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Ziarat-e-Aale Yasin – A Brief Explanation

Imam's Greetings To a Mother

Always, songs of joys are modulated on the plectrum of hopes. Their expressions are adorned on being drawn from the future's sack.

A child complains, "Mother! Sleep's eluding me. Tell me a story." She lays down a condition, "Close your eyes first and only then will I narrate one for you." The child does as told but the constant batting of the eyelids gives away the fact that sleep is still far-off.

She begins, "One day, the Awaited One will certainly come, mounted on a white steed. He will have a sword in his right hand and a flag on his left shoulder. The flag's banner will be green in color. Signs of victory and conquest will be written all over it. His face will shine like a brilliant sun. The harmonic sound of his horse's hooves will tell that a helper is arriving. His sword will not instill fear because it is meant to protect us. The flying banner of his standard will bring tears of joy to dreary eyes. His gorgeous gaze will soothe the crying and wailing innocent children. Caressing their tiny hands on the lips of their mothers, they will laugh with joy, in a way that their uvula will be seen. Mothers will hug their children and shower their infinite love on them. (A child can never realize the ocean of love gushing forth restlessly from the mother's heart!) Then, they will see the rider approaching near. So near, yet so far. A light emanating from his forehead breaks and forms a halo around him. Occasionally, his forelocks will fall on his forehead and play with its light. Darkness will disperse. Dawn will break from the East, almost leisurely, and spread to other parts of the globe. Paths will turn fragrant wherever he treads. Barren lands will become laden with scented flowers of various hues and colors, pink, red, blue, yellow, turquoise, etc. Their soft petals will increase their beauty twofold. Their aroma will instill hopes in desperate hearts. Slight drizzle will bring forth refreshing fragrance from the earth.

He will alight from his mount. The part of the earth where he steps will smile with joy. Tidings of peace and security will follow the direction he moves in.

Lo! His moving lips can be seen very clearly now. Pearls of wisdom will flow forth from him. He will be engrossed in the praise and glorification of Allah, Blessed and High be He. Doors and walls will testify for his truthfulness.

Thereafter, he will move towards a glowing camp, atop which, the divine sign will be hoisted. He will pitch the blessed flag on the ground and hang his sword on another side. He will summon his fortunate servants in his presence and issue orders. 'Go to the innocent children, whose mothers put them to sleep during my occultation by talking about me. First, convey my greetings to these mothers and then, order sleep to rest undisturbed in the eyes of my tiny soldiers.'

Now, even the mother starts feeling drowsy. She goes off to sleep because she has to get up for the night-vigil prayers.

From the breast-beating of the present, a scream is heard. The person blaring was doing so in a manner that fire-balls were emanating from his tongue. 'Who is talking about a new law, a new world order and a new setup in my government?' he thundered. 'I am the fear, the terror and the dread of innocent children. I will turn all of them topsy-turvy.' He orders his blood-sucking

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soldiers to withdraw their draconian teeth from the jugular vein of the sobbing and miserably poor and venture towards this mother to destroy her pure thoughts. The winds of Satanic power blew but for a few seconds. It sent them all to the gallows by forming a tight noose around their necks.

The child was in deep slumber as the night ticked away. Suddenly, the alarm bell rings and the mother gets up for the night-vigil prayers. The child, in his sleep, is having a glorious visitation of his kind Imam (a.t.f.s.).

Traditions of the infallible (a.s.) prophesy that when the Flower of Narjis (a.t.f.s.) reappears, infants in cradles will be welcome him with a broad smile on their lips.

The Companions Of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) And Their Characteristics

It is evident that the appointment of an individual is made solely on the basis of the work and its aim. The qualification of an engineer is taken into consideration if a small house has to be constructed. But if a bigger project has to be undertaken, then the engineer will have to be more capable and qualified. And if one has to draft a plan for an entire nation then the qualifications of the engineer and others responsible for its implementation will be at a totally different level. In the last scenario, the utility of each and every individual will be minutely scrutinized as the responsibility given to them is extremely critical and hence due attention will have to be paid to each and every aspect. Now, if the same plan has to be implemented throughout the world, then the qualifications of this individual will have to be extraordinary, in fact, even peerless. His capabilities, his plans, his skills must be far superior and superlative vis-à-vis the rest. In other words, it is not a position anyone can aspire to reach and it is not a task for the run of the mill individual. The character, the thought and the energies of this group of individuals will be entirely focused on the task at hand. They will be totally immersed in the project.

Now let us try to gauge the enormity of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr's (a.t.f.s) tasks. We will mention a few of them below:

1. Establishing justice and equality in the whole world.

Whenever there is mention of the auspicious reappearance of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.), the following sentence comes to mind instantly:

يَمْلَأُ الْأَرْضَ قِسْطًا وَ عَدْلًا بَعْدَ مَا مَلَأَتْ ظُلْمًا وَ جَوْرًا

'He will fill the earth with justice and equality as it would have been filled with oppression and injustice.'

So one critical task that Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall perform on his reappearance is the establishment of justice and equality in the whole world.

2. Prevalence of Islam

Allah declares in the Holy Quran

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَ دِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَ لَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ.

'He it is Who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion, that He may make it overcome the religions, all of them, though the polytheists may be averse.'

(Surah Saf :Verse 9)

Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) will actualize this divine promise.

3. End of polytheism:

It is explicitly stated

يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا

'...they shall serve Me, not associating aught with Me...'

(Surah Noor: Verse 55)

وَلَهُ اسَلَّمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا

...and to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly...'

(Surah Alelman: Verse 83)

Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) has advanced an exegesis of this verse:

'On the reappearance of Qaem (a.t.f.s.), from every corner of the earth one shall hear the voice

أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 340, tradition 89)

From this it is clear that after the reappearance of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.), the standard of Tauheed will fly high across the length and the breadth of the world. With this the final traces of polytheism and infidelity will vanish. Then on this earth that truly belongs only to Allah, only He will be worshipped and everyone will bow down in prostration as a measure of the Awe and Majesty that He commands.

4: Other objectives:

In numerous Quranic verses, traditions and supplications, several other objectives have been outlined. For brevity's sake we are narrating certain excerpts from Dua-e-Nudba. This is one of the most important and authentic supplications. This supplication has been strongly recommended for recitation on Fridays.

1. Renewal of the religious obligations and recommended acts (Sunnah).
2. Well-being of the people and the Islamic Shariat
3. Safe keeping the limits of the Holy Quran
4. Safeguarding religion and the religious people
5. Putting an end to despots and suppressive regimes
6. Destruction of polytheism and evil
7. Annihilation of sinners
8. End of opposition to religion
9. Termination of liars, accusers and egoists
10. Respect and pride for the friends and putting to shame and disheartening the enemies
11. Inviting the people towards piety and devoutness
12. Uniting the scattered ones

5: In a salutation recommended by Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.), we learn of some other duties

1. The destruction of every enemy of religion.
2. The end of the enemies of religion and their leaders
3. To act stringently with the transgressors
4. To bring down every standard representing the oppressors and tyrants
5. To grind to pieces all forces hostile to religion
6. To disrupt the armies that aim to cause damage to the true religion
7. To destroy those pulpits, which are employed solely to spew venom against Islam
8. To break the swords of the enemies of religion
9. To exterminate the idols
10. Convert strong forts into ruins
11. To close all the doors of mischief and corruption
12. To destroy the palaces of oppression
13. To bring out all the treasures from the earth
14. To establish supremacy over heights and pits

From the abovementioned points one can safely assume and understand that after the reappearance of the radiant light, the responsibilities of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) will not be limited to narrating the rules but also establishing in totality the perfect religion of Allah. He has to carry out a unique task that has not been performed by anyone till date. The task of all the divine messengers (a.s.) was only to convey the divine message and not its implementation."

“وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ، إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ.....“، “لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ.“

"...only the delivery of the message is (incumbent) on us'

'You are only a warner...'

'You are not a watcher over them'

The duty of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) was to communicate the message to the nation His responsibility was to warn the people of the • dangers (of disobeying Allah). He (s.a.w.a.) did

not exercise control or authority over the people (i.e. he could not compel them to obey divine commands)

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ.

O Apostle! Deliver...

Implementation of rules is more difficult than mere invitation

The duty of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is not restricted to conveying the divine message, but to get it implemented in its entirety across the length and the breadth of the world.

The messengers (a.s.) had encountered innumerable hardships and obstacles in conveying the divine message. They were made victims to the severest of tribulations. For instance, Hazrat Lut (a.s.) exclaimed out of sheer helplessness,

'Ah! That I had power to stand up against you, or rather I shall have recourse to a strong support...'

(Surah Hud : Verse 80)

When prophets (a.s.) and apostles (a.s.) faced such resistance at the 'conveying' stage, then how many trials and tribulations will Imam (a.t.f.s.) have to encounter at the 'implementation' stage. Characteristics of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) helpers and companions

In the light of what we have outlined earlier, we can begin to appreciate the characteristics of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) helpers and companions. Indeed, they will be at a sublime level of excellent morals and character.

It is undeniable that Allah has bestowed a great favour on us by keeping us attached to the infallible personalities of Ahle Bait (a.s.). Traditions have been narrated by the heirs of the 'Door of the City of Knowledge' (i.e. Hazrat Ali (a.s.)) regarding the characteristics of the companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.). If we find all these characteristics or even one of them in us, then we should thank Allah. And if Allah forbid, our existence is not adorned by these characteristics, then we should beseech Allah that He gives us the inclination to embellish ourselves with these characteristics.

General traits

In one tradition Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) has mentioned the general traits of the companions of Imam Mahdi (a.s.):

Their hearts are stronger than iron. They will be having complete faith in Allah.

There is no place for doubts in their hearts.

They shall be tougher than stones.

They will uproot the mountain only by turning towards

They will conquer every city they enter with their standard.

They are like swift eagles, mounted on fast horses.

They will touch the saddle of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) mount to seek blessings.

They will be encircling Imam (a.t.f.s.) to safeguard him from all calamities and misfortune.

They will fulfill every desire of Imam (a.t.f.s.) with their heart and soul.

They will not sleep in the nights.

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They will buzz like honeybees in their prayers.

They will pass the night in worship and in the morning they will be seen mounted on horses, ready for helping Imam (a.t.f.s.).

They will be devout worshippers by the night and like the lions in the day.

They will be more submissive and obedient to Imam than a maidservant.

They are like burning lamps and their hearts are like glowing beacons.

They are fearful of Allah and testify to His Unity. They are hopeful of martyrdom in the Way of Allah.

Their slogan will be "O Avenger of Husain!" When they march, their awe will precede them by a distance of one month's journey.

These are the ones who seek Allah's Pleasure.

Allah will help Imam (a.t.f.s.) through them.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 307-08, tradition 82)

Number of companions

Imam Mohammad Taqi (a.s) declared,

'Allah will gather his followers around him. Their number will be 313, the same as the companions of Badr. They will gather from different parts of the earth.' And this is the exegesis of Allah's Words,

'...wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together; surely Allah has power over all things.

(Surah Baqarah : Verse148)

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 283, tradition 10)

This is the number of companions after the aggregation of which, Imam (a.t.f.s.) will announce his reappearance from the Holy Kaaba.

All these individuals will be among the sincere ones and when this number swells up to ten thousand, then by Allah's order, Imam (a.t.f.s.) will establish himself (as Allah's Representative) and will kill the enemies of Allah.

(ibid)

How will they gather?

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) prophesied,

'When our Qaim (a.t.f.s.) will establish himself, Allah will gather the people of the East and West. These people will come together in one place in the same manner as the leaves gather in one place in autumn.'

(Al Sawaeq Al Mohreqa, pg. 163; Muntakhab Al Asar, pg.477)

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According to another tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) these people will gather in one place with the blinking of an eye.

(Ilzam An Nasib, pg. 200)

They will spend the night in their homes and by dawn-break, will reach Makkah A Mukarramah.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 286, tradition 21)

They will travel on clouds

Some of them will travel on the clouds by the day. Imam (a.t.f.s.) will recognise them by their names, by the names of their ancestors, by their lineage and by their style and mode. The narrator inquired who will be the most faithful? The prophet replied, 'The one who will travel on the clouds by the day.'

(Ibid)

They will be extremely brave and pious

Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s) relates,

'I am seeing Qaim (a.t.f.s.) and his companions in Kufa. Their foreheads bear the distinct marks of prostration. They have the ferociousness of a lion by the day and are intense worshippers by the night. Their bodies will be stronger than steel. The strength of each one of them will be equal to forty men. They will only kill the hypocrites and the infidels.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 386, tradition 202)

Their names shall be inscribed on their swords

On each of their swords their names shall be inscribed along with their lineage.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 53, pg.329, tradition 155)

And these swords shall descend from the heavens

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg.256, tradition 121)

Contracting of the earth

Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s) informs,

'From different parts of the land his (Imam (a.t.f.s.)) Shias will access him as the land will shrink for them. When they reach to him, they shall pay their allegiance to him.'

(Kitab al-Irshad, pg. 341, Muntakhab Al Asar, pg. 198)

From such traditions, it is apparent that the from different parts of the earth to him. Some will come while in the nights they were in their beds and in the morning they shall be with Imam (a.t.f.s.). Some will reach Imam (a.t.f.s.) with the batting of an eyelid, while some others shall travel with the help of the shrinking earth. It could be that all 313 companions shall reach with the batting of an eyelid and while others shall reach Imam (a.t.f.s.) through different ways. This difference can be possible due to the varied levels of their faith. Some of them will even walk

on water. When they will reach the sea seashore, they will write something on their feet and then they will walk on it.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol.52, pg. 327, tradition 43)

Extremely Obedient, fragrant and fortunate:

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), while narrating the characteristics of Hazrat Qaim (a.t.f.s.) to Ubayy b. Ka'b, said:

'Allah shall gather the same number of people as the companions of Badr from different parts of the earth. Imam (a.t.f.s.) has a tablet in which the details of his companions have been written down like their number, names, cities, natures, titles and even their family tree. These will be at the highest level of faith. After that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) narrated their greatness thus: 'O Ubayy! Blessed are those who shall meet them, blessed is he who loves them and blessed is he who talks about them, as they shall save them from being destroyed. Allah shall open the doors of heaven for them on the basis of their acceptance of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Imams (a.s.). Their example is like musk, which spreads but does not change and in the skies their example is like that of the moon whose brightness never diminishes.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 310-311, tradition 4)

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has compared the companions with musk as it has the best of fragrances. This fragrance can emanate from their bodies or from their immaculate ethics and morals. This implies that their firm actions and unshakable faith will enliven the surroundings with their fragrance

Here the companions have been compared to the moon. Moon symbolises light, but it does not independently emit this light, rather it subsists from the light of the sun. When the moon absorbs the light from the sun, it also becomes bright. Thus the companions have been compared with the moon due to their acceptance of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) and their brilliance is an extract from the character of Imam (a.t.f.s.). Another point to be noted here is that people of the earth consider them to be normal (like themselves) while the people of the heavens consider them to be like the beautiful moon.

In another tradition, Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) informs,

'When the Qaim shall reappear then Allah shall help him, in rows, through the people of the signs, devout worshippers and the descending angels. Jibrail (a.s.) shall be in front of him, while Mikaaeel (a.s.) shall be on his right and Israfil (a.s.) on his left. Awe shall precede them from all sides for as long as a month's journey. Allah's proximate angels shall accompany them on this expedition. The first to accompany them shall be the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and after him shall be Hazrat Ali (as). He shall have a special sword by which he shall conquer Rome, China, Turkey, Sindh, Hind, Kabul and Hijr.'

'Glad tidings is for those who accept him and is among his companions. Woe unto him who disobeys him and his orders and is counted amongst his enemies.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg.229-248, tradition 99)

Indeed what can be better for the one who is amongst his companions and is enumerated along with the proximate angels who are Imam's (a.t.f.s.) helpers!

All shall look alike and they shall all be young

Hazrat Alib. Abi Talib (a.s.) declared, 'The companions of Mahdi shall all be young and none shall be old except a small number equivalent to the kohl applied to the eyes or the salt sprinkled in the food.'

(Ghaibat-e-Nomani, pg. 170, Roozgaarhaai, vol. 1, pg. 415, tradition 480)

Here by young it could imply 'intention' because Allah in the Holy Quran has called Hazrat Ibrahim (as) on the occasion of destroying the idols as 'Fata' (youth)

“قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذُكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ”

'They said: We heard a youth called Ibrahim speak of them.'

(Surah Ambiya : Verse 60)

At that time, Hazrat Ibrahim's (a.s.) age was around 40 years. By this we learn that the one who destroys the idols is considered to be 'a youth'. When Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) shall reappear, he shall destroy the idols and will have a youthful appearance.

Hazrat Ali (as) in another tradition narrates:

'I am seeing them (companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.)) - they are similar in colour, height, face and clothes. They are united in their hearts and are anxiously trying to search for their lost property. They are troubled and disturbed because of it. At that moment, a person from the extreme wall of the Holy Kaaba will reappear. This person will be an exact replica of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in his appearance, ethics, mannerisms, beauty and radiance. These people shall ask him

'Are you Mahdi?' He shall reply, 'Yes I am Mahdi.' Then they shall all pay allegiance to him.'

(Al-Malaahim wal Fitan, pg. 122, Roozgaarhaai, vol.1, pg. 416, tradition 482)

The reason for their having the same colour and features is probably because their thinking shall be similar and their pain and sorrow will be shared. They would have absorbed the faith of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) in such a fashion that they would be just like him in his ethics and morals.

Intellects shall attain perfection; Sight and hearing shall become sharp

One of the characteristics of the companions of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall be that their intellects shall be at the highest level and their sense of justice and ethics shall be perfect.

Imam Baqir (a.t.f.s.) informs,

'When our Qaem reappears, he will place his hand on the heads of the people by which their intellects will become complete and their ethics will scale the peak of perfection.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 329, tradition 7,336-47, tradition 71)

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declares:

“بُعِثْتُ لِاتِّمَامِ مَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ.”

'I have been raised for the perfection of ethics.'

Therefore, it is apparent that the purpose of the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) prophethood will become complete with the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). It is significant that mention of the intellect becoming complete has preceded that of ethics reaching perfection. This is because for ethics to reach the highest level, perfection of the intellect is necessary, as a perfect intellect can never have evil ethics.

After the reappearance of Imam (a.t.f.s.) not only will the intellect become complete but the power of seeing and hearing shall also get more acute.

Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) says:

'When our Qaim (a.t.f.s.) reappears, Allah will make the seeing and hearing of the people so powerful that nothing shall be concealed between them and their Imam (a.t.f.s.). Imam shall address the people directly and the people shall see and hear Imam from their places.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 336, tradition 72)

Instructors of Quran, Carriers of Quran.

Imam Ali (a.s) reveals,

'I see my Shias in Masjid-e-Kufa and they are teaching the Holy Quran in different tents and teaching it just the way it was revealed.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 364, tradition 140-141)

In this tradition, Imam Ali (a.s) has enumerated the companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) as his own Shias. This not only serves to highlight the esteemed position of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) but also underscores the status of his companions in the eyes of the Imams (a.s.).

Nowadays the instructor of the Quran does not command any respect nor is his work considered meritorious. Compare this to the one who imparts worldly knowledge and is placed on a pedestal.

It is apparent that people fail to gauge the importance of a teacher by the topic or the book instructed by him. When no worldly book is more esteemed than the Holy Quran and no concept higher than the concepts advocated by the Holy Quran, then the most revered and esteemed one should be the teacher of the Holy Quran.

In another tradition Imam Ali (a.s.) predicts,

'At that time people will be made sharp just as iron (arrow) makes the bow sharp. By reciting the Holy Quran their eyes will become bright and by the exegesis (tafseer) their ears will become alive. They will be drinking day and night from the cup of wisdom.'

Around them would be such people (servants of Allah) who will keep their sayings alive. They will help them, be their advisors, take charge of the responsibilities of their nations and they will help them in fulfilling the works allotted to them by Allah.

If we want to be included among the companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s), then we have to be attached to the Holy Quran.

United Heart

Imam Ali (a.s) while narrating the characteristics of the companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) asserts, 'These are the people who do not remind Allah, boasting of their patience in His Cause. They do not exaggerate their endeavours and sacrifices in Allah's Way. Whenever there is a problem or an unfortunate event occurs and all doors of hope are closed, they gladden their eyes with the radiance of their swords and on the command of their Imam (a.t.f.s.), gain proximity to their Lord. All of them are like lions coming out of their dens. If they want to uproot a mountain from its place they can do so. These are those people who have truly and sincerely acknowledged Allah's Unity (Tauheed). In the nights they wail due to mortal fear of Allah, just like a mother wails on seeing the corpse of her young son. In the nights they pray and during the day they fast. They are united in ethics and character and their hearts are filled with love, affection and concern for each other.'

(Ilzaamun Nasib, pg 199, Roozgaarhaai, vol. 1, pg. 144, tradition 477)

Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) wrote in one of his signed letters (tawqee) to Shaikh Mufeed (r.a.), 'May Allah bestow our Shias with the ability to obey, for if they had sincerely adhered to their covenant with united hearts, then there wouldn't have been any delay in our blessed reappearance.'

In the light of this tawqee, it is apparent that the Shias fulfill the criteria of obedience and worship, but fare miserably on the factor of unity. Mosques are bursting with people engrossed in various states of worship, but their hearts are hostile towards each other. The condition for meeting Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) and his subsequent reappearance is not only worship, but also to fulfill all other prerequisites in a comprehensive manner. It must be as if their bodies are different, but their hearts and heartbeats are one. Please pay attention to the following traditions.

Lovers of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s)

Imam Ali (a.s.) predicts:

'Allah will make their hearts proximate to each other, they shall not get saddened by anyone's departure nor will they become happy with anyone's advent. Their number would be that of the companions of Badr (i.e. 313). They will be without any parallel in the past or the present. People of the past were unable to attain this stature and likewise the people of the future will never accomplish their excellence. These companions would be like that of King Taloot (of Bani Israel) (i.e. 313 in number) who had successfully crossed the river. Allah had examined the companions of Taloot by ordering them not to drink water from the river, which would come their way. However, owing to excessive thirst most of them drank from the river except for some (i.e. 313) who followed the orders of their leader and these companions were successful in the examination.'

With this tradition we learn that the companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) will follow the orders of their Imam and will be extremely close to each other.

Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s) foretells in one tradition,

"When Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) reappears, he will stand between Hajar-e-Aswad and Maqam-e-Ibrahim and announce - 'O my chiefs, O my leaders, O my chosen people, O those whom Allah has sent before me for my help and as a storehouse for me. Come to me in obedience' This call of Imam will be heard across the East and West to the extent that people will come out from their prayer rooms and bedrooms. Everyone will hear this voice and soon people will rush to reach Imam (a.t.f.s)."

Today with the help of electronic media, it is not difficult to hear a sound anywhere. Everywhere sounds and pictures are transferred through satellites and waves. So if the sinners of the world can transfer the sound across the world without any effort, is there anything beyond the ability of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s)?

Some other social characteristics

In the Sahifa of Hazrat Idris (a.s.) it has been recorded: When Satan sought divine amnesty till the Day of Judgement, Allah extended him a reprieve till the Appointed Hour (Waqt-e-Ma'loom). Allah declared, 'It is My Decree that on that day, I shall purify the earth from ignorance, polytheism and sins. Till that time I have appointed such servants who have been tested with faith and their hearts have been purified of the sins and their hearts are now filled with humility, faith, piety, truthfulness, patience, abstinence and with renunciation and pre-cautious piety. I have appointed them to invite the sun and the moon and made them as My Caliphs on the earth and bestowed them with My favourite religion. They will worship Me and will never associate anyone with Me. They will pray on time, pay the poor rate on time and will always enjoin good and forbid evil.'

'Allah will create love and affection between them and they will never oppress each other. They will be kind to the young and the old and will respect them. They will remain steadfast on the religion and will always give their judgment based on it. These are My vicegerents, for them I have raised Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) as a Messenger and Hazrat Ali (a.s) as a trustee and made them helpers (of Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Imam (a.s.))'

'These are those people who I have chosen for My Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) and for My trustee - Imam Ali (a.s.). I have concealed them in My Hidden Knowledge and all this is bound to happen. On that day I shall destroy your warriors and armies. Go, I have given you respite till the Appointed Hour.'

(Saadus Saood by Syed b. Tawoos (r.a.), pg 34, Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 284,585 tradition 194)

In this tradition around 30 characteristics of the companions of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) have been narrated and each characteristic is noteworthy.

Severe Examination

As it has been narrated in the beginning, everyone wishes to be among the helpers of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.). Imam Sadiq (a.s.) narrates in a tradition - 'If I get the era of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) then I would most certainly expend my life in his service.' Even Imam Ali (a.s) has 3 accounted them as his Shias.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 131, tradition 32)

So is it possible for just about anyone to reach that position? Certainly not! To attain this position one has to undergo severe examination. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) informs, 'The number of Arabs with the Qaim (a.t.f.s.) would be less.' Imam (a.s.) was asked, 'According to the characteristics you have narrated, their numbers appears to be large?' To this question Imam (a.s) replied, 'Surely people shall be repeatedly sieved and examined. Again and again they shall be sieved and due to this sieving many people shall exit from religion.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 348)

It is evident that for such a colossal revolution, it is not going to be an easy task to arrange for the requisite individuals. There will be major filtering so that only individuals with the desired traits remain.

Paying allegiance to Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s)

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has narrated the criteria for allegiance. The companions will testify in front of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) to abide by the below mentioned provisions:

1. They shall never rob
2. They shall never indulge in evil actions
3. They shall never abuse any Muslim
4. They shall never kill anyone unjustly
5. They shall never humiliate anyone
6. They shall never attack anyone's house
7. They shall never hit anyone unjustly.
8. They shall never hoard gold, silver, wheat and jowar
9. They shall never consume the right of an orphan
10. They shall never bear witness without absolute surety
11. They shall never destroy a mosque
12. They shall never drink wine
13. They shall never wear silk clothes
14. They shall never obstruct anyone's path
15. They shall never spread terror on the streets

16. They shall never indulge in homosexuality
17. They shall never hoard food grains and wheat
18. They shall be content with little.
19. They shall be partial towards purity.
20. They would stay away from uncleanness.
21. They will enjoin good
22. They shall forbid evil
23. They shall never wear thick clothes
24. Clay and mud will be their headrest
25. They will struggle in Allah's Way as one ought to struggle.

Then Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s) will pledge the following:

1. He (a.t.f.s.) will travel with them.
2. Will wear the same clothes as them.
3. Will employ the same mode of transportation as them.
4. Will work as per their desire.
5. Will be happy and content with little.
6. With Allah's Help, they will fill the earth with justice and tranquility just as it would have been filled with injustice and tyranny.
7. Will worship Allah in a manner that He should be worshipped.

(Ilzaamun Nasib, pg201, Roozgaarhaai, vol. 1, pg. 465, tradition 564, MuntakhabulAsar, pg 469)

Imam (a.t.f.s.) will take allegiance from his companions on these criteria (mentioned earlier) and once the companions fulfill the criteria, then Imam (a.t.f.s.) will remain with them and spend his life alongside them. This highlights the intense love and affection of Imam (a.t.f.s.) for his companions.

بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَ أُمِّي وَ أَهْلِي وَ نَفْسِي وَ مَالِي يَا مَوْلَايَ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ

'May my father, my mother, my family, myself and my wealth be sacrificed upon you, O my Master, O Saahebuz Zamaan!

The Third Special Deputy Husain B. Rauh Nawbhakti (r.a.)

În the 15th Shabaan special editions of Al-Muntazar, we have been discussing about Imam-e-Asr's (a.t.f.s.) special deputies. We began this series in 1420 AH by highlighting the 'Need of deputyship' and in the subsequent issues (1421 AH, 1422 AH) we shed light on the lives (biographies) of the first and second deputies - Janabe Usman b. Saeed Amri (r.a.) and Janabe Muhammad b. Usman b. Saeed Amri (r.a.) respectively. In this issue we shall add another link to this series by outlining the life and times of the third special deputy - Janabe Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) Nawbakhti (r.a.)

