13. Abu Ali Hasan Ibn Ahmad Saffar

He was present at the time of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) and wrote a book 'Dalaail Khurooj-al-Qaem [Mo'jam Rijaal al-Ahadees, vol. 18, p. 199 and Rijaal of Najaashi (r.a.), p. 19]

14. Abu al-Anbas Mohammad Ibn Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim Kufi

Abu al-Anbas was famous litterateur of the Abbasi dynasty and was categorized among the famous Ahle Tasannun scholars of that era. He was among the advisors of Mutawakkil Abbasi from 232 A.H to 248 A.H. He was the judge at Saymarah. He wrote a book by the name (Saahebus Zamaan' and died in 275 A.H.

(Al-Fehrist of Ibn Nadeem, p. 223, Taarikh al Khulafa pp. 346, 356]

Abu al-Abnas died 20 years after the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), probably, he wrote the book 'Saahebus Zaman' before the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

15. Fazl Ibn Shazaan

He lived in the era of four Imams viz. Imam Reza (a.s.), Imam Jawad (a.s.), Imam Hadi (a.s.) and Imam Askari (a.s.) and gained from their beneficence. He sat in the presence of many narrators of traditions and learnt from the treasure-chests of their knowledge. It is said that he has written 180 books. Some have said 160 while others have quoted 120 books. It is said for some of his books that Imams (a.s.) have seen them page by page and commented thus:

This book is correct and in accordance and should be acted upon

(Rijaal of Kashi,p. 538; Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 50, p.300]

There is a need to write a complete article on the life and works of Fazl Ibn Shazaan, however in this article we are only discussing books related to Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). They are as follows:

- a. Isbaat al-Ghaibah
- b. Isbaat al-Raj'ah
- c. Kitaab al-Qaem
- d. Al-Malaahim
- e. Hazw al-Na'l Bi al-Na'l
- f. Al-Ghaibah min al-Hairah wa al-Teeh

[Rijaal of Kashi, p. 538]

These were some of the companions of Imams (a.s.) who wrote series of books on birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), his occultation and signs of reappearance before the birth of

The special characteristic of these books is that they have been written before the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and these authors spent their lives during the times of Imams (a.t.f.s.).

They have not taken knowledge from anyone except from its original source or from the minimum and most trusted media.

Narrators and Reporters of Traditions

After the discussion of the above mentioned books we shall now discuss about the narrators and reporters of traditions. These narrators and reporters of traditions would reach the traditionalists from different parts of the world after a lot of hard work, labour and trouble and would humbly sit in front of them to listen to the traditions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They would then compare these traditions with other sources and assess whether they are correct or weak and only then include them in their chronicles so that the later the later generations would benefit from them.

The companions of holy Imams (a.s.) and the compilers of their traditions have transferred traditions from one century to another and this series is continuing till date.

Apart from the Shias, the narrators who are associated to the school of despotic rulers have compiled traditions regarding Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) in their collection of traditions. Here, we shall mention the names of the oldest books with the name of the author and year of death. 1. Al Musannaf: Abdur Razzak Ibn Hamaamue(Exp. 211 A.H.)

2. Sunan: Abu Abdillah Mohammad Ibn Yazeed Ibn Maaja al Qazvini (Exp. 273A.H.)

3. Sunan: Abu Dawood Ibn Sulaiman Ibn al Ash'ath al-Sajistaani (Exp. 275 A.H.)

4. Sunan: Abu Isa Mohammad Ibn Isa al Tirmidhi (Exp. 279 A.H.)

5. Sahih: Abu Abdillah Mohammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (Exp. 256 A.H.).

We have included Bukhari in this list because he has recorded the discussion of resurrection, signs of resurrection and Dajjaal, which are also signs of reappearance in the chapters of Ashraat al-Saa'ah and al-Malaahim wa al-Fitan. Bukhari has also included the discussion of descent of Hazrat Isa Ibn Maryam (a.s.).

