

Concealed Leadership through Watchful

Eyes

The shape and the size of this world along with its dimensions, notwithstanding that they have remained the same since its creation till its very end, seem to shrink. This statement, though concise, carries a profound meaning in its wake. If someone enquires, "How has the world shrunk if it is the same since inception?" The answer is clear when one explains how communication and commuting modes have progressed at a rapid pace. The beginning of technological ascension is at such a pinnacle today such that a person sitting thousands of miles away can, without wasting a moment, watch and interact with his friend. The introductory point being conveyed here is that although these are mere words used to explain this concept but its reality is still apparent despite being concealed.

Now ponder over the concept of 'apparent' and 'concealed' at its peak. Whatever was being conveyed by the blessed tongue of recipient of wisdom, revelation and divine inspiration viz. the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) concerning his physical journey of ascension (Me'raaj), there was none who objected, doubted or questioned how could it have been possible that the chain on the door was still swinging and the entire incident of Me'raaj transpired along with its nuances, intricacies and pomp. Moreover, it was granted veracity, along with its completeness and perfections, in the pre-conditions of revelation in the following words of the Holy Quran "the measure of the two bows".
(Surah Najm (53): Verse 9)

Concept of 'Apparent' and 'Concealed'

Numerous books have been written on history. History, the word itself, explains that past incidents have been dug into and documented. Right from the initiation of Islam to life sketches of historians, the conditions, incidents, circumstances and details of every leader and those at the helm of affairs who had anything to do with Islam, were recorded. Historians, depending upon their era, have recorded events in different languages, incorporating their own opinions or influences.

When historians documented stuff, none of those living now were present. The only thing they could lay their hands on were the signs, influences and sources used to document matters. As far as current affairs were concerned, a composite report was prepared, which not only included local events, but even news from far-off areas relayed by the messengers and its veracity wholly depended on their statements.

As times progressed and things changed, the historian disappeared and what remained of history are only the writings. Someone asked, "Why is history taught?" The reply was 'History revisits the prevailing conditions of the past, ups and downs, strictness, gentleness, moods, mannerisms and cultures. One learns from the approach of the people of the past, their strengths and weaknesses, factors that made them successful and those that led to their downfall as to how do we benefit from their discoveries and continue the good things they left behind. In other words, the soul of progress can be further strengthened with the blessings of the unseen and leave a legacy that guides the upcoming generations of this nation to benefit from what has been left behind.

This is a benefit of studying history and its entire foundation is based on concealed! The historian, depending on which region and environment he lived in his brief lifespan and his reach is consigned to a limited space and time.

The conclusion of the above discussion is that history is an outcome of a specific voice and a limited life that can be benefitted from

Islam's Misfortune

On one hand is the famous tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) that there will be 12 Imams after me and that this era will start with Imam Ali (a.s.) and end with the Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), whose name will be my name and whose agnomen shall be my agnomen, he will fill the earth with justice and equity as it would be fraught with injustice and inequity. On the other hand, the testimony of Holy Quran, wherein Allah the Almighty says in Surah Qasas (28), verse 5:

"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."

Imam Ali (a.s.) and his progeny were the divine appointed Imams (a.s.) and the rightful heirs of the Messenger of Allah (a.s.). This series continued in its apparent form till the third Islamic century, every detail of which has been received, recorded, and well-documented. For the 12th successor, all precautionary measures were taken such that no record remains as a proof but it could not materialize. Documentary evidences that were established under the light of Prophetic prophecies and divine verses remained more evident than the radiant sun.

This article doesn't have the scope to describe how in a brief span, referred to as the 'minor occultation, the 12th successor provided strong arguments and proofs and how, despite the strong opposition put up by so called the Islamic nation, it was still well established. Post this the 'major occultation started which has included all the past features and covered the present and the future with it.

None of the opponents or antagonists has raised any objection to Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) words nor have they doubted the veracity of the interpretation of the holy verses.