Name	:	Husain
Agnomen	:	Abul Qasim
Father's Name	:	Rauh
Grandfather's Name	:	Abu Jafar
Family	:	Nawbakht

He was known by his name - Husain b. Rauh-e-Nawbakhti (r.a.). His exact date of birth has not been recorded in books of history.

Genealogy

Historians have recorded that after Abu Sohail Ismail b. Ali, Husain b. Rauh b. Abi Bahr was the most famous personality in the Nawbakhti family. The cause and reason of his fame and recognition was attributed to his religious position. He is counted amongst the four special deputies of Imam Qaim (A.S.).

(Pazhoshee-e-Peeramoon, Zindagaani-e-Nawaab-e-Khaas-e-Imam-e-Zamana(a.t.f.s.), pg 233)

Shaikh Tusi (r.a.) in his book Rejaal has not made any mention of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) Early Islamic scholars seem to have taken a cue from Shaikh and have not shed light on the life of Husain b Rauh (r.a.). Scholars of the present era Whave only mentioned his name. However, in his book Al Ghaibat, Shaikh Tusi (r.a.) has narrated many traditions regarding him, highlighting the various aspects of his life.

Ibn Shahr-e-Aashob (r.a.) has included Husain b Rauh (r.a.) amongst the close companions of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.)

(Zindagaani-e-Nawaab-e-Khaas-e-Imam-c-Zamana (a.c.s.s.), pg. 234 sourced from Manageb, pg. 423)

The late Iqbal in his book 'Khandaane Nawbakht' on pg. 214 has accepted the opinion of Ibn Shahr-e-Ashoob (r.a.). However, Dr. Jasim in his book Tarikh - e - Siyaasi-e-Ghaibat -e -Imame-Dawazdahom (a.t.f.s.) has rejected this view.

Husain b Rauh (r.a.) during the period of the 2nd special deputy:

As per the popular narrations, he was amongst the companions of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) and was considered amongst the close companions and supporters of the 2nd special deputy - Janabe Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) enjoyed the unequivocal confidence of

the second deputy so much so that the latter divided the chiefs of the Imamia sects into various levels and grades and appointed Husain b Rauh (r.a.) at the highest and the foremost group. He was the first amongst the chiefs who was permitted to directly meet him (2nd deputy).

Note:

A critical aspect of the lives of the deputies of Imam (a.t.f.s.) is underscored in the above discussion. They were special Shias who performed their administrative duties in an extraordinary manner. Although they were in close contact with Imam (a.t.f.s.) and knew his residence, they ensured that it remained a secret from the prying eyes of others around them. This trait is even commendable when we consider that the period of short occultation was not a period of * 1 or 2 years, but a long era spanning more than 7 decades. Over this prolonged duration, to keep constant touch and contact with Imam (a.s.) and at the same time to regularly communicate the problems of the people to Imam (a.s.) and seek a solution from him (a.t.f.s.) underlines their capabilities. They had to deal with constant requests and pressures from the people for being allowed to meet Imam (a.t.f.s.) and they had to all along be careful never to disclose Imam's (a.t.f.s.) location to the people. The reader will appreciate the fact that if we try to conceal something, while the people are aware that we are trying to hide something from them, and we are also aware that people are trying to discover the hidden thing, then it is indeed a difficult task to conceal that hidden object from the inquisitive eyes of the people. It may be possible to divert their attention and delay the matter for a few days, but certainly not for a year or years or decades. These points can make us appreciate how well Imam (a.t.f.s.) must have trained the deputies.

Muhammad b. Usinan (a.r.) had made Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) a link between himself and the agents around Baghdad. During this period, Husain b Rauh (r.a.) came to establish an influential presence in the court of the Bani Abbas rulers by virtue of a pre-determined plan. Consequently he even succeeded in solving some problems prevailing in the government. Readers are requested to read the following incident carefully:

1. Shaikh Sadooq (a.r.) has narrated from Abu Mohammed Hasan b. Hasan b. Yahya Alawi that Abul Hasan Ali b. Ahmed b. Ali Aqiqi in the year 298 A.H. came to meet Ali b. Esa b. Jarah who was the vizier at that time, so that he could advise him regarding his government and to advance his needs to him. The vizier replied, 'You have many relatives in this city and if all of them start asking their needs and if we decide to entertain all of them, then it will become a huge task and we will never be able to resolve this matter.' Aqiqi replied, 'Therefore I am asking my need from the One through whom difficulties are solved.' Ali b. Esse queried, 'Who is he?' He replied, 'Allah, the Almighty.' With this he went out of the room angrily. Aqiqi used to say, 'I came out angrily and was saying, 'Allah, the Lord of the Universe, gives patience on every destruction and solves every difficulty. 'Uttering this statement I left from there. Then a messenger from Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) came to me with a message from him. I complained to him about the vizier and he in turn narrated my complaint about the vizier to Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). That messenger returned and gave me 100 dirhams. I counted all of them and weighed them. He also gave me a handkerchief and some quantity of Hunoot (camphor) and a few shrouds and declared, 'Your master has conveyed salutations to you and said that whenever any difficulty or sorrow befalls you then at that time i wipe this handkerchief over your face. This is

your master's handkerchief. Take this money, camphor and shroud along with you and know that tonight your wishes will be fulfilled' He also said, 'When you reach Egypt, Muhammad b. Ismail will die 10 days before you and then after 10 days, even you will leave this world. This shroud and camphor are for you.' I took it from the messenger and he left. At that moment, all of a sudden, I saw myself at the doorsteps of my house. At that moment a voice called out. I asked my servant, 'Is everything alright? Go and see, who is there.' He went to see and replied, 'Everything is fine. The vizier's paternal cousin - Hamid b. Mohammed Kaatib's servant has come.' He brought him to me. The servant said to me, 'The vizier and my master Hamid have called you.' I mounted my horse and went ahead till I reached the lane of 'Vazzaneen' and saw that Hamid was sitting and waiting for me. When he saw me, he advanced towards me and shook hands with me and both of us headed for the vizier's house. The vizier said to me, "O old man! Allah has fulfilled your wish.' Then he apologised to me (for his past behaviour) and gave me some official papers bearing his seal. I took them and came out.

(Kamaluddin; chapter of Tawqee'aat; pg. 32)

Reminder

From the above incident we can gauge the degree of influence that Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) exerted in the court. We can also conclude that Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) was the beneficiary of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) special care and attention, while he had not yet become a special deputy as this incident occurred in 298 AH - 7 years before Muhammad b. Usman's (r.a.) demise, after which Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) assumed special deputyship.

Selection of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.)

More than 3 years before his own death, Muhammad b. Usman had started directing some of the Shias who were bringing Khums and other monies for Imam (a.t.f.s.) to Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) In this manner he was preparing the ground for the appointment of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) to the position of special deputyship. If someone raised any doubt or objection to this practice, Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) would affirm that this was on the order of Imam (a.t.f.s.) himself. In this regard, there are several traditions, of which, we narrate just one:

Muhammad b Ali Aswad narrates, 'When some financial donations (waqf) used to be brought to me, I would surrender the same to Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) and he used to accept it from me.

Once, during the last days of his life, I took some monies and went to him, but Muhammad b. Usman ordered me to hand over the wealth to Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). I went to Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) and handed the money to him and asked him for a receipt. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) complained about this to Muhammad b. Usman, so Muhammad b. Usman ordered me not to demand a receipt from Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) in future. He stressed - whatever wealth you deposit with Abul Qasim Husain b. Rauh (r.a.), it is as if you have deposited the same with me. After this incident, I never sought a receipt for any amount deposited * with Husain b. Rauh (r.a.).

A similar incident has been narrated by Abu Abdullah Jafar b. Muhammad Madai famous asse 'Ibne Qazooda'. Shaikh-e-Tusi (r.a.) has narrated it in his book 'Al Ghaibah', pg 367.

Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) took particular care in appointing Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) as his successor. He endorsed his successorship while he was alone with him, at times in the assemblies of sincere Shias and at other times in front of his representatives. The reason for adopting such an approach was because there were no clear narrations from the holy Imams (a.s.) about the reliability and the trustworthiness of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). Neither the representatives of Baghdad nor the special and common Shias expected the deputyship of Imam (a.t.f.s.) to fall on the relatively unknown and unfamiliar shoulders of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). Hence Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) took advantage of every opportunity to impress upon the Shias the deputyship of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.).

Jafar b. Muhammad b. Qoolwyah relates: 'Our teachers used to say that we had no doubt that after the demise of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.), none other than Jafar b. Ahmad b. Muttayal or his father would succeed him. This was because he possessed characteristics similar to Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). Also, we were aware that he stayed frequently in his house. In addition to that, in his last days, Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) ate food, which was prepared in the house of Jafar b. Muttayal and his father or personally visited their house for food.'

There was no doubt whatsoever in the minds of the special Shias that in the case of any eventuality, Jafar b. Muttayal would succeed Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). However, when Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) appointed Abul Qasim Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) as his successor, everyone submitted to him and accepted him and their conduct towards him was like their conduct towards Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). Jafar b. Muttayal worked in a similar manner (with Husain b. Rauh (r.a.)) as he had worked during the deputyship of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.).

'This is a characteristic of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) chosen servants, whose actions do not alter with the change in personality.'

Jafar b. Muhammad b. Qoolwayh Qummi says:

'Then whoever speaks evil of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) has in fact maligned Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). Whoever maligns Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.), in reality he has spoken ill about Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and has criticized him (a.t.f.s.).

(Zindagaani-e-Nawwab-e-Khaas, pg.243)

The abovementioned chronicles underline the fact that some of Muhammad b. Usman's (r.a.) deputies were closer to him than Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) spent more time meeting these deputies than he did in meeting Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). This led the Shias to believe that one of these proximate deputies would eventually succeed Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). Also, it is clear from the previous quotes, that although Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) was subtly appointing Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) as his successor, this fact was not well-known among the general Shia populace.

Abu Ali Muhammad b. Hamala says that before his demise, Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) gathered the leaders and chiefs of the Shias and announced, 'After my demise, Husain b. Rauh-

e-Nawbakhti (r.a.) will be my successor. I have been ordered to appoint him in my place. Therefore, turn towards him and have faith in him regarding your works.'

(Behanul Anwaar, vol. 51, pg. 355)

First Tawqee (a signed letter) to Husain b. Rauh (r.a.)

Abul Abbas b. Nuh states that Muhammad b. Nafees wrote a letter from Ahwaz. I read the very first tawqee concerning Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) from Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). In it was written:

'We know (Husain b. Rauh), may Allah confer all His Goodness and Pleasure on him and bestow His Bounties on him. We are aware of his letter, which is the cause of our reliance and certainties (upon him). We deem him meritorious, which makes him happy. May Allah increase His Favours and Goodness on him.'

(AlGhaibah of Shaikh-e-Tusi (r.a.), pg. 372, tradition 344)

This tawqee reached Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) on Sunday, 6th of Shawwal, 305 A.H.

The rationale behind the appointment of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) as deputy of Imam Zaman (a.t.f.s.)

1. He was appointed as the deputy largely due to his faith, intelligence, patience, generosity and sincerity. These qualities were to prove very useful in that political environment so as to stifle jealousy and enmity. There were numerous jurisprudents and theologians in that period and the people had their eyes fixed on them. He was the wisest among Shias and Sunnis. Also, he had placated the enemies and also pleased his friends. In the last tawqee received by Shaikh-e-Tusi (r.a.) through Husain b. Rauh (r.a.), Imam (a.t.f.s.) asserted,

وَ كَانَ أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ رَحْمَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَعْقَلِ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ الْمُخَالِفِ وَالْمُؤَافِقِ وَ يَسْتَعْمِلُ التَّقِيَّةَ.

'Abul Qasim (r.a.) is the wisest of the people, in the eyes of the enemies and friends and his approach is that of dissimulation (Taqaiyyah).'

(AlGhaibah, pg. 384)

There are numerous incidents of his Taqaiyyah. Shaikh Tusi (r.a.) in his book 'Al Ghaibah' narrates from Abu Nasr Hebatullah b. Muhammad that in the house of Abu Yasaar, the vazier of Muqtadirbillah Abbasi, in the presence of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.), there were five Ahle Sunnah scholars discussing the most superior Muslim after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). One of them said: The superior one after Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Ali (a.s.). The other claimed this superiority for Ali (a.s.). Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) solved the problem in a manner placating the Sunnis and also.

A safe guarding the Shias in the process. The people present in that gathering became the adherents of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). 3. Another reason for Husain b. Rauh's (r.a.) selection was the possibility of people accusing Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) of appointing his close relatives according to his own whims and Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) not being involved in the decision. (We have mentioned earlier that Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) was very close to Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) but apparently it seemed that Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) was closer to other representatives)

(Zindagaani-e-Nawwab-e-Khaas, pg.252)

Commencement of his Deputyship

After the demise of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.), as per his will, a gathering was organised at Daarul Niyabah in Baghdad where along with the leaders of Shias, Abul Qasim Husain b. Rauh Nawbhakti (r.a.) was present. This incident has been narrated by Sayyed b. Taoos (r.a.) in his book 'Mohajjud Daawaat'. After the expiry of Shaikh Abu Jafar Muhammad b. Usman b. Saeed Amri (r.a.), Shaikh Abul Qasim Husain b. Rauh b. Abi Bahr (r.a.) went to the house of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.). A servant named Zuka of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.) handed over him the following:

1. Some documents that were wrapped together and a scroll.
2. A staff.
3. A painted wooden trunk.

He took them and said to the inheritors of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.), 'In this scroll are narrated the sayings of Holy Imams (a.s.)' He opened it and showed them the same. It contained supplications and Qunoot of the Infallible (a.s.). The inheritors left it and said, 'Certainly the trunk contains gold and jewelry.' Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) asked them whether they would like to sell the trunk to him. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) signaled Abul Hasan i.e. Ibne Shabeeb-e-Kooshari to give them 10 dirhams in exchange for the wooden trunk. They were not satisfied with it. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) increased it till it reached 100 dirhams. Yet, they were not satisfied with the amount. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) warned them that if they do not close the deal at that rate they would regret later. On his insistence, they finalised the deal at 100 dirhams. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) put aside the staff and scroll and picked up the trunk. When the matter of the trunk was resolved he explained: This staff belongs to Abu Muhammad - Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). He had given it to Shaikh Usman b. Saeed (r.a.) at the time of his will. The staff is still present and regarding the trunk, it contains the rings of the Holy Imams (a.s.). The rings have special characteristics and then he showed it to the people.'

(Zindagaani Nawwab-e-Khaas, pg. 252-254)

It is clear from the aforementioned incident that the period of Husain b. Rauh's (r.a.) deputyship was more prominent among the common Shias than the period of the first and the second deputies. Due to this, many Shias directly contacted Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) instead of his deputies in their areas. In his period of deputyship, he witnessed lesser opposition compared to the previous deputies.

Deniers of Deputyship

In the year 307 A.H., Muhammad b. Fazl Mosuli denied the deputyship of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). However, with the guidance of Hasan b. Ali Wajnaa and after witnessing some of the affairs of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.), he repented.

It is necessary to point out over here that some people have written that Hasan b. Wajnaa rejected the deputyship of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). Some have written his name as Hasan b. Ali Wajnaa and some have recorded it as Husain.

In this regard, Ayatullah Khui (r.a.) in his book *Mojam-o-Rejalel-Hadees'* vol. 5, pg. 130 has recorded his name as Abu Muhammad Hasani b. Muhammad Wajnaa Nasibi. He has narrated traditions from Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) and he had met Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.).

Shaikh Tusi (r.a.) has included him as the supporter of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.). Hasan Wajnaa was deputy of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) in the area of Nasibeen. He was also writing letters for the people of Egypt. Similarly, Qasim b. Alaa and his two friends Abu Hamid Imran b. Mufleen, Abu Ali Hajdar in Azerbaijan and Muhammad b. Jafar Asadi were deputies till 312 A.H. in the city of Rayy (Teheran). Muhammad b. Hasan Sairafi was in Balkh. They all were the media between the people and Husain b. Rauh (r.a.).

(*Tarikh-e-Siyaasi e-Ghaibate Imam-e-Devazdahum*, pg. 196-198)

Political Aspect (295 - 320 A.H.)

In Muqtadir Abbas's reign, Husain b. Rauh was highly respected by the ministers (Viziers). But he was subsequently arrested in the reign of Muqtadir. Muqtadir donned the mantle of Caliphate at a very young age. Till the time the post of Vizier was in the family of Furat, Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) had a say in the government's decision-making. But this changed when Hamid b. Abbas, an evil person who thought nothing of abusing people when he was angry, became the Vizier. He harassed the family of Furat and the Shias were imprisoned. At that time Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) had to face increased difficulties under very hostile conditions. The hostility persisted for approximately five years i.e. from Jamaadiul Aakhar 306 A.H. till Rabiul Aakhar, 311 A.H. During this period, Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) lived a secluded life and his activities were largely clandestine. After the difficult era of Hamid b. Abbas, the conditions of the Shias improved. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) recommenced his activities openly. In the year 314 A.H., the government arrested him. The historians have cited the following reasons for his arrest:

1. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) was blamed of promoting links with Qaramati. He had written a letter to Abu Tahir Qarameta and invited him to Baghdad so as to lay siege to it. Abu Tahir had attacked pilgrims (Hajjis) of Baghdad and imprisoned them. Among the Hajjis were the relatives of Caliph Muqtadir.

2. Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) was accused on accepting money from the people. Some have written that the government had demanded wealth from him, which he refused to pay.

Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) was once again imprisoned in Zilhajj 312 A.H. till Mohaaram 317 A.H. After being released from prison, he got engrossed in his activities. The conditions improved for him because people from the family of Nawbakht viz. Abu Yaqub Ishaq b. Ismail (killed in 322 A.H.), Abu Ali Nawbakhti (244-324 A.H.) and Abu Abdullah Husain b. Ali Nawbakhti (d. 326 A.H.) were appointed at senior positions in the government.

His Knowledge

Indeed what can be said about the knowledge of the one who had unrestricted access to the Proof of Allah (i.e. Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)) and his bestowals, attention, care and respect!

Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Ishaq Talaqi asked the questions of Ali b. Esa Qasri to Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) that whether Imam Husain (a.s.) was Wali (appointee) of Allah? And whether his killer was enemy of Allah? Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) replied in the affirmative. Then he was asked whether

Allah allows His Enemy to overpower His appointee? After receiving the replies, Muhammad b. Ibrahim fell in doubt as he could not digest this subtle point. The next day when he went in the presence of Husain b. Rauh (r.a.), before he could utter anything, Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) exclaimed: 'O Muhammad b. Ibrahim! It would have been better had I fallen from the sky and became a morsel for birds than advance my views concerning Allah's Religion. Whatever I had replied, its source was the Proof of Allah (i.e. Imam (a.t.f.s.)) and I myself heard this from him.'

(Isbaatul Hudaat, vol. 1, pg. 117, tradition 168)

Husain b. Rauh's (r.a.) discussion with Muhammad b. Ibrahim on Allah's Enemy and His Wali can be summarised in a simple manner. Allah does not converse with the people openly like we converse with each other but He converses through the Prophets (a.s.), who are mortals. He bestows miracles upon them, which are beyond all others in their respective nations. Despite evident miracles, few people from their nations testified to their claims, while others rejected them outright. So, sometimes Prophets (a.s.) overpower the enemies and sometimes they were vanquished and confronted with calamities. If Allah made the Prophets (a.s.) defeat all their adversaries in all matters, then the people would have taken them as gods and patience, calamities and examination would have no meaning and purpose.

Hence, Allah has conferred characteristics on these mortals that they should be patient at all times be it in comfort or difficulties. In times of ease and triumph (over the enemy) they should thank Allah. They should be humble in all situations and abstain from rebellion and disobedience. In this way, people may understand that Allah is the Creator and in all affairs, He has some purpose and wisdom.

(Zindagaani e Nawwab-e-Khaas, pg.265)

For more details on Husain b. Rauh's (r.a.) knowledge, the following books of traditions may be referred to:

1. Al Ghaibah of Shaikh Tusi (a.r.) - pg. 390 tradition 356, pg. 378, tradition 346 and pg . 373, tradition 345
2. Kamaluddin of Shaikh Saduq (a.r.) - Vol. 2, pg. 519, tradition 48
3. Beharul Anwaar of Allama Majlisi (a.r.)- Vol. 53, pg. 192, tradition 20

The aforementioned volumes of Kamaluddin and Behaarul Anwar have been translated into Urdu.

If Allah gives us taufeeq, Inshallah, in the next issue we will discuss the above topic.

Miracles and Manifestations

There are many incidents that highlight the abovementioned traits of which we are narrating only two:

1. Husain b. Ali Babawayah (r.a.) (brother of Shaikh Saduq (r.a.)) narrates:

Some people from the city of Qum (in 310 A.H.), prepared to go for Hajj, when the Qaramatah attacked the Hajjis. My father (Ali b. Babawayah (r.a.) wrote a letter to Shaikh Abul Qasim Husain b. Rauh Nawbakhti (r.a.) to present it to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and seek permission

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for Hajj that year. Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) ordered him not to go for Hajj. My father wrote another letter saying that the Hajj was obligatory and whether it is permissible to stay away from it? Imam replied: 'If you cannot avoid it, then travel with the last caravan.'

As my father left for Hajj with the last caravan, he was saved while the people with the earlier caravan were killed.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 51, pg.293, tradition 1)

2. When Ahmed b. Ishaq Qummi requested for permission to go for Hajj, Husain b. Rauh (r.a.) granted him permission and gave him a cloth. When Ahmed b. Ishaq saw the cloth, he exclaimed - this is the news of my death. On his return from Hajj, he expired at a place called Halwaan.

(Beharul Anwaar, vol.51, pg. 306, tradition 21)

His demise

He was appointed as a deputy in the year 305 A.H. and departed from this transitory world in the year 326 A.H. He served as a direct deputy of Imam (a.t.f.s.) for 21 years. If we add another 2-3 years, during which he served as a deputy during the deputyship of Muhammad b. Usman (r.a.), it adds upto 23 years.

His grave is situated in Baghdad in Nawbakhtia, near the door of the house of Ali b. Ahmad Nawbhakti. He expired on Wednesday, 18 Shabaan, 326 A.H. His grave is still there. However, the place is now known as Suk Al Attaareen. Visitors should not forsake the visitation of this great deputy of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) when they visit Kazimain for Ziarat. Nowadays, the caravan of visitors do not visit his grave due to the stringent traffic system of Baghdad. However, his Ziarat can be done on Fridays, which is a holiday in Baghdad.

Exegesis of Ziarate Ale Yasin

Last year in the 1423 AH Shabaan English edition, we had commenced the Exegesis of Ziarat-e-Ale Yasin. We had first outlined the chain of narrators and the significance of this Ziarat. We then went on to elucidate a few lines of the Ziarat. In this edition, we shall continue this discussion by explaining some more sentences. As was the case last year, to remain within the confines of brevity will be our constant endeavour.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْعَلَمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ: 11

Salutation upon you, O Raised Standard

Over here, Hazrat Baqiatullah (a.t.f.s.), has been referred to as the 'Raised Standard'. It is possible that the term - Raised Standard over here isn't used alone, rather a word 'Master' is concealed before it. So this verse should have read as

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا صَاحِبَ الْعَلَمِ الْمَنْصُوبِ

In the light of this adjustment, the translation of this verse will now read as

Salutation upon you, O Master of the Raised Standard.

This verse alludes to the Raised Standard that will unfurl in all its glory on Imam's (a.t.f.s.) reappearance and will serve as a sign to the people of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) veracity.

The respected scholar of Al-Abqari al-Hesaan writes, 'When Imam's (a.t.f.s.) reappearance draws near, his standard shall start unfurling on its own, without anyone's intervention. Then Allah shall bestow the power of speech to this standard, which shall exclaim - O Allah's Servant, reappear now and destroy Allah's Enemies.'

(An-Najmuz Zaahir, vol. 2, pg. 52, Al-Abqari al-Hesaan)

Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) will have with him three standards. On one of them shall be inscribed:

الْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ اَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَ رَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْاِسْلَامَ دِينًا.

(Surah Maidah : Verse 3)

... This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion...'

On the second standard shall be written:

يُؤْفُونَ بِالنُّذُرِ وَ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا.

(Surah Insaan : Verse 7)

'They fulfill vows and fear a day the evil of which shall be spreading far and wide.'

The third standard shall be adorned with the words:

لَا اِلَهَ اِلَّا اللهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللهِ عَلِيُّ وَلِيُّ اللهِ وَ خَلِيْفَتُهُ الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ وَ لِتَسْعَةَ مِنْ وُلْدِ الْحُسَيْنِ اَوْصِيَانَهُ.

'There is no God except Allah. Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is His Messenger. Ali (a.s.) is His Slave and His Caliph. Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.) and the nine sons from Husain's (a.s.) progeny are His Successors.'

(Baqiyatut Taalib fi man ra'a Imamal Ghaib (a.t.f.s.), pg. 39)

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) informs:

'Imam-e-Zamana's (a.t.f.s.) standard is a unique flag - the very flag with which Hazrat Jibrail (a.s.) descended during the battle of Badr and entrusted to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). This is the very flag that Ameerul Mo'mineen (a.s.), had unfurled during the Battle of Jamal and which resulted in his triumph. After this he wrapped up the flag and handed it over to his son, Imam Hasan Mujtaba (a.s.). In this manner the flag was passed on from one Imam (a.s.) to another as a legacy and an invaluable treasure. The Imams (a.s.) maintained the flag, but none got the opportunity to unfurl it. Now this flag shall unfurl at the hands of the last surviving member of this immaculate household - the Qaim, Mahdi of Ale Muhammad (a.s.).

(Kamaluddin, pg. 672, Ghaibat-e-Nomani, Pg. 307)

وَالْعِلْمُ الْمَصْنُوبُ: 12

Salutation upon you, O overflowing knowledge...

The word مصبوب is اسم مفعول and is made from which means to overflow or to pour out.

Like the earlier statements, this statement also throws up two possibilities. One possibility could be that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) is the possessor of overflowing knowledge and the other is that Imam's (a.t.f.s.) personality is overflowing with knowledge. At this stage the pen confesses its helplessness in describing the overflowing knowledge'. For how can the overflowing ignorance' have the audacity to elucidate the reality of the overflowing knowledge!! Indeed this is only possible if we restrict ourselves to the traditions of the infallibles (a.s.) to unravel the reality of the overflowing knowledge'. In this regard let us cast a glance at the traditions, supplications and Ziaarat related to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). (Readers are requested to read the following lines with rapt attention)

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ كُنْزِ الْعُلُومِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ

'Salutation upon you, O the treasure of divine knowledge...'

(Misbahuz Zair, pg. 437, Beharul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 226)

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا مَعْدِنَ الْعُلُومِ النَّبُويَّةِ

'Salutation upon you, O storehouse of the prophetic knowledge...'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 117)

إِنَّكَ حَازِنُ كُلِّ عِلْمٍ

'Indeed you are the collection of every knowledge and science.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 99, Misbahuz Zair, pg. 437)

إِنَّكَ حَازِنُ كُلِّ عِلْمٍ وَقَانِقُ كُلِّ رَتَقٍ-

'Indeed you are the collection of every knowledge and the splitter of every sewn thing (of every branch of knowledge)'

(Mafatihul Jinaan, Ziarat-e-Sahebil Amr, second Ziarat, pg. 961, Urdu Translation by Maulana Nazim Ali Khairabadi)

السَّلَامُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْجَدِيدِ وَالْعَالِمِ الَّذِي عِلْمُهُ لَا يَبِيدُ.

'Salutations upon the revived truth, (the revived truth implies that Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall revive the truth on his reappearance as the truth will have been corrupted and scarred beyond recognition until then) and the scholar whose knowledge shall never be ruined.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 228)

In Dua-e-Nudba, we address Imam (a.t.f.s.):

أَيْنَ أَعْلَامِ الدِّينِ وَ قَوَاعِدِ الْعِلْمِ.

'Where is the standard of religion and the foundation of knowledge.'

In the same supplication, we address Imam (a.t.f.s.) further:

يَا بِنَ الْعُلُومِ الْكَامِلَةِ.

'O son of the complete sciences'

Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.), the splitter of prophetic sciences, informs us:

إِنَّ الْعِلْمَ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَ سُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ يَنْبُتُ فِي قَلْبِ مَهْدِيْنَا كَمَا يَنْبُتُ الزَّرْعُ عَلَى أَحْسَنِ نَبَاتِهِ.