For details please refer the book Iqd al-Durar fi Akhbaar al-Muntazar of Yusuf Ibn Yahya As-Shaafei

6. Sahih: Abu al-Husain Muslim Ibn alHajjaaj al-Naisaaburi (Exp. 261 A.H.)

7. Musnad Kabir: Abu Bakr Ibn Ahmad Ibn Umar Ajri (Exp. 292 A.H.). He is buried in the city of Ramlah

8. Al-Mo'jam al-Awsat: Tabaraani Sulaiman Ibn Ahmad (Birth 260 A.H. and Exp. in 320 A.H. apparently, he has written some books till the minor occultation i.e. 329 A.H.)

9. Kitab-o-Musnad of Abu Ya'laa al-Mosuli (Exp. 308 A.H.)

The books mentioned in this article are famous books written which were written either before the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) or during the minor occultation. The books mentioned in this article are those of which we are aware. However, there may be several other books, treatises and chronicles of which we are not aware of hence we cannot restrict ourselves only to the above mentioned books. There is a scope and need for further research. Thus we have mentioned about the narrators and reporters and we cannot limit ourselves to them but research further.

Important References

While concluding the article it is important to mention that, we have taken references from the preface of Persian translation of the book 'Kamaal al-din wa Tamaam al-ne'mah'. This preface has been written by the translator of the book 'Ayatullah Mohammad Baqir Kamrehei'. There is another book 'Kitabnaama-e-Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.)' written by Janab Ali Akbar Mahdipur. This book is in two volumes and was first published in 1417 A.H. In this book more than 2000 books on Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) have been introduced.

Prior to publishing this book, the author Janab Ali Akbar Mahdipur visited Mumbai and met Hujjatul Islam Aga Shaikh Ahmad Shaabani and learnt from him about the books published in India on Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). Coincidentally, Haaj Aga Shabaani inquired from the author of this article on the same subject who presented to him a list of 390 books on which Janab Mahdipur remarked,

'I had access to the books mentioned in this (Mumbai list) in many libraries and I have benefitted from them while writing this booklet, however among all the lists, the books of Mumbai library which are 390 in number which I have received from Hazrat Hujjatul Islam wal Muslimeen Aga Shabaani are the most important one.'

(Please note that Janab Ali Akbar Mahdipur has many such lists apart from this list. Among all the lists and libraries he has deemed the list of Mumbai to be the most important one.)

The reality of the list of Mumbai

This list was prepared by Association of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). When the first book exhibition was organized in Mumbai, the author of this article along with a few friends had explained the books and had written the name of the book, author, publication and summary of the same.

After this explanation, we request you to refer the booklet 'Kitaabnaama-e-Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)' which has references to the books written on Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) in every era. This book includes references of books in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English, Gujarati and other languages.

O Allah! Grant us the Taufeeq of doing research for defending Imamate and Shiism.

Shaikh Albani And Belief In Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

In this article, we shall discuss the famous Ahle Hadith Salafi scholar Shaikh Mohammad Naasiruddin Albani. Shaikh Albani has established the authenticity of the belief in Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) based on traditions from reliable books of the Ahle Tassannun. Furthermore, he has replied to the doubts raised in this regard by the Egyptian scholar Rasheed Reza.

Note: All the views in this article belong to Shaikh Albani and it is not necessary that they coincide with the views of the true faith explained by the purified family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Who was Shaikh Albani?

Shaikh Mohammad Nasiruddin Albani was born in the city of Shkoder, a city in northwestern Albania the year 1334 A.H (1912 AD). After acquiring basic education from a religious madrassa in Istanbul, he returned to his home town. Due to pressures from the government of his time, he left his home town and migrated to Damascus. There he developed an interest for the study of traditions and benefited greatly from Damascus' famous library – al-Zahiriyyah. He then spent three years in the holy city of Madinah and wrote a book "Ikhtesaar-e-Sahih Muslim" (A summary of Sahih Muslim). Then he spent some time in various countries like Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and UAE and finally settled in Amman, the capital of Jordan. In the year 1999, he was awarded the King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies in Saudi Arabia. Most of the books written by Albani were in defense of the source books of the Ahle Sunnah or for their propagation. Hence, he is often referred to as, "Muhaddithe-Asr" (The Traditionalist of the Age). Among his famous students are Umar Sulaiman alAshqaar, Khairuddin Wa'eli and Muhammad Ibrahim Shaybani. Finally, he expired at the age of 85 in the year 1420 AH (1999 AD).

One of Albani's articles named 'Hawlul Mahdi' (Concerning the Mahdi) was printed in Damascus in the magazine, 'Al-Tamaddun al-Islamiyyah' (The Islamic Civilization) in volume 22, page 642-646 in Arabic. We shall now present a translation of the same article hereunder.

About Mahdi (a.s.)

Some of our learned readers have written letters to the aforementioned magazine. In one of those letters it was written that: "In issues 8, 9 and 10, I read the in-depth research of Shaikh Naasiruddin Albani on weak and unknown traditions and in which there was some discussion about the Mahdi. Before this, I subscribed to the views explained by Shaikh Rasheed Reza in his book Tafsir al-Manaar (pages 499 and 504) and Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah al-Sumaan in his book "Al-Islam alMasfah". But now I am certain that Shaikh Naasiruddin Albani is well-acquainted with whatever has been written by these two scholars. Hence, I request the Shaikh to reread what has been written by these two scholars and write an article on the Mahdi because the views of both of these scholars are against those of Shaikh Albani."

In reply, I (Albani) say: Yes I am well aware of the views of Rasheed Reza and Shaikh al-Suman which he has presented in his book "Al-Islam al-Masfah" and I firmly believed that both of them have erred in this regard, especially Shaikh al-Suman who is absolutely unaware of this topic (i.e. the belief in the Mahdi). And this is the reason due to which he has rejected other issues

too which are more important and well-established than this topic like the coming of Dajjaal, descent of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) and the intercession of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on the Day of Judgment. (Note: The Ahle Hadith and the Deobandis who deny the intercession (of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)) should take note that one of their foremost scholars has criticized someone for his views which are against the intercession of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and has deemed the person to be bereft of knowledge and learning).

The proofs concerning these three topics are very strong and well-established since there have been consecutive (mutawaatir) traditions i.e. traditions narrated uninterruptedly from the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and these are among the most reliable kinds of traditions. Hence, after such clear proofs, when I see that Shaikh al Sumaan has denied these facts, I consider it to be unforgiveable and unpardonable. Before him, Rasheed Reza too has discussed these topics and has deemed the traditions that mention Dajjaal and the descent of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) to be weak while both of these are Sahih (correct from the aspect of chain of narrators and content) and consecutive traditions.

Experts in the field of traditions and scholars like Ibn Hajar al-Asqalaani and others have explained this clearly. Anyways, it is not possible to discuss these topics within the scope of this article. If Allah wills, we shall discuss it in detail elsewhere.

As for the Mahdi, then it should be known there are several Sahih traditions concerning him for which we find the most the narrators to be reliable. Now we shall present a few examples and then present the doubts raised by some people against them:

First

Ibn Masood' narrates in a tradition: "If there had been only a day left for the world, then Allah will lengthen that day till He raises a man from me or my family whose name shall be my name and the name of whose father shall be the name of my father. He will fill the earth with justice and equity just like it was filled with injustice and inequity."

This tradition has been recorded by the following traditionalists:

- Abu Dawood (Musnad vol. 2, p. 207)
- Tirmidhi
- Ahmad Ibn Hanbal
- Tabaraani (in two of his books: Mo'jam al-Kabeer and Mo'jam al-Sagheer)
- Abu Noaim Isfahaani in Hilyah alAwliyaa
- Khateeb Baghdadi in Tareekh Baghdad, through his chain of narrators from Zareen Jaish who has recorded it from Ibn Masood
- Tirmidhi has deemed this tradition to be Sahih and Hasan (Good, a term used in the science of traditoinis) whereas Zahabi has taken it as Sahih. And the concept is the same as what has been narrated.
- Ibn Maajah in his Sahih (vol. 2, p. 517) has narrated from Ibn Mas'ood through another chain of narrators and has deemed it to be Hasan

Second

A similar narration has been attributed to (Ameerul Momineen) Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) too in which there are two chains of narrators: the first of which is narrated by Abu Dawood and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal which has a Sahih chain of narrators and the second has been narrated by Ibn Maajah and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal which has Hasan chain of narrators.

Third

It is narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri via two chains of narrators. The first chain has been recorded by Tirmidhi, Ibn Maajah, Haakim Neyshapoori and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. Tirmidhi has considered the narration to be Hasan, Haakim has considered it to be Sahih (Correct) as per the standards of Muslim Ibn Hajjaj, Zahabi too has agreed to this and whatever has been recorded by them is the truth. The second chain has been recorded by Abu Dawood and Haakim. Haakim has considered it to be Sahih (correct) and has deemed its chain of narrators to be Hasan.

Fourth

There is a narration from Umm Salmah whose words and chain of narrators have been discussed in the 81st tradition of the 10th article, which is recorded under the title "Hadith-ul-Zaeef" (The Weak Tradition).

Other chains of narrators of this same tradition have been brought by scholars in their books. Those who wish to study this further can study the books: (Al-Arf al-Wardi fee Akhbaar al-Mahdi by Haafiz Jalaaluddin Suyuti and Al-Eza'ah Le Ma Kaana Wa Ma Yakoona Bayna Yaday Al-Saa'ah by Siddeeq Hasan Khan).

Siddeeq Hasan Khan has recorded in his book Al-Eza'ah that the narrations that have come regarding the Mahdi are so many that - despite there being a difference in the narrations - they comply with the condition of consecutiveness i.e. they are Mutawaatir. These narrations have been recorded in the books of Sunan, Musnad and Mo'jam and Ibn Khaldoon has discussed them in great detail. He writes in his book "Al Abr wa Deewan al Mubtada wa al-Khabar" that "In this chapter I rely upon the traditions which have been narrated by the scholars of traditions. Some people who have denied them have argued concerning the reliability of these traditions and they have criticized these traditions. Among these criticisms, some bring concerns regarding the chain of narrators, some claim forgetfulness, some claim weak memory and some claim weak or false beliefs in order to reject these traditions. Then they have argued that these traditions are not Sahih (correct) rather they are Zaeef (weak)" – till the end of Ibn Khaldoon's discussion.

Siddeeq Hasan Khan says, "It should be known that it is natural and has been accepted to be correct by traditionalists that there are only two conditions for the correctness of the chain of narrators of a tradition and there is no third standard concerning this. The first is discipline and the other is truthfulness. Other conditions which are deemed important by the scholars of religion like piety, etc. are not considered important by the scholars of traditions. Other than the two conditions mentioned above there is no third condition on the basis of which a tradition can be deemed weak."

Siddeeq Hasan further states:

"Some narrations concerning the Mahdi are Sahih (correct) and some are Zaeef (weak). But the belief concerning the Mahdi was prevalent and acceptable among the Muslims from the beginning of Islam. All Muslims have this certain belief that in the last time, a person shall rise from the family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who shall support religion and spread justice and equity. Muslims shall follow him and he shall rule over all countries. His name shall be Mahdi, Dajjaal too shall appear at the same time and the signs of Resurrection - as have been narrated in Sahih traditions - shall unfold. Then Prophet Isa (a.s.) will descend from the heavens, kill Dajjaal and pray behind Mahdi. And other incidents will follow."

Traditions concerning Dajjaal and Prophet Isa (a.s.) too have reached the level of consecutiveness and it is not possible to deny them. Just as Qazi Allamah Shawkaani has written in his book, "Al-Tawzeeh fee Tawaaturo-Maa Jaa'a Fee al-Muntazar wa al-Dajjaal wa al-Maseeh" (An explanation of the consecutiveness of what has come concerning the Awaited One and the Dajjaal and the Messiah), "The traditions which have been narrated concerning the Mahdi (which have reached us) are approximately 50 in number which comprise of Sahih (correct), Hasan (good) and Zaeef Min Khabar. (Zaeef Min Khabar are those traditions which are considered weak from the aspect of their chain of narrators but are strengthened by other evidences). Without any doubt these traditions satisfy the condition of consecutiveness. Rather, among the terms that are narrated in Usool-e-Deen (fundamentals of religion), some which are mentioned as consecutive have a lower level of continuity than these traditions. Traditions concerning the Mahdi on the authority of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) too are so clear and so numerous that it is not possible to negate them. There is no possibility of Ijtehaad and opinion in this matter.

After the views of Shawkaani, we shall look at the opinions of Syed Mohammad Ibn Ismail Ameer Yamani. He has collected traditions regarding Mahdi that he is from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and shall rise in the last era. He says, "Even the time of his rising has not been fixed. The only thing which is known is that he shall rise before the appearance of the Dajjaal."

Doubts concerning the traditions about the Mahdi

Rasheed Reza and others like him have not systematically analyzed the traditions which have been narrated regarding the Mahdi. Rather, they are not even aware of all the traditions that have been narrated in this matter. Had they known, they would have reached to the conclusion that through these traditions the argument has been completed and (there is no doubt regarding it) to the extent of famous unseen affairs which are acceptable to the people only through Mutawaatir (consecutive) chains of narrators.

The proofs for this are the words of Rasheed Reza who opines that the narrations concerning the Mahdi have all been narrated from Shia narrators. But this opinion is absolutely absurd, preposterous, false and incorrect. In the chains (of narrators) for these traditions - which we have brought in this discussion - there is not even a single person who can be called Shia. Other than this - even if we were to accept his argument (which is impossible), it is not possible to criticize the chains of narrators and declare that they are not Sahih (correct) because the condition for the acceptance and correctness of a tradition is only truthfulness and discipline. In

the science of traditions this has been narrated with complete clarity that religion or sect cannot be the basis for the correctness or falseness of a tradition. This is the reason due to which Muslim and Bukhari in their Sihaah have narrated traditions from many people - including Shias, non-Shias and other sects - and both of these scholars have relied upon such traditions.

The second objection of Rasheed Reza concerning these traditions is about their contradictions. But this objection too is baseless - because the condition for contradiction is that two or more similar traditions should be present as a proof. Hence, presenting a contradiction between a strong and a weak tradition is an argument which would not be acceptable to any intelligent and rational person. We have presented numerous examples in our previous articles and whosoever wishes may refer to them.

Some people after reading these traditions and the those of the descent of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) come up with another objection that such traditions become the basis for people to become inactive and the excuse of waiting for the coming of the Mahdi and Prophet Isa (a.s.) and not doing anything themselves. As a result, the Islamic Nation shall lose its way from the paths of life, strength, power, progress and prosperity.

Those who hold to this view have found a solution to the above problem in the negation of the traditions concerning the Mahdi and the coming of Prophet Isa (a.s.). But this approach is clearly incorrect, exactly like how the Motazelah have interpreted the ambiguous verses and traditions. In other words, with the intention of establishing Tanzeeh (Transcendence) and to negate Tashbeeh (Immanence) they misinterpreted ambiguous verses and denied traditions. But (we) the Ahle Sunnah believe in the apparent meaning of the Quranic verses and the traditions. At the same time, we do not accept the concepts of Immanence and other similar concepts derived from such verses and traditions that are not appropriate for Allah.

Such is the case with traditions concerning Mahdi. There is not even the slightest of indications in those traditions that the Muslims should be complacent before the advent of the Mahdi and not take any steps to protect their respect and honor. If some ignorant Muslims misinterpret these traditions, the only solution then is that these ignorant people acquire knowledge, realize their interpretation is incorrect and not ask us to deny correct traditions due to their misunderstandings!

Another objection is that some false claimants and Dajjaalis misuse the belief of the Mahdi. They claim themselves to be the Mahdi and through this create disunity and differences among the Muslims. These objectors present numerous examples to establish their arguments among which Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani - The Dajjal from India - is often mentioned.

In reply, I say that this objection is the weakest of all the objections pertaining to this issue. The reply to which is present in the objection itself because it is an established fact that among the righteous matters of religion there are numerous such beliefs which have been misused by the mischief mongers.

For example, some people claim to be scholars whereas in reality they are completely ignorant and illiterate. Hence, would it be correct that a rational person start denying the excellence of acquiring knowledge due to the presence of these false claimants? Another example of this is

that some Muslims have derived the concept of Jabr (compulsion) from the beliefs of Qaza (decree) and Qadar (destiny). They believe that they are being forced to commit evil actions, are helpless and have no role whatsoever in committing evil actions. Many scholars too have fallen prey to this disbelief. However we belong to the group of scholars who neither reject the beliefs of Qaza and Qadar nor derive any such concept of Jabr from it. We seek to correct such misconceptions. Should we too subscribe to this belief that may deny the beliefs of Qaza and Qadar like the leaders of the Motazelah did in the past or what their followers are doing currently? Or is it more appropriate that since the beliefs of Qaza and Qadar are established through traditions we say that we accept these beliefs but we do not derive the concept of Jabr from it? Undoubtedly, this is the correct approach and no Muslim can deny it.

This approach should be adopted concerning belief in the Mahdi which will solve the disagreements concerning it. We accept the correct traditions and distance ourselves from the false traditions. Thus, we believe in the one who has been appointed by the Pure Islamic Laws (Shariat-e-Muqaddesa) and who has been accepted by the rational intellect (Aql-e-Saleem).

To sum up, the advent of the Mahdi is an established and well-chronicled fact narrated from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) through unbroken chains of narrators, and it is obligatory for all Muslims to subscribe to this belief. This is so because this is from those beliefs which the Noble Quran has enumerated among the beliefs of the pious. Allah the Most High says:

"Alif Lam Mim. This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard (against evil). Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them."

[Surah Baqarah (2): 1-3]

The belief of the Mahdi can be rejected only by the one who is either an ignorant person or acts haughtily despite his knowledge.

We pray to Allah the High that He grant us death in such a condition that we remain on the belief of the Mahdi and all those beliefs which are established from the Quran the correct traditions.

All views and beliefs written above concerning Imam Mahdi (a.s.) are purely the views and beliefs of Shaikh Mohammad Nasiruddin Albani. We shall elucidate further on this in subsequent articles.

The Method Of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) - In Taking Decisions & Judgements

Introduction

Before we discuss about equality and justice it is necessary to identify the causes of crimes, injustice, dispute, trespassing others' rights and destruction to enable ourselves to reduce them by eliminating their roots. Therefore, for universal justice, it is necessary that from one aspect, the pillars of faith and ethics are strengthened and simultaneously a just judge and a strong leader is handed the rule.

By comprehending the depths of crimes, destruction, disputes and social evils, we can proceed to eliminate them. For example:

1. The establishment of a collective justice in the society, equal distribution of wealth and property uproots many social evils, frauds, treachery, injustices, and disputes which are caused by greed, will be eradicated on their own. These social evils are found in every society and severing their roots will lead to the destruction of its branches and leaves.
2. One of the important reasons for the spread of injustice and disputes in the society is that today's society not only does not use the commonly available resources for correct teachings but also uses them for the wrong purposes.
3. Such a judiciary, which along with being aware and educated is equipped with means which are difficult to circumvent, enables it to keep an eye on the culprits, prevents every injustice and oppressor from being unnoticed, will reduce the impact of injustice and disputes.

These three things, if they unite, will have a huge impact.

On pondering over the traditions related to the government of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), we find that Imam (a.t.f.s.) will make use of the all the above three things during his revolution which befits the phrase 'there will be a time when the lion and the goat will drink water besides each other?'

These words also imply that there will be justice in the world and the beasts, who live in the human garb under the patronage of the despotic rulers and oppress the weak and helpless, will have to give up their evil ways.

1. The method of justice of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and his judicial system can only be understood in the light of traditions because intellect cannot reach this government for us to understand the reality through intellectual analysis. Therefore, in this article, we shall first mention the general traditions (until we can) and then minutely analyze them and try to understand the judicial system of Imam (a.t.f.s.).

Traditions:

There are many traditions regarding the judicial system of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and his judgments but we shall only mention a few here:

1. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says:

"When the Qaim rises, he will judge based on justice and during his time injustice will be removed, the roads will be safe, the earth will bring forth all its blessings and every due will be

restored to its owner... he will judge between people as per the judgments of Prophet Dawood (a.s.) and the law of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.)."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 338]

2. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says:

"When all the matters will come in the hands of the Master of Affairs (a.t.f.s.), Allah will raise all the lowly things of the world and bring down all the lofty things such that the entire world in front of him will be like the palm of the hand and who among you is such that there is a hair on his palm and he cannot see it."

[Kamaaluddin, vol. 2, p. 684]

3. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and Imam Kazim (a.s.) say: *"When Qaim will rise, then he will judge in three ways such that none before him did so: He shall kill the aged adulterer, the one who refuses to pay Zakaat and will give inheritance to the brother of a person in Aalam-e-Zar and not just the biological brother."*

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 309]

4. It has been narrated in many traditions that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) will kill the progeny and families of the murderers of Imam Husain (a.s.) due to their being satisfied with the killing by their forefathers. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: *"When Qaim will come, he will kill the progenies of the killers of Husain (a.s.) due to their forefathers' deeds."*

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 313]

5. Abaan says that I heard Imam Sadiq (a.s.) saying: *"The world will not end until one of us rises and judges in his government like the progeny of Dawood. He shall not seek any proof or witness from anybody but will judge for every person rightfully."*

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 320]

6. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: *"When Qaim will rise, none from the creatures of Allah will stand against him except that Imam will know whether he is a good or an evil person. And surely in this is a sign for those who examine."*

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 325]

In another tradition, it is narrated, "When Qaim will rise, Allah will grant him with the knowledge of the names. He will judge against the disbeliever, seize him by his hair and feet and strike him with sword."

7. In another tradition, Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: *"When our Qaim (a.s.) will rise, Allah will strengthen the eyes and ears of our Shias such that there will not be any need of a messenger between them and our Qaim. Imam (a.s.) will speak with them and they will listen to him and will see him while he will be where he is and they will be in another part of the world."*

[Al Kaafi, vol. 8, p. 241]

8. It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.):

"When the Qaim-e-Aale Muhammad will rise, he will judge between the people like the judgment of Dawood (a.s.) and will not be in need of any evidence. Allah will inspire him and he will judge with his knowledge."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 339]

He will reveal every hidden nation. He will recognize his friends and enemies by their signs and this is the exegesis of the verse in which Allah says, "Surely in this are signs for those who examine."

[Surah Hijr (15): Verse 75]

9. Imam Baqir (a.s.) says: "The Qaim will rise with fresh justice, laws and judgment."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 354]

10. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says in a tradition:

"When our Qaim will rise, he will send a representative in every corner of the world saying that whenever you encounter a problem look in your palms and act based on what you seen in it."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 365]

11. Imam Baqir (a.s.) says:

"Then he shall return to Kufa and establish himself there and send more than three hundred people to different parts of the world and touch their shoulders and chests with his blessed hands before deputing them."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 345]

Then these people will not be incapable in any order or judgment; rather it will be easy for them to judge in difficult situations.

12. Imam Baqir (a.s.) says in a tradition:

"Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) has been called Mahdi because Allah has made him aware of the hidden affairs and among other things he will bring out the Torah and other heavenly books from a cave in Antioch and will judge the people of Torah through Torah, the people of Bible through Bible, the people of Zaboor through Zaboor and the people of Quran through Quran."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 51, p. 29]

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says, "By Allah, Imam will make justice to enter houses in such a manner like heat and cold enter houses."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 362]

Analysis

From the above traditions, we understand the following:

1. Justice is vital and an important teaching from the teachings of Islam and a great aim from the aims. It is such a teaching that it is emphasized in very clear words in the Quran and traditions to its followers to adopt in various aspects of life. As per the divine scriptures, all the divine prophets wanted to establish justice among the people and all their efforts were to train the people so that they themselves practice justice among themselves.

Only Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the one who will establish justice in word and deed and the following words are found in traditions only for Imam Mahdi (a.s.), "He will fill the earth with equity and justice". Even in the earlier traditions, this point has been clearly explained.

The presence of equity and justice in the era of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) will not be restricted to its social aspect. Rather it will be present in various aspects of people lives to a surprising extent. It is narrated in traditions that when Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will reappear, he will fill the earth with justice such that neither a single drop of spring water will be wasted nor a fruit will be unjustly or extravagantly plucked from the tree. During his era, the flag of justice will fly high. No place on earth will be devoid of justice and justice will enter houses just as heat and cold enter houses on their own and engulf everything. Same will be case with justice.

It is said that during the first period of Imam's rule, the representatives of the kingdom in Makkah will announce, "Anyone who has recited his prayer near Hajar-e-Aswad and at the place of Tawaaf and wants to perform the recommended prayers should move back and one who wants to perform obligatory prayers may come forward so that no one's right is trampled." Peoples' rights will be observed to the extent that none will face injustice even to the measure of an iota and everyone will get his due.

2. According to traditions, Imam (a.t.f.s.) will pass verdicts like Prophet Dawood (a.s.) and Prophet Sulaiman (a.s.) i.e. he will judge based on his knowledge, will not seek any witness from any claimant or his opponent. Similarly, he will make judgments like the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) i.e. based on proofs and witnesses. Therefore, Imam (a.t.f.s.) will judge based on both ways.

3. According to traditions, in the era of Imam (a.t.f.s.), knowledge and technology, methods of manufacturing will be so perfect that criminals will not succeed in hiding the signs of their sins. There will be strong vigil in Imam's (a.t.f.s.) rule and a criminal will not be safe in his own house because it will be possible to control him from the above mentioned methods and even to the extent that their voices can be controlled from behind the wall. This is a strong indicator of the fact that the range of law will be far reaching in Imam's (a.t.f.s.) rule in order to counter crime and it is also seen that Imam may not use his knowledge of the unseen in all matters. In most matters, Imam (a.t.f.s.) will judge based on the evident information generally present in that time.

It is clear that without such a vast knowledge to establish a global government, establish peace, security and justice which is perfect from all aspects is not far as it is mentioned in the third tradition. Because of this progressive system, the world will be available on a person's palm. The depths and heights of the world will not be a hindrance to observe the creatures of the world.

4. Imam (a.t.f.s.) will simply look at people's faces to identify whether he is a criminal or not, good or evil, friend or foe because Allah will give him the knowledge to recognize faces. It is clear that Imam (a.t.f.s.) will identify him with a glance and will not need any proof or witness to pass a judgment.

5. In the government of Imam (a.t.f.s.), all things will be clear and evident for the Shias of Imam, let alone Imam (a.t.f.s.) himself. Based on this, the judges appointed by Imam (a.t.f.s.), will also judge based on their knowledge.

6. Among other judgments of Imam (a.t.f.s.) will be his passing rulings on those dead people on whom a ruling was yet to be applied and the sixth tradition is a proof to this fact.

7. During his rule, Imam (a.t.f.s.) will appoint a judge for every village, city and district and while doing so, place his blessed hand on their shoulders and chests and will say that when you are not able to pass a judgment on a particular issue or you face a difficulty, look at your palm, because whatever you need to pass the judgment will be present there. Hence, the judges appointed by Imam (a.t.f.s.) will not face any difficulty and they will know most of the matters. They will judge based on their knowledge. They will also use witnesses and oaths which are Islamic methods to make a judgment but when these will not be helpful, they will refer to their palms and solve the problem.

(Tradition 15, 16)

8. Imam (a.t.f.s.) will pass judgments for various nations and clans based on their books and laws. He (a.t.f.s.) will judge between the people of Torah through Torah, the people of Bible through Bible, the people of Zaboor through Zaboor and the people of Quran through Quran.

9. The method of judgments and justice of Imam (a.t.f.s.) is different from the worlds' rulers, and he will judge in a newmanner.

10. Imam (a.t.f.s.) will kill the one who does not pay Zakaat because Zakaat is from the necessities of religion and one who refuses to pay it is an apostate and killing him is obligatory. Such a ruling will not be present before reappearance but Imam (a.t.f.s.) in his government will apply thisruling and kill him.

11. Imam (a.t.f.s.) will avenge the killing of Imam Husain (a.t.f.s.) from the progeny of his killers. When Imam Reza (a.t.f.s.) was asked as to why the children will face the consequences of the crimes of the fathers and grandfathers, he replied that it is because they are satisfied with the actions of their forefathers and when a person is satisfied with the actions of the criminals he is eligible for the same punishment. Even this is particular to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and in today's times such a ruling is not applied. .

Let us pray to Allah the He destines the reappearance of Imam during our lifetime and that He includes us in his helpers and aides and makes our actions as per Imam's satisfaction and hastens his reappearance.

Ilaahi Aameen.