But what can be said about this ill-fated nation that when all proofs, details and records are put before them, they say that Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is yet to be born and on his arrival into this world will the saying of the truthful one and the interpretation of the verse be fulfilled.

Everything travels from the unknown to the known. Take a closer look at this aspect of history which became the epicenter of differences and continues to be so till date. Focus on how differences were created and then introspect to understand what really happened.

Nowadays our scholars, speakers and orators attend functions held on the occasion of the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and discuss the longevity of Imam (a.s.) likening it to that of divine Prophets Nuh (a.s.), Yunus (a.s.) and Idrees (a.s.). They factually prove that longevity is not a new concept nor is it beyond the realms of possibility. They cite the example of Hazrat Khizr (a.s.) and also that of the accursed Satan who has cast his net of deceit wider even as he remains concealed. They argue that if Satan, can remain hidden and deviate people, why can't a divine proof lead and guide the masses from occultation?

These voices echo in our celebrations. The history and birth of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), his Imamate, his four special deputies and their role during minor occultation, visitation to their holy graves and then the leadership of the scholars during major occultation, their conditions, teachings, their help, assistance and guidance. There are concrete evidences and documents that cannot be rejected. The reason for Imam's (a.t.f.s.) prolonged occultation, longevity and his concealed leadership for the last 1200 years is to protect him from the coterie of the rulers who forced the successors of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) into isolation. This will continue till reappearance as indicated in the verse "And we desired to bestow a favor upon those who were deemed weak in the land and to make them the Imams..."

Every word and letter of this sacred verse is an absolute truth and grants light of salvation. This verse of Holy Quran coupled with the prophecies of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) leave no room for deviation.

The question then arises as to why, despite the sayings of Allah the Almighty and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) regarding the 12 successors, certifying their immaculate characters and knowledge, which none can dare raise a finger at, are these objections raised? Why do these opponents of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) while believing in the Power of Allah deny the existence and presence of His Proof (a.t.f.s.)? Can a knowledgeable person deny that Firaun's corpse was kept on the shores of Nile for people to take heed? None of the flesh-eating animals present in the sea devoured his body. A corpse can remain untouched for a cause. Incidents like these occur to enlighten the intelligent human mind with the truth. Isn't this a point to ponder? Don't these lessons make a person realize that the One who has kept a lifeless body of Firaun intact, can also keep the successor of His chosen one alive through His Might for the guidance of mankind and the coming generations on this earth?

Due to deliberately offensive policies of past governments and falsehood which danced to the tune of devious politics, the nation that lived under the arrogant propaganda kept growing and this is how the thick veil of ignorance kept covering one promise after the other.

Our thirsty Imam Husain (a.s.) was so right when he said on day of Ashura,

"O the oppressive soldiers of Yazeed, your bellies are filled with the forbidden (haram) and hence you are unmindful of what I say."

Wherever the aforementioned elements are found in those members of the Islamic nation, who are in majority, they will continue to remain deviated from this concealed leadership. The insightful eyes will lose sight and injustice, lies, oppression, hypocrisy, ignorance, etc. will rule the roost. The ignorant will breathe this poisonous air till his (a.t.f.s.) reappearance. Those who keep firm faith in the concealed leadership will plead in the court of Allah's caliph, who will avenge from each one of them. The flag of justice and equity will fly above his sacred head; the oppressed will look into the eyes of the oppressor and plead and the one who will hear their pleas will punish the oppressors.

Thus, it is incumbent to introspect on Divine Prophecies and the eloquence of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.). There are all means present to get enthusiastic but only for those watchful eyes that are under the leadership of the concealed leader.

Etiquette Of Reappearance- Spiritual & Transcendental Preparations

It is essential that there exists a correlation between an aim and its preparedness. If the aim is to appear for an examination, preparation will be different. If traveling is the purpose, the groundwork will be different. The etiquette of attending a marriage is not like that of attending a mourning ceremony. If we long for the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and wish to be among his servants and helpers, our preparation has to be different. It is not similar to attending any gathering or a march. It is participating in a celestial and divine affair whose boundaries extend till the limitless boundaries of divinity. Preparing for reappearance is no different and we have to consider some of its characteristics while preparing for it.

