A monthly magazine for a better knowledge about Imam al-Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam.

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«لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ حَتَّى يُخْرِجَ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي يَمْلَأُ الْأَرْضَ عَدْلًا كَمَا مُلِنَتْ ظُلْماً وَ جَوْرِا»<sup>1</sup>

"If there remains only one day for the world to come to an end, Allah will prolong this day till He raises a man from my progeny who will fill the earth with justice as it will be fraught with injustice and oppression."

1. Al-Ghaybah by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 180.

The Supreme Leader of Islamic Republic

Today, people are ready to realize and to make sure that a great man will come to save them from oppression and injustice. This goal is what all the prophets tried to attain. The Prophet of Islam also was chosen by Allah to give this promise to people as Allah says in the Quran,

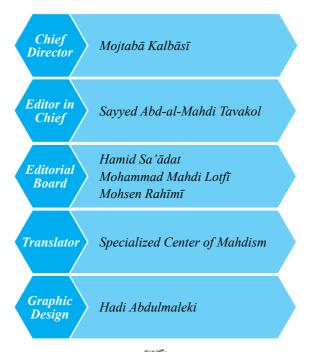
وَ يَضَعُ عَنْهُمُ إِصْرَهُمْ وَ الأَغْلالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمَ ﴾ [ And (the Prophet) relieves them of their burdens and the shackles that were upon them"

Allah Almighty, with His power, can fulfill this promise for mankind through the help of a divine man who is connected to the world of unseen and to the world of spirituality and to the worlds that are higher than to be conceived by us who are short-sighted. This is why the hearts of people are eager to see that day and everyday people will think about it more.<sup>2</sup>

1. The Quran, 7:157

2. The Supreme Leader's speech on the occasion of birthday anniversary of Imam al-Mahdi on Wednesday, the 24th of November 1999.

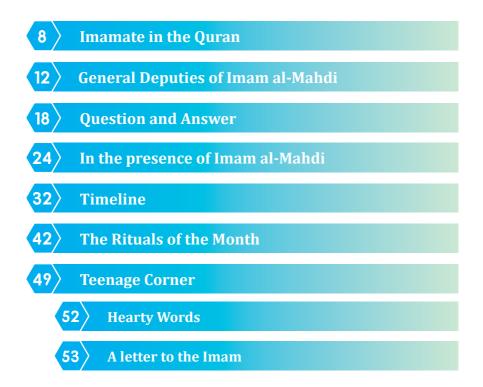
# The Final Hope





Islamic Seminary of Gom Specialized Center of Mahdisn

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### Editorial

The Find Hope

We observe that most religions, philosophical and even political schools of thought consider the future of mankind to be better than his present and his past. Therefore, all the worldviews, heavenly or otherwise, constantly endeavor to improve the future and to build it based on the knowledge gained from the past. This is the reason science is increasingly improving and scientists always come up with a new strategy to make the world a better place to live. Even religious figures try to give answers to the existing problems and attempt to present an ideology to lessen the difficulties of their societies. The hope of approaching a positive and more desirable future has forced people to strive more and more. If this innate promising hope was taken away from them, this progression to a better future would have come to an abrupt stop.

However, there are some considerable questions: Have we ever thought what our final destination in this world is and when we will have a utopian society? Why for thousands of year people's collective thought could not help them achieve a world full of justice and placidity? Can science, by itself, guarantee the world's welfare?

We, the Shia, believe that the final goal of this world and the final step of this advancement in science is a world full of calmness and serenity and this could not be achieved without a divine leader. This leader is the Imam of the Age whose leadership is emanated directly from Allah.

Editor in Chief: Sayyed Abd-al-Mahdi Tavakol Smtavakol@gmail.com



# Imam al-Mahdi in the Quran

### Surah al-Bagarah, verse 155

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Allah in Surah al-Baqarah, verse 155, reminds the believers that they will have some tragedies and problems in their life saying,

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَىءٍ مِّنَ الخُوْفِ وَ الْجُـوعِ وَ نَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَ الْأَنفُسِ وَ التَّمَرَاتِ وَ بَشِّرِ الصَّابرِينِ»

"We will surely test you with something of fear, hunger, and loss of wealth, lives, and fruits. So give glad tidings to the patients."

#### An explanatory narration:

«أَبِي بَصِيرٍ قَالَ عَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عليه السلامر : «لَا بُدَّ أَنْ يَكُونَ قُدًامَرِ الْقَائِمِرِ سَنَةٌ تَجُوعُ فِيهَا النَّاسُ وَ يُصِيبُهُمْ خَوْفٌ شَدِيدٌ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَ نَقْصٌ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَ الْأَنْفُسِ وَ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ لَبَيُّنٌ ثُمَّر تَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ وَ لَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْر بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَ الْجُوعِ وَ نَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوالِ وَ الْأَنْفُسِ وَ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَ بَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ»<sup>1</sup>

It is narrated from Abū Basīr who narrates from Imam al-Sādiq (the sixth Imam of Shia) to have said, "Inevitably, before the appearance of the Upriser (Imam al-Mahdi) there will be a period that people will be hungry, deeply fearful of being killed, scared of losing (their) wealth, lives and fruits. This is referred to evidently in the holy Quran." Then, the Imam recited the abovementioned verse.

1. Bihār al-Anwār, v. 52, p. 228, hadith 93.

#### **Points:**

- 1. Divine trial is unavoidable: Mankind will be certainly exposed to divine examinations. The time of Occultation, when Imam al-Mahdi is hidden, is a time that people face one of those great divine examinations. People, during this time, would face all sorts of difficulties like oppression, injustice, fear, loss of lives etc. and still their problems may seem not be solved. This turmoil is due to their Imam being hidden. Here, people should wait till they pass these trials successfully and try just to do whatever their religion demands.
- 2. Difficulties lead to perfection: Patience against problems makes man perfect and resistant. By difficulties, the real essence of man manifests itself and man can realize how steadfast he is in his divine way. When man is under the pressure of troubles he should try his best to solve it in a legal way and if the problems still remained unsolved he has to keep on being patient. The time of Occultation is a time Moslems are under the pressure. But to endure it and remain calm and resistant and also content with what Allah decides make people spiritually prefect and closer to Allah.
- 3. There are various sorts of divine trials: Allah tests

people with all sorts of problems. These trials will be continued up until the real nature of man shows itself. One should not think that by just a single form of trial his reality is tested and then he will be left untouched. People, during the time of Occultation, are subject to various forms of trials and, as Allah points to at the end of the mentioned verse, just patience is the key element to survive. Some of these divine examinations are referred to in the mentioned verse; however, they are not restricted to these.