'Surely the knowledge of Allah's Book (Quran) and the traditions of his Prophet (s.a.w.a.) grows in the heart of our Mahdi just like crops grow in the best place of vegetation.'

We have mentioned only a small sample of traditions to give readers an idea about the overflowing knowledge'. Indeed the actual number is innumerable and will overwhelm the reader like the boundless ocean overwhelms the onlooker at the shore. The dawn of reappearance is still away. Imam (a.t.f.s.) is still awaiting those trusted and upright companions who will help him establish the objectives of reappearance and will be the subject of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) limitless affection and benefaction. 'The overflowing knowledge' is sealed in the holy personality of Imam (a.t.f.s.). The brilliance of his knowledge is beyond the gloom of darkness and cannot be overwhelmed by it. In fact, this knowledge is too high for our thoughts to comprehend. Our imagination fails to grasp the reality of this knowledge. Consider that 124,000 prophets (a.s.) have been raised by Allah, who collectively have informed us of only 2 parts of knowledge. When Imam (a.t.f.s.) reappears he will unfold the remaining 25 alphabets. Glory be to Allah! All praise be to the Great Maker, the Comprehensive Power and Creator who has bestowed His Slave with this knowledge. The light of Imam's essence illumines the heavens and the earth. Indeed, we confess our helplessness in grasping this reality. From the depth of our hearts, we summon all our strength and insight and proclaim:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْعَلَمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ وَالْعِلْمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ

Salutation upon you, O Raised Standard and the overflowing knowledge

It is worth noting that the past prophets (a.s.) did not disclose all their knowledge to their nations. They informed them of only a little and if they did reveal a fraction of the treasure houses of their knowledge, it was to their special and trustworthy companions. Traditions testify to the fact that throughout his lifetime the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) never addressed his companions with his ultimate and perfect intellect. This complete and perfect intellect knowledge of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is only with the infallibles (a.s.). The divine secrets and

knowledge with which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was blessed, got transferred from one Imam (a.s.) to the other and now rests with Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). In the time of Imam Mahdi's (a.t.f.s.) major occultation, the false and erroneous knowledge gained ascent. Imam (a.t.f.s.) discharged his responsibilities only with the two parts of knowledge that prevailed in the world. He is still informing the people of only the two parts, the depth of which perplexes the mind. That is why when Imam (a.t.f.s.) blesses Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Noman (r.a.) with a portion of this knowledge, he becomes (Shaikh) Mufeed of the Islamic Shariat and its defender. When Imam (a.t.f.s.) bestows a small portion of this knowledge on Syed Raziuddin b. Taoos (r.a.), he becomes the protector and compiler of supplications and Ziaraat. When we see Imam (a.t.f.s.) gift a portion of this knowledge to Hasan b. Yusuf b. Mutahhar (r.a.), he transforms miraculously into Allamah Hilli. When we observe Imam (a.t.f.s.) whisper a few words in the ears of Ahmed b. Muhammad Alifi (r.a.), he becomes the upholder of jurisprudence with insight and becomes Muqaddas-e-Ardebali. Likewise in every era there are some pious and special personalities who have benefited from a drop of knowledge from Imam's (a.t.f.s.) boundless knowledge. And with this small drop, they have scaled the peaks of wisdom and intelligence.

Allah, the Almighty, bestows knowledge on Imam (a.t.f.s.). So Allah is صَابٍ, one who pours (knowledge) and Imam (a.t.f.s.) is مَصْبُوبٌ, the one overflowing with knowledge. Imam (a.t.f.s.) himself confers some drops of this knowledge on the Shias in which case he

becomes علماء=مصبوب = امام = صابٌ and the scholars are علماء=مصبوب.

The third point that needs some emphasis is that at all times we should address the Ahle Bait (a.s.) with utmost humility and beseech them with raised hands, 'O Master! We seek knowledge and wisdom only from you and reject everyone else.' We should translate this claim into action and never desert Imam (a.t.f.s.) by approaching others for knowledge.

وَالْغُوثُ: 13

In Arabic, yes is an infinitive means providing help, succour and shelter and granting relief to the aggrieved. In supplications and Ziaraat, we see (غياث/غوث) being used prolifically to denote Allah's Names. For instance,

يَا غِيَاثَ الْمُسْتَغِيثِينَ! يَا غِيَاثَ مَنْ لَا غِيَاثَ لَهُ! يَا غِيَاثِي عِنْدَ كُرْبَتِي!

(Dua-e-Jawshan-e-Kabeer, 11, 14, 28, parts)

Of course the true and rightful shelter and succour is Allah, Himself at a fundamental level. However, as is the case with other divine traits, His Appointees (i.e. Prophets and Imams) are the perfect manifestation and the en complete reflection of divine shelter and succour. Consequently, we see even the infallibles (a.s.) being addressed with the title of us orbis

E.g. in the Ziarat of Ameerul Mo'mineen (a.s.) on 17th Rabbiul Awwal, which is narrated by Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.), we address Imam (a.s.):

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا غِيَاثَ الْمَكْرُوبِينَ.

'Salutations upon you, O shelter of the aggrieved and distressed.'

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(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 100, pg. 375, Mafatihul Jinaan (Urdu translation), pg. 537

This is the Ziarat that Imam (a.s.) instructed his trusted companion - Muhammad b. Muslim (r.a.).

This trait has also been associated with Imam Husain (a.s.). While forecasting the tribulations of his family after Karbala, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed,

وَأَمَّا الْحُسَيْنُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي وَهُوَ ابْنِي وَوَلَدِي..... وَغِيَاثُ الْمُسْتَغِيثِينَ.

'As for Husain (a.s.), surely he is from me and he is my son and my offspring...and the shelter of the distressed.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 28, pg. 39, Amaali-e-Sadooq, pg. 101 (Assembly 24)

Likewise, these titles have also been employed while addressing other Imams (a.s.). Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) while enumerating the personality of his beloved grandson - Imam Reza (a.s.) declares :

”يُخْرِجُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ غَوْثَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَغِيَاثَهَا.

'Allah shall manifest the saviour and shelter of this nation through my son (Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.)).'

(Uyoon-e-Akhbaar-e-Reza (a.s.))

In the Ziarat of Imam Jawad (a.s.) we come across this title:

السَّلَامُ عَلَى غَوْثِ اللَّهْفَانِ.

Salutations be upon the shelter and succour of the distressed.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 53)

Similarly, Imam Mahdi's (a.t.f.s.) most esteemed forefather - the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has described him (a.t.f.s.) with such titles. Our religious responsibility is that in all our problems, be it major or minor, social or personal, religious or worldly, we implore only Imam (a.t.f.s.) for succour and reject all other imposters like the Sufi mystics and sages who have no divine mandate and authority and are the biggest shams, to put it mildly. If with such a benevolent and divinely guided Imam at our disposal, we still knock at the door of others, we have rejected Imamat and its precepts.

Often we wonder how to beseech Imam (a.t.f.s.) for help as we are not well-versed with the etiquette.

First:

The most important criterion is pure intention (niyyat). If we beseech Imam (a.t.f.s.) with sincerity from the depth of our hearts, then it does not matter in what language we call out to him. He shall most certainly heed our plaint.

Second:

Our beloved Imams (a.s.) have themselves trained us in this regard in their supplications and Ziaraat. Keeping in mind brevity, we have outlined a few lines that the respected readers can memorize while beseeching Imam (a.t.f.s.):

يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ أَعْتَنِي يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ أَدْرِكْنِي.
يَا مُحَمَّدُ يَا عَلِيُّ يَا فَاطِمَةُ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ أَدْرِكْنِي وَلَا تُهْلِكْنِي.
يَا أَبَا الْقَاسِمِ أَعْتَنِي يَا أَبَا صَالِحِ الْمُهَدِيِّ أَدْرِكْنِي أَدْرِكْنِي وَلَا تَدَعْنِي فَاتِي دَلِيلٌ عَاجِزٌ.
يَا مَوْعُودُ الْمُنتَظَرِ أَنْظِرْ إِلَى الْمُحْتَصِرِ.
الْمُسْتَعَاثُ بِكَ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ.

Third:

There is no definite time or any numerical limit prescribed to seek succour from Imam (a.t.f.s.). Whenever one is spiritually inclined towards imploring Imam (a.t.f.s.), one can do so with the sentences mentioned earlier, without any hesitation whatsoever. No time should be considered unsuitable for this meritorious act - be it day, night, noon, dawn, dusk.

14. وَالرَّحْمَةَ الْوَاسِعَةَ.

(Salutations be upon you)... O the encompassing mercy.

A cursory glance over the Quranic verses reveals that this term *رحمة*, is employed exclusively for Allah to the exception of all others.

فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ.

'...then say: Your Lord is the Lord of All-encompassing mercy'

(Sura Anaam : Verse 147)

In the recommended supplications (Ta'qeebaat) recited after Namaz-e-Asr, we beseech Allah with the supplication narrated by Janabe Zahra (s.a.):

اللَّهُمَّ ذَا الرَّحْمَةِ الْوَاسِعَةِ

In Dua-e-Kumail, the opening lines highlight Allah's 'All-encompassing mercy'

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ الَّتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ.

'O Allah! Surely I beseech you with Your Mercy that encompasses everything.'

Apart from Allah, this manner of addressing (i.e. 'All-encompassing mercy') has been used only for Imam (a.t.f.s.) in supplications.