Characteristics of the Era of Reappearance

To acquaint ourselves with the characteristics of reappearance, we have to prepare ourselves accordingly. We will have to align our speech, actions and all aspects of our behavior appropriately.

One of the distinguished characteristics of reappearance is that the period of reappearance is that of truth. All curtains will be unveiled and truth will be manifested. None will be able to mask his reality from the Imam of the time (a.t.f.s.). He (a.t.f.s.) is cognizant of the condition of everyone's heart. He will act according to the practice of Prophet Dawood (a.s). Now, the question arises as to what was the practice of Prophet Dawood (a.s.) and what was the practice of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)?

The reply is that Allah the Almighty ordered our beloved Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to judge based on the apparent while Prophet Dawood (a.s.) used to judge according to the hidden reality. Allah the High will grant Imam Mahdi (a.s.) such knowledge that all realities will be apparent for him. He will neither need a witness nor a proof in any case. The affair will be clear to him.

The period of reappearance will be that of truth and honesty. When veils will be uncovered, truth will become apparent. It is mentioned in traditions that when he (a.t.f.s.) reappears, he will place his holy hand on the heads of the people due to which their intellects will be perfected.

[Kamaluddin, p. 675, H. 30]

Thus, the period of reappearance will be an era of intellect and truth and not of whims and fancies. With perfect intellect, there will be no need to hide anything. The intellect will present the case in its truest form. What would it be like when a perfect intellect presents a case? People will deal with each other with truth and not with ostentation and flamboyance

If we take such a period into account, we will realize how negligent we are today. Imam Ali (a.s.) said,

"If your secrets are revealed to each other you will not bury one other."

[Al-Amaali of Shaikh Saduq (r.a.). p. 531. H. 9/718]

It means people will not consider each other as Muslims. It is Allah's grace that truth is covered, else survival would be difficult. The present situation while being a great bounty for our daily lives is also a great opportunity to improve and prepare ourselves before the reappearance of

Imam Mahdi (a.s.). We should develop ourselves in a way that we do not embarrass ourselves when blessed with the opportunity of meeting Imam (a.s.).

Presently, Allah the High has cast certain veils on us and we have created some veils ourselves, due to which notwithstanding all its defects and shortcomings, life seems to be hassle free. Post reappearance, there will be no scope to commit or provoke mischief. At that time Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will establish the religion of Allah with all its intricacies and there will be no scope for dissimulation (taqiyyah). Hence, it is our responsibility to prepare ourselves in such a manner that we do not face any problems and embarrassment at the time of reappearance.

The period before reappearance though is the best time to improve and prepare to face truth and honesty. We should take benefit of this precious opportunity. After reappearance some people will be asked to relinquish their property as it belongs to someone else. Property will be given to its real owner. Let's prepare ourselves from now, so that, we are when asked to disassociate from our land, house, position and status, we are ready and do not argue about it and instead submit to the order of our Imam (a.t.f.s.).

We must be prepared to face the truth. At times people chalk out huge plans for themselves. They select special positions and status for themselves and spend their lives in the same assumptions. If we continue our lives in the same thought when Imam (a.t.f.s.) reappears and we get a chance to be in his holy presence, he might say:

"You are useless. All your plans are superficial and have no reality."

How would we face it? Our true value will be revealed because it is a day for which the Holy Quran has mentioned:

"This is the day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness.

[Surah Maidah (5): Verse 119)

Can anyone benefit from his baseless truth in front of Imam (a.t.f.s.) on the Day of Judgment and hide his true self? Certainly not. On that day man will be accountable on the basis of truth. The criteria of accounting will be piety and religiousness. All evil factors of gaining importance and lofty positions will be destroyed and only truth will prevail. We cannot hide our reality from Imam (a.s.) under any circumstances and will have to face it. So is it not prudent that we start living a truthful life right away so that we remain the same at the time of reappearance?

When we are informed of our reality, is it possible that we claim that we are striving or prefix a title of the one who strives before our name without having worked for it. We claim to be representing Imam while our levels of piety are way below our claim. We accept the control of those tasks and leadership of those institutions whose capacity we do not possess.

Since there is no time fixed for reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and it can occur anytime, we must be ready for it. Our apparent and hidden must be alike. We must check ourselves in the mirror of truth and cleanse ourselves from evil thoughts and irrelevant issues. We should take account of ourselves so that we do not face a situation of unpreparedness. On the Day of Judgment, we will witness many-a-times that there will be a group of people asking for another opportunity Their pleas will not be answered since they will certainly repeat those things which they have been practicing earlier. No excuse will be considered after reappearance.

Few Demands of Reappearance

The period of reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will be the period of honesty and truth. We will discuss some of the demands of this era.

1. Truthful Character

Today, we have a responsibility. We should be true to ourselves, our being and our soul and possess a pure character. One who is true to himself is contented and composed and is not in need of concealing his reality. He is fortunate for himself as well as others. People respect him because he does not boast about his honesty and truthfulness. He respects people and people respect him in turn.

2. Religious Education

Islamic knowledge is necessary to accustom ourselves to divine laws. These divine laws and religious teachings are an invaluable gift from the holy Ahle Bait (a.s.). They have borne many difficulties to spread, publicize, protect and make it accessible to everyone. Many have laid down their lives for this cause. From the first martyr till date, many have continued to tread this path. To document the teachings of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and pass it on to others is a great work done by religious institutions and none can say that these religious institutions and schools are restricted to teaching methods of ritual bath, ablution and other laws. Making such a statement is like ridiculing the divine laws. Religious teachings are not merely discussing social and political issues but a way of life which encompasses every aspect of life and is a celestial legacy. If we wish that the Imam of the time (a.t.f.s.) accepts us, we must be aware of religious teachings so that we can develop ourselves accordingly. It is not necessary that we become a scholar; however, we should be aware of the issues pertaining to our daily lives. We should be thoroughly aware of the rulings regarding prayers, fasting, alms, khums, impurities and mutual rights so that we can mold our lives as per Islamic teachings.

3. Perfect Insight

One of the most important aspects while preparing for the reappearance is insight and recognition with true faith. If our belief at the time of reappearance is incorrect or not firm and has not been learnt and sourced thoroughly, there could be serious problems after reappearance because one who does not possess recognition of his Imam (a.s.) and Imamate will not understand its importance and jurisdictions. He will not accept it with the depth of his heart and possibly may even object to the rulings of Imam (a.t.f.s.). This group will include people who are in the army of Imam (a.s.), will be commanders in the army but do not adhere to the commands of Imam (a.t.f.s.) and will object to them. Such people will be sentenced to death as Imam's decision is based on truth and is free from any kind of doubt, error and emotion. Hence, questioning the decision of Imam will be denying the truth and giving preference to our own intellects over that of Imam, which is clearly against the belief of Imamate.

Imam does not approve of killing anyone. In fact, he has arrived to give life to the people and to grace the earth with peace and justice. Hence, he whose faith is not firmly based on the Holy Quran and traditions and does not have complete recognition of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) will fail in

the examination since after the reappearance, there will be instances where Imam (a.t.f.s.) will say that you were practicing false traditions and he (a.t.f.s.) will speak the truth.

If our belief is firm and we believe that Imam is the Proof of Allah, is infallible and his order is free from emotion, error and doubt and acting upon it is a blessing for us and a reason for our success, it will be very easy for us to submit to him. Our requests will have no standing in front of Imam's order. The thought that Imam's (a.t.f.s.) ruling is contrary to his ancestors should never occur to us. However, he whose faith on Imamate is not firm may object saying that a particular ruling is against traditions. These who bring such objections are unaware that the traditions they are referring to are crystal clear for Imam (a.s.). Boasting about our own knowledge before Imam proves that our faith on Imamate is weak.

Hence, today it is our responsibility that we take serious efforts to gain knowledge and participate in those gatherings and classes where knowledge is imparted in the light of the Holy Quran and traditions of the infallible Ahle Bait (a.s.).

Responsibilities as against Ease

The reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) generally evokes thoughts of ease, abundance and bounties. A time of no sorrow and bloodshed, no chaos and riots. There would be peace everywhere. Certainly, there will be ease which is unimaginable today. It would be a different world altogether.

These comforts though would be accompanied by responsibilities that will have to be strictly fulfilled. The regime of Imam will be on the entire world and it would be an Islamic regime that too established on the Islam of Ghadeer. All of it won't be easy and there will be opposition from unauthorized regimes. They will prevent it from advancing. Everything will not be achieved through miracles. There will be wars that would require soldiers. The entire world will accept the religion of Islam. The entire world will not learn Islam overnight and will need teachers in huge numbers to teach them the laws of Islam.

Hence, as followers of the Ahle Bait (a.s.), it is our duty to accept this responsibility. This is not an ordinary responsibility. We cannot become scholars overnight and hence should start preparing from now. Women have equal responsibility as men in this arena. There will be a need for educated women to teach other women. Women will be required in the battlefield as well as in the field of education. There would certainly be a need of learned and faithful women. In fact the need of such learned men and women would be more than the soldiers. The responsibility of soldiers will be over after the war but the responsibility of spreading knowledge will be unending. Hence, it would be an important responsibility of the followers to work in that arena.

There will also be a need of Islamic intellectuals to run the government. To fulfill our responsibilities in these areas, we will have to start working from now. Hence, the period of reappearance will not just be a time of comfort but of responsibilities as well. It is time to prepare ourselves for the responsibilities of post reappearance era. Therefore, before time passes away, let us prepare to the best of our abilities.

It is important to pay attention to the fact in order to fulfill these responsibilities, only being experts in knowledge or having the right belief will not suffice; rather, we have to train

ourselves to such an extent that we submit to every command of Imam (a.t.f.s.) just like Haroon Makki submitted to Imam Sadiq (a.s.).

Haroon al-Makki (r.a.)

This incident is very enlightening from the aspect of training our souls and complete submission to Imam (a.s.). Sahl bin Hasan Khorasani came to meet Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.). He greeted and spoke to Imam (a.s.) very politely that you are from the progeny of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and an Imam. People love you. Why don't you rise for your right? There are 100000 Shias ready to assist you. Imam (a.s.) said: O Khorasani! Sit down. May Allah protect your right! Then Imam (a.s.) ordered his servant to ignite the furnace. When the furnace was lit, throwing up flames, Imam (a.s.) ordered Khorasani to jump in it. Khorasani said: O son of the Messenger of Allah! Do not chastise me with fire. Please forgive me. Imam (a.s.) said: I forgive you. At that moment Haroon Makki (r.a.) walked in. He was holding shoes in his hands. He greeted Imam (a.s.). Imam (a.s.) said: "Keep your shoes aside and jump in the furnace." Haroon threw the shoes aside and jumped inside. In the meanwhile, Imam (a.s.) continued his conversation with Khorasani. Imam was calm but Khorasani was getting restless. Imam (a.s.) asked him to check the furnace. Khorasani reports that I saw Haroon Makki sitting comfortably. Imam ordered Haroon to come out. He came out and greeted the Imam. Then Imam (a.s.) asked Khorasani: How many people do you have in Khorasan like him? He replied: None. Imam (a.s.) said: By Allah! None! We will not rise till we have five such helpers and certainly we are aware of the correct time.

[Manaaqