

**Belief in
Hazrat Imam
Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)**

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Index

Introduction	8
Status of Imamat.....	9
Status of Imamat in the Holy Quran	11
(a) The system of Creation and (b) The System of Command	11
The Intention of Imams (a.s.) in the Commands of Guidance	12
The Origin of Patience	13
Perfect Patience	13
The Ideal Worshipper	15
Patience of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.).....	17
Denial of Mahdi is Blasphemy.....	20
Quran and Belief in Imam Mahdi (a.s.).....	21
Eulogy to the Imam in light of Narrations.....	23
Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) – The Twelfth Imam.....	27
Principle of Deliverance	29
The Twelve Successors of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):.....	30
The Prophecy of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)	31
Who is Imam Mahdi?	31
Moment of Contemplation	33
The Classification of The Rightly Guided Caliphs is against the Tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)	34

Suggestion	34
Mahdi – The Saviour of Mankind	36
Majoos and Belief in the Saviour.....	36
Jews and the Saviour	37
Mazmoor 37 (Mazameer of Hazrat Dawood (a.s.)) Sentence 29..	38
Christians and Belief in the Saviour	39
Bible of Matt, Part 24.....	39
The Bible of Luke	39
Distortions by Christians	40
Reply	40
Hinduism and the Saviour	40
The Belief of Chinese and Egyptians.....	41
An Introduction of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and Our Responsibilities	42
His Genealogy.....	42
Some Important Characteristics.....	42
The Conduct of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).....	43
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) – The Heart of the Universe.....	43
The Reason for his Occultation	44
First Examination	44
Second Examination	45
The Manner of Awaiting the Reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)	46
The Meaning of Awaiting	46
Virtues of a Muntazir of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)	47
The Method of Remembering Imam Mahdi (a.s.).....	47
Peace be upon Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)	51

The Pulsating Heart of the Universe	52
The Proof of Allah is the Medium of Grace	53
The Hierarchy of Creatures	55
Proof of Allah is Most Superior	55
Recognizing the Favour and Thankfulness.....	57
Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) in the eyes of Hazrat Ali (a.s.).....	60
Necessity to hold fast unto Imam Mahdi (atfs) in this era	63
Nahj al-Balaagha and Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)	64
Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall revolt against all forms of oppression and tyranny	64
Enlivening the Book and the Practice	67
Tomorrow's Dawn	68
Belief in Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)	71
The Belief in Occultation is not coined by Shias	72
Tradition 1	73
Testimony of Imam Sadiq (a.s.).....	75
Tradition 2: Number of Imams equal to the tribes of Bani Israel .	75
Tradition 3	76
Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall avenge the oppression upon other Imams (a.s.).....	76
Tradition 4	77
Tradition 5	77
Tradition 6	78
Tradition 7: Raj'at of Imam Husain (a.s.) and his companions	78

Tradition 8	79
Tradition 9	81
Tradition 10	81
Tradition 11	82
Various names of the mother of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.).....	82
Tradition 12: Miracle of Imamah in Childhood.....	82
Tradition 13	83
Tradition 14	84
Tradition 15: Some signs of Reappearance	84
Tradition 16	84
Tradition 17	85
Tradition 18	85
Tradition 19	86
Tradition 20	87
Recognition of Divine Proof for Worship of God.....	88
Worship should be as per God's Wish.....	90
Tauheed – along with Prophethood and Imamah	91
Manifestation of Divine Unity in the Imamah of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).....	97
Hazrat Imam Husain (a.s.) and Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.).....	105
Imam Husain (a.s.) in the eyes of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)	105
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in the eyes of Imam Husain (a.s.)	106
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) the avenger of blood of Imam Husain (a.s.) .	107
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in the words of Imam Husain's (a.s.).....	108
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.)	109

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the Day of Ashura	110
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and his yearning to help Imam Husain (a.s.)	111
The Day of Ashura and the Day of Reappearance	111
Imam Mahdi's (a.s.) first speech	112
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the avenging of the killing of Imam Husain (a.s.)	113
Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the Completion of Imam Husain's (a.s.) Journey.....	114
The Helpers of Imam Husain (a.s.) are helpers of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)	115
The Birthday of Imam Husain (a.s.) and Remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)	116
The Birthday of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and Remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.).....	117
Shab-e-Qadr and the Remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.).....	117
The supplication of Nudbah and Remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.)	118
Ziyarat-e-Ashura and Remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)...	119
The Day of Ashurah & the Remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)	120
Imam Husain (a.s.) and Raj'at (The Return)	121

Introduction

This book is a compilation of articles published by Association of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in their magazine Al Qaem Al Muntazar.

Special issues are published in the months of Moharram and Shabaan by Association of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). The Moharram issue is based on understanding Karbala and the incidents of the martyrdom and the detaining of Imam Husain (a.s.) and his companions. While the Shabaan issue illustrates about the Imamate of Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and topics related to him.

A few articles from issues between 1409 AH and 1431 AH have been selected and have been compiled in this book after minor editing and research with the hope of it being accepted by Allah.

Status of Imamah

Imamah is a matter of great importance and it is significant from the aspect that it is the only and most reliable source to reach Allah. True recognition of Allah and His worship can only be achieved through (the belief) Imamah. If anyone takes a route other than this to worship Allah he'll never be successful in his endeavour.

Imamah has been described in Ziyaarat-e-Jameah Kabirah in the following words:

بِجِيٍّ أَتَمُّ أُمَّيْ وَنَفْسِي وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي مَنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهَ بَدَأَ بِكُمْ وَمَنْ وَابَّاهُ فَقَلَّ
عَنْكُمْ مَنْ قَصَدَهُ تَوَهَّاهُ بِكُمْ

“May my father, mother, I, my family and my wealth be your ransom. The one who desired (to reach) Allah began with you. The one who has acknowledged His Unity has acquired (his belief in) Tauheed from you. The one who loves Allah turns towards you”¹

In this same Ziyaarat, it is mentioned at another place:

مَنْ أَتَىٰكُمْ نَجَّوْكُمْ مِنْ لَمَّا كَمَّلَكَ إِلَى اللَّهِ عُونَ وَتَلِيهِ تَلَوْنَ

“The one who comes to you has received salvation and the one who forsakes you is ruined. You invite (the people) towards Allah and indicate towards Him.”²

When we ponder over these phrases of Ziyaarat-e-Jameah Kabirah, it becomes clear that it is only the infallible Ahle Bait

¹ Mafaatih al-Jinaan

² Mafaatih al-Jinaan

(a.s.) who can lead us to Allah, help us in acknowledging His Tauheed, worshipping Him. And why shouldn't it be like this? These are the personalities who invite the people towards Allah and indicate towards His Oneness since Allah has created man solely for His worship.

Allah says in the Quran:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“I have not created man and the jinn except that they should worship Me.”¹

If man wants to realize the aim of his creation, then he should worship Allah. For worshipping Allah as He ought to be worshipped, it necessary that he comes to the doorstep of the infallible Ahle Bait (a.s.).

In the light of the phrases of Ziyaarat-e-Jameah let us also cast a glance at the phrases of Dua-e-Nudbah:

أَيْنَ بَابُ اللَّهِ أَيُّهُ يُوْفَىٰ لَنْ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ أَيُّهُ يَتَوَلَّاهُ الْأَوْلِيَاءُ أَيْنَ السَّبِيلُ الْمُهْتَدِ بِهَا بَيْنَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءِ

“Where is that gate of Allah through which all should enter? Where is the countenance of Allah through which all should enter? Where is the means which stretches from the earth to the sky?”

The Imam (a.s.) of the time is the means for reaching Allah. It is only through the Imam that Allah's Tauheed and Oneness can be acknowledged. It is through this Proof of Allah that one can reach Allah. In this era, Hazrat Hujjat bin Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.) is the 'Proof' (Hujjat) of Allah and the Imam of the time.

Allah's recognition and worship i.e. establishing a divine connection based on knowledge and actions are facilitated through the belief in Imamat.

¹ Surah Zaariyaat (51): 56

Status of Imamat in the Holy Quran

Allah, the Almighty has alluded to this fact in the following verse of the Holy Quran:

وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمُ الْيَمِينَاتِ لِيُذَكَّرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَأَن يُصَلُّوا

“And We made of them Imams to guide by Our command when they were patient...”¹

This brief verse highlights four crucial points:

1. **جَعَلْنَا** ‘We made Imams.’ This shows that the right of appointing an Imam rests exclusively with Allah and no one else. This is a matter of appointment of an Imam for the entire creation and not a matter of appointing some ‘Imam’ (leader) for congregational prayers in a local mosque.
2. **لَهُمُ** (of them) Allah has appointed only a few people for this crucial position. This shows that each and every person is not eligible for this rank. Allah sees the qualities and abilities and only then does He bestow this honor.
3. **لِيُذَكَّرُوا** to guide by Our command.’ There are two types of systems prevalent in the universe viz.

(a) The system of Creation and (b) The System of Command

- (a) The system of creation is that system wherein the things come into existence through the normal process of “cause and effect”. For instance the foetus gradually (after passing through various stages) is converted into a human being. A seed after undergoing through the normal processes finally becomes a tree.
- (b) The system of command is superior to the system of

¹ Surah Sajdah (32): 24

creation. Things don't move through the normal process. Nor is time and space a pre-condition for the actualization of the outcome. Here only the intention of 'Be' is sufficient. As Allah says in the Quran:

﴿إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْءًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

“His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it, ‘Be’ and it becomes.”¹

This means that the mere intention of a thing is sufficient to bring about its existence. There is neither a need for any cause or purpose nor are there any restrictions of time and place.

The Intention of Imams (a.s.) in the Commands of Guidance

The Imams (a.s.) guide as per the command of Allah. If someone is to be guided then a mere intention by the Imam of the time is sufficient to guide that person. Just like Janabe Zohair bin Qain (r.a.) was guided by Imam Husain (a.s.). In a brief meeting of a just a few moments, Imam (a.s.) changed Zohair bin Qain (r.a.) completely. But To be included in this form of guidance, it is necessary that a person positions himself in that place and position where the winds of guidance are blowing. Shortcomings are from our side. The earth should make itself fertile enough to soak the pure drops of rain and prepare a garden. Today this guidance is present for us in the form of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.). The only precondition is that we should derive benefit from him.

4. **لَمَّا صَبَرُوا** ‘when they were patient’. This particular phrase shows why this distinction of Imamat was granted to them. It is truly a miracle of Quran to explain the exalted status of Imamat in a few words. An ocean has been encapsulated in

¹ Surah Ya Seen (36): 82

a small cup. Through the phrase ‘when they were patient’, the Quran has defined the foundation of Imamat and elucidated the responsibility of Imamat through the phrase ‘to guide by Our command.’

The Origin of Patience

Patience is of three types viz. patience at the time of committing sins, patience during calamities and patience on one’s desires. Patience begins with minimal speech, controlling one’s tongue, refraining oneself from loose and vain talks and speaking only about what it is necessary. This is the very first stage of patience and it has its own effects. There is a lot of emphasis on silence in spiritual training. Along with the tongue it is also essential to keep one’s eyes in control. The ‘Self’ of a person employs these two faculties in a lot of futile things.

Perfect Patience

A person should gradually prepare himself to be patient on the bounties of this world. The heart should not be attached to any worldly comfort, nor should it find a place in it. No form of lust or greed should be allowed to enter the heart.

We find in Dua-e-Nudbah:

بَعْدَ أَنْ شَرَطْتَ ۞ لِيَسْمِعُ الْوَعْدَ فِي دَرَجَاتِ هَذِهِ ۞ نِيَا ۞ لِيُؤْزِرَ خُرْفَهَا وَزُرَّ ۞
فَشَرَطُوا لَكَ ذَلِكَ ۞ وَلَمَّا تَمَّ لِيَهُمُ الْوَقَاءُ بِهَا ۞ فَكَلَّمْتَهُمْ وَوَعَدْتَهُمْ ۞ وَفَلَّمْتَهُمْ لِيَهُمُ الْاِكْرَامُ
الْعَلَى ۞ ...

“After You took promise from them to renounce all stages of this despicable world and its superficial attractions and allurements. Then they accepted the promise. And You did know their fulfillment towards it (promise). So, You accepted them. And brought them

near to Yourself and accorded for them the exalted remembrance...”

To remain patient on the bounties of this world is just one of the stages. There are many more stages after this. Another form of patience is to exercise complete restraint and have control on our thoughts. The stage after the world is that of ‘Barzakh’. This particular stage is more arduous than being patient upon the bounties of the world. Man can turn his face away from the luxuries of this world. But his thoughts should also be in his control. He should have such command and influence upon his ‘Self’ that no thought should be able to enter his mind without his consent. This is really very difficult. It is not a matter of a few minutes, hours, days or years. Just try to keep yourself focused on one particular point for a few moments — taking care that you are not distracted by any other thought — you will quickly realize the difficulty of this task. When it is difficult to concentrate for such a small duration then keeping one’s mind free from distractions and diversions lifelong is that stage of patience which is far higher than being patient on calamities. Here, the intellect becomes helpless.

Imam Husain (a.s.), even when surrounded by grief and calamities says بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَبِإِيَّاهِ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ‘In the name of Allah, by (the strength and support of) Allah and for the sake of Allah.’ When he was severely afflicted with wounds, when he fell from his horse to the ground and when he smeared his face with his own blood, then too, he kept saying بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَبِإِيَّاهِ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ‘In the name of Allah, by (the strength and support of) Allah and for the sake of Allah.’ Even at such a time, no other thought could distract Imam Husain (a.s.) from remembering Allah.

أَمْ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ

“Allah knows best where He places His message.”¹

Beyond this world is the Hereafter. Nothing of the Hereafter should bias a person, neither the unlimited bounties of Paradise nor the acute chastisement of Hell and not even the stages of Mahshar.

Ameerul Momineen Imam Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) has expressed this in a very eloquent manner:

إِنِّي قَوْمًا عَبَدُوا اللَّهَ رَغْبَةً إِنَّكَ عِبَادَةُ التَّجَارِ وَالْإِنِّي قَوْمًا عَبَدُوا اللَّهَ رَهْبَةً
 إِنَّكَ عِبَادَةُ الْعَبِيدِ وَالْإِنِّي قَوْمًا عَبَدُوا اللَّهَ كَرًّا إِنَّكَ عِبَادَةُ الْأَحْرَارِ

‘Surely, there are people who worship Allah for the sake of rewards. This is the worship of traders. While some worship Allah due to the fear of being punished. This is the worship of slaves. Yet others worship Allah out of gratitude for His bounties. This is the worship of free men.’²

One should have such control on one’s ‘Self’ that while worshipping Allah he should neither think of the bounties of Paradise, nor about the punishments of Hell. It is extremely difficult to reach to this stage of patience. And this stage too demands a remarkable amount of restraint on the ‘Self’.

The Ideal Worshipper

Allah’s worship is solely for Him. Nothing can be associated with Allah in His worship. It means that the sole aim of our worship is to achieve Allah’s satisfaction, not this world or Barzakh nor the Hereafter. It is obvious that the one who has submitted himself to Allah’s love and whose excellence lies in

¹ Surah An’aam (6): 124

² Nahj al-Balaagha, Tradition 237

Allah's worship, to him nothing else matters. All other things are lowly and worthless in his eyes. Everything is subservient and obedient to His wishes and orders. It is found in Ziyaarat-e-Jameah wherein it is said **وَدَلَّ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ لَكُمْ** 'Everything is lowly and subservient to you.' Our Imam is not only an Imam for humans on this earth rather he is the Imam of the entire universe. It is, therefore, because of the presence of Imam (a.s.) that rain descends on the earth, the heaven and the earth are secure in their respective places and our difficulties are repelled.

When a person reaches to this perfect level of worship then he becomes a symbol of divine attributes. Many a times those who are ignorant of the reality, unaware of facts and not well versed with the teachings of Ahle Bait (a.s.), start considering this emblem of divine characteristics as God Himself! This perfect worshipper – by the permission of Allah – governs the entire universe, provides sustenance to each and every individual and arranges for all other essentials of life so that everyone is able to reach to their goal of perfection. It is for this reason that it is mentioned for Imam Asr (a.t.f.s.)

بِعَاقِبَتِهِمْ إِنَّا وَإِيْمَانُ نَزَقَ الْوَرَىٰ وَيُؤْجُودِهِ بِتِلْكَ الْأَرْضُ وَالسَّمَاءُ

'It is due to his existence that the world is surviving in its place and it is due to his benevolence that everyone acquires sustenance.'

No doubt that Allah is the One Who is the giver of life. However, He grants it through Imam Asr (a.t.f.s.). Allah is the giver of sustenance but it is through Imam Asr (a.t.f.s.). All the bounties through which the universe is benefitting today are due to Hazrat Hujjat b. Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.). Now, when all favors that we receive from Allah are through Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) then all our worship and supplications towards Allah will be worthy of acceptance if they are acceptable near Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). Keeping in mind the endless benefits that we receive from Imam-

e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) we are obliged to confess with a sense of remorse that:

‘O Vali-e-Asr! We have received benevolence from you since the time of our coming into this world. We are living our lives even today by your grace and are acquiring Allah’s bounties due to your benevolence. It is due to your venerable presence that both our body and soul are being nourished. It is only because of you that Allah’s kindness reaches us. Yet when we look at our actions and within ourselves, it becomes apparent to us that we have still not been able to acquire your true recognition. We have not recognized your true value nor have we been able to fulfill any of your rights. We have contributed so much to your suffering that we shudder to think how Allah will take our account. We benefitted from you every moment but have not done anything for you. We have acquired fame and status through your name but have not done anything to glorify your name. We have received our sustenance due to your grace but have not spent anything in your way. We have exploited you in all walks of our life for our personal gains but have failed to endure any form of adversity for your sake. O Yusuf-e-Zahra! We are ashamed of ourselves in front of you just like the brothers of Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.). We confess that we have oppressed and wronged you and we seek forgiveness from you for our actions.

Patience of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)

In light of the latest research, it has been firmly established that access to past events is easily available. Our reach is so limited that we are unable to comprehend those realities. However, there are some events which are very heart rending. It is beyond the capacity of ordinary humans to endure them. But the entire event of Karbala is in front of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.),

including all those events that are unbearable for a normal human being. Like the dress of Imam Husain (a.s.) drenched in his blood is present right in front of Imam-e-Zamana's (a.t.f.s.) eyes while fresh blood is continuously dripping from it. This will continue till the reappearance of Imam (a.t.f.s.).

Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) has to witness all these calamities every day and then be patient upon them. Imagine the witnessing of those calamities, the listening of which is unbearable for us. Indeed what must be the level of Imam's patience and forbearance? Apart from the tribulations of Karbala, Imam also witnesses the calamities that befell Janabe Zahra (s.a.) and Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), Imam Hasan (a.s.) and every Imam till his father Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.). All persecution that was meted out to his friends, lovers and Shias are also in front of his eyes. He sees them, but is extremely patient and forbearing. In spite of having the authority, he has to accept Allah's command, remain in occultation and be patient.

If someone reflects carefully on all this, the troubled and distressed state of Imam (a.t.f.s.) will be clear for him. He will also realize the significance of praying for his early reappearance. Preparing the ground for his reappearance, bringing the people closer to him and making them eager and restless for his presence are some of our prime religious responsibilities. Lapses and laziness on our part should not become the cause of increase in his pain and suffering. Otherwise we will lose face in front of our Imam and have no answers in front of Allah.

We hope that by pondering on this discussion the readers may have comprehended the significance of the phrase **لَمَّا صَبَرُوا** 'when they were patient' of the verse.

Come let us all present ourselves in front of Allah through Imam (a.s.) and pray to Him that He should forgive our shortcomings. And for seeking the revenge of the afflictions

heaped on Janabe Zahra (s.a.), let us beseech and pray for the earliest reappearance of Yusuf-e-Zahra (a.t.f.s.).

Denial of Mahdi is Blasphemy

Fourteen hundred years ago, the part of the globe known as Arabia was the cradle of ignorance and its inhabitants were in a state of illiteracy. The gloom of unawareness was illuminated with the advent of Islam brought by Holy Prophet Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) and the darkness of ignorance was alleviated by the light of knowledge. Gradually, the people embraced Islam and benefited from its light except a few who had veiled their intellect with curtains of partisanship and hatred. They refused to acknowledge the Messengership of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and refuted his book. These were the apostates. The person who rejects the Prophet and his book or refuses to follow his dictates, is certainly termed a heretic. The same is said for a person who denies one from the necessities of religion even though he is a Muslim by name. For instance, the belief of finality of prophethood, i.e. if a person does not have belief in the finality of the messengership of the holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) or does not believe in the tenet of Qiyamat, he will then become an apostate. This fact has the unanimous consensus of all Muslims. The finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is found in both the narrations and the Noble Quran. The Quran states:

مَلَاكِنَ مُنْجِلِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ الَّذِينَ مِنْ رَجُلٍ كَذَبُوا لَكَ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَنْزِلِ بِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَآتَمُّوا إِلَيْكَ وَاللَّهُ وَآلِهِ وَالنَّبِيُّونَ

“Mohammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the prophets.”¹

The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) adds:

لَيَكُونُ فِي أُمَّتِي كَلْبُونَ لَا تُؤْنَكَلُهُمْ، إِلَّا عَمَّ نَبِيٌّ وَأَنَا وَأَتَمُّ الْعَالَمِينَ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي

“There will soon be thirty pseudo prophets in my nation whereas I am the seal of the messengers and there is no prophet after me.”¹

Quran and Belief in Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

1.

وَأِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا

“And most surely it is knowledge of the hour, therefore have no doubt about it.”²

The famous scholars of the Ahle Sunnat comment on the verse thus:

This verse has been revealed with regards to Mahdi (a.s.).³

2.

بَقِيَّةُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“What remains with Allah is better for you if you are believers.”⁴

Shablanji Shaafei’ says that when Mahdi (a.s.) reappears, he will stand leaning back on the wall of the Holy Ka’ba and when the

¹ Abu Dawood, Kitabul Fitan

² Surah Zukhruf (43): 61

³ Al-Bayaan fi Akhbaar al-Saheb al-Zamaan by Hafiz Ganji Shafei’, p.109; As’aaf al-Raagibeen by Ibn Sabbaagh al-Maliki, p.156; Al-Sawaaeq al-Muhreqah by Ibn Hajar Haithami, p.96; Tafseer al-Durr al-Mansoor by Haafiz Jalaal al-Deen al-Suyuti, vol. 6, p. 21; Noor al-Absaar by Shablanji, p.153; Yanabi al-Mawaddah by Hafiz Sulaiman Qunduzi, p.470.

⁴ Surah Hud (11): 86

313 companions gather around him, he will recite this verse and then declare **أَنَا بَقِيَّةُ اللَّهِ** (I am the remaining Hujjat of Allah). Everyone will address him as **اللَّهُ يَا بَقِيَّةَ اللَّهِ** and greet him.¹

3.

قَالَ فَاتَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ

“Till the period of the time made known.”²

Shaafe'i scholar Ibrahim Hamvini comments on this verse that Hasan Ibn Khalid questioned Imam Ali Ibn Musa Reza (a.s.): What does **الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ** mean? Imam (a.s.) explained: This is the day of the advent of our Qaem (a.t.f.s.).³

4.

**وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ**

“And We desired to bestow a favor upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the Imams, and to make them the heirs.”⁴

Ibn Abil Hadeed Motazeli has written in his book concerning the above verse that it refers to Imam Mahdi (a.s.).⁵

There are many such verses in the Holy Quran. The aforementioned verse proves that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) has been talked about in the Holy Quran as well. All the Shia and Sunni traditionalists and explicators of Quran have openly supported this view.

¹ Noor al-Absaar, p.172; Ibn Sabbaagh al-Maliki, Fusul al-Muhimmah, chapter 12

² Surah Hijr (15): Verse 38

³ Faraed al-Simatain, vol.2 (in context of the verse)

⁴ Surah Qasas (28): 5

⁵ Sharh Ibn Abil Hadeed, vol. 4, p. 336

Eulogy to the Imam in light of Narrations

Hadith-e-Nabawi are those words of guidance which have been spoken by the Messenger of God (s.a.w.a.) and have been recorded in the books of traditions. The Almighty has introduced the Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

1.

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ

“Whoever obeys the Apostle, he indeed obeys Allah.”¹

2.

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

“And whatever the Apostle gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back.”²

3.

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ، إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

“Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed.”³

These three verses prove that:

1. One who obeys the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) obeys Allah and one who refutes him denies Allah.
2. Accept whatever the Prophet of God (s.a.w.a.) gives.
3. The speech of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) is God’s revelation.

Now let us see what the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the recipient of the honor of these verses opines about the Imam of the Time

¹ Surah Nisa (4): 80

² Surah Hashr (56): 7

³ Surah Najm (53): 3-4

(a.s.):

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِمَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِالْمَهْدِيِّ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِمَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ

“One who denies the advent of Mahdi has indeed disbelieved in what has been revealed upon Mohammad (s.a.w.a.)”¹

Does any iota of doubt remain, after this narration along with these authentic sources? The tradition, in no uncertain terms, declares the apostasy of the one who denies Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.). Does there remain any scope of argument for the rejection of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) to those who raise the slogan of *اللَّهُ حَسْبُنَا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ* or are traditionalists? Can anyone still deny the one who is *أَظْهَرُ مِنَ الشَّمْسِ*? Does turning a blind eye to the sun make it night? Can the moon be obliterated if a man after seeing it denies its existence? Most certainly not, but people will call such a man blind.

We now repeat our statement that the one who denies the necessities of religion is an unbeliever and in this light we see that the belief in Imam Mahdi (a.s.) has been mentioned in the Quran and the traditions and that which is mentioned in the Quran and narrations is from the requisites of religion and one who denies them is therefore an apostate. But we continue this line of reasoning by adding another dimension to it. The scholars of a multitude of muslim sects have presented their definite views regarding the belief in Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

The Hanafi, Shafaii', Maleki, Hambali, Ash'ari, Mutazeli scholars have pronounced:

All the Islamic sects have decreed that the belief in Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is from the requisites of religion and the one

¹ Lisaan al-Mizaan by Ibne Hajar Askalaani, vol. 5, p. 130; Faraaed al-Simtain by Hamvini, vol. 2; Al-Qaul al-Mukhtasar fi Alaamat al-Mahdi al-Muntazar by Ibne Hajar Makki Shaafei, p. 56

disbelieves in it is an apostate just as the finality of prophethood is from the requisites of religion.

This edict is found the following books:

1. Al-burhan fi Alaem Mahdi (a.s.) Akher az-Zamaan by Muttaqi Hindi, chapter 13
2. Sharh Nahj al-Balagha by Ibn Abil Hadid Mutazeli, Vol. 2, p
3. Muqaddamah by Ibn Khaldun, p.367
4. Sabaak az-Zahab by Suwaidi, p.78
5. Ghaayat al-Ma'mul by Sheikh Ali Naasif, p.362,381
6. Aqeedat Ahle as-Sunnat wa al-Asr fi al-Mahdi al-Muntazar by Abd Muhsin
7. Lisaan al-Mizaan by Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Vol.5, p.130
8. Al-Qaul al-Mukhtasar fi al-Mahdi al-Munatzar by Ibn Hajar Haithami, p.56
9. Faraaed as-Simtain by Hamvini, Vol.2

Have these leaders of the different muslim sects, who have published the edicts in their books, not spoken the truth? These pillars of the faith must have reached their conclusion after due diligence of Quran, narrations and history. Is it not our duty then, that we break the walls of bigotry and perceive the reality with open eyes? Besmirching others on the basis of ignorance is improper:

1. The belief in Imam Mahdi is an Islamic belief since it has been mentioned both in Quran and traditions.
2. The one denies this belief is truly removed from the bounds of faith.
3. The people who deny it the position of a belief do so due to prejudice.

If, there remains someone who still denies this belief, after

the completion of these proofs, should then fear the day of the advent of Imam (a.s.) when the sword of Mahdi (a.s.) shall speak. We cannot then say that we do not know. Or fear maybe the time when men will gather before their Lord.

According to the narration of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the one who dies without recognizing the Imam of his time dies the death of ignorance (unbelief).

And for the day of Judgement, the Quran says:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُ كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ بِرَسُولِهِمْ

“(Remember) the day when We will call every people with their Imam.”¹

It should not come to pass that when people are removed from the rows of Muslims and made to stand in the ranks of the unbelievers, they would complain: my Lord, we are but Muslims. And the answer should resound: And did you recognize the Imam of your Time...?

¹ Surah Bani Israel (17): 71

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) – The Twelfth Imam

Just as some attributes get ascribed to certain personalities or things similarly there are some people who are distinguished and identified with certain qualities or characteristics so much so that they can be easily recognized due to these special characteristics that are associated to their personalities.

These distinguishing characteristics exhibit great wisdom in the creation of this world and are also a cause of sustaining the order in this creation.

مَا يَمِ الْأَشْتِرَاكُ i.e. analogous characteristics are those characteristics due to which a similarity is struck between various individuals. These are general characteristics and are found in many individuals at a given time. For example the characteristic of being a Muslim, one can find numerous people to be having this quality of being Muslim. Likewise the characteristic of talking, this is present in almost every human being. Similar is the characteristic of laughing and we can enumerate countless such examples of مَا يَمِ الْأَشْتِرَاكُ here.

مَا يَمِ الْأَفْتِرَاقُ وَالْإِمْتِيَازُ i.e. unique or distinguishing characteristics are those characteristics that strike a distinction amongst the creation hence if a unique characteristic is present in one individual then it might not be present in another person.

It is a fact that every individual has various characteristics and to remember them all is a tedious task. However if the unique characteristics of individuals are understood and remembered and are considered as distinguishing characteristics in order to recognize that individual then there will never arise a case of

misidentifying that person. For example if we decide to identify someone visually then it is necessary to understand his aura with respect to facial attributes, posture, color, hair, eyebrows, height and built etc. If the identification is through lineage then the description should be of his father, mother, grandfather, great grandfather, great grandmother etc. Likewise if his actions and achievements are to be identified then the description should be about reformative initiatives, warfare and battles, agreements, struggles, historical incidents, dealings and socializing with people. If the identification is for his knowledge then the description should be of his thought, principles and beliefs. Yet if the identification is through his conduct then the description should be about his behavior, bravery, generosity, forgiveness and tolerance, humility and motivation, patience and justice, etc. And if he is a bad person then the opposite of all these characteristics are described for him.

The more these characteristics are enumerated and explained the easier it is to identify this person.

If a person decides to undertake a journey but does not fix for himself a destination and neither does he choose an appropriate medium of journey, then certainly he will not be able to reach any destination and even if he reaches somewhere it will not be his intended destination. Rather if this same person appoints a destination, selects an appropriate medium to reach there and commences his journey then he will certainly reach the end which he set out for.

Similar is the case if man wants to tread the journey whose destination is salvation then he should choose a savior who will save him from the darkness of deviation and lead him to salvation. Now the questions that arise are: Who is this guide for salvation? How is this guide identified? And what are his characteristics?

Principle of Deliverance

Respected readers, the verses of Quran and the Prophetic traditions have presented several rules and principals with the help of which man can recognize the true guides, tread the path of salvation and can be successful and prosperous in the hereafter.

One of the easiest rules from these is to find an infallible leader, follow the path shown by him and perform all our actions as per his instructions so that we are successful in this world and are saved in the hereafter. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has said:

“One who desires to live a life like me and to depart from this world like me, enter that paradise which my Lord has promised me and that is the ‘everlasting’ paradise; then after me he should befriend Ali and his sons who will come in this world after him because they will not let you go astray from the path of deliverance nor will they let you tread the path of deviation.”¹

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلِأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

“Obey the Messenger and those vested with authority among you.”²

From the above order it is clear that obedience of Allah and Ulul Amr are a cause of deliverance but there is a slight problem here. After we have recognized Allah and His Prophet how can we recognize who are the Ulul Amr? Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has resolved this important and difficult issue for us and has introduced some signs for the identification of the Ulul Amr. From

¹ Narrating from the author of Al-Muraaja’at, Kitab al-Kanz, p. 155, H. 2578

² Surah Nisa (4): 59

amongst the various signs one sign of their recognition is that they will be twelve in number. In order to prove our point we bring forth for our readers some traditions and references.

The Twelve Successors of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

Jabir bin Samrah narrates that he came in the presence of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) along with his father and heard the Prophet say the following:

“This affair will not end till the time twelve caliphs do not pass.” The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said something slowly after this which I could not hear, upon enquiring from my father about this he told me that the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, “All will be from the Quraysh” the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) also said, “Islam will remain powerful and mighty till the twelve caliphs pass” and in one tradition the words used are, “religion will remain mighty and dominating and protected” while in another tradition it is said “the religion will remain established till the day of judgment or till the time there are twelve caliphs ruling upon you of which all will be from the Quraysh.”¹

It is worth noting that Sahih Muslim and Sunan Abi Dawood, both these books are included among the Sihah al-Sittah (the 6 most authentic books of traditions according to Ahle Sunnah). The Ahle Sunnah scholars consider these 6 books as the real source and foundation of religion after the Holy Quran. The remaining 4 books are: Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Tirmidhi, Sunan Ibn Maaja and Sunan Nesaai.

¹ Sahih Muslim, printed by Daar al-Furqaan, Jama' Masjid, New Delhi, vol. 2, p. 65; Sahih Muslim, printed by Daar al-Furqaan, Egypt 1348 A.H., vol. 2, p. 191; Sunan Abi Dawood, published by Daar Ihyaa al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah, vol. 4, Kitab al-Mahdi, H. 4279 – 4280; Mo'jam al-Kabeer by Tabarani, p. 108

The Prophecy of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“This affair (religion) will always remain successful and dominating among the people. After me there shall be twelve successors, all of them will be from the Quraysh and will overpower the enemies.”¹

Hafiz Suyuti expired in the year 911 A.H. and he is a known personality among both the Sunnis and the Shias. Among his famous books is Tafseer al-Durr al-Mansoor. Immediately after the above tradition he writes that **اخرجه الشيخان و غيرهما** meaning this tradition has been narrated by Bukhari and Muslim (in their books in different forms) and also by others.

For instance refer to Sahih Bukhari, vol. 9, p. 81. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said: *“There will be twelve leaders after me.”*

Who is Imam Mahdi?

After knowing that there will be twelve successors of Holy prophet (s.a.w.a.) we should also understand that whether Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will be the Prophets (s.a.w.a.) first or second or third or fourth or ...twelfth successor?

Even this point will become clear from the following Prophetic tradition:

عن عبد الله بن عباس ، قال سؤل الله : **لِمَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَمَا مِنْ**
أَبِي طَالِبٍ لِمَ الْوَصِيَّةِ بَيْنَهُ ، وَ الْوَصِيَّةِ بَيْنِي بَعْدِي إِثْنَا عَشَرَ أَهْلَهُمْ عَلَى أَبِي
طَالِبٍ وَأَخْرَهُمُ الْقَائِمُ

Abdullah b. Abbas narrates from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who said: “I am the leaders of the messengers and Ali b. Abi Talib is the

¹ Taareekh al-Khulafa by Hafiz Suyuti, p. 10 printed by Al-Sa'aadah, Egypt

leader of the successors, indeed after me my vicegerent and successors will be twelve in number, first of whom will be Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and last will be Al-Qaem (a.s.).”¹

On the page 226 of this same book it has been narrated on account of Holy prophet (s.a.w.a.):

إِنِّي لَمَقَامُ أَوْصِيَاءِي وَحُجَجِ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْبَشَرِ بَعْدِي اثْنَا عَشَرَ أَقْلَمًا
وَأَخِرُهُمْ وَآخِرِي

From this tradition it becomes further evident:

“My caliphs and my successors and the proof of Allah upon the people will be twelve after me, the first amongst them will be my brother and last my son.” Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was asked, “O Prophet of Allah who is your brother?” He (s.a.w.a.) said: “Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.)” and when asked “who is your son?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied:

الْمَهْدِيُّ الَّذِي يَمَلَأُ بِطَاغُوتِ الْوَقْتِ لَا تَمَلَأُ جَوْرًا إِلَّا لَمَّا

“The Mahdi who will fill this earth with justice and equity as it will be filled with oppression and injustice.”²

Conclusion – The successors of Holy prophet (s.a.w.a.) will be twelve in number, the proofs of Allah after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) will be twelve in number. The twelfth successor will be the last successor and he will be the Mahdi of this nation. The religion of Allah will remain till his reappearance just as the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) as said:

لَا يَزَالُ هَذَا الدِّينُ قَائِمًا حَتَّىٰ الْكُونُ عَلَيْكُمْ اثْنَا عَشَرَ بَيْعَةً

“This religion will always be established till the time there will be twelve successors (of the Prophet) upon

¹ Faraaed al-Simtain by Shaikh al-Islam al-Mohaddis al-Kabeer Ibrahim b. Mohammad b. al-Muwaid al-Hamooi, exp. 732 A.H., vol. 2, p. 227

² Faraaed al-Simtain, vol. 2, p. 226

you.”¹

This characteristic of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) that he is the twelfth successor of the Holy prophet (s.a.w.a.) can be found abundantly in Shia books. In the book Muntakhab al-Athar of Ayatullah Lutfullah Safi al-Gulpaygani there are numerous traditions that indicate to the fact that Imam Mahdi is the twelfth successor of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Names of few chapters from this book indicating to the above fact are as follows:

- 1) Twelfth Imam is the ninth son of Imam Husain (a.s.)
- 2) Fourth son of Imam Reza (a.s.)
- 3) The third generation of Imam Mohammed Taqi (a.s.)
- 4) The delight of the eyes of Hasan Askari (a.s.) the son of Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.)