4. The verse does not clearly express what the good tidings are about: Allah in the abovementioned verse just tells the Prophet to give glad tidings to the patients and does not clarify what they are about. The reason behind it is that it would include all sort of good news and rewards that would be given to man both in this world and in the hereafter. One of the best examples of these glad tidings in this world is that people should make sure that the promise of Allah about the Last Savior will be fulfilled and the last Imam will appear in a day. It, indeed, is enjoyable for those who have remained firm, steadfast, and patient; and at that time, their difficulties will come to an end.

General Deputies of Imam al-Mahdi

### Sheikh al-Mufīd

#### **His birth**

Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Nu'mān al-Baghdādī (Sheikh al-Mufīd) was born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Qa'dah (336 A.H. / 948 A.D.) in 'Ukbarā (a small village about 30 to 35 miles from Baghdad, Iraq). Some have recorded his year of birth as 338 A.H., but most of historians agree that he was born in 336 A.H<sup>1</sup>. Some called him Ibn al-Mu'allim because his father was a teacher who had a desire for his son to attain great heights as a scholar. Whereas the small village didn't have the right environment for the scholastic pursuits, his father decided to move to Baghdad.

#### **His works**

In Baghdad, Sheikh al-Mufīd started acquiring knowledge in Islamic disciplines. He pursued his education with several mentors. The names of 61 mentors who tutored him are recorded in some books<sup>2</sup>. There is also a long list of Sheikh al-Mufd's

<sup>1.</sup> Al-*Rijāl*, by al-Najāshī, p. 402.

<sup>2.</sup> Al-Rijāl, by Sheikh al-Tūsī, p. 157.

disciples. Some of his most notable disciples were Sayyed al-Murtadā, Sayyed al-Razī, Sheikh al-Tūsī, and al-Najāshī. He wrote around 200 books that constitute a treasure trove of knowledge. His books are themed at life teachings, accounts of the sayings of the Prophet's household, philosophical and theological interpretation of the fundamental Shia doctrines (kalām) and jurisprudence (fiqh).

He was not older than 40 that was chosen as the head of the Shia in *Kalām, Fiqh and Hadith*. He possessed a great level of dignity with the Abbasid caliphs, though they were Sunni and at that time, were not so much willing to respect a Shi'i scholar.

At that time, all the sects of Islam were absorbed in debate with one another. On the one hand, he was giving fitting replies to all the objections of the debaters of the other sects, and on the other hand, he busied himself in the establishment of the Seminary of Najaf by the help of his disciples. Unlike other clerics, Sheikh al-Mufīd entered the field of debate and gave convincing replies to all the objections that came up regarding the Shia Faith to ensure that the

beliefs of its followers remained firm. The main topic for discussion during these debates was the concept of Imamate. In fact, he bridged the gap between the old school of Shia believing in adherence to the hadith and the later school of theology advocating a more rational interpretation of theology and religious beliefs. He was one of the early Shia scholars who brought in the rational method in interpretation and explication of religious concepts.

In general, we can elucidate the influential and decisive role of al-Mufid in the following three aspects:

1. Establishment of the independent identity of the school of the Ahl al-Bayt, may peace be upon them;

2. Creation of a correct pattern and model for the development of Shi'i *fiqh;* 

3. Devising a method in *fiqh* and *kalām* based on logical compatibility between reason and revelation.

The high edifice built by Shi'i jurists and theologians during the last ten centuries and the incomparably rich literary tradition created by them through their works, rest on the foundations laid down by

Sheikh al-Mufīd through these three facets of his work.

#### The title, al-Mufīd

It has been said that his appellation (*al-Mufīd*) was given to him by the Imam al-Mahdi himself.<sup>1</sup> Also it is said that this title was given to him as a result of a dispute between him and Ali bin 'Īsā al-Ramānī, a great Mu'tazilī scholar, when he was very impressed by the reasoning of the young man (Sheikh al-Mufīd). Al-Ramānī asked him about his teacher and then gave him a note to take to that man. In the note al-Ramānī recommended his intellect and gave him the nickname of *al-Mufīd*, "the one who gives benefit."<sup>2</sup>

#### His demise

Sheikh al-Mufīd died on the eve of Friday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Ramadān (413 A.H./ 1023 A.D.) at the age of 77. His student Sayyed al-Murtadā led his funeral prayer in the presence of nearly eighty thousand people, a crowd never seen before in any funeral in Baghdad.

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<sup>1.</sup> Maālim al-Ulamā, by Ibn-e- Shahr Āshūb, p. 112.

<sup>2.</sup> Rawdāt al-Jannāt by Mīrzā Muhammad Baqir al-Khānsārī, vol. 6, p. 159.

He remained buried in his own house for two years, and then his body was transferred to al-Kādhimīyyah Mosque facing the feet of Imam Muhammad al-Taqī (the 9<sup>th</sup> Imam). His grave is still visited by those who visit the holy shrines in Kādhimayn, Iraq.

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Question and answer

#### What is the Philosophy of Occultation?

Sometimes we may think that why the Imam of our time is not visible. Wouldn't it was better that Imam al-Mahdi lived normally among us and we were able to see him, we had direct access to him and could beseech his help to solve our physical and spiritual problems? Why did the Imam go into Occultation and Muslims were deprived of the favor of a present Imam?

For finding an appropriate answer, we had better refer to Islamic sources. In some of our narrations the wisdom of Occultation are as follows,

#### **1** .No to pay allegiance to unjust rulers:

Hassan bin Fazzāl narrates from Imam al-Redā to have said,

«كَأَنَّي بِالشَّيعَهِ عِنْدَ فَقْدِهِمُ الثَّالِثَ مِنْ وُلْدِي يَطْلُبُونَ الْمَرْعَى فَلَا يَجِدُونَهُ.» قُلْتُ لَهُ: وَ لِمَر ذَلِكَ يَا ابْنَ مَسُولِ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ : «لِأَنَّ إِمَامَهُمْ يَغِيبُ عَنْهُمْر .» فَقُلْتُ : وَ لِمَ؟ قَالَ: «لِئَلًا يَكُونَ فِي عُنُقِهِ لِأَحَدٍ بَيْعَةٌ إِذَا قَامَ بِالسَّيْف.»<sup>1</sup>

"As if I see my followers in the aftermath of the death of my third descendant [Imam al-Hassan al-'Askarī) looking for their Imam everywhere and do not find him." I (Hassan bin Fazzāl) asked him, 'O the son of the Messenger of Allah! What's the rea-

<sup>1.</sup> Bihār al-Anwār, by Allāma Majlesi, vol. 51, p. 152, hadith 1.

son of it?' He said: "Because their Imam will have entered the state of Occultation." I went on asking the reason of Occultation. He said: "This will be, so that when he rises by sword he will have paid no allegiance to anyone."

If the Imam would sign a non-intervention treaty with the cruel rulers, he would have been bound to the treaty. As a result, he would be not able to fight against tyrannies, because Islam regards a treaty binding on those who have agreed to its terms.

Moreover, the oppressors and unjust rulers would never be tied to acting upon the content of such an agreement because of the perceived danger of the Imam to their power. Hence, they would have murdered the Imam as the only solution for their continued domination over humanity.

#### 2. To be immune from murder:

In a narration reported by Zurāra from Imam al-Sādiq, we read,

«إِنَّ لِلْقَائِمِرِ عليه السلامرِ غَيْبَةً قَبْلَ أَنْ يَقُومَرِ. قُلْتُ: وَ لِمَرِ ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّهُ يَخَافُ. وَ أَوْمَأَ بِيَدِهِ إِلَى بَطْنِهِ يَعْنِي الْقَتْل».<sup>1</sup>

"Indeed the Qāim (Imam al-Mahdi) will have an

<sup>1.</sup> Al-Kāfi, by Kuleynī, vol. 1, p. 338, hadith 9.

Occultation before his rising." I (Zurāra) asked, 'why is that?' He said: "He is afraid" and pointed to his stomach meaning that he is afraid to get killed."

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Indeed, the Imam of the Age, like his forefathers, is not afraid of being killed in the path of Allah as all of his forefathers suffered martyrdom for disseminating the true religion and reforming the society. Nevertheless, his being killed is not in the interest of the religion or the society because when the previous Imams were killed, they had an infallible son to succeed them, but the twelfth Imam is the final Imam and there is no other infallible Imam to succeed him. So, if the twelfth Imam is killed the earth would remain without Allah's Proof to guide people and supervise their affairs.

Of course, Allah has the power to protect the Imam from the evil of his enemies, but generally, Allah's custom in this world is to do things in the most normal fashion, using the regular channel of causation. Allah, would not want the Imam to be protected in an extraordinary way.

Besides the two mentioned philosophis, some traditions declare that the reason of Occultation is hidden and it is a secret of Allah, عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْفَضْلِ الْهَاشِمِيَّ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ الصَّادِقَ جَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ ع يَقُولُ: «إِنَّ لِصَاحِبِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ غَيْبَةً لَا بُدَّ مِنْهَا يَرْتَابُ فِيهَا كُلُّ مُبْطِلٍ.» فَقُلْتُ لَهُ: وَ لِمَ جُعِلْتُ فِذَاكَ؟ قَالَت: «لِأَمْرٍ لَمْ يُؤْذَنْ لَنَا فِي كَشْفِهِ لَكُمر » قُلْتُ: فَمَا وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ؟ فَقَالَت: «وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي غَيْبَاتِ مَنْ تَقَدَّمَهُ مِنْ حُجَجِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ. إِنَّ وَجْهَ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي ذَلِلَتَ لَا يَنْكَشِفُ لَكُمر » قُلْتُ : فَمَا وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي حُجَجِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ. إِنَّ وَجْهَ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي ذَلِلَتَ لَا يَنْكَشِفُ إِلَّا بَعْدَ ظُهُومِهِ، كَمَا لَا يَنْكَشِفُ وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ لَمَا أَتَاهُ الْحَمْمَةِ فِي ذَلِلَتَ لَا يَنْكَشِفُ إِلَّا بَعْدَ ظُهُومِهِ، كَمَا لَا يَنْكَشِفُ وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ لَمَا أَتَاهُ الْحَضْمَةِ فِي ذَلِلَتَ لَا يَنْكَشِفُ إِلَّا بَعْدَ ظُهُومِهِ، كَمَا لَا يَنْكَشِفُ وَجْهُ الْحِكْمَةِ لَمَا أَتَاهُ الْحَضْمَ ع مِنْ خَرْقِ السَّفِينَةِ وَ قَتْلِ الْعُلَامِ وَ إِقَامَةِ الْجِدَاير لِمُوسَى عليه السلام إِلَّا وَقْتَ افْتِرَاقِهِمَا. يَا ابْنَ الْفَضْلِ ! إِنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ أَمْر مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَهِ وَ سِنِّ مِنَ اللَهِ وَ سِنِّ مِنَ اللَهِ وَ عَيْبُ مِنَ اللَهُ وَ عَنْ اللَهُ فَيَ اللَهِ وَ مَتَى عَلْمُ اللَهُ وَ مَنْ الْعَمْدَا إِنَّ

"'Abd-u-llah bin al-Fazl al-Hāshemī relates, "I heard Imam al-Sādiq to have said, 'The Imam will necessarily have an invisible life and this is unavoidable. This will lead those who are already astray into doubt. 'So I asked the Imam the reason of it. He said, 'We (the Household of the Prophet) are not permitted to reveal its secret to you.'I went on seeking the philosophy behind the invisible life of him and the Imam said, 'It possesses the same wisdom that existed in prior situations when other Proofs of Allah (the apostles) also went into occultation. However, the true secret behind it will not become manifest until after he has appeared, just as the wisdom be-

<sup>1.</sup> Bihār al-Anwār, by Allāma Majlesī, vol. 52, p. 91, hadith 4.

hind making the boat defective, killing the boy, and repairing the falling wall [in the story of Moses and Khizr in the Qur'an]<sup>1</sup> were revealed to Moses only after the two had decided to part company. O the son of al-Fazl! The subject of Occultation is related only to Allah and is a divine secrets, it is a concealed matter whose knowledge is only with Allah. Since we regard Allah the Exalted, the Glorified to be Wise, we must also affirm that His acts are based on that perfect wisdom, even when the detailed understanding is not accessible to us."

This hadith points to the fact that the main reason for Occultation is not explained to people because they have no preparation to grasp it, or because of other reasons. We have to keep patience with the issue and the Imam will inform us about the reason when he comes.

Let us end this answer by saying that one of the possible wisdoms for Occultation is that Allah wants to test us then we would realize how firm we are in our faith. If the Imam is not visible, do we act in accordance to our religious responsibilities or we would lose hope and stop continuing.

The Quran, 18:71 to 82. In these verses the prophet Khizr performed the mentioned three actions, the Moses who was not aware of the philosophy behind them protested and finally Khizr made him aware of the secret and Moses accepted it.

# In the presence of Imam al-Mahdi

It is narrated from Imam al-Mahdi to have said,

«...فَنَفْسِي مُؤْمِنَةٌ بِاللهِ وَحْدَهُ لا شَرِيكَ لَهُ»<sup>1</sup>

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"...so, my soul believes in Allah the One without a partner..."

### **Explanation**

This is a part of a famous supplication and the Imam bears witness to the unity of Allah. However, there are three determinant points that should be noted and they are as follows:

- The great status of the faith in Allah,
- The concept of Allah's oneness,
- The fact that Allah does not have a partner.

#### The status of the faith

Imam al-Mahdi by saying the word "*my soul believes in*…" may want to put emphasis on this point that *belief* represents a deep meaning. In Quranic terminology *belief* contains a higher stance than the word *Islam* and accordingly, the word *believer* points to a higher level of faith than the word *Moslem*.

Islam could be obtained by just uttering the two testimonies (the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of the

<sup>1.</sup> Al-Ihtijāj, by Tabarsī, vol. 4, p. 342; Bihār al Anwār, vol. 53, p. 171-173.

Prophet); however, man at this point has taken just his first step and the deepness of faith has not been penetrated in his heart.

On the contrary, *belief* is an inner quality that is rooted in the heart of a real believer and originates from a deep spiritual cognizance of Allah Almighty. In such a case, the fruit of the belief would be virtue and piety, the man will become totally God-wary and sense the dignity of Allah in his heart. This, exactly, is the meaning of what the Prophet says,

«الإِسْلامُ عَلانِيَهٌ، وَ الإِيْمانُ فِي الْقَلْبِ»<sup>1</sup>

#### "Islam is overt, rather the faith is in the heart".

It means that Islam is gained by uttering those two testimonies and it could be heard by others. Nonetheless, man could not be that much devoted in his Islam, but belief is hidden in hearts and others could not become aware of it, and it represents the intensity of faith.

This is what Allah clearly says with regard to the difference between *Islam* and *belief* in the Quran,

﴿قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُوْمِنُوا وَ لَكِنْ قُولُوا آسْلَمْنا وَ لَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُم...﴾2

<sup>1.</sup> Majma' al-Bayān, vol. 9, p. 138.

<sup>2.</sup> The Quran, 49: 14.

"The Bedouins say, "We have believed." Say, "You have not [yet] believed; but say [instead], 'We have submitted [and are Moslems],' for belief has not yet entered your hearts..."

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In a nutshell, when the Imam says that his soul believes in the oneness of Allah it denotes that this belief has got root in his heart and is not just a sole verbal testimony.

#### The oneness of Allah

Though believing in the oneness of Allah as well as His existence is undisputable and does not need to be proven, some scholars have brought up intellectual demonstrations in the Quran, traditions and philosophical arguments because the human's intellect and first nature usually will be deviated from the correct path by the passage of time.

In Arabic, the words wāhid, Ahad, tawhīd, and wahdānīyyah have a same root by the meaning of being one and unique with no peer or partner in His essence, attributes, and works. We also should believe in that. All Divine prophets called their people to believe in the oneness of Allah and monotheism and prohibited them from polytheism and duality. Also, this is the first and the most important principle of the fundamental principles of religion in Islam. The Prophet began his mission with monotheism and in the first stage announced:

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«قۇلۇا لا إلهَ إلَّا اللَّه تُفلِحوُا»

"Say, 'there is no god except Allah' to be successful."

In fact, all Islamic Laws and beliefs are based on the oneness of Allah. To show the importance of this idea, on the one hand, Allah considers polytheism to be the only sin which is unforgivable under every circumstance and says: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللهِ

"Surely Allah does not forgive that anything should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases; and whoever associates anything with Allah, he devises indeed a great sin."

On the other hand, Allah puts emphasis on this important belief in a way that He, Himself, testifies to His oneness as saying,

﴿ شَهِدَ اللهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَهَ إِلَّهَ وَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَ أُوْلُواْ الْعِلْمِ قَائمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ» 3

"Allah witnesses that there is no god except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that

<sup>1.</sup> Bihār al Anwār, vol. 18, p. 202.

<sup>2.</sup> The Quran, 4: 48.

<sup>3.</sup> The Quran, 3: 18.

# *He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise.*"

It is clear that Allah's testimony does not designate His verbal witness, rather it refers to a practical testimony. In better words, this Divine attribute (the oneness of Allah) could be understood through the *Argumentation of order* (Burhān al-Nazm). Based on this argument, there is a same universal magnificent order in the cosmos that reasonably we find it impossible to come to existence accidentally. So, in fact through His creatures, Allah Himself witnesses that there is a Unique Organizer here practically. But, the testimony of Angels and those who are possessed of knowledge usually is a verbal witness. That is because, Angels have been created just to glorify Allah; also the people who possess the knowledge praise and thank Almighty Allah due to their knowledge of His existence through thinking about Divine signs in the world and in their souls.

Consequently, these two groups, both, only worship Allah and they are totally submissive to the will of Him.

#### Allah has no partner

In the above mentioned verse, pertaining to the testimony of those who are possessed with knowledge, if we consider the prophets as the head of those knowledgeable

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people, the meaning of the mentioned verse would be clearer because all of the Prophets encouraged people to worship the Only Allah and practice monotheism without any exception. It is obvious that if there were more than one Allah, the prophets would not invite people to practice monotheism, but would direct people to the gods by whom they were appointed. Imam Ali in a letter to his son, Imam al-Hassan, has referred to the same point and says, «وَ اِعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ لِرَبَّلَتُ شَرِيكُ لَأَتَتْكَ مُسُلُهُ وَ لَرَأَيْتَ آثَامَ مُلْكِهِ وَ سُلْطَانِهِ

"O dear son! Know that if there were any god except the Only Allah, it must have sent prophets to you, and the traces of his divine dominion and rule would be evident, and you would realize him through his actions and attributes, rather He is the Unique Allah as He qualifies Himself..."

Also Allah clearly says in the Quran that if He had any partner the whole universe would have been destroyed because any of the Gods wanted to accomplish his desires and nothing would remain safe and stable.

﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةً إِلَّا الله لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ٢٠

<sup>1.</sup> Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter, no. 31.

<sup>2.</sup> The Quran, 21: 22.

"If there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined. So exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe."

As a matter of fact, there are variety of philosophical arguments proving that Allah does not have any partner. For example, if there were more than one Allah, they would have possessed some differences to each other for sure; because it is not imaginable to be two or more things without any differences between them since if there was not any differences between the two things, it shows that there would be only one thing. Therefore, to believe in two or more gods, requires that every god would have some similarities and differences toward the other one and it resulted in saying that every god would have been formed of some parts in which are similar or different in contrast with the other god's parts while Allah Almighty is a non-composite Essence because if He had a composite essence, He would have needed His parts whereas Allah qualifies Himself in the Quran as the Self-sufficient and says,

(...وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الله غَنِيُّ حَمِيدُ»<sup>1</sup>

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"...and know that Allah is Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy."

1. The Quran, 2: 267.



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# The martyrdom of Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Jawād (the ninth Imam of Shi'a) (220 A.H. / 835 A.D.)

On Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2015 A.D. (the 29<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Qa'dah, 1436 A.H.)

Imam Muhammad bin Ali is the ninth Imam of Shia. His two famous titles are *al-Jawād and al-Taqī*. His epithet is Abū Ja'far and whereas Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir (the Fifth Imam) was called Abū Ja'far as well; historians have mentioned this Imam as Abū Ja'far al-Thānī (the Second Abū Ja'far). He was born in Medina (811 A.D.). His honorable mother, Sabīkah, was one of the most pious of women. Imam Muhammad al-Jawad was brought up by his holy father Imam Ridā for five years. After the martyrdom of his father, the mantle of divine leadership fell on the young shoulders of Imam Muhammad al-Taqī at the age of eight. Though some people from among the followers of the Imams and others doubted the Imam's eligibility to become Imam at this young age, later, they realized that he possessed divine knowledge and that his knowledge was not acquired, but granted by Allah, since he did not participated in any classroom of his time and no one is famous to be his tutor.

After the martyrdom of his father (Imam al-Ridā), Imam al-Jawād was called to Iraq from Medina by the

Abbasid caliph at the time, al-Ma`mūn. During his stay in Iraq, the Imam was able to impress the Caliph and the people through sharing his wealth of knowledge by answering the toughest questions posed by the top scholars of the area. After the death of al-Ma`mūn, al-Mu'tasim ascended the throne and began to persecute the Imam until he was able to poison him with the help of the Imam's wife who was named Umm-e-Fazl (835 A.D.)

The story was that Umm-e-Fazl, who was the daughter of al-Ma'mūn, confederated with Ja'far (her brother) and al-Mu'tasim (her uncle) to murder the Imam. Later on, they decided that there was no one better than Umm-e-Fazl to accomplish the mission. They injected the poison into a bunch of grape and Umm-e-Fazl brought it to the Imam and described it as being very delicious. As soon as the Imam ate it, he felt the effect of the quick-acting poison in his body.

Imam al-Jawād was martyred at the age of 25 years and buried next to his grandfather (Imam Mūsā al-Kādim) in Kādhimayn, a suburb of Baghdad, Iraq.

# The auspicious marriage of Imam Ali and Lady Fatima (2 A.H. / 624 A.D.)

On Tuesday, the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2015 A.D. (the 1<sup>st</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah 1436 A.H.)

When Lady Fatima attained the age of maturity and the

marriageable age, the Prophet started receiving proposals from important people among the tribe of Quraysh. The extraordinary virtues of Fatimah on one side, and on the other side, her blood relations with the Prophet and still on another side, the nobility of her family, caused many of the high-ranking companions of the Prophet to propose to her; but the Prophet did not accept any proposal saying that he was waiting for the order of Allah to decide for this issue. The Prophet announced that the marriage of Fatima was in the hand of Allah and he himself had nothing to do concerning the matter. When Muslims knew that, they refrained from asking the Prophet for his daughter's hand any more.

Lady Fatima was only five years old when her mother, Khadīja, died and thenceforth, her father took charge of the duties of a mother also for her. The Prophet gave the utmost attention to the education and upbringing of his daughter. She was the personification of devotion and obedience to the Creator, and she was the embodiment of all heavenly purity and saintliness. In character and personality, she bore a most striking resemblance to her father. Fatima, the daughter, was the image of Muhammad, the father. Therefore, her spouse must be the nearest and most resemblance to the Prophet and his daughter.

Two months after the battle of Badr, (in the month of

Dhū al-Qa'dah 2 A.H. / 624 A.D.), one day, Imam Ali went to the Prophet hesitatingly because of shyness. He came to the Prophet lowering his sight to the ground. The Prophet asked him, "What do you want, my brother?" He replied, "My parents be at ransom for you, you know that since my childhood, I have dedicated myself for your service. You have educated me from be beginning and brought me to this status. It is because of your encouragement that I feel this courage in myself to express my heartfelt wish that you give me the honor of becoming your son-in-law. I have concealed his wish in my heart for a long time thinking that this might not be according to your wishes as well. Is there a possibility that this could happen?"

The Prophet told Fatima that Ali was asking for her hand in marriage, and asked her what was her response. She kept quiet. The Prophet interpreted her silence as her assent, returned to Ali, informed him that his proposal was accepted, and told him to make preparations for the wedding. The Prophet told his companions that Allah had ordered him to marry his daughter to Ali. He said to them, "An Angel of Allah came to me and said, 'Allah sends you greetings and says that in heaven I have made Fatimah the wife of Ali bin Abī Tālib. You also marry her to Ali on earth.""<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1.</sup> Dhakhā'ir al-Uqbā, p. 31.

## The martyrdom of Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir (the fifth Imam) (114 A.H. / 733 A.D.)

On Monday, the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2015 A.D. (the 7<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah 1436 A.H.)

Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Bāqir is the Fifth Imam of Shia. His epithet was Abū Ja'far and he was popularly titled *al-Bāqir*. His mother, Fatima, was the daughter of Imam al-Hassan (the second Imam). Thus, he was the only Imam who was connected with Lady Fatima both from his paternal and maternal sides. When he was three years old, he was present in Karbalā at the time of the gruesome tragedy of the wholesale massacre of his grandfather Imam al-Hussain and his companions and also suffered with his father and the ladies of the House of the Prophet the heartless captivity and imprisonment at the hands of the devilish forces at the command of Yazīd bin Mu'āwiyah. Imam al-Bāqir, for thirty-four years, was under the gracious patronage of his father, Imam Ali bin al-Hussein (Zayn al-`Ābidīn) and after the martyrdom of his father, he passed his time in Medina praying to Allah and guiding the people to the right path.

Imam al-Bāqir became martyred by poisoning when he was fifty-seven years old, in Hishām's era because of the kingdom of this Caliph started from 105 to 125

A.H., and according to the historians the year of Imam's martyrdom was in 118 A.H. The Imam's body prepared for burial by his son, Imam al-Sādiq, and was buried in Baqī' cemetery in Medina.

#### The Day of 'Arafah

# On Wednesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2015 A.D. (the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah 1436 A.H.)

The ninth day of Dhū al-Hijjah is the day of 'Arafah. It is the day when Hajj pilgrims stand on the plain of 'Arafat (a flat wide desert about 22 km south east of Mecca and beyond Minā and Mash'ar al-Harām) when the stand of the pilgrims is observed in this place from midday until sunset in solitude supplication and intimate discourse with Almighty Allah. This day is considered to be of supreme significance to the extent that the hadiths state that this day is important even for those are not at Hajj. On this day, Allah commanded his servants to obey and worship Him. He thus extended for them the tables of His benevolence and magnanimity. Imam al-Hussain (the third Imam of Shia) made the supplication, one of the most famous in Shi'ite history, one year during the pilgrimage to Mecca on the Day of 'Arafāh and it has been recited by Shia Muslims ever since. The spirit of the day is well represented in the Imam's prayer.

Though 'Arafah, literally means knowledge and science, there are different interpretations on why that day was called '*Arafah* or '*Arafāt*.

#### Al-Adhā Feast (the Feast of Sacrifice)

On Thursday, the  $24^{th}$  of September 2015 A.D. (the  $10^{th}$  of Dhū al-Hijjah 1436 A.H.)

Eid al-Adhā (the feast of sacrifice) is one of the most important Islamic festivals celebrated by Muslims at the end of the Hajj to commemorate the willingness of Prophet Abraham to follow Allah's command to sacrifice his son Ishmael to demonstrate his devotion to the Almighty.

Ignoring the advice of the Devil who tried to tempt Ibrahim into disobeying Allah by saying he should spare Ishmael; Abraham's main trials was to face the command of Allah to slaughter his only son. Upon hearing this command, he prepared to submit to Allah's will. When he was all prepared to do it, Allah revealed to him that his "sacrifice" had already been fulfilled and gave him a lamb to kill instead. Also, the story is told in similar fashion in the Jewish Torah and Christian Old Testament where Allah asks Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. However, the story is designed to demonstrate how Abraham's devotion passed even the sternest test. Muslims all over the world sacrifice an animal during

this day. In fact, the feast re-enacts Abraham's obedience by sacrificing a cow or ram. The meat of sacrificed animal, mostly is given away to others: immediate family and relatives, friends, and poor people. The act symbolizes one's willingness to give up, in order to strengthen ties of friendship and help those who are in need. It is recognized that all blessings come from Allah, and it should open the hearts and share with others.

# The birthday of Imam Ali bin Muhammad al-Naqī, al-Hādī (the tenth Imam) (212 A.H. / 828 A.D.)

On Tuesday, the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2015 A.D. (the 15<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah 1436 A.H.)

Imam Ali bin Muhammad (the tenth Imam) was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah in Medina in 212 A.H. / 827 A.D. His honorable father is Imam al-Jawād (the ninth Imam) and his respected mother's name is Samānah. His father Imam al-Jawād named him Ali like the blessed name of his two great grandfathers Imam Ali (the first Imam) and Imam Ali bin al-Hussain (the fourth Imam). Also his two famous titles are *al-Hādī and al-Naqī*, and his agnomen is *Abū al-Hassan al-thālith*.

To do the ceremony of his birth, Imam al-Jawād performed the special rituals for his blessed newborn son. He performed Azān in his right ear and Iqāmah in the

left, and slaughtered a ram as 'Aqīqah, as it was the norm for the Imams to do with their children when they were born. Narrators described that he was black-eyed, with thick hands, wide chest, hooked nose, pretty face, and good body odor. He was stout in body like his grandfather Imam al-Bāqir, neither short nor tall, with wide shoulders, big organs and straight stature.<sup>1</sup>

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The Imam was six years old when his father martyred and at the age of eight in 220 A.H., like his father, he was also elevated to the rank of Imamate in his childhood. So, after having seen his father's example, the Shi'a community had no more problems in accepting such a young Imam. The period of his Imamate lasted 33years old. During his lifetime (42 years), the tenth Imam was contemporary with seven of the Abbasid Caliphs: al-Ma'mūn, al-Mu'tasim, al-Wāthiq, al-Mutawakkil, al-Muntasir, al-Musta'in, and al-Mu'tazz. In 243 A.H. / 857 A.D, after al-Mutawakkil ordered one of his government officials to invite the Imam from Medina to Samarra, north of Baghdad (Iraq), which was then the capital, the Imam immigrated to Samarra and stayed there for twenty years. The Imam poisoned by al-Mu'tazz at the age of 42 in 254 A.H. / 868 and buried in Samarra.

<sup>1.</sup> Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 13, p. 127;

# The Rituals of the Month

# From the 17<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Qa'dah to the 16<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah (September 2015)

### The $23^{rd}$ of $Dh\bar{u}$ al-Qa'dah

To visit the tomb of Imam al-Ridā (the 8<sup>th</sup> Imam) on this day. In this respect, Sayyed bin Tāwūs in *Iqbāl al-A'māl* says that he has seen in a book of some non-Arab scholars that it is recommended to visit the holy tomb of Imam al-Ridā on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Dhū al-Qa'dah from nearby or from far off by one of the familiar forms of Ziyārah or any other form.

#### The 25<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Qa'dah (*The Earth Spreading Day*)

Imam al- Ridā is quoted to have said that this is the day at which the earth was spread on the water where the holy Ka'bah is now situated. According to another narration, to observe fasting on this day is equal to seventy years fasting. On this day, the mercy of Almighty Allah has been spread and on this day Allah will give the worshippers an abundant reward. Apart from fasting, acts of worship, remembrance of Allah, and bathing to make major ablution (ghusl), there are two other acts that are advisably done on this day:

**First:** It is recommended to offer, in the morning, a prayer consisting of two units, reciting in the each unit Sūrah al-Fātihah once and repeating Sūrah al-Shams (no. 91) five times. After accomplishment, the following supplication is said:

«لا حَوْلَ وَلا قُوَّهَ اِلا بِالله اَلعَلِيِّ العَظيم»

"There is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Most High, the All-Great."

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Then, one may pray Allah for granting his needs and then say the following supplicatory prayer:

«یا مقیل العثرات أقلنی عثرتی»

"O He Who overlooks slips, (please) overlook my slip."

«یا مجیب الدّعوات أجب دعوتی»

*"O He Who responds to prayers, (please) respond to my prayer."* 

«يا سامع الأصوات إسمع صوتى»

"O He Who hears all sounds, (please) listen to mine."

«و أرحمنی و تجاوز عن سیّئاتی و ما عندی»

"And have mercy on me, and excuse my wrongdoings and whatever I have committed."

«يا ذا الجلال و الإكرام»

"O the Owner of majesty and honor!"

**Second:** It is recommended to say the following supplicatory prayer on this day:

«أَللَّهُمَّ دَاحِيَ الْكَعْبَةِ وَ فَالِقَ الْحَبَّة... »

"O Allah! Who spread the Ka'bah, split the kernel..."

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#### Dhū al-Hijjah

#### Al-Ayyām al-Ma'lūmāt

The first ten days of this month are called *al-Ayyām al-Ma'lūmāt* (The known days) by the holy Quran.<sup>2</sup> About these honorable days, the Prophet is reported to have said that nothing is more preferable to Allah than practicing acts of worship on these ten days.

Some devotional acts on these ten days are as follows:

- 1. To observe fasting on the first nine days of this month which is equal to the fasting of one's whole lifetime.
- 2. At each of these ten nights, it is recommended to offer a two unit prayer between the Maghrib an d Ishā' obligatory prayers and to recite at each unit Sūrah al-Fātihah once, Sūrah al-Tawhīd once, and the following verse:

«وَ واعَدْنا مُوسى ثَلاثيزَ\_ لَيْلَةً وَ أَمَّمْناها بِعَشْمٍ فَتَمَّر ميقاتُ مَبِّهِ أَرْبَعينَ لَيْلَةً وَ قالَ مُوسى لِأَخيهِ هارُونَ اخْلُفْنى فى قَوْمى وَ أَصْلِحْ وَ لا تَتَّبِعْ سَبيلَ الْمُفْسِدينَ»<sup>3</sup>

"And We made an appointment with Moses for

<sup>1.</sup> Refer to Mafātih al-Jinān.

<sup>2.</sup> The Quran, 22:28.

<sup>3.</sup> The Quran, 7:147.

thirty nights and perfected them by [the addition of] ten; so the term of his Lord was completed as forty nights. And Moses said to his brother Aaron, 'Take my place among my people, do right [by them], and do not follow the way of the corrupters.'"

The reward of offering these prayers is to participate in the rewards of those who go on Hajj.

1. There are some recommended supplicatory prayers recited on the first ten day of this month. You can find them in Mafātīh al-Jinān.

### The Tarwīyah Day

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The eighth of Dhū al-Hijjah is called *Yawm al-tar-* $w\bar{i}yah$ . It is recommended to make major ablution (Ghusl) and to fast on this day.

### The 'Arafah Night

According to some narrations repentance at this blessed night is accepted, prayers responded, and acts of worship and obedience achieve the reward of one hundred and seventy years of worship.

There are a bundle of some recommended acts on this day:

1. To recite the following prayer:

«أللَّهُمَّ يَا شَاهِدَ كُلِّ نَجْوَى وَ مَوْضِعَ كُلِّ شَكْوَى...»

"O Allah! Who witnesses all secrets of hearts and

Who is the reference of all complaints..."

- 2. It is highly recommended to visit the holy tomb of Imam al-Hussayn.
- 3. To recite the supplication which begins with the following statement:

«أَللَّهُمَّ مَنْ تَعَبَّا وَ تَهَيَّا... »

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"O Allah! One may call up and be prepared ... "

#### The Day of 'Arafah

It is narrated that the fourth Imam (Imam al-Sajjād) heard someone begging people for financial aid on this day; the Imam said to him "Wove is you! On such a day, do you beg other than Almighty Allah!? On this day, even fetuses in wombs are expected to be included with the mercy of Allah and they will be delighted."

Some of the recommended acts on this day are as follows:

- 1. To make the major ablution (Ghusl);
- 2. To visit the holy shrine of Imam al-Husayn, for its reward is equal to the reward of one thousand times and even more;
- 3. To offer a two unit prayer, immediately after the obligatory Asr prayer, before saying the supplication of Arafāt. This prayer should be offered out-

doors and it should include confessions of sins;

4. To recite the Imam al-Hussayn's supplicatory prayer on the Arafāt day which is roughly long:

«ألحمد لله ألذى ليس لقضائه دافع ...»

*"Praise be to Allah Whose determination cannot be repelled by anything..."* 

### Al-Adhā Feast (the 10<sup>th</sup> of Dhū al-Hijjah)

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The tenth night of Dhū al-Hijjah is a blessed night since it is one of the four nights that should be advisably spent with acts of worship. It is recommended, at this night, to visit the holy shrine of Imam al-Hussayn and also to recite the following supplication:

«يا دائم الفضل على البريّه...»

"O He Who is the ever-favor on the beings..."

On the tenth day of Dhū al-Hijjah (the Feast of Sacrifice) is recommended:

- 1. To make the major ablution (ghusl);
- To offer the Prayer of the Feast (Salāt al-Īd) as described within the acts on the Īd al-Fitr (the1<sup>st</sup> of Shawwāl);
- 3. To say Duā al-Nudbah (the supplication of Lamentation);
- 4. To offer a sacrifice which is to slaughter an animal.

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### Poetry

Oh my Imam, our hearts long for you. Come show us, oh Guide, that which is true. Please save us, oh Mahdi, from the evils we face. Please save this religion, from the corrupted disgrace. What has become, of this beautiful truth? Why is this world, so sadly uncouth?

Oh Mahdi, my leader, how I wish you'd arrive, To rekindle the faith; bring the truth back alive. My heart bleeds these words, oh my valiant master, For the hate in this world, is inflicting disaster, On my brothers and sisters, from Palestine to Iraq, You are their key, to freedom's unlock.

Oh my Imam, the liars mock me, Saying one can't be helped, by who they can't see, My dear guide, my dear leader; show them they're wrong, Please end this separation, it's unbearably long. You are the preacher of Allah's words and His love, You are the deputy, sent from above, The servant of Allah, the student, the friend, From his last Messenger, you nobly descend. Oh my sinless Imam, I would die for your cause,

For your sake I would crawl into death's hungry jaws, I wish to be there, when you call those who believe, I want to fight in your army, against those who deceive. Please teach me the ways, to be a servant like you, Who loves and fears Allah; who is pure-hearted and true, I long for your presence, each day and each night; You are the guide, to the path that is right, Please lead me on it, my heart is contrite, For you're the purest of pure, with Noor you are bright.

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The world is in need, of you to reveal, The pure, soulful truth, that no evil conceals, My Imam please come soon, to deepen the light, Of the truth of Allah, with your conviction and might.

#### **Hearty words**

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I waited for your coming so long that my eyes went blind, but it's OK, this is a price I'm willing to pay.

O Imam al-Mahdi! All I want from life is to see you, but how can I look you in the eyes when so many times I gave pain to your heart.

O awaited savior of the whole creation! The world has become dark with blood and we need the purifying downpour of your mercy to cleanse it.

The desire for the appearance of you O my Imam!, is at the top of the list of my requests every day. When you will come to cool the burning heart of mine.

#### A letter to the Imam

It is written in a narration that if you have faced a difficulties and want it to be solved quickly you should write the following letter which is the translation of the narration,

In In the name of Allah the most Compassionate and the most Merciful

I have written to you O my master, may Allah's mercy and blessing be on you, seeking a favor from you. I have complained to you for what has happened to me seeking solutions firstly from Allah and then from you for a matter that has obsessed me.

I am helpless in combating the problem and for that I have resorted to seeking help from Allah and from you knowing the status you have with Allah.

I am confident that you will help me get the solutions to my problems swiftly and that you will intercede with Allah on my behalf.

I am helpless and moreover I am sinful, so help me O master and present this problem to Allah and I pray to Him that He will solve this quickly and grant me victory and success in finding the solution to my problems.

(Write your personal wishes and problems in the provided space)

The Find Hope

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I am not able to carry or bear with it. Although I am responsible for the increase of my sins and ignorant about my religious obligations, from Allah which are given to me.

So help me O my master! Peace be upon you during this time of problems and sorrow.

Presents my prayers to Allah before I compensate and before my enemies engulfs me. For you have shown me your blessings. So I pray to Allah for great salvation and near victory with calmness from all fears, for Allah is most high and does what he wants. Allah is sufficient for me from beginning and in my hopes. Whatever Allah wish there is neither strength nor any power except in Allah the High, the Great.

(Then drop this letter in the sea, river, or into a well)