In the Quran, Allah declares:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ.

'And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.'

(Surah Ambiya : Verse 107)

And these very words have been reiterated in the case of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) in the renowned tradition of the Green Tablet (Hadis-e-Lauh):

وَأَكْمَلُ ذَالِكَ بِإِنِّمِ م-ح-م-د رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ.

'I (Allah) shall complete the chain of Imamate through his son (i.e. son of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.)) MHMD - a mercy for the worlds.'

Imam (a.t.f.s.) is referred to as the All-encompassing mercy because with his advent there shall not remain a soul on this earth, but he will have embraced Islam. Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) elaborates, 'After Imam's (a.t.f.s.) advent, the Meccans shall slay both representatives appointed by Imam (a.t.f.s.) in Mecca. Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall dispatch his army for the third time with the explicit command - Don't spare anyone but ensure that he embraces Islam. This is because Allah's All-Encompassing Mercy includes everything and I am that All-encompassing mercy. Certainly I would also have preferred to turn towards them along with you so that no excuse remains between Allah and them and between them and me.'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 53, pg. 11)

The above tradition underlines how Imam (a.t.f.s.) has introduced himself in the light of Allah's All-encompassing mercy and has also indicated the reason for the same.

15. وَعَدَا غَيْرِ مَكْدُوبٍ

We shall not dwell on the details of this po line as we have already dealt with it before while elaborating on

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي ضَمِنَهُ

Our earlier discussion on this topic should suffice.

After this part of Ziarate Ale Yasin, we proceed towards the 8 salutations that are linked to each other through the word **حِينَ**. **حِينَ** in Arabic indicates time - i.e. it is the English equivalent of 'while' or 'when'. When we address Imam (a.t.f.s.) with these salutations we are referring to the actions that he performs at different points of time in his life.

16. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ

17. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقْعُدُ

'Salutations be upon you when you stand.'

Salutations be upon you when you are seated.'

(A point worth noting in these 2 and the other 6 sentences is that all the verbs are in the present tense)

تَقُومُ means 'to stand' and **تَقْعُدُ** means 'to sit'. It is quite possible that these words have been employed metaphorically. A case in point is the famous prophetic tradition

الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ إِمَامَانِ قَامَا أَوْ قَعَدَا.

'Hasan and Husain are the two Imams, regardless of whether they are standing or sitting.'

(Elalush Sharaa'e, pg. 211, chapter 159)

Over here standing indicates to rise or revolt in order to claim one's rights. Sitting indicates to negotiate peace in line with the circumstances and demands of the situation and concede one's rights. Peace is resorted to when a war would go against the largers

Interests of the Muslims. In light of the above interpretation, we can translate this statement thus:

'Salutations be upon you O Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) when you rise (to claim your rights) after your reappearance and salutations be upon you when you are seated patiently behind the curtain of occultation beseeching Allah to hasten your reappearance.'

18. **اَسَلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِيْنَ تَقْرَأُ وَ تَبَيِّنُ.**

'Salutations be upon you when you recite (the Holy Quran) and elucidate its interpretation.'

According to the rules of Arabic language, **قَرَأَ يَقْرَأُ** is a transitive verb (**فِعْلٌ مُتَعَدٍ**). In other words, when we say that Imam (a.t.f.s.) is reciting, the question that comes to mind is 'what is he reciting?' By and large Shia scholars have taken the Holy Quran as the subject matter of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) recitation. However, this is just one possibility. It is equally possible that Imam (a.t.f.s.) is reciting the Jaameah (**كِتَابُ جَامِعِهِ**) of his grandfather - Ameerul Mo'mineen (a.s.) and it is also possible that Imam (a.t.f.s.) is reading the Mushaf (**مِصْحَفٍ**) of his grandmother - Janabe Zahra and it is quite likely that he (a.t.f.s.) is (**كِتَابُ جَعْفَرٍ**) also browsing through the Jafr

So in light of this, we can say -

'Salutations be upon you, o Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) when you are reciting the Book and when you are elucidating its verses.'

Another point that demands some elaboration is - to whom is Imam (a.t.f.s.) reciting the elucidation and interpretation of Quranic verses. Who are those fortunate people who sit along with Imam (a.t.f.s.) and listen to the interpretation of the Quran directly from Imam (a.t.f.s.)?

The illustrious scholar - Marhoom b. Abi Zainab Muhammad b. Ibrahim Nomani has recorded a tradition from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in his book - Ghaibat' which serves to answer the above question to some extent:

لَا بُدَّ لِصَاحِبِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ مِنْ غَيْبَةٍ وَلَا بُدَّ لَهُ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ مِنْ عُرْلَةٍ وَ نِعْمَ الْمَنْزِلُ طَيِّبُهُ وَ مَا بِنَاتِلَيْنِ مِنْ وَحْشَةٍ.

(Ghaibat-e-Nomani, pg 188, Usul-e-Kafi, vol. 1, pg. 340, Beharul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 153)

'Occultation is necessary for the Master of this affair (Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)). And in occultation his separation (from the people) is also necessary. What a wonderful place is Medina? He will be accompanied by 30 people who will serve to ward off loneliness and fear from him.' (These 30 companions are special and privileged. They spend every moment of their lives in the glorious presence of Imam (a.t.f.s.)) It is possible that in this era of occultation Imam (a.t.f.s.) arranges for a class or an assembly of these companions and instructs them with lofty religious concepts on a regular basis.

Just thinking of this fantastic spectacle of Imam (a.t.f.s.) training these students is sufficient to bring tears to our eyes. Our hearts are captivated with this image and we are gripped with the desire to be a part of this assembly and class that is a direct beneficiary of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) boundless knowledge and sits face to face with him. Our stark ignorance in Imam's (a.t.f.s.) occultation becomes even more evident to us. We are reminded of that statement of Imam Husain (a.s.) in Dua-e-Arafah:

أَنَا الْجَاهِلُ فِي عِلْمِي فَكَيْفَ لَا أَكُونُ جُهُولًا فِي جَهْلِي؟

'When I am so ignorant in my knowledge, then how ignorant am I in my ignorance!?'

(Beharul Anwaar, vol. 98, pg. 225, Mafatihul Jinaan - Amaal-e-Rauz-e-Arafah, Dua-e-Imam-e-Husain (a.s.))

O my master, when a student is driven out of his classroom or is not permitted to enter it for some reason, one can only imagine his plight. He is overwhelmed with anguish at being kept away from guidance and training, which have become the objective of his life. O my master, we are restless at being kept away from your class. We are awaiting that day when you shall invite us to your class. O Allah! Hasten the reappearance of Imam (a.t.f.s.) and grant us the good fortune of attending Imam's (a.t.f.s.) class. In this way, even we shall be able to benefit from Imam's (a.t.f.s.) brilliance.

19. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُصَلِّي وَ تَقُتُّ

'Salutations be upon you when you perform Namaz and recite the Qunoot (of Namaz).'

In Arabic literature, Salaat means to glorify Allah (tasbih) and recite supplication (dua). Over here it refers to the obligation of namaz imposed on the Muslim by the Islamic Shariat. Likewise, Qunoot in Arabic literally means obedience to and humility in front of Allah. Here, it refers to the act of performing Qunoot in namaz.

In the Ziarat, we send salutations on Imam (a.t.f.s.) when he is engaged in namaz and when he recites the Qunoot. Indeed, there is no way for us to determine the sincerity and intensity with which Imam (a.t.f.s.) performs these actions as Imam's (a.t.f.s.) piety and devoutness are beyond our fragile imaginations. All we can say is that Imam (a.t.f.s.) is the son of Ameerul Mo'mineen (a.s.), whose worship and humility is without parallel. It follows naturally that Imam's (a.t.f.s.) worship is also with utmost sincerity and humility and in line with divine ; satisfaction.

We eagerly await the day when we sha!! o be able to witness this namaz and Qunoot te performed with the highest level of servitude.

Not only we, but Prophet Esa (a.s.) is waiting in anticipation for the day when he shall have the honour and distinction of praying namaz and Qunoot behind Imam (a.t.f.s.).

The renowned Ahle Sunnah traditionalist, 3 Muttaqi Hindi, records a tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), 'On his reappearance, Mahdi shall advance towards? Hazrat Esa (a.s.) and request him to undertake) the responsibility of leading the congregational prayers. Hazrat Esa (a.s.) will humbly reply, 'The congregational prayers have been established for you to lead.'

(Al Burhaan fi alamaate Mahdi AkhirizZaman, pg. 160)

This verse of the Holy Quran deserves attention:

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَ يُكَشِفُ السُّوءَ.

(Surah Naml : Verse 62)

'Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil...

Under the exegesis of this verse, Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) relates, 'This verse has been revealed in honour of the Qaim of Ale Muhammad (a.t.f.s.). By Allah! He (a.t.f.s.) is the 'distressed one' in this verse. When he will recite two rakat namaz behind Maqam-e-Ibrahim and supplicate to Allah, Allah will answer his prayers and deliver him from the difficulties and appoint him as the Caliph on the earth.

(Tafsir-e-Ali b. Ibrahim, vol. 2, pg. 129)

This is the prayer of a helpless soul, on reciting which Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall be ordered to rise. The command shall be issued in this manner, 'O Allah's slave, rise and seek vengeance against Allah's enemies.'

As far as Imam's (a.t.f.s.) Qunoot is concerned, there are several supplications that are associated with Imam (a.t.f.s.). Interested readers can refer to some of these books viz. Muhajjud Daawaat pg 67, Al-Baladul Ameen 569 and Beharul Anwaar vol. 85, pg. 233...