Moment of Contemplation

When it has been established that the caliphs and Imams will be twelve then we can easily differentiate the correct chain of Imamat from the false ones. That chain which is outside the caliphate of the Quraysh like the Sultans of Turkey or even if they are from the Quraysh but their number does not reach twelve or exceed the mark of twelve, then these chains are not from the one that has been established by Allah because it is not possible for Allah to commit a mistake in prophesizing their numbers or for that matter it is also not possible that the Prophet of Allah prophesizes the number on his own without a revelation from Allah.

When Allah’s committing a mistake or the Prophet narrating without revelation from Allah is considered impossible then what

¹ Sunan Abi Dawood, vol. 4, Kitab al-Mahdi, p. 40, Sunan Abi Dawood, vol. 4, Kitab al-Mahdi, p. 150 Egypt edition

excuse do we have to consider these narrations of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to be incorrect?

The immediate consequence of this fact is to accept that the methods used for the appointment of the successor of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) by the nation, be it in the form of consensus, appointment, council, force or threats of which none account to have twelve successors, can never be termed as the system of governance chosen or appointed by Allah or his Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

The Classification of The Rightly Guided Caliphs is against the Tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

The Muslim nation is to decide whether any of the following systems of governance be it the system of rightly guided caliphs, the caliphate of Bani Abbas, Bani Ummaya, Andaloos, Turkey, Kingdom of Egypt or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, etc. fall true to the criterion described in the Prophetic Tradition? Do any of these chains have twelve caliphs as per the above traditions who shall remain until the Day of Judgment? No Muslim can ever bring a reply to these questions in the following verse:

فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَا لَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ
لَكُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ يَوْمٍ ...

“But if you cannot – and of a surety you cannot – then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, which is prepared for those who disbelieve.”¹

Suggestion

One should accept only that chain of caliphate whose number of caliphs are twelve and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) of Allah has introduced them by their names Na’sal (in some books his name is mentioned as Ma’sal) and Jandal b. Junadah were Jews.

¹ Surah Baqarah (2): 24

After they brought faith in the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) they enquired about his (s.a.w.a.) successors from the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) enumerated each one along with his name, refer Al Muntazar Shaban 1411 A.H. page 25 for traditions bearing this context.

Mahdi – The Saviour of Mankind

Most of the religions of the world, divine or otherwise, have mentioned have mentioned about 'The Saviour '. The scholars of these religions have also discussed and therefore it deserves due attention.

The belief that 'The Saviour' will deliver humanity from the clutches of oppression, tyranny, disbelief and deviation and lead it towards monotheism and justice, is found in most of the religions and their sacred books have also mentioned his characteristics. This proves the innate human nature of the belief in 'The Saviour' and also its wish to see the good end of this world.

We shall hereunder present the views about 'The Saviour' in ancient religions.

Majoos and Belief in the Saviour

The Majoos religion¹ is considered to be one of the ancient religions of the world. It seems that the belief in a Saviour, who at his reappearance will defeat Ahreman and lead this world towards divine light, is among the fundamentals of this religion. In their famous religious book Zanaad, the battle of Ahreman and Yazdaan has been mentioned thus:

"...then Yazdaan shall achieve a huge victory and Ahreman shall be destroyed. After the victory of Yazdaan and the crushing defeat of Ahreman the world shall be at the threshold of real happiness and sons of

¹ Majoos refers to the Parsis who are Fire Worshippers. They worship fire and fire is ever lit in their temples.

Adam shall be seated atop virtue.”

In this excerpt the success of Humanity through Yazdaan has been put forward.

In Jama Sab Nama which in an important book of Majoos by Zardasht, the above incident has been mentioned thus:

“A man shall appear from the land of Arabs, he shall have long hair, a strong body, he shall establish virtues, will turn towards Iran inhabit it and fill the earth with justice and equity.”¹

“We extol pure men and chaste women. We give high regards to pure and sacred powers right from Kyumars to Victorious Sushyant.”

In the same way in the book Furoreen Basht, sentence 128 and 129 the reason for terming the Saviour as Sushyant has been explained thus:

“One who has been termed Sushyant and Astawat Arat for the reason that he will benefit the entire world and rise against the falsehood of the people, till the righteous overpower the evil.”

Have you noticed how the deliverance of the humanity and the victory of truth have been mentioned? These shall actualize at the reappearance of Sushyant. These excerpts prove that the discussion and the testimonies regarding the ‘Saviour’ is also found in the religious texts of Majoos.

Jews and the Saviour

Judaism has a long history. Its followers left no stone unturned in distorting their divine book and removing all the

¹ Faharhang Lughaat Adastaa, vol. 2; Pastha, p. 1226; Sutiyausun, p. 12

indications regarding Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and Islam. However Allah wished to enlighten the darkness through the lamp of guidance. In spite of their entire conspiracies one can find statements about the Saviour of Humanity. He will, at his reappearance, fill this earth with justice and equity in such a way that a tiger (a beast of wild nature) and a goat shall peacefully coexist.

Let us look at the following excerpt ¹:

“A branch shall sprout from the mouth of Lycee... it shall bring a just government to this earth and a cause of the admonishment and (real) awakening of the human beings.”

Its approach will be that of justice.

Loyalty shall be its conduct.

A wolf shall live with kids (young goats) and a small child shall be their shepherd.

And there shall not be even an iota of harm and corruption on my sacred mountains because earth will be replete with justice and equity in the same way as a river is filled with water.”

Mazmoor 37 (Mazameer of Hazrat Dawood (a.s.))

Sentence 29

The truthful ones shall inherit the earth and inhabit it forever. In sentence 22 we find:

“The accursed people of the world shall be destroyed because the righteous ones will inherit it.”

This proves that the ‘Saviour’ shall be a righteous person with a wise government and the protector of the divine laws.

¹ Book of Ashi’yaaBani Naami, Part 11, Line 4

The Old Testament does not stop here but continues further thus:

“If case of delay in his arrival, await him because he will surely reappear and not postpone it, he shall gather all the nations around him and prepare himself for all nations.”

To put it in brief the anticipation of this Saviour shall be a source of belief, will strengthen ones faith and it is also certain that he will, on his arrival fill this world with justice and equity, defeat and overcome the oppressive rulers and nations with the help of Allah.

Christians and Belief in the Saviour

Bible (New Testament), the Holy Book of the Christians narrates many verses regarding the Saviour. Since there have been many distortions in this book, many verses are not found in the current Bible. However, in spite of the distortions, certain concepts are still found which indicate to the Saviour. For instance, pay attention to the following:

Bible of Matt, Part 24

“The arrival of the son of man shall be similar to that of arrival of lightning which shines from east and proceeds to west.”

“They shall see human beings riding on clouds with glory and grandeur.”

“He shall dispatch his angels and gather his esteemed companions with a loud cry.”

The Bible of Luke

Be prepared and keep the light (of faith) shining, and be like

those who await their master so as to quickly answer his call when he knocks at your door.

In the above verses the arrival of the ‘Saviour’, the importance of his arrival and the signs of his reappearance has been clearly hinted at.

We also find in the Bible of Luke:

“His arrival will be all of a sudden, hence be prepared and always pray for his reappearance. Conduct yourselves in a way that will deliver you when you, at the news of his arrival, present yourselves before him.”

Distortions by Christians

The Christians have distorted the above verse and claim that it refers to Hazrat Isa (a.s.).

Reply

Firstly Hazrat Isa (a.s.) himself gave glad tidings about this Saviour. Secondly the world should have been replete with justice and equity if it referred to him and it is not hidden from anyone that the era of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) has concluded.

However if we consider Hazrat Isa (a.s.) as the Saviour then we can at the most state that he shall descend at the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and the world shall be saved at both their hands.

In Islamic traditions, after the descent of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) and his reappearance, Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall assume the role an Imam and Hazrat Isa (a.s.) the role of a follower.

Hinduism and the Saviour

The conclusion of our discussion is that the belief in the Saviour is found in all the divine and worldly religions. In the sacred texts of Hindus too, we find such instances. For example

we find in Ved:

“After the ruin of this world, a king shall appear in the last era who will be the leader of the creatures. His name will be Mansoor he shall make all the people follow his conduct after conquering the entire world.”

The Belief of Chinese and Egyptians

We also find instances about this belief among the residents of China and Egypt, gathering all of which requires a voluminous book. Hence we shall suffice here with the few sentences mentioned above.

Lastly we pray that O Allah! Hasten the blessed arrival of Your promised Saviour and make him apparent to the world that he is none other than Hazrat Hujjat b. Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.).

An Introduction of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and Our Responsibilities

His Genealogy

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the son of Imam Hasan al Askari (a.s.) and Janabe Narjis Khatoon (s.a). His name is M H M D. His agnomen is Abul Qasim and his famous titles are Muntazar, Mahdi, Qaem, Hujjat, Khalaf al-Saleh and the Sahib al-Zaman. He is the twelfth successor of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and from the progeny of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

He shares the name and the agnomen of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and resembles him more than anyone else. He is the twelfth and the last Imam.

Some Important Characteristics

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) inherits the knowledge of all the prophets and successors (a.s.). Allah has granted him long life and shares one quality of all the Prophets and Imams (a.s.). He shall have two occultations, the shorter and the longer one. The longer occultation is so extended that the people with weak faith and less recognition have doubted and will doubt his very existence.

His longevity will not be able to bring about the effects of old age on him and he shall always remain and appear like a youth.

He will fill the earth with justice and equity in spite of it being replete with injustice and oppression.

He shall reappear after people have been severely tested. At his reappearance the sky and the earth will shower their bounties.

The deserted look of the earth will be replaced with that of an inhabited place. None except Allah shall be worshipped. All difficulties shall be solved and the intellects shall reach maturity.

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the only Imam of this time and one who dies without his recognition dies a pre-Islamic death i.e. the death of disbelief, deviation and misguidance. He is the Savior of Mankind, the real reformer of this world, the one who will uproot disbelief and oppression and eradicate the oppressive and unjust rule of the despots.

The Conduct of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

The conduct of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall be same as that of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). He will tread the footsteps of the Prophets of Allah and shall call people towards the teachings of the Holy Quran and the conduct of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a).

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) – The Heart of the Universe

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) enjoys a lofty status and plays a pivotal role in this universe because it is due to his holy presence that this world subsists. Allah has made him the proof over this world.

He is to this world what a heart is to a human body. If a heart does not provide the body with required energy and blood it shall turn into a lifeless corpse and deteriorate. Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is like a heart unto this universe who breathes life into it and due to his holy existence it continues to survive.

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is the source of the love, grace and mercy of Allah. Even in his occultation he is like a sun behind the clouds providing the light of guidance, life giving energy and grants the light of life to the inhabitants of this earth.

The Reason for his Occultation

There are various divine secrets and a deep wisdom behind his occultation. If one is unaware of them due to his ignorance and defective thinking then he has no right to reject them altogether. This is because the finite and erroneous knowledge of human beings enjoys no standing before the roaring sea of Divine Wisdom. However some causes behind his occultation have been mentioned which we shall mention as follows:

1. It is necessary that he continues to live so that the promise of Allah to establish an Islamic and a just government in this world is actualized. Hence occultation is necessary to protect him from the evil intentions of the oppressive rulers, notwithstanding the fact that Allah can keep him safe from them while being apparent. He can also grant him dominance over all the governments of the world. However Allah has desired and established the system of cause and effect in this world. For this very reason and to protect him from the potential threat of the world and the evil intentions of the people, Allah has decided to keep him in occultation till the time people exhibit willingness to submit to his universal rule.
2. Man is progressing at an alarming speed. Difficulties and hardship are the driving factors of progress. His occultation is an examination for human beings from two aspects:

First Examination

It is an examination with respect to his existence and occultation. A group among the people will doubt his very existence due to his prolonged occultation. Believing in him, his prolonged aand Aimmah (a.s.) have foretold and submission to the Holy Quran and the Shiite creed. Only pious, pure and steadfast people, who have unflinching faith in him will survive

this test and attain perfection.

Second Examination

The conditions of the world are changing at a rapid pace and every day some new developments take place. People of weak faith fall prey to these changes as a result of which, their belief is shattered. At the same time people with certainty of faith, do not see any dent in their unwavering faith. Only those who are heedless of Allah and death will be drawn towards corruption, be it ethical or mental, hatred and enmity, fall prey to desires, consume alcohol, listen to music, indulge in indecent conversations, shamelessness, beget illicit wealth and commit thousands other sins that puts their hearts under a spiritual gloom. A true believer, however, will never succumb to these evils and will be steadfast on the path of righteousness. This is a test to distinguish the people of resolute faith from such inferior people who accord little value to their beliefs.

3. The law of supply and demand is applicable universally. For anything to be available and in supply it is necessary that people show willingness for it, be it from spiritual or ethical aspect. Social changes too, take place when desired. The provision of water will be valued only when given to a thirsty person. Hence, it is necessary to awaken the thirst (of spirituality) in the people before providing them with the means to satiate it. The need of the hour is that the people feel the pressing need of divine laws, the desire to liberate themselves from the clutches of the devil so that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) reappears and put his divine mission into action.

The Manner of Awaiting the Reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Awaiting the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is a permanent source of reform and progress. It is a source of progress for intellect, a hope against the feelings of deprivation. Awaiting does not entail sitting idle, being heedless and silent upon the deteriorating conditions while pushing all the duties of reform on Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

The Meaning of Awaiting

Awaiting means to strive towards reforming oneself and society, inculcate great human values, give intellect the potential to develop and unite against oppression.

The anticipation of this Saviour is a school of thought that breathes life into and gives hope to the Muslims of the world to keep them steadfast on the path of reforms. Being away from the essence of awaiting leads to dejection, deprivation and relinquishes the feelings of hope. In contrast, his anticipation provides such strength to those who await his advent which acts as a ray of hope in darkness of hopelessness. We must pay attention to the following traditions of Imam Raza (a.s.) that lays the foundation of his (a.t.f.s.) mission:

“Anticipating reappearance is a part of reappearance itself.”¹

This tradition also indicates that it is the duty of an informed Shia, that he, during the occultation of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) conducts himself in the same way as he would, after his reappearance.

¹ Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52

Virtues of a Muntazir of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

The person who awaits (Muntazir) the Hujjat (a.t.f.s.) is one who molds himself to be virtuous and righteous. He should be awaiting the coming of a Reformer in the true sense. The Muntazir is a responsible person. Not only is he aware of the events besetting the world but is ready to fulfill his religious and humanitarian obligations with a hopeful heart, sound thinking and a responsible outlook.

The one who awaits His Eminence is always involved in his remembrance and also makes others attentive towards His Eminence.

The Muntazir is akin in value and stature to the people who have fought in the company of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

The excellence of the Muntazir is also similar to the one who is in the company of His Eminence in his tent.

The Muntazir of the Imam (a.s.) never violates the rights and holdings of others, never lies, and desists from false accusations and back biting. He does not humiliate the people, gives great importance to prayers and other acts of worship. He is pious, kind heartedness and affection is a part of his nature. He is far from meanness and immorality and adorned with the qualities of humanity.

The Method of Remembering Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

The remembrance of Imam (a.s.) and praying for the advancement in his reappearance is from the best acts of worship and results in nearness of the Almighty.

O Shias of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)! How do we remember him? O supporters of this school of thought! How many hours or minutes do we spend in his reminiscence? O the ones eager to see him! O the sincere ones! How are we attentive in attaining his satisfaction? Are we mindful of restraint from any act which hurts the heart of this beloved personality and is detrimental to achieving his satisfaction? Do we not wish that he too remembers us and provides help? It is thence our responsibility to remember him as much as possible.

Do we not wish that at the time of death, at the first stage of the grave, the first night, which could even be tonight, he comes to our side and enquires of us? So we should also make efforts to enquire about him.

Do we not wish that we should benefit from the deluge of his benevolence and magnanimity in that lonely house, uncomfortable and fear inducing places, the dark grave, in the moments after we depart the world and it should remove our fear, anxiety and discomfort? Hence we should create attachment with His Eminence as much as possible.

The remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) grants peace and comfort to the heart. Makes one happy and joyous, cultivates and nurtures our personality. It reforms a person and cultivates strength in him. It is the means to the nearness of God and is the strength against the fearful moments of death.

If we want the cleansing and enlightenment of our soul, if we strive for the purification of our self, if we are desirous of strength and ability to oppose the carnal desires and satanic whisperings, if we want a source for the forgiveness of our evil deeds and shameful acts, if we are speculating on a cure for our spiritual diseases and deviations, if we desire self-elevation and high mindedness, if we aspire to succeed in this world and goodness in the hereafter, then we should efface our identity in

his remembrance. We turn to him, his lappet in our hands, lost in his remembrance morning, afternoon, evening, midnight. Hoping for His Eminence, searching for him, walking in his footsteps, everything is accessible there... the courtyard of his house, the shade of his love, the path of his obedience, the struggle to obtain his satisfaction and... just his remembrance.

Do we truly retain the friendship of the Master of the Time (a.s.)? Is it possible that one has affection for someone but does not remember him?

Today, in the social situations facing us, if we want to achieve success in the all our affairs, in social matters, specifically for the human soul and building of character, we have to remember His Eminence continually. Make your connections to Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) firm and solid, turn towards him, it is our belief that we have a master. We are certain that our Imam is alive. He observes us, is cognizant of our thoughts and ideals, knowing every bit of our souls and body. He is the means of the grace and benevolence of Allah to reach us. He is the door to the gifts and favors from Allah. We should knock on this door and enter only through it. He is the savior and the guide. His remembrance is the cure of all pains. His proximity is the secret of all successes.

It is our duty to remember him all the time. We should talk of him in every gathering, make people attentive towards him, refresh his remembrance for the faithful, at least utter his name a few times a day, send benedictions upon him, send salutations on him, show affection for him, pray to Allah for his early advent, search for him and always remember him.

Is it possible that someone is his follower and he disregards it? Is it possible that a person yearns at his separation, is restless, always remembers him, sends salutations on him, cries in sorrow,

grieved at the distance and prays for his advent, but His Eminence is inattentive towards him and does not reply to his lament? No, no, it can never be. He is the spring of mercy and benevolence. He is the source of generosity himself, a mighty source. He is the master, the principal, the door to God's mercy.

The great respected scholar and thinker of the Shiite world, Syed Ibn Tawoos gives a message to his son and the other Shias:

“There are a lot of people who believe in their present Imam (a.s.), but their declarations and faith is different from their deeds. They believe in his Eminence and have faith in his reappearance but when it comes to speech and action, the ones who await, have forgotten the Imam's advent.”

Then he continues that if a person loses money or some other wealth, then his attention is always towards the lost object. He is always alert, never relaxed, exerts his every effort to gain the object back, and searches for the object diligently. But does a man who has faith in his Eminence and believes in his advent yearn for the sight of his visage even as much as he craves for this valueless worldly object? Does he struggle and search for his master, his leader, the bestower, the universal reformer, the soul of the universe and the passion of his followers? (If he does not do so) then on what basis is he a believer in his Imamate? How is he awaiting him? How can he claim for his love, affection, closeness and friendship?

Ah! If not for the divine exegesis, was there power in the pen to write? When a follower, a broken heart enters into the presence of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), falls at his feet, crying and lamenting, the master asks: why do you cry? After a while he replies: in your separation, due to your lengthy occultation, because of the condition of your Shias, etc. Imam will sigh: then shed tears, for our Shias do not wish that I should come to their

aid, come near to them. Our Shias do not call and wait for us with the intensity that a thirsty man searches for half a glass of water.

Surely, they should feel the thirst of separation. Reach out for satisfying the thirst. They should understand that he and only he can quench the thirsty. The rest of them are like mirages, a lie. He is the lone cure. He is the only savior. His remembrance is the solution to all difficulties and the secret to every success.

Peace be upon Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

We should be completely involved in the remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and send sincere salutations upon him,

السلامُ عليكُمُ أَيُّهَا الْوَلِيُّ وَالْوَيْلِيُّ وَالْمُرْتَضَى وَالْمُجْتَبَى وَالْمُحْتَمَى وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ

Peace be upon you, O vicegerent of Allah and the helper of His truth.

السلامُ عليكُمُ أَيُّهَا الْبَقِيَّةُ الْبَاقِيَّةُ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ

Peace be upon you, O the remnant of Allah on His earth.

السلامُ عليكُمُ أَيُّهَا الدَّاعِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالْمَوْجِدُ لِلْآيَاتِ وَالْمَوْجِدُ لِلْآيَاتِ وَالْمَوْجِدُ لِلْآيَاتِ

Peace be upon you, O caller to Allah and place of manifestation of His signs.

السلامُ عليكُمُ أَيُّهَا الْبَابُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ

Peace be upon you, O door to Allah and the devout one of His religion.

السلامُ عليكُمُ أَيُّهَا الْجَمْعُ بِجَمَاعَةِ السَّلَامِ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمُتَمَسِّكُ بِالْحَقِّ

Peace be upon you by the collections of all salutations.

The Pulsating Heart of the Universe

Atoms are those central units of small particles, which are surrounded by fast revolving peculiar elements. The center of power never separates from them. The planets of the solar system revolve around the sun. They maintain their position due to the strength of its magnetism and remain radiant by deriving benefit from the shining light.

Our body also consists of an extremely sensitive center called the 'heart' which provides heat and strength to our entire body. If it stops functioning even for a moment, our life would come to an end. This apparently limitless and expansive universe as well as whatever exists in it also gains its strength and capacity from a real and basic principle as per the orders of Allah, the Almighty. The center of spiritual and divine power is revolving in the orbit of the excellent system of creation. In the world of creation, a great spiritual personality who is a representative of Allah and appointed by Him for this universe is always present, a personality whose existence is the cause of the functioning and management of the universe. Due to the essence of his Creator, the causes and factors of innate nature, orbits the axis of the created world. In every era, there is always a proof appointed by Allah, the Almighty, to run system of spiritual and divine orders.

Today, Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) is the beating heart of this universe. He is the representative of Allah on the face of this earth who grants dwellers of this world with the unlimited bounties of Allah through his blessings and presence.

There is a tradition reported from Abu Hamza in Usul-e-

Kaafi, Kitab al-Hujjah. He asked Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.): Can the earth be left without an Imam?

Imam (a.s.) replied:

لَوْ بَدَّلَ الرَّضُ بِغَيْرِ إِمَامٍ سَأَخْتُ

"If the earth would be devoid of an Imam, it would be destroyed."

Even if we look apart from the divine leadership and concealed kingdom of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), we shall find that his Eminence (a.s.) organizes our spiritual acts and matters as well. He is also the protector of the book of Allah and the savior of its laws. Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, has promised that 'He shall protect and guard religion.' Hence, it is narrated:

إِنَّا كُنَّا نُرَاهُ وَإِنَّا كُنَّا نَحِيطُ بِهِ

"Surely we are the ones who revealed the Quran and we are its protectors"¹

According to most of the reliable traditions, the ideal protector and the true guide is Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) who is always aware of all our words and actions. Reports of all our actions are presented before him. Hence, Imam is the beating heart of the universe, the guardian of the divine system and the protector of Shariah and the rules and regulations of the Holy Quran.

The Proof of Allah is the Medium of Grace

The bases of all our beliefs are Intellect and Shariah. Both Intellect and Shariah demand that for the functioning of this universe, the existence of an 'Ideal Person', 'Proof of Allah', 'Thoughtful Mind' and an 'Active Mind' is essential. His existence

¹ Surah Hijr (15): 9

should precede the existence of the universe and he should be the ruler and king of this universe. He should be different and unlike others. He should enjoy superiority over all other creatures. The existence of the universe would be impossible if it were not for him.

All the bounties which this universe receives from the Grace of the Almighty... knowledge, life, power, mercy... all of it is on account of his existence. Let us try and understand this from the following example:

The entire universe is well-lit due to the light of the sun be it land, houses, mountains or seas. The atmosphere is brightened only because of the sun. Its light is spread across everywhere. There are some things which are very close to the sun and some others which are very distant from it. The light at those places is that of the sun itself and the effect its rays and emissions. Is it possible that the distant places are brightened due to the sun-rays while the nearby places lie in darkness? Is it also possible that the sun-rays light up the far off places first and do not reach the nearby places? Intellect does not accept this. It is unfathomable. If everything derives its light from the sun then those things which are near to it should be lightened first followed by those which are far off. Rather, this light shall reach the distant places after gradually passing through the nearby ones and things will be brightened steadily. This light will travel from one place to the other. Whatever is closest to the center shall be the brightest. It will be most characteristic of that light. It will be a collection of all other aspects of the center. The only difference is that although it is a collection of the characteristics of the center and light passes through it and reaches everywhere else but this light does not belong to it. It is all due that center.

Similarly, the blazing sun acquires the light of life, knowledge, might, kingdom, elevation and power through the

divine guidance and distributes it across to the entire creation. The substance of everything is lightened through that very divine light. Whoever possesses any prowess, it is the grace of that divine light. When this light shone upon the world of possibilities that substance, which was of the highest grade and the closest to the Almighty benefitted first. The maximum representation of that divine light was witnessed in that substance and then was transferred to others. Had it not been so, this sequence of light would not have reached the others. Every recipient is benefitting through it.

The Hierarchy of Creatures

According to the hierarchy of creation, man is superior to animals. Animals are greater than plants and plants in turn are greater than inanimate objects. This status and superiority is not on the basis of creation. Rather it is due to the peculiarities and perfections which are existent in one and lacking in the other. Man is superior to animals due to intellect and understanding. Animals are superior to plants based on sensitivities. Plants are superior to inanimate objects on the basis of growth and development. It means that creatures possess superiority over each other based on their characteristics. Man shall be the first to benefit from divine grace. Hence, he is on the highest level of perfections followed by animals, plants and inanimate objects.

Proof of Allah is Most Superior

Just as some creatures are superior to the others, similarly even in humans some enjoy a higher grade as compared to the others based on some characteristics. Accordingly, the one who is at the highest level of perfection would benefit from divine grace before the others. He would be an ideal human being. In other

words, in whosoever the divine perfections are manifested first will be at the peak and the highest level. This person will be the center of divine lights and the collection of divine perfections. Everyone shall benefit only due to his presence. This holy being is known as the ‘Proof of Allah’ according to traditions.

It is impossible that creatures at the lowest level benefit from Allah’s grace and there exists no one superior to them. Hence, the existence of the world of possibilities is an extremely evident and clear point. It is possible that the most superior and best person exists and this world co-exists due to him. This superior perfect being is termed as the “Highest Possibility” or “Greatest Possibility” in religious terminologies.

Currently, this most superior being, is Hazrat Hujjat b. Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.) and his holy existence due to whom this system continues to function effectively.

بِقَائِمِهِ يَحْيَى الْوَالِدِ

“The world exists due to his existence.”

وَيَمْنُورُ زُقِ الْوَرَى

“The universe receives its sustenance due to his blessings.”

وَبُحُودِهِ يَبْقَى الْاَرْضُ وَالسَّمَاءُ

“The earth and the heavens remain firm due to his existence.”¹

It is impossible that every particle of this universe benefits from Allah’s grace while Allah’s Proof does not exist because it is due to the Proof of Allah that everyone is a recipient of the grace from the source of generosity. According to this, the Proof of Allah is before the creation, with the creation and after the creation. As the tradition says,

¹ Dua-e-Adeelah, Mafaatih al-Jinaan

الْحَقُّ قَبْلَ الْخَلْقِ وَمَعَ الْخَلْقِ وَبَعْدَ الْخَلْقِ

“The Proof of Allah is before the creation, with the creation and after the creation.”¹

Whoever is benefitting from anything in this universe, it is due to the grace of Allah’s Proof. If the Proof of Allah does not exist then the creation shall be deprived of Allah’s grace. Pay attention to the following tradition:

لَوْ بَقِيَ الْاَرْضُ يَوْمًا بِاِمَامٍ مِّنَّا لَمْ يَخْتِ

“If the earth remains without an Imam from among us even for a single day, it shall be destroyed.”²

Hence, even if there exists, only one person on this earth, it means that an Imam exists somewhere. According to a tradition, even if two people exist on the face of the earth then one of them will be an Imam.

Recognizing the Favour and Thankfulness

Intellect and innate nature of man are witnesses towards the fact that we should always be thankful to the one who has helped and favoured us. This feeling of recognizing and thanking is not restricted to humans only but is also found in carnivorous animal. If we caress an animal lovingly then even the animal shall look at us in gratitude. It will appreciate you in a typical way. If someone is ungrateful to his benefactor then he is worse than an animal.

It is evident from what we have discussed that the entire universe and everything in it, for its existence, sustenance, all other attributes and acquired bounties, is dependent on the

¹ Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 23, p. 38, H. 66

² Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 23, p. 37, H. 64

anchor of the heavens and the earth, pillar of existence, axis of knowledge and existence, Hazrat Hujjat b. Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.). Everything subsists only due to his existence. Allah has ordained the gratitude, gratefulness and obedience to our biological parents on account of their providing the grounds for our existence. We can imagine what our responsibilities towards the Imam of our time would be. It is incumbent upon the us, rather the entire creation, to appreciate, be grateful and obedient towards him and do good to him.

It mentioned in the 7th verse of Surah Ibrahim:

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَرَأَى كَفْرَهُمْ فَلَمَّ إِلَهُنَّ فَأَبْدَأْنَا لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

“And when your Lord made it known: If you are grateful, I would certainly give to you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe.”

If this life and everything in it are bounties, then the greatest bounty is that great personality due to whom we are receiving all the bounties. What would be the highest level of gratitude towards him? Had we recognized the bounty of Imamat, respected it, not given preference to others over him, not acquired religion from other than him and obeyed his commands then we would not have been deprived of the reappearance of our Imam. The occultation of our Imam is due to our ungratefulness.

At present, we do not remember our Imam of the time as we should. This belief and its requirements should be a part of our lives in a manner similar to not just blood circulating in our bodies but like the presence of our souls in our bodies. All senses rather all pleasures of life are due to this soul. Life cannot exist without these senses. Let us come together and strengthen this sense of belief, let us enliven it to such an extent that it forms the ground for the reappearance of our Imam (a.t.f.s.), stirs the Divine Mercy, all doors of acceptance of prayers are opened and Allah grants the

permission of reappearance at this very instant.

لَهُمْ وَنَهُ بَعِيدًا وَتَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا

“Surely they consider it (the reappearance) to be distant while we consider it to be near.”¹

¹ Dua-e-Ahad

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) in the eyes of Hazrat Ali (a.s.)

The belief in Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is so important that everyone has discussed it. Salvation from disbelief and ignorance depends on submission to this belief. Here we shall chronicle some of the traditions which have been narrated from Ameerul Momineen, Hazrat Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.)

The end is known through the beginning. Often the introduction leads to the conclusion. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is the first Imam, while Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the last one. Let us get some information about the last Imam from the first one. Ali (a.s.) says that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed me,

“Allah has favored us, the Ahle Bait (a.s.), with seven persons, that He has not conferred on anyone before us, nor will He bestow it on anyone after us. (1) In our family is the Messenger of Allah, the chief of all Prophets and the seal of Prophethood. (2) The Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) successor, Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.), is more elevated than all other successors. (3) & (4) His (s.a.w.a.) two grandsons, Hasan and Husain (a.s.), are the best of grandsons. (5) The chief of martyrs is his uncle Janabe Hamza b. Abdul Muttalib, chief of all martyrs. (6) Indeed the one who is granted a pair of wings by Allah, so that he can soar along with the angels in Paradise is Ja’far b. Abi Talib (al-Tayyar). (7)

The Qaem (a.s.) is also from us.”¹

Once Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) told Abu Tufayl that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed him,

لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْ الْعَالَمِ إِلَّا يَوْمٌ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي يَمْلَأُهَا قِسْطًا
مِلَّتْ جَوْرًا

“Even if a solitary day remains for the world to end, Allah shall raise a man from my Ahle Bait who shall fill it with justice as it would have been filled with tyranny.”²

While Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) has time and again advanced irrefutable evidences to support his claim of being the Prophet’s immediate successor, he has also introduced his last successor and has termed him as the saviour of world.

أَوَّلُ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآخِرُ مُحَمَّدٍ

“The first is Mohammad and the last is Mohammad.”

We mention below a tradition that reveals the origin of creation, the light-creation of Mohammad and his progeny (a.s.), the transfer of this light to different loins in every age, creation of the Angels, creation of Hazrat Adam’s (a.s.) face and the objective behind creating the light of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (as) says:

“Certainly Allah informed Hazrat Adam (a.s.), the father of humanity, of those things that He had concealed from him and manifested his excellence and superiority to him and called him an ‘Imam’ in front of Angels and bestowed him with the position of Imamat

¹ Muntakhab al-Asar, p. 173

² Sunan Abu Dawood, Kitab al-Mahdi

and Vilaayat. Thus, Hazrat Adam (a.s.) could benefit from this goodness and mercy in accordance to the magnitude of our light hidden in him. Then Allah kept this light hidden from era to another, till it came to rest with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). In this way, Allah has invited the people in an apparent as well as concealed manner towards His Messenger's obedience and his Shariat. The Messenger of Allah reminded the people of Allah's covenant, the very covenant that Allah had taken from the people in Aalam-e-Zar. Those who had testified to the prophethood of Messenger of Allah had lit their torches with the light of his guidance, recognized him and benefitted from his illuminated affair. While those who were victims of negligence and rejected him, were deserving of the wrath and punishment of Allah. Finally this light was transferred to our loins and glowed in our Imams.

Therefore, we are the light of the heavens and the earth, through us is the way to deliverance and success and all hidden sciences will be manifested only through us and all affairs shall revert only to us.

وَبِمَهْدٍ يَنْتَقِطُ الْحَجُّ لِأَتَمَّةِ الْإِنْبِيَاءِ وَمَهْدِ الْأُمَّةِ وَالْأَيَّةِ الْوَعْدِ وَمَصْدَرِ الْأُمُورِ

Through our Mahdi, the chain of Allah's Proofs shall terminate and Imamatus shall reach its conclusion. He shall be the seal of Imams, and he alone will deliver the nation. He is the culmination of that divine light and the aim and source of all affairs.

We are the best of creation and most exalted of creatures and Allah's Proofs upon the earth. Blessed be them, with divine bounties, those who hold fast unto our Mastership and carry the document of our

Mastership along with them.”¹

We present this tradition to the readers so that they can witness the exhaustive virtues and excellence of Ahle Bait (a.s.) and increase in their knowledge. Nevertheless we would like to bring your attention to an important point which Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) has emphasized.

Necessity to hold fast unto Imam Mahdi (atfs) in this era

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) says,

“Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is at the culmination of divine light and is the source of all affairs. Then it is incumbent upon people that they hold fast unto this light and acquire his recognition because he is Allah’s greatest bounty and only those who have been blessed with this bounty are worthy of deliverance.”

...فَلْيَهْتَبُوا تَعَمَّتْ مَنْ تَمَّكَ يُولَايَا...¹

Then glad tidings of bounties are for those who have devoted themselves to our Mastership (Vilaayat).

¹ Murooj al-Zahab, v. 1, p. 42-43, printed by Dar al-Andalus, Beirut, 1393 A.H.

Nahj al-Balaagha and Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

A few days before his martyrdom, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) delivered a sermon in Kufa, standing on the stone that was fixed by Jodah b. Hubairah al-Makhzumi. At that time Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was wearing woolen shirt, his sheath was of date skin, and his shoes were also made of date leaves.

In this sermon, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), after praising and glorifying Allah, narrating His grace and bounties, His attributes and explaining about His creation, admonished people to fear Allah and elucidated about the certainty of death by illustrating the case of Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.) thus, “If there was anyone who could secure a ladder to an everlasting life or a way to avoid death, then it would have been Sulaiman b. Dawood (a.s.), who was given control of the domain of the jinn and men, but when he finished what was his due in food (of this world) and exhausted his (fixed) time, the bow of destruction shot him with an arrow of death. His houses became vacant and his habitations became empty. Another group of people inherited him.

وَالَّذِي لَكُمْ فِي الْقُرُونِ السَّابِقَةِ لَعِبْرَةٌ

“Certainly, the by-gone centuries have a lesson for you.”

Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall revolt against all forms of oppression and tyranny

In the same sermon, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) while discussing the topic of tyranny and oppression, recounts thus:

Amaaleqa and his son Firaun and their sons the people of the cities, al-Rass who killed a large number of people, destroyed the traditions of the Prophets (a.s.) and revived the traditions of the despots... immediately after this his Eminence warned the people thus:

قَدْ بَلَغَ الْحِكْمَةَ جَمِيعًا وَأَلَدَهَا جَمِيعَ أَدْبَابِهَا الْإِفْهَالِ لِيُهَا...

“He will be wearing the armour of wisdom, which he will have secured with all its conditions and full attention towards it, its complete knowledge and exclusive devotion to it ...”

Wisdom (Hikmah) for him is like a thing which he had lost and which he was then seeking or a need which he was trying to fulfill. (He shall always be careful about wisdom, for as per traditions *الحكمة ضالة المؤمن* Wisdom is a lost (treasure) of a believer i.e. a believer is always in search to acquire wisdom). When Islam will be in trouble (when corruption and disruption increase manifold), he will feel forlorn like a (tired) camel, which (in moments of weakness and fatigue) beats the end of its tail and flattens its neck on the ground (i.e. Islam shall be weakened to an extent that it will not have but a few faithful followers. This is what the Prophet had prophesied that Islam shall soon be isolated and secluded). He (Imam Mahdi) is the last of Allah’s proofs and a vicegerent of His Prophets.

[Sermon 182]

Important points from this sermon:

1. Wisdom means that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) has insight of things, renunciation (Zuhd) and worship. That is why the etiquette of renunciation and worship and the secrets of the creation should be acquired only from him.
2. Islam will remain for namesake. There will be no one to

follow it truly or act according to it. During this period, the proof of Allah will be its protector and guardian. He will then re-appear and Islam will no longer remain isolated and secluded and will be followed by everyone.

Syed Razi (r.a.) narrates a tradition from among the difficult and subtle sayings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). He (a.s.) says:

فِي تَلَايِهِمْ: فَإِذَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ ضَرَبَ يَعْسُوبُ الْإِنْسَانِ بِدَنْيَمٍ يَجْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْهِ ۚ
يَجْتَمِعُ قُرَى الْخَرِيفِ

In this tradition Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) has informed about the virtue and position of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.).

“When his time comes, he will be the Ya’soob (chief of the honeybees) of religion (i.e. he shall reappear from his occultation and shall settle down in his rightful position of as the caliph and leader). The believers (from all over the world) will gather near him like the gathering of the clouds in the Kharif season.”

1. The statement of Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is evident and clear that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) is alive and hidden from the enemies. He is living in this world and shall reappear on the command of Allah.
2. Syed Razi (r.a.) says that Ya’soob of religion means a such lofty leader who will be the master of the affairs of people on that day.

And Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) saying **ضَرَبَ يَدْئِمِ** means that Imam-e-Zamana will be firmly establish himself after his re-appearance because Ya’soob is the chief of honeybees who flies for the most part of the day and when the last part of his body gives up it ends its flight and stations itself at its position. Similarly, Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) will settle at his place after traversing the world.

3. Here قزع refers to small pieces of clouds which are subtle and delicate irrespective of whether they contain water or no. Here the companions of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) have been likened to these small clouds of the Kharif season because these scattered clouds come together very quickly.
4. In ضرب ذنبه, ضرب means to stroll and ذنب means followers and supporters. ضرب ذنبه also means the stinging of the honeybee i.e. that when his Eminence will rise with his sword, he will annihilate the enemies of religion.

Enlivening the Book and the Practice

Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) while prophesizing the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) says:

يَعْطِفُ الْهُوَىٰ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ إِذَا عَطِفُوا الْهُدَىٰ إِلَى الْهُوَىٰ يَعْطِفُ الْهُوَىٰ إِلَى
 الْقُرْآنِ إِذَا عَطِفُوا الْقُرْآنَ إِلَى الْإِلَهِ حَتَّى تَقُومَ الْحَرْبُ كَمَا لَمْ يَلِي سِاقٍ إِلَّا
 نَوَّالَهَا...

“(When the awaited Imam will reappear from occultation) He will divert the desires towards guidance (he will bring the deviated people to the right path) when people would have turned the guidance to desires (means people would have turned from the Shariah of Mohammad (s.a.w.a.) to obedience of desires) and will turn their views to Quran (he will prevent people from prohibited and incorrect views and will prepare them to turn towards Quran so that Allah’s laws are obeyed and views against the Quran are discarded) while people would have used their (twisted and turned) imaginations and opinions about Quran...”

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) mentions in one part of this sermon that:

“(Before the advent of Mahdi) the situation would be such that intense battles and bloodshed shall be prevalent, (like a ferocious lion in a fit of rage) showing forth its teeth and (like a camel) udders filled with sweet and relishing milk (means those who will come to war with Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) initially will hope of victory) but their fate will be bitter (i.e. after confronting and fighting with Imam (a.t.f.s.) grief shall surround them).

Beware, it will be tomorrow and the morrow will come soon with things which you do not know. The Ruler and King, not from among the rulers of the world, will take to task all those were formerly appointed for their ill deeds and the earth will pour forth its treasures and fling before him easily her keys. He will show you the true and just way of behaviour and revive the Qur'an and sunnah which would have become lifeless (among people).”

[Sermon 138]

Tomorrow's Dawn

Occultation and reappearance are not distant intervals. In fact, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) has warned those materialists who tread the deviated paths and have wandered away (turned away from the right path due to which corruption and evil shall be rampant and they shall term injustice and oppression upon innocent people as permissible and shall shed their blood unjustly). Then (when people heard this prophecy, they asked his Eminence (a.s.) about the period when all this oppression would end and he said) **فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوا** Don't make haste. (There shall be

destruction) What is inevitable and awaited (Don't be in any haste for it). Whatever 'tomorrow' shall bring along with it, refrain from showing discontent while feeling it to be distant. There are many people who show haste in acquiring something and when they finally secure it, they regret acquiring it the way they did. How near is the light of tomorrow's dawn from today's darkness!

O my nation! This is the time of the advent of the promised one (Mahdi) and the time when corruption shall approach evidently which you are not aware of as of now (today, during the beginning of Islam, others have usurped my rights and undeserving people have claimed the position of Caliphate, disruption and discord has spread in the entire world and as time passes, you will see those events as I will now foretell you).

...إِلَّا وَالَّذِينَ أَدْرَكُوا لَعْنَتِي فِيهَا سِرَاجٌ مُبِينٌ...

Beware! Then the one from us (Ahle Bait), who shall witness that era of corruption (the period of occultation of Imam Mahdi), will proceed with the illumined lamp (the light of Vilaayat and Imamat) and tread the path of the righteous. He shall untie the knots (steer the misguided and deviated into salvation and freedom), release the prisoners (of ignorance and oblivion), scatter the advocates of deviation and mobilize the supporters of truth. He shall remain hidden from the eyes of the people. Spies shall try to locate him by constantly keeping vigil but they shall not succeed in tracing him. But amidst all this, there shall be one nation, who shall be sharpened just as a blacksmith sharpens a sword (despite disputes being rampant they shall receive guidance and salvation and

shall always be prepared to obey and follow his Eminence (a.t.f.s.)). Their eyes shall be illuminated through Quran and its meanings shall constantly ring in their ears. They shall be quenched with the seas of wisdom. (That nation shall directly acquire knowledge and teachings of the Quran from their Imam (a.t.f.s.)).

Sermon 150

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنْ أَنْصَارِهِ وَأَعْوَانِهِ وَاتَّبَاعِهِ وَتَلِيْعَتِي وَأَرْبِي فِي مُلْكِ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ
 وَالْإِسْلَامِ مَا يَلُونَ وَفِي لِقَائِهِمْ مِيخَذَرُونَ إِلَهَ الْحَقِّ تَمِيمِينَ ﷻ الْجَلِيلِ
 وَالْأَكْرَامِ ﷻ الرَّحِيمِ

Belief in Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

The book “Isbaat al-Raj’at” was written before the birth of Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.) [255 A.H]. Eminent scholars and companions of Imams (a.s.) compiled a lot of books containing traditions about glad-tidings concerning reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

It is a lamentable fact that most of these books were lost due to the contingencies of time and were unable to reach us thereby becoming extinct. The books that have reached us, due to grace of Allah upon us, include a book authored by a noble and eminent companion of Imam (a.s.), Fazl bin Shazan-e-Neyshaapuri and titled as “Isbaat al-Raj’at”.

Janab Abu Mohammad Fazl bin Shazan bin Khaleel-e-Neyshaapuri was a revered companion of Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.), an expert in Jurisprudence and polemics. He died in 260 AH in the year coinciding with the death of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) and commencement of minor occultation and vicegerency of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Due to this it becomes evident that the aforementioned book is either written before 260 AH or at least in that year, and thereby the value of the book increases because of it being ancient. This book plays a significant role in context of doctrine of Mahdaviyat.

In bibliographical books approximately 80 books of Fazl bin Shazan are listed. Out of these, two books, viz. “Al-Ghaibat” and “Isbaat al-Raj’at” deal with Imam Mahdi (a.s.) covering topics like occultation, its incidences, reappearance and so on. Janab Syed Mohammad Mir Lauhi Isfehani (exp.1083 AH) in his book

“Kefaayat al-Mahdi” has referred to the book “Al-Ghaibat” and has narrated traditions directly from it. But unfortunately “Al-Ghaibat” is extinct today and contents of this book can be had only from those sources which have used it extensively.

“Isbaat al-Raj’at” has also not reached us completely and only extracts from this book have remained. Syed Bahaiddin Ali Naili Najafi, author of book “Anwarul-Masfiyya” in ninth century compiled the extracts of the book “Isbaat al-Raj’at” and a quite a few copies of it are available currently. Out of which one is available in library of Ayatullah ul Uzma Syed Mohsin al-Hakim (r.a.), another in the library of Marhoom Shaikh Mohammad Samawi in Najaf al-Ashraf and a third one is in library of Astaan-e-Quds-e-Razawi, Mashad-e-Muqaddas. All the copies date back to manuscript collected and written by Sheikh Hurre Amili (exp. 1104).

The Belief in Occultation is not coined by Shias

This book is important because and carries more weight as it is written before the death of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.). It contains traditions and glad tidings related to Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and it serves as a manifest proof for those who doubt the existence of Imam Mahdi (a.s.), as many uninformed writers accuse Shias of concocting the doctrine of Mahdaviyat after the death of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) whereas this book was written before the death of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) and contains a description of the occultation and other characteristics of Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

Janab Fazl bin Shazan has given it an aura of authenticity by narrating the traditions from great companions of Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) like Safwan bin Yahya, Mohammad bin Abi Umair and Hasan bin Ali bin Fazzal. Apart from this, traditions from Imam Ali-un-Naqi (a.s.) and Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) uninterrupted from

Abdullah bin Hasan-e-Khatib, Ahmed bin Ishaq Qummi and Mohammad bin Ali bin Hamza and so on.

Marhoom Janab Syed Ali Naili, the one who abridged this book has selected only twenty traditions for the purpose and rest of us have not reached us.

Though this book is titled as *Isbaat al-Raj'at* only 7th and 16th traditions deal with *Raj'at*. This topic is based on above book and keeping in mind the limited space, the chains of narrators are purposely omitted and also the Arabic version. The traditions which do not explicitly deal with the topic of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) are also omitted and those readers who are interested in the whole book are requested to refer to the periodical "TURASONA" (1409 AH, ISSUE NO. 5). Attempt has been made to present a simple and lucid translation, thus providing parentheses as an additional tool.

Isbaat al-Raj'at (Abridged)

Tradition 1

Responding to the query of Sulaym bin Qais, Imam Ameerul Momineen Ali (a.s.) said:

"Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) kept his blessed hand on my chest and beseeched Allah to bestow upon me knowledge, intellect, cognizance, wisdom and light and invoked to Allah thus: O my Lord! Grant him retentive memory and make him memorize the things instructed to him by me.

I once professed humbly before Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saying that may my parents be sacrificed on you, from the day you invoked for me I have not forgotten a single thing. I have written down all your instructions and neglected nothing. Are you

worried about my forgetting?

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

O brother! I am not worried about either your ignorance or your loss of memory. I simply intended to pray for you. Verily! Allah has ordained obedience of you and your companions along with my obedience and has chosen you to be my representative. He (Allah) has said: O you who believe! Obey Allah, His messenger and those vested with authority among you.

I inquired as to who are they? He replied:

They are my successors. It does not matter to them if people do not follow them. They are with Quran and will not be separated from Quran till they meet me at cistern of Kausar. My nation benefits from their presence. Even the rain does not pour without their permission. Calamities are warded off through them and prayers are accepted through their intercession.

I requested the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to narrate their names and he narrated thus:

You O Ali are the first among them and then keeping his hand on Hasan (a.s.) stated him to be second one of them. Then he kept his hand on Husain (a.s.) and asserted that he is to follow Hasan (a.s.) in vicegerency. He said after Husain (a.s.) will be the son of Husain (a.s.) who will share his name with you, he is Zainul Abideen (a.s.). He shall be born in your time. Convey my salutations to him. After him will be Mohammad Baqir (a.s.), the one who will be the splitter of my knowledge and protector of divine revelation. He will be followed by his son Ja'far Sadiq, then his son Musa Kazim, then his son Ali Reza, then his son Mohammad Taqi, then his son Ali Naqi, then his son Hasan Zaki

(peace be upon them all) then his son HUJJAT AL-QAEM (a.t.f.s.). He is last in the chain of vicegerency and caliphate. He will take revenge from my enemies and will fill the earth with Justice and Equity as it shall be filled with injustice and oppression.

Then Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) said:

By Allah! I visualize all of them who will pledge allegiance to him between Hajre Aswad and Maqame Ibrahim, not only this, I am aware of their names and tribes."

Testimony of Imam Sadiq (a.s.)

Hammad bin Isa states that he narrated this tradition in front of my master Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.). Imam wept and confirmed that:

"Sulaym has stated the truth. Because I heard this from my father and he heard it from his father Ali ibn Husain (a.s.) and he heard it from his father Husain ibn Ali (a.s.). He heard it from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) at the time when Sulaym bin Qais asked him about it."

Tradition 2: Number of Imams equal to the tribes of Bani Israel

Imam Hasan (a.s.) said:

"I heard from my grandfather about Imams after him. He said that they will be twelve in number similar to Nuqaba of Bani Israel. Allah has bestowed them with my knowledge and wisdom and O Hasan, you are from them. Then I asked as to when the reappearance of Qaem from his Ahle Bait will take place. He (s.a.w.a.) replied: O Hasan! His reappearance is like occurrence

of the Day of Judgement, Allah has kept it a secret from people of skies and earth. He will appear all of a sudden."

Tradition 3

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (a.s.):

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.): Quraish will prevail upon you when you will strive to unveil the truth and all will join hands in oppressing you. If you get partisans and helpers face them strongly and if you are left alone be patient and protect yourself. Martyrdom is chasing you anyway.

Surely my son shall avenge those who oppress you, your children and your partisans in this world. In the hereafter Allah will chastise them with a severe punishment."

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall avenge the oppression upon other Imams (a.s.)

Salman-e-Farsi inquired about the avenger? Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

"The ninth son from progeny of my son Husain (a.s.); who will reappear after a long occultation. He will spread the religion of God and will seek revenge from His enemies. He will fill the earth with justice and equity as it would have been filled with oppression and injustice."

Salman-e-Farsi inquired again about the time of his reappearance. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) replied:

"Knowledge of the time is exclusively with Allah, but there are some signs of his reappearance like a call from sky, landslides in east and west of Earth,

submergence of land at Baiza (a place between Mecca and Medina)."

Tradition 4

Abu Khalid-e-Kabuli says that when he went in presence of his master Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.), he found him in a state of weeping while reading a book. He inquired: "May my parents be sacrificed on you, what book is this?" Imam (a.s.) replied:

"This book is the copy of the tablet which was gifted to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) by Allah. It contains the name of Allah, His Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), my paternal uncle Hasan bin Ali (a.s.), my father (a.s.), me, my son Mohammad Baqir (a.s.), his son Ja'far Sadjq (a.s.), his son Musa Kazim (a.s.), his son Ali Reza (a.s.), his son Mohammad Taqi (a.s.), his son Ali Naqi (a.s.), his son Hasan Zaki (a.s.) and his son Hujjat (a.s.), the one who will rise (with sword) on the orders of Allah. He will seek vengeance from the enemies of God. He will reappear after a long occultation with solitary aim of filling this earth with justice and equity as it shall be full of injustice and oppression."

Tradition 5

Hazrat Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.) narrates that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) conveyed to Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.):

"I have more authority over believers than they themselves have on their own souls. After me such an authority will be enjoyed by you and then by Hasan, Husain, Ali Ibn Husain, Mohammad Ibn Ali, Ja'far Ibn Mohammad, Musa Ibn Ja'far, Ali Ibn Musa, Mohammad Ibn Ali, Ali Ibn Mohammad, Hasan Ibn Ali

and lastly son of Hasan, al-Hujjat (peace be upon them all) the one on whom the vicegerency will conclude. He will reappear after a long occultation and will fill the earth with justice and equity as it shall be full with injustice and oppression.”

Tradition 6

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

“Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was asked about the word ‘progeny’ (Itrat) in the tradition of two weighty things (Hadees Saqalain). He replied: “I, Hasan, Husain and nine sons from progeny of Husain are ‘Itrat’ of which ninth will be Mahdi (peace be upon them all). They will not separate from Quran till the time they meet Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) at the cistern of KAUSAR.”

Tradition 7: Raj'at of Imam Husain (a.s.) and his companions

Hazrat Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.) said:

“Imam Husain (a.s.) said to his companions one night before his martyrdom, ‘Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed me: “O my son! You will travel to Iraq, till the land by the name of Amra and Karbala. You will be martyred along with some chosen companions’. The words of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) are going to be actualized. Tomorrow I will meet my grandfather Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Those of you who intend to leave can depart in darkness of night. You have my permission. Imam exhorted very much but nobody left. All enunciated in solitary voice, ‘By Allah we shall never leave you alone and will follow you in every aspect.’ Observing such steadfastness of his companions Imam Husain (a.s.) said: “I give you glad tidings of Paradise.

By Allah! After martyrdom we will reside in our graves till the time Allah wishes. Then Allah will cause us to return from our graves at the time of reappearance of our Qaem (a.s.). He will take revenge from the unjust, we will witness with our own eyes that the unjust are shackled and chained.”

Then Imam Husain (a.s.) was asked as to who was ‘Qaem’. Imam (a.s.) replied:

“Seventh from the progeny of my son Mohammad ibn Ali (al-Baqir), Hujjat ibn al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Mohammad ibn Ali ibn Musa ibn Ja’far ibn Mohammad ibn Ali (peace be upon them all). He will reappear after a long occultation and will fill the earth with justice and equity as it shall be full of injustice and oppression.”

Tradition 8

Abu Khalid Kabuli says that he was in the presence of his master Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) and asked him as to who are the ones whose obedience has been made obligatory by Allah after Holy Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.). Imam replied!

“O Kabuli! ‘Ulil Amr’ are those who are appointed by Allah as guides and leaders and their obedience is compulsory and they are Ameerul Momineen, my uncle Hasan, my father Husain and after him the chain reached me”. After saying this Imam became silent.

I asked: “It has been narrated from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) that this earth can never be devoid of a divine Proof. So who is the Imam after you?” Imam replied:

“He is my son Mohammad who is known in heavenly books as “Baqir”, the one who will split and spread knowledge excessively. He is the proof of Allah and

Imam after me. After him the Imam will be his son Ja'far who is known by the name of 'Sadiq' in the heavens."

I asked, "Why is he called 'Sadiq' (truthful) when you all are truthful?" Imam clarified: "My father narrated from his father who in turn narrated from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) that: "When my son Ja'far bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is born, name him 'Sadiq' because a person from his fifth generation will also bear the name of Ja'far but will wrongly claim vicegerency. His name will be Ja'far al-Kazzaab. He will ascribe wrong things to Allah and will claim the position for which he is not entitled. He will oppose his father and bear jealousy towards his brother. This is the person who will try to tear apart the veil of occultation of Allah's Proof." After saying this Imam wept profusely and added: "As if I am seeing Ja'far al-Kazzaab exhorting the King of his time to go and search for Allah's Proof and lay his claim to the inheritance of his father while he is aware of his status. If he is able to find him then he will be prepared to kill him. He shall be greedy of his brother's inheritance and usurp it unjustly."

I asked: "O son of Prophet! Is this actually going to happen?" He replied:

"By Allah certainly this is inscribed in a book which Allah gave to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) narrating in it suffering of every kind which is to befall on us".

I inquired as to what will happen after that. Imam replied, "Occultation of twelfth Imam from the chain of Imamate and Viceregency will continue for a long time. O Abu Khalid! Those with a firm faith upon his occultation and awaiting his reappearance are better than the people of all times because Allah has bestowed them with intelligence and knowledge that occultation for them will be like actually seeing him (as if

occultation does not exist). Their position in times of occultation is like those who fought alongside Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They are our true Shias, who will invite people towards religion of Holy Prophet secretly and openly.” Imam added: “To await the reappearance is true pleasure.”

Tradition 9

Mohammad bin Abdul Jabbar narrates that he asked Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) about Imam after him. Imam (a.s.) replied:

“After me the Proof of Allah on earth shall be my son whose name and agnomen are that of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and he is the last in chain of vicegerency.”

He was asked about his mother so he (a.s.) replied,

“He will be born to the granddaughter of Caesar of Rome and will remain hidden from the eyes of the people. He will reappear and will fight Dajjal and thereby spread justice and equity on earth as it shall be full of injustice and oppression. Hence, calling him by his name and agnomen during his occultation has been prohibited.”

Tradition 10

Ahmad bin Ishaq relates that he heard from Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) thus:

“Praise be to Allah who did not cause me to die before showing me my successor. He shall resemble the Prophet in his appearance and character the most. Allah will protect him in occultation and then will make him reappear. Thereafter he shall fill the earth with justice and equity as it would be full with injustice and

oppression.”

Tradition 11

Mohammad bin Ali Hamza states that he heard Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) saying,

“The vicegerent and proof of Allah, my successor, was born circumcised on 15th Shaaban 255 A.H. at dawn. Rizwan, the treasurer of Heaven, along with the proximate angels, bathed him with the water of Kausar and Salsabil. After that he was given bath by my aunt Janabe Hakima, daughter of Imam Mohammad Taqi (a.s.).”

Various names of the mother of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)

After this, the narrator asked concerning his mother and to this Imam (a.s.) said:

“She is a princess. She is sometimes called ‘Susan’, ‘Rayhaana’ and ‘Saiqal’. ‘Narjis’ is also one of her names.”

Tradition 12: Miracle of Imam at Childhood

It is narrated from Ibrahim bin Mohammad bin Faras-e-Neyshaapuri that he says, “Amr bin Auf was a ‘Nasibi’ (enemy of Able Bait) and a staunch enemy of Shias. On getting the information about his intentions to murder me, I was afraid and bid farewell to my family members and went to the house of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). I wanted to flee after meeting him. When I was with Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.), I noticed a boy who was sitting beside Imam, with a face shining like a moon. I was extremely impressed and on the verge of forgetting my problem. At that time the boy told me:

“O son of Ibrahim, do not fear for Allah will keep you safe from his (Amr bin Auf’s) evil desire.”

This increased my amazement and I asked Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.): O my Master! Who is he who is aware of inner problems? Imam (a.s.) replied:

“He is my son and my successor. It is not appropriate to call him by his name or agnomen until Allah manifests his rule and kingdom. O son of Ibrahim! Do not to disclose what you have heard to anyone except who is worthy of it.”

I sent salutations upon Imam Hasan-e-Askari (a.s.) and his son Imam Mahdi (a.s.). I came out of his house relieved due to the grace of Allah and due to the assurance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Soon I was informed by my uncle (Ali bin Faras) that Mo’tamid Abbasi deputed his brother to arrest and kill Amr bin Auf. He was arrested and chopped to pieces. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Tradition 13

Abdullah bin Husain Katib narrates from Imam Hasan-e-Askari (a.s.):

“Bani Umayyah and Bani Abbas raised their swords against us due to two reasons. First, they were aware of the fact that they did not have any right upon Caliphate. They were afraid that we would claim Caliphate and we get it. Secondly, they were cognizant of traditions which predicted the end of their rule at the hands of our Qaem (a.s.).

They undoubtedly believed themselves to be the tyrants. Due to this they desired to kill the Ahle Bait of the Prophet and terminate his progeny to prevent the

birth of Qaem (a.s.) or they could kill him. But Allah did not allow them to carry on their evil desire. He wished complete His light although the polytheists might be averse to it."

Tradition 14

Imam Ja'far-e-Sadiq (a.s.) is reported to have said:

"There is no miracle of the Prophets and Imams which Allah will not manifest at hands of our Qaem (a.s.), thus completing the argument and proof upon the people."

Tradition 15: Some signs of Reappearance

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

"Ten signs will certainly appear before the Day of Judgment. Sufyani, Dajjal, Smoke, Reappearance of Daabbat al-Arz (the one who will walk on earth), Reappearance of Qaem (a.s.), Rising of sun from the west, Descent of Isa, Submergence of land in the Arabian peninsula, blazing fire from land of Eden, Hastening of people towards Qiyamat."

Tradition 16

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

"Seek refuge in Allah from the evil of Sufyani, Dajjal and other mischiefs."

He was asked, 'O Son of Prophet (s.a.w.a.)! We know Dajjal in light of your traditions but who is this Sufyani and others who are going to spread these mischiefs?'

Imam (a.s.) replied:

"A person from the barren lands of Syria will rise. He will be from the progeny of Atabah bin Abu Sufyan.

This accursed person shall pretend to be pious in the beginning... and later claim Caliphate. People will pledge allegiance to him. Those scholars who were hiding the truth will follow him and will declare him as the best person on face of earth.

Appearance of both Sufyani and people with white flags from Yemen will take place in the same year and month. Sufyani will rule for 20 years."

Tradition 17

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said:

"Khurasani, Sufyani and Yemeni will appear in same year and month, but none will be more near the truth than Yemeni as he shall be guided towards truth."

Tradition 18

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

"Our Qaem (a.s.) will be victorious through his awe and he will be helped by Allah. Earth will contract for him and all treasures shall be revealed will be at his disposal. Allah will cause His religion to dominate over all other religions although the polytheists will be averse to it. His empire will extend from East to West and will civilize all the destroyed nations. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) ibn Maryam, the Spirit of Allah, will descend and pray behind him."

A person asked, 'O son of Allah's Messenger! When will your Qaem (a.s.) reappear? Imam (a.s.) replied:

"The time when men will resemble women and women will resemble men, homosexuality will be rampant, women will drive vehicles, false testimonies will be

accepted and justice shall be put aside, people will consider murder, fornication, bribery and usury as normal, pious ones will be subjugated by evil ones, Sufyani will rise from Syria and Yemeni from Yemen. Earth will be submerged at a place called Baida. A person from progeny of Holy Prophet (s.a.), whose name will be Ahmed bin Hasan alias 'Nafs-e-Zakiyyah' will be martyred between Hajar-e-Aswad and Maqam-e-Ibrahim. There will be call from the sky stating that truth is with Ali and his Shias. At that time our Qaem shall reappear.

When he reappears, his back will be against the Hoy Kaaba. He will be accompanied by 313 followers and shall commence the crusade against injustice with the ayat of Quran. **بَقِيَّةُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (The Remnant of Allah is better for you, if you are amongst the believers)**. Then he will proclaim, 'I am the last of the Proofs of Allah. I am Allah's Caliph among you. People will greet him thus, **السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَقِيَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ** (Peace be upon you, O Remnant of Allah in this earth). When 4000 people shall gather around him he will march from Mecca. None except Allah shall be worshipped on earth. This will occur after a long occultation."

Same tradition is also narrated from Imam Mohammad-e-Baqir (a.s.).

Tradition 19

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

"Some people will disappear from their beds. Their will be 313 in number just as the people of Badr and will reach Mecca at dawn. This is the explanation of the

verse **Wherever you are Allah will bring you out.**
 [Surah Baqarah (2): 148] *These are the partisans of
 Qaem (a.s.)."*

Tradition 20

A person asked Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.): When will your Qaem reappear? Imam (a.s.) replied.

"The time when deviation will increase and guidance will decrease, corruption and mischief will rise, religious reformation will virtually disappear. Homosexuality shall be rampant. Fuqaha (Jurists) will be inclined towards the allurements of the world, the poets will acquire honour through poetry and recitals, some innovators shall be transformed into monkeys and pigs. Sufyani will be killed and Dajjal will rise and increase the deviation of people. Then on the 23rd of the month of Ramazan a voice will call out from sky the name of Qaem (a.s.). He will reappear on the day of Ashura (10th Moharram). As if I am visualizing him standing between Hajar-e-Aswad and Maqam-e-Ibrahim. Jibraeel will stand in front of him and will proclaim that allegiance is only for Allah. Then the followers of Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will come towards him."

O Allah! Include us among those who pay allegiance to him and obey him. For the sake of Mohammad and his progeny (a.s.).

Recognition of Divine Proof for Worship of God

There is no doubt that God has created man for worship. A clean and pure intellect will conclude that it is necessary for man to worship God. The best way to thank the benefactor is to obey and serve him. But intellect cannot decide the manner of worship because this is beyond the reach of human intellect. Those who formulated the manners of worshipping God based on their own intellect were deviated from the path and ended up worshipping someone other than God.

God sent Prophets and Messengers so that they call people towards the true and real God, extract the hidden treasures of the intellect, to bring forth and awaken the divine recognition present in nature through their reminders and teach them the correct methods of worship so that this worship can be a cause of divine proximity.

The words and actions of the Prophets draw peoples' attention towards God – every word of theirs is guidance towards God. We would like to mention a very important point here. If we wish to distinguish between a true prophet and a pseudo prophet, or true Imam and a pseudo Imam, then we must look at their words and deeds. If his words and deeds deny evil and invite towards the worship of God then that prophet is a true prophet and the Imam is the rightful Imam. If it is contrary to this i.e. obedience of evil is found in his words, then that prophet is not the rightful one. His mere words are enough to prove his falsehood and more proofs are not required.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says,

إِعْرِفُوا اللَّهَ بِالرَّسُولِ وَالرَّسَالَاتِ

“Recognise God through God and the Messenger through his message.”¹

Based on this, the rightfulness of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and the invalidity of their opponents can be proved through their sayings.

Let us pay attention to the following sentences of Ziyaarat-e-Jaameah. God has made the Ahle Bait (a.s.):

“The spokespersons of His revelation, the pillar of His Tauheed, witness over His creation, guiding flag for His servants, luminous minarets in his cities, proof and guide for His path and has protected these personalities from all deviation, safeguarded them from all temptations, protected them from all uncleanness and purified them as one ought to be purified.”

The Imams (a.s.) have invited towards the worship of God. Despite being on such a high position and being attributed with some many merits, Ahle Bait (a.s.) neither called people towards them nor did they portray themselves as great, whereas we see that people get carried away by acquiring the smallest of merits and begin to think too high of themselves. We find the below sentences after the aforementioned ones:

“You therefore respected His Majesty, honoured His Grandeur, glorified His Magnanimity, perpetuated His Invocation, confirmed His Covenant, strengthened the pledge for His Obedience, advised people secretly and openly to please Him, invited to His way with wisdom and attractive sermons. You sacrificed your lives for

¹ Usul-e-Kaafi, Kitab al-Tauheed, vol. 1, p. 85

His goodwill, and endured patiently whatever befell you in His cause. And you established prayer and paid poor-rate and you commanded virtue, and prohibited vice and strongly fought in His way.”

Were these efforts wasted? Wasn't there any outcome of these? Absolutely not! The aim was completely fulfilled. There is not an iota of question of failure. Let's pay attention to the below sentences:

“Until you made His message completely widespread, explained His obligations, implemented His limitations, spread the rules of His constitution and propagated His traditions.”

The aim of the pure Ahle Bait (a.s.) was to spread the divine message and this message reached the entire world. Today, wherever in the world we see the light of Islam, it is the result of the teachings of Ahle Bait (a.s.).

Worship should be as per God's Wish

God's worship can only be done in a manner and method prescribed by Him. Prayer is certainly a form of worship but it is correct when it is as per the order of God. If a person, after the two units of morning prayers performs another two units (without those of vow etc.) assuming it to be made obligatory by God, then this prayer will not be a cause of nearness to God because this prayer is not as per His order.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says,

“God ordered the angels to prostrate to Adam. Everyone prostrated to Adam. At that time, the jealousy in the heart of Satan became evident and he refused to prostrate. God said to him, “When I ordered you to prostrate then what prevented you from prostrating?” He replied, “I am better than him. You

have created me from fire and created him from dust.” Therefore, the first one to use conjecture was Satan and he showed pride. This very pride was the first disobedience of God. Satan said, “My God, exempt me from prostrating to Adam and I will worship you in such a manner that neither any proximate angel nor any messenger would have done.” God replied, “I do not need your worship. I just want that I be worshipped the way I want.” Satan refused to prostrate. God said, “Get out of here. Certainly my curse is upon you till the day of judgment.”¹

God’s wish with respect to worship is evident from this incident. If a person spends his entire life in prostration but this prostration is not as per the order of God, then not only is it not considered as worship but is also a cause of distancing from God.

Tauheed – along with Prophethood and Imamat

The implication of believing in God is not that we simply consider Him as One and do not associate anyone with Him, but it is also necessary that we acquire religion and his orders from that door which He has appointed for it. These “Divine Doors” are the Prophets, Messengers and the Holy Imams (a.s.). To believe in Prophethood and Imamat is necessary for the completion of the belief of Tauheed.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says,

“If someone assumes that he can make the permitted as permitted and the prohibited as prohibited without the recognition of the Messenger of God (s.a.w.a.) then in reality, he has not observed the permitted as

¹ Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 11, p. 141

permitted and the prohibited as prohibited. If a person offers prayers, pays poor rate, performs pilgrimage and performs all the actions without the recognition of the personality whose obedience has been made obligatory and necessary by God, then he is not performed any act. Neither has he offered prayers, nor observed fast, nor paid poor rate, nor performed pilgrimage, nor the ritual ablution nor purification, nor considered the prohibited of God as prohibited nor His permitted as permitted. His prayer is not prayer although he bows and prostrates. Neither his charity is right nor his pilgrimage. All these will be correct only when they are performed with the recognition and under the guidance of the one whose obedience God has made obligatory upon the people. Whoever has the recognition of this divine representative and takes the religious laws from him, has obeyed God.”¹

Let us pay attention to this tradition below:

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says,

“A scholar from Bani Israel worshipped God to such an extent that he became extremely thin and frail. God revealed to the Prophet of his time to convey to him, “Worship me so much that you melt like the goat’s meat in a cauldron, but I will not accept from you until you come from the door which from which I have ordered to come.”²

It is extremely clear from these traditions that the recognition of the Divine Proof is necessary for God’s worship and obedience. Since man has been created to worship God, this aim of creation cannot be fulfilled without the recognition of the

¹ Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 27, p. 176

² Ibid.

Divine Proof. Now let us pay attention to this tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which has been unanimously accepted and narrated by both Shias and Sunnis.

مَنْ مَاتَ وَلا يَعْرِفُ إِمَامَ زَمَانِهِ مَاتَ مَاتَةَ أَهْلِ الْكُفْرِ

“The one who dies without recognising the Imam of his time dies the death of ignorance.”¹

Along with this, pay careful attention to the following incident which makes the importance and necessity of the recognition of the Divine Proof absolutely clear. Today, the belief in Imamah of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is of extreme importance. The entire base and pivot of our faith and worship is on the Imamah of Hazrat Vali-e-Asr (a.s.). Even the slightest deviation from the belief in his Imamah will take us away from religion and none of our actions will be accepted near God without his Imamah.

Believe in the Divine Proof, your prayers shall be accepted

There was a family in Bani Israel who possessed special characteristics. When any member of this family prayed to God for forty nights, his prayer would be accepted and need fulfilled. Their prayer would never be rejected.

One person of this family prayed for forty nights for a particular need and prayer a lot but his prayer was not accepted and his need was not fulfilled. He came to Hazrat Isa (a.s.), explained his case and requested him to pray for him. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) performed ablution, offered prayers and then supplicated to God. God replied,

سَيِّدِي إِسْحَابِي، أَلَيْ مِنْ يَرِي الْبَابِ أَلَيْ أَوْتَىٰ أَلَيْ لِي فِي وَفِي قَلْبِي
شَكٌّ فَكُلُّهُ حَتَّىٰ يَنْقَطِعَ عَنْهُ وَيَكْتُمُ مَا لَمْ يَكْتُمُ لِي

¹ Yanaabee' al-Mawaddah, chapter 39, p. 137

“O Isa, this servant of mine came to me from a door other than the one from which I have called from. He prays to me while he has some doubt about you in his heart. Then even if he worships me until his neck breaks and his fingers fall off, I will not accept his prayer.”¹

When such is the consequence of doubting the Divine Proof, what will be the result of his disobedience? If someone tries to bypass the Divine Proof and go in the presence of God, he is rejecting that medium and channel which is appointed by God. It has been mentioned earlier that if someone worships God as per his wish, then his worship will not be accepted.

In a Hadees-e-Qudsi, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has said that Jibraeel narrated to me who narrates from God, the Mighty who says,

“One who considers Me eligible and deserving of worship and considers Mohammad as My servant and messenger and considers Ali b. Abi Talib as My caliph and consider the Imams from his progeny as My proofs, I shall make him enter paradise due to My mercy and I shall deliver him from the fire of hell on account of My pardon and forgiveness. I shall give him a place in My neighbourhood. I shall make My mercy and nobility necessary for him and I shall complete My bounties upon him. I will consider him among My special and sincere ones. If he calls I will acknowledge him and if he prays to me I will accept it. If he asked from Me, I shall give him and if he remains silent I will initiate. If he performs evil deeds, I shall give him a place in My mercy. If he runs from Me, I shall call him towards Me and if he returns to Me I shall accept him.

¹ Usul-e-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 400, Chapter of Doubt

If he knocks at My door, I shall open it for him. And one who does not bear witness to My Unity, or bears witness to My Unity but does not bear witness to the Messengership of My messenger, or bears witness to his Messengership but does not bear witness that Ali b. Abi Talib is My caliph, or bears witness to the caliphate of Ali but does not does not bear witness to the Imamat and Mastership of the Imams in his progeny, he has rejected My bounties and considered My greatness as worthless. He has rejected My signs and My books. (Now pay attention to the following sentences which show the importance of the recognition of the Divine Proof) If he turns towards Me, I shall veil Myself from Him. If he asks from Me, I will deprive him of it. If he calls Me I will not listen to him. If he is hopeful of Me, I will disappoint him. This is My punishment for him and I am not the slightest unjust towards my servants.”¹

It is not possible to be safe from the divine punishment without the recognition of the divine proof. Man may assume to have done a lot of good deeds but if he does not have the recognition of the Imam of his time in his heart, he will not attain deliverance.

“God does not hesitate to chastise those people who follow an Imam who has not been appointed by Him even though people are good doers. And God hesitates to chastise those people who follow the Imam appointed by Him even though they are evil doers.”²

¹ Kamaaluddin, Chapter 23, p. 258. H. 3

² Usul-e-Kaafi, Kitab al-Hujjah, vol. 1, p. 376

The matter of hesitance and shame near God is not like the one in case of humans. This means that this is the Sunnah of God and His way. However, one should not conclude from this tradition that if we are followers of the rightful Imam, there is no problem in sinning. After acknowledging the Imamat and recognising the Imam, one should be more careful in staying away from sins so that it can be known that a follower of the rightful Imam knows the requirements of this belief.

May God increase the recognition of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) daily, and every moment, may He increase his love in our hearts and give us the opportunity to serve him.

Manifestation of Divine Unity in the Imamat of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

One aspect in the belief of Tauheed is that no man has the right to rule over another man. Even a father does not have the right to rule over his children. And if a father does not have the right to rule then no one else will have the right to rule, neither order nor prohibit, nor appoint on a position nor remove. In fact man does not have authority on his own self. Therefore any government rule which comes into existence without the permission of God will be an unjust government and will be considered as interfering in divine matters. As a result, if a person or a nation follows this government then it is as if he has followed the unjust and instead of answering the call of God, he has chosen that path which is different from the divine path.

Based on this, all the people of the world who are believers in Divine Unity should accept such a government or leadership which is from God and a government and rule with which God is satisfied. It could be the case of the leadership and authority of a father over his children or that of a person over his self or his wealth. Now if God had not given the authority and leadership to a father over his children, then the father did not have the right to rule over his children. In the same way, if God had not made man owner of his life, self and property, then man did not have the right to rule over his self and impose his decision over his life. If God had not made someone as owner of land, then man would not have become its owner. Now if he claims ownership, then this claim is invalid because he has claimed ownership without the permission of God.

All the discussion regarding Mastership which has been mentioned in Islam is related to human nature and the laws are as per human nature. But even this innate Mastership cannot come into the domain of laws without divine permission because government and rulership is God's unique right and none can interfere in it except Him. But it is also clear that God has given His permission of governing and ruling to some of His servants and has endowed it with reliability and it is clear from the previous discussions that the system of Imamat and guidance in Islam means having divinely endowed Imams who have the permitted right to rule and therefore obedience to their orders is obligatory. And if this order and prohibition is not obeyed, it is considered as disobedience will be regarded as opposing the divine order. There is a basic difference between the order of an Imam and a representative of the Imam (Faqih) which is that God forbid, if a Faqih orders against the order of God, then opposing the Faqih's order will not be considered as opposing the order of God and His Messenger. It will not be considered under, لَا طَاعَةَ مَخْلُوقٍ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ "There is no obedience to the creatures in disobedience of the Creator". In a divine government, there is hierarchal rule, but only and only God's order prevails as Ali (a.s.) in reply to Ibne Abbas said,

"Divine government means that truth is established through this government and falsehood is removed. If these two are not achieved then the government is not religious and it is not obligatory to obey this government."

In such a government, the responsible people are answerable to implement divine laws and no ruler or official has the right to go against the divine law. None of the officials, including the Imam has the right to demand or expect people to act other than the order of God. One of the signs of this

government is this that there is no competition or conflict between people to attain a certain position in the government. If a person or a group thinks of gaining superiority in this manner, then he is certainly not eligible for that position. In this government, position means hardships and restrictions. The more critical the position more will be the responsibility. While the value of the position holder will be based on his sincerity and work, it is possible that a common man due to his intention and sincerity in work for God, or due to his interest and responsible approach towards the work is closer to God than a ruler or governor.

Adi b. Haatim said to Muawiyah regarding Ameerul Momineen (a.s.),

لَا يَخَافُ الْقَوِيَّ ظَلَمَ وَلَا يَبِيضُ الْهَيْفُ مِنْ ظُلْمِهِ

“In Ali’s government, no powerful fears his oppression, or his anger, or favouritism and the weak do not fear his justice.”

Ali (a.s.) has himself said,

“The weak are more honoured near me such that I give them their rights and the powerful are weak such that I take away others’ rights from them.”

In short, in this government, Tauheed will be manifested with its complete splendour. There will not be any superiority in this society. There will be one religion, one law and one government. This government will always be the personification of reconciliatory progress. Similar to the exegesis of the following verse according to some traditions,

فَمَنْ كَانَ رَاجِعًا لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ

“Then the one who desires meeting his Lord, he

should do good deeds and should not associate anyone with his Lord in worship.”

This shows that not associating anyone on God’s worship in this system of Imam’s government means not to accept any other government other than this government. Mastership is for the Imams and no one else should be associated with them. It is mentioned in Tafseer-e-Ayaashi that someone asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.) regarding this verse. Imam (a.s.) replied,

“The best action is the recognition of the Imams and وَلَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ رَبَّهُ الْأَلْهَاءُ should not associate anyone with his Lord in worship’ means to follow Ali (a.s.) and not to associate anyone in his caliphate and not to consider anyone else worthy of it.”

The last link of this chain of Imamatus in whose era we live and due to whose blessing we benefit from various bounties is Hazrat Hujjat b. al-Hasan (a.t.f.s.). Just like the previous Imams, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) also has absolute authority and the right to discontinue and implement anything. There is no partner for him in this. In order to derive more benefit from his reappearance such conditions will appear and all those hurdles which were present at the time of other Imams as well as during the occultation of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) will be removed. At that time, the true meanings of the divine names like Wali, Aadil, Haakim, Sultan, Muntaqim, Mubeer, Qaahir, Zaahir will become evident. In other words, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) will be the perfect personification of these names and will be the divinely appointed ruler and master. The position of divine caliphate will be illuminated with his blessed presence. The existence of Imam (a.s.) will be the axis to implement all the divine affairs. God, with His perfect wisdom, through the medium of Imam, will grant life to everything. The foundation of all these will be Divine Unity and will be implemented with divine permission.

In traditions, the reappearance of Imam has been mentioned as realisation of the aim of Tauheed. For example, one government, one law, one religion and one society. God will win over the entire world through the Imam (a.s.). In one of famous traditions from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Janabe Jabir (r.a.) narrates,

ذَلِكَ يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُ اللَّهُ يَدَيْمِشَارِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبَهَا

“He is the one through whom God will conquer the east and the west”

That victorious day, which will be a great day according to some exegeses of Quran, is the day of the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.). It is that day when a disbeliever will not benefit if he brings faith and the slogan of لا اله الا الله “There is no god except Allah” will be heard. Islam will be the universal religion. Small kingdoms will cease to exist, the whole world will be one and there will be no passport or permission required to enter a city. Today, the way people have been divided based on countries and are recognised as per their nationality, will no longer exist.

In that era, the effects and blessings of faith will be manifested and beliefs regarding God will be evident as mentioned in Quran.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ لَكَفَرُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا لَهُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَأَلْزَمْنَا الْأَرْضَ

“And if the people of the villages would have brought faith and observed piety, We would have opened the doors of blessings of the heavens and the earth for them.”¹

The doors of blessings of the heavens and the earth will be opened for the people. Wars and battles, polytheistic systems,

¹ Surah A’raaf (7): 96

jealousy will transform into friendship and brotherhood, peace, purity of hearts and a divine Islamic system.

The proof of these is a tradition of Imam which Ayyashi has narrated from Ibn Bukayr. Ibn Bukayr says that I asked Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) regarding the verse,

وَلَا سَلْمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُجْعُونَ

“And to Him submit whoever is in the heavens and the earth voluntarily or involuntarily and they will all return to Him.”¹

Imam (a.s.) replied,

“This verse has been revealed regarding our Qaaim (a.s.). When he will reappear, he will present Islam before the disbelievers of the east and the west. If one obeys and accepts Islam, he will order them that which he given the Muslim, like prayers, fasting, charity and pilgrimage. But if someone does not accept Islam, Imam will kill them until there will none except a believer in Tauheed in the whole world.”

Ibn Bukair says, “My my life be sacrificed for you. Creatures are more that they be killed or converted.” Imam (a.s.) replied, “Surely when God intends, He increases the less and decrease the more.”

In another tradition from Imam Baqir (a.s.) says explaining the verse,

لَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا قُرُونًا يَتَسَوَّوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَرُوا بِالصَّالِحَاتِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَتِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْآمُورِ

“They are those whom we have established in the earth, they offer prayers and give poor rate and enjoin towards goodness and prohibit from evil and

¹ Surah Aale Imran (3): 83

for God is the end of the affairs.”

“Those who help God are such that if we make them the masters and rulers of this earth, they establish prayers, pay poor rate and enjoin towards goodness and prohibit from evil and know that all the affairs are in divine hands.”

Imam (a.s.) says:

“This is for the progeny of Mohammad (a.s.). God will make the east and the west of this earth as the property of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and his companions and will make His religion victorious.

Through him and his companions, God the High, will destroy the innovations. They will enjoin towards goodness and prohibit from evil. All the affairs will be in divine hands.”

Apart from this, there are many traditions which explain this aim and mention the innate human desires due to which people today take undue benefit from it, like United Nations in the name of human rights, justice and equity, peace and security oppress the weak.

The reason for this is that innate nature of man desires such a government which observes justice and equity, peace and security and honouring of human rights. And this is that very religion which, ultimately, will be established with the obedience of a great leader. This leader is the beloved of the Successors and the Prophets and is the favourite of all servants of God. He will rule over the entire universe. The world, while accepting his government and his clear goals, will acknowledge his call when the son of the Messenger and the light of the eye of Ali (a.s.) and Fatima (s.a.) will rise from the Kaaba.

We hope for that day; the day which belongs to those who await, the day of the weak which will be the day of the reappearance of the one who will bring the message of peace and safety. On that day, the world which is filled with fear and conflicts will be filled with peace, safety, justice and equity.

Hazrat Imam Husain (a.s.) and Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

The cries of help raised by Imam Husain (a.s.) on the day of Ashura did not die away in Karbala itself. Indeed, it reverberated with greater intensity with the passage of time. Those who weren't present in this physical world rather were still in the celestial world, had also answered his (a.s.) plea (*labbaik*).

There's a strong connection between the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) and the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). In the traditions narrated by Imam Husain (a.s.) as well as in supplications, we find the mention of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Imam Mahdi (a.s.) too has often spoken about the afflictions that befell Imam Husain (a.s.). In this article we will try to make a brief analysis.

Imam Husain (a.s.) in the eyes of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Sa'ad bin Abdullah Qummi states that I inquired from Imam Mahdi (a.s.) the explanation of کھیمص

He (a.s.) said:

"These are the concealed words with which Allah had forewarned His servant Janab-e-Zakariyyah (a.s.) and also reiterated it to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Janab-e-Zakariyyah (a.s.) had requested Allah to teach him the five (special) names and Allah had taught him those names through Janab-e-Jibraeel (a.s.). When Janab-e-Zakariyyah (a.s.) would take the names of Mohammad (s.a.w.a.), Ali (a.s.), Fatima (s.a.) and Hasan (a.s.) then

the grief within him would subside. But when he took the name of Husain (a.s.) his sorrow would intensify. One day he implored Allah, 'O Allah, when I take four names I find rest and inner peace but when I take the name of Husain, then sorrow overcomes me and tears start flowing from my eyes. Allah revealed the incident (of Karbala) through these words.

'س' means Karbala, 'ح' refers to the massacre and martyrdom of the chaste progeny, 'ي' is for the oppressor Yazeed, 'ع' stands for thirst and 'ص' is for the patience of Imam Husain (a.s.).

On hearing this Janab-e-Zakariyyah (a.s.) became so anguished that he did not leave his prayer niche for three days. He did not allow anyone to come near him. He wept incessantly and kept saying:

'O Allah, I am in grief because calamities will befall on the son of Your best creation. O Allah! Grant me a son who will be a support in my old age, who will be the light of my eyes, who will be my inheritor and my vicegerent. And then you involve me in his grief, just like You have involved Your beloved messenger Mohammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) in his son's sorrow.'

Allah granted Janab-e-Zakariyyah (a.s.) a son named Yahya (a.s.) and then involved him in his misery. The pregnancy period of both Janabe Yahya (a.s.) and Imam Husain (a.s.) was six months."¹

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in the eyes of Imam Husain (a.s.)

Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.) says:

Haaris al-A'war asked Imam Husain (a.s.) the meaning of

¹ Kamaluddin, Vol 2, page 420

وَ الشَّمْسِ وَ ضُحَاهُ

“I swear by the sun and its heat.”¹

He (a.s.) replied “It refers to the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.)”

Then he asked him about the second verse

وَ الْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا

“I swear by the moon while it follows it”.

He said, “It refers to Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), who is after the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.). Then he asked him (a.s.) about the third verse

وَ الظُّلَمِ إِذَا أَظْهَرَهَا

“I swear by the day when it manifests itself.”

He (a.s.) said:

ذَلِكَ الْقَائِمُ مِنَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ يَمْلَأُ الْأَرْضَ قِسْطًا وَ بَرًّا

“It refers to Hazrat Qaem of Aale Mohammad (a.s.), who will fill the earth with justice and equity.”²

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) the avenger of the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.)

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will avenge the brutal and tyrannical killing of Imam Husain (a.s.) and his companions. While explaining this verse of Quran,

وَ مَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُوماً فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوَلِيِّهِ سُلْطٰناً فَلَا يُكْرَفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ

“...and whoever is killed unjustly, We have indeed given

¹ Surah Shams, verse 1

² Tafseer al-Furaat al-Kufi, p. 212

to his heir authority, so he shall not be extravagant in slaying; surely he is aided”¹

Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.) says:

“The oppressed ones are Imam Husain (a.s.) and his successors. When our Qaem (a.s.) will reappear he will account for their blood. He will take revenge in such a way that people will say that he has gone to the extreme.”²

‘Going to the extreme,’ means to slay the innocent ones. Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) is infallible, so there is no question of him shedding the blood of innocent people. This is the opinion of those who think that the killers of Imam Husain (a.s.) were only those who were present in Karbala. On the contrary, in the eyes of Islam, even they are culpable who agree with the actions of the tyrants, justify it and then go all-out to prove their innocence. Even today, we find some wretched people who praise Yazeed (I.a.) and those involved in the killing of Imam Husain (a.s.). Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) will take revenge from all of them.

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in the words of Imam Husain’s (a.s.)

In Ziyarate Ashura, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) is referred to as ‘Mansoor (the helped one).’ Isa al-Khashaab inquired from Imam Husain (a.s.), ‘Are you the Master of Affairs?’

He (a.s.) said:

لاَ وَ لَكِنِّ صَاحِبُ الْأَمْرِ الظَّرِيءُ الْقَرِيءُ الْمَشْهُورُ إِلَيْهِ أَلَيْكِي بِعِيهِ يَجْعَعُ لِقَائِهِ
إِلَى أَتَقِيهِ تَمَانِيَةً ۗ

“No (I am not the Master of Affairs). Rather the Master

¹ Surah Baqarah (2): 33

² Tafseer al-Burhaan, v. 2, p. 419; Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 10, p. 15

of Affairs is the one who will be hidden from the eyes of the people. His dwelling is far away from the human inhabitants. He will avenge the killing of his father. His agnomen will be the agnomen of his uncle. The sword will rest on his shoulder for 8 months.”¹

The words “tareed” and “shareed” are synonyms. They are used for the one who has gone far away from the people because they deserted and abandoned him. The people did not value the blessing of Imam’s (a.s.) presence. On the contrary, they were ungrateful to this blessing. They made the killing of his family lawful, opposed him through their tongues and pens and made every possible effort to take his remembrance out of the minds.

‘He will avenge the killing of his father’ could also mean Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) because he was martyred through poison and it could also mean Imam Husain (a.s.).

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.)

In Ziyarat-e-Naahiyah, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) has remembered Imam Husain (a.s.) in these words:

“You were to the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) a son, an authority on the Noble Quran, a pillar and supporter of the nation, diligent in obeying your Lord, a protector of the covenant and the oath, you kept away from the paths of the sinners, you were troubled, you were excessive in your bowing and prostrations. You had turned your face from the enticements of the world like the one who is departing from it, looking upon it with

¹ Kamaaluddin, v. 1, p. 318

fear.”¹

This is how Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) has articulated 10 qualities and attributes of his illustrious grandfather. The truth is that Imam Husain (a.s.) and Imam Mahdi (a.s.) share a special bond. They both share the same objective. Imam Husain (a.s.) desired to safeguard the religion while Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will enforce the religion in the entire world.

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the Day of Ashura

Just as the title of Ameerul Momineen is exclusive for Imam Ali (a.s.), similarly the title of Qaem is only for Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Abu Hamza Thumali asked Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.): “Are you not the Qaem? Why only Wali-e-Asr (a.s.) is called Qaem?” He (a.s.) replied:

“When my grandfather Imam Husain (a.s.) was martyred the angels wailed loudly and they pleaded in front of Allah — ‘O Allah, will you let go the ones who have massacred the best of Your creation – the one chosen by You and the son of Your chosen one?’ Allah revealed to the angels:

“O My angels, be patient! I swear by My Honour and Might, verily I will take revenge from these people even if it may be after a few days. Thereafter Allah removed the veil from the eyes of the angels and they saw the Imams from the progeny of Imam Husain (a.s.). Seeing this the angels became happy and they saw that among those Imams there was one who was in the state of qiyam (standing) and Allah said,

بِهَذَا الْقَائِمِ أُنْتَقِمُ مِنْهُمْ

‘Through this Qaem I will take revenge.’¹

¹

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and his yearning to help Imam Husain (a.s.)

To attain martyrdom alongside Hazrat Imam Husain (a.s.) is the greatest achievement and honour. It is something which we mention repeatedly in Ziyarat-e-Waaresah,

‘O how we wish we would have been with you and attain this ultimate success.’

In Ziyarat-e-Naahiyah, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) has expressed this great desire in the following words:

“O my oppressed grandfather! Although, I came in this world after you and by the decree of Allah I couldn’t help you, but I will lament upon you every morning and evening and instead of tears I shall weep blood.”

This gives us an idea that in the eyes of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.), it is indeed a great honour and privilege to help Imam Husain (a.s.). The mission of Imam Husain (a.s.) will be completed by Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the religion for which the Chief of Martyrs (a.s.) sacrificed his life will be put into practice in the entire world.

The Day of Ashura and the Day of Reappearance

There’s no particular day fixed for the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Some traditions, however, do speak of certain days on which there’s a possibility of Imam (a.s.) reappearing. It means one can hope and expect the reappearance to occur on these days. Some reports mention Friday, some speak of Ashura and some also talk about Saturday.

¹ Dalaail al-Imaamah by Mohammad Ibn Jurair al-Tabari (he is different from the famous Sunni historian), p. 239

These traditions can be reconciled broadly as – Ashura and Friday could be one day on which reappearance may take place while Saturday could be the day of announcement. Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) says:

“On 23rd day of the holy month of Ramazan there will be a voice in the sky calling out the name of Hazrat Qaem (a.s.) and the day of Ashura will be the day when he will rise – the day on which Imam Husain (a.s.) was martyred.”¹

It appears that the decision of the reappearance of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.s.) will be taken in Shab-e-Qadr. He will be informed about his reappearance and the day of Ashura will be the day on which he will reappear and commence his uprising.

Imam Mahdi’s (a.s.) first speech

In his first speech after reappearance, Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will introduce himself in such a way that the deep connect between his reappearance and the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) will be manifested.

When Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will reappear he will introduce himself in the following way while standing between Hajar-e-Aswad and Maqam-e-Ibrahim:

‘O people of the world! Know that I am Imam Qaem (a.s.)’

‘O people of the world! Know that I am the sword with which revenge will be taken.’

‘O people of the world! Know that my grandfather Husain was martyred thirsty.’

‘O people of the world! Know that my grandfather Husain was left uncovered without a shroud on the

¹ Al-Ghaibah by Shaikh Tusi, p. 474

dusty plains.'

*'O people of the world! My grandfather Husain's body was trampled (by horses) after he was massacred.'*¹

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) will first declare that he is the Qaem Imam. Then he will talk about taking revenge through his sword and then speak about the tribulations that befell upon Imam Husain (a.s.). Hazrat (a.s.) will start his oration with the majlis of Imam Husain (a.s.) This will make it clear to one and all the importance of narrating the tribulations and sufferings of Imam Husain (a.s.). It also becomes clear that the objective of Imam Husain's (a.s.) martyrdom will only be realized following the illuminated reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Besides, it is evident that those who narrate the afflictions that were faced by the Chief of Martyrs (a.s.), are actually following the path and tradition of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) while those who put obstacles in the way (of Azadari) can now judge their own fate.

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the avenging of the killing of Imam Husain (a.s.)

Imam Husain (a.s.) told Imam Zainul Aabedeem (a.s.):

*"By Allah, my blood will keep boiling until Allah makes Mahdi apparent. He will avenge my killing and he will slay seventy thousand hypocrites, transgressors and disbelievers."*²

A narrator asked Imam Reza (a.s.): What do you have to say about this tradition wherein Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says:

'When our Qaem (a.s.) will rise he will massacre the

¹ Intezaar Magazine, 1st year, 2nd Edition, p. 178

² Al-Manaaqib by Ibn Shahr Aashoob, v. 4, p. 85; Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 45, p. 299

descendants of the killers of Imam Husain (a.s.) for the crime of their fathers!' Imam Reza (a.s.) said: 'Yes it is true.' Then the narrator asked, 'What is the essence of this verse of Quran then:

وَلَا يُؤْتِرُ وَرَثَتَهُمْ ذُنُوبَهُمْ وَإِذَا نَفَخَ الْفُؤُودُ بِئْسَ الْوَارِثُ

*'No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another'*¹

Imam Reza (a.s.) replied:

*"What Allah has said is true but these people were happy and proud over what their ancestors had done. If a person concurs with the one who performs the action then he too becomes a party in it. If someone is killed in the east and the people of west are in accord with it then in the eyes of Allah they too are partners in crime along with the killers. The fact that Qaem (a.s.) will execute the sons of the killers of Imam Husain (a.s.) is on the premise that they were in pleased and satisfied with the actions of their predecessors."*²

Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and the Completion of Imam Husain's (a.s.) Journey

Imam Husain (a.s.) had travelled from Mecca to Kufa because he wanted to live in Kufa. But the tyrants didn't allow him to complete his journey. They did not let him enter Kufa and instead martyred him in Karbala. Imam Mahdi (a.s.), after his reappearance, will designate Kufa as his capital.

Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.) says:

*"Mahdi will reappear and then travel to Kufa, which will be his home."*³

¹ An'aam (6): 164; Bani Israel (17): 15; Faatir (35): 18; Zumar (39): 7

² Elal al-Sharae', v. 1, p. 219; Oyoon Akhbaar arl-Reza (a.s.), v. 1, p. 273; Behaar al -Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 313

³ Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 52, p. 224

In another tradition he (a.s.) says:

“When our Qaem (a.s.) will reappear he will go to Kufa. At that time every believer will live in Kufa or at least will definitely go there.”¹

These traditions clearly state that Kufa will be Imam Mahdi’s (a.s.) seat of power. He will stay and rule over the entire world from there.

The Helpers of Imam Husain (a.s.) are helpers of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Along with believers, even angels from the heavens will be included in Imam Mahdi’s (a.s.) army. Rayyan ibn Shabeeb narrates from Imam Raza (a.s.):

“Four thousand angels had descended from the heavens to help and support Imam Husain (a.s.). But when they reached Karbala, Imam Husain (a.s.) was already martyred. Since then, those angels are lamenting besides the sacred grave of Imam Husain (a.s.) and they have covered themselves in dust. They will remain in this condition till the reappearance of Qaem (a.s.) following which they will be among his helpers and aiders and their slogan will be,

لِنَارَاتِ الْحَسَنِ

‘Revenge for (the unjust) killing of Imam Husain (a.s.)’²

The aspiration of helping Imam Husain (a.s.) can be met by helping Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Therefore, anyone who, while reciting Ziyarat-e-Waaresah, wishes that he too should have been present

¹ Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 52, p. 385

² Amaali al-Sadooq, Speech No. 27; Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 44, p. 286

in the battle of Karbala, can attain this great blessing by helping Imam e Zamana (a.s.) – even while Imam (a.s.) is in occultation. He can do that by spreading the name of Imam e Zamana (a.s.), by increasing the love of Imam e Zamana (a.s.) in the hearts of the people, by making them remember him, by erasing the doubts concerning him and preparing them for his reappearance and awaiting his reappearance devotedly. These are the ways of helping Imam (a.s.) and in whatever way possible, one should step forward and realize the ambition of helping Imam Husain (a.s.).

The Birthday of Imam Husain (a.s.) and Remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

The 3rd of Shabaan is the birthday of Chief of Martyrs – Imam Husain (a.s.). It is a day of great joy for the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and their Shias. It is a great day for Allah too. On this very distinguished day, Allah had gifted His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) a tradition luminously etched on a green slate, which is called as Hadith-e-Lauh. This tradition elucidates the Messengership, Mastership and Leadership of the Fourteen Infallibles (a.s.). There is a special mention of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). The previous editions of Al Muntazar have discussed this tradition extensively. Hence, we will refrain from discussing it here. There are exclusive supplications and actions prescribed for this day. In these supplications there is mention of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) along with Imam Husain (a.s.). One of the supplications includes:

‘O Allah I beseech You for the sake of the one who was born on this day, the one promised with martyrdom on the day he was born; the heavens and the earth and all their inhabitants wept for him, the one who has been awarded with favour of the Imams (a.s.) being from his offspring as compensation of his martyrdom; the dust of his burial place has healing powers, in whose

company lies success and good fortune and in his lineage is the Qaem for whom occultation has been decreed.”¹

The Birthday of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and Remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.)

The night of 15th Shabaan is the greatest and most blessed after Shab-e-Qadr. On one night the silent Quran was revealed and on the other the speaking Quran was born. One is the night of ‘Qadr’ which is better than thousand months and the other night is a practical exegesis of Shab-e-Qadr. Just as during Shab-e-Qadr, spending the entire night in worship is an excellent act. The best action in this highly significant night is the Ziyarat of Imam Husain (a.s.) and such is its grandeur that the one who wishes to shake hands with 124,000 Prophets (a.s.) then he should perform the Ziyarat of Imam Husain (a.s.) in this night.

As if all the Prophets have come to congratulate Imam Husain (a.s.) on the birth of his dearest grandson Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) this night, the one who will fulfill the purpose for which he sacrificed himself and spread his religion in the entire world.

Shab-e-Qadr and the Remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.)

Shab-e-Qadr is the most blessed night of the year. This night is specifically related to Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) because in this night the angels and Rooh descend in the pious presence of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) with the affairs of the entire year. The most commendable of actions in this night is Ziyarat of Imam Husain

¹ Al-Misbaah al-Mutahajjid, p. 826; Mafaateeh al-Jinaan, A’amaal of 3rd Shabaan

(a.s.). The one who performs the Ziyarat of Imam Husain (a.s.) in this night will have the honour of shaking hands with the pure souls of 124,000 Prophets (a.s.).

On the day of birth of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) too, the visitor of Imam Husain (a.s.) will have the honour of shaking hands with 124,000 Prophets. Likewise, the one who performs Ziyarat on Shab-e-Qadr will have the same privilege. Perhaps, the reason for this is that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) was born on the night of 15th Shaban and that his reappearance may be decided in Shab-e-Qadr. One night is holy on the basis of his birth and the other is from the perspective of his reappearance. Both nights are associated with Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and on both these nights there is Ziyarat of Imam Husain (a.s.).

The supplication of Nudbah and Remembrance of Imam Husain (a.s.)

Dua-e-Nudbah is one of the many supplications exclusively related to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). Those who carry the desire of assisting Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) recite this dua every Friday. They remember their Imam from the depths of their hearts and shed tears on being separated from him. They keep their hearts fresh with the remembrance of their Imam. From the point of legitimacy and on the basis of the actions of the scholars, this is an absolutely authentic supplication. Along with Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) this dua also refers to Imam Husain (a.s.).

Pay attention to the following words from this dua and remember Imam Husain (a.s.):

اَلْحَسَنُ اَلْحَسَنُ اَلْحُسَيْنُ اَلْحُسَيْنُ اَبْنَاؤُاَلْحُسَيْنِ صَ اَلْحِ بَعْدَ صَ اَلْحِ وَ صَ اَدِ قُ بَعْدَ
صَ اَدِ قِ

“Where is Hasan and where is Husain? Where are the sons of Husain? The virtuous – one after the other and

the truthful – one after the other?”

Then Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) has been remembered specifically in this manner:

لَيْسَ الْقَلْبُ بِدَمِ الْمُؤْمَلِ كَرَبَلَاءَ

“Where is the avenger of the innocent blood of the martyr of Karbala?”

Thus, along with Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) the memory of Imam Husain (a.s.) too is revived every Friday.

Ziyarat-e-Ashura and Remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

Ziyarat-e-Ashura is one of the most authentic Ziyaraat. The Infallible Imams (a.s.), and in particular Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), have greatly emphasized that this ziyarat should be recited daily. Traditions speak of enormous rewards for the one who recites it. This ziyarat too discusses about Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

لَوْ رَفِي طَلَبَ لَكَ مَعَ إِمَامِهَا وَرَمِينِ الْقَلْبِ أَجْتِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَأَلِهِ

‘May Allah give me the opportunity to avenge your blood and be along with the helped Imam from the descendants of Mohammad (s.a.w.a.).’

Imam Mohammad Baqir (a.s.), says regarding the verse
وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُوماً فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ سُلْطٰناً فَلَا تُرْفِ فِي الْقَتْلِ كَانَ
مُظْلِماً

“And if anyone is slain unjustly then surely we have made his vicegerent a ruler; then there shall not be any extravagance in killing; surely he is the helped

one.”¹

سَمِيَ الْمَهْدِي الْمَنْصُورَ سَمِيَ أَحْمَدُ وَ مُحَمَّدٌ [مُحَمَّدًا] وَ مُحَمَّدٌ وَ سَمِيَ الْمَسِيحَ (ع)

Allah has named Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) as “Mansoor” (the helped one) just as the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) is referred to as Ahmad and Mohammad and Janabe Isa (a.s.) is called Masih.”²

This also means that Mansoor is one of the names of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

It is also mentioned in Ziyaarat-e-Ashurah thus:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي طَلَبْتُ لِي مَعَ إِمَامٍ مَهْدِيٍّ ظَاهِرٍ لِحَقِّكَ مِنْكُمْ

“O Allah! You give me the opportunity to be alongside Imam Mahdi (a.s.) when he is avenging the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.) while he is visible and speaking.”

Thus, this sentence is a prayer for the early reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) along with the plea for assisting him rightfully and avenging the slaying of Imam Husain (a.s.).

The Day of Ashurah and the Remembrance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Just as the way Imam Mahdi (a.s.) has been mentioned in Ziyaarat-e-Ashurah, similarly among the recommended acts on the day of Ashurah is to offer each other condolences on the severe tribulations braved by Imam Husain (a.s.) in the following manner:

اعظم الله أجورَ يَصُابِنَا لِحُسَيْنٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَ جَعَلْنَا وَ كُمْ مِنْ

¹ Surah Bani Israel (17): 33

² Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 51, p. 31, H. 8 narrating from Tafseer al-Furaat, p. 240, H. 324

الْقَالِينَ بِقَرْنِهِ مَعَ وَوَلِيِّهِ الْإِمَامِ الْحَقِيقِيِّ مِنْ أَهْلِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

“May Allah grant us the highest rewards due to colossal calamity that befell Imam Husain (a.s.). May He include us and you amongst those who take revenge under the Mastership of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) who is from the progeny of Mohammad (a.s.).”

It is worth noting that even on this day of severe afflictions, Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is mentioned along with Imam Husain (a.s.).

Imam Husain (a.s.) and Raj’at (The Return)

In the light of Islamic teachings, just as the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is a certainty, similarly Raj’at too is a certainty. Raj’at means that after the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) those who have left this world will be brought back to life. Only those who don’t believe in the Day of Judgment will consider Raj’at to be impossible.

Those who believe in the resurrection of the dead, it is not surprising for them that before the Day of Judgment some people will be brought back to life following the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and during his reign, rather it is in accordance with the Sunnah of Allah.

Imam Husain (a.s.) is also among those who will return. According to a tradition from Imam Sadiq (a.s.), the first person for whom the earth will split open to re-emerge is Imam Husain Ibn Ali (a.s.).¹

In another tradition Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) says:

“The first among those who will return is Imam Husain (a.s.) and his faithful companions. At the same time

¹ Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 53, p. 39; Tafseer al-Burhaan, v. 2, p 408

O Lord of Husain (a.s.)! For the sake of Husain (a.s.), for the tranquility of the heart of Husain (a.s.), hasten the reappearance of Hujjat (a.s.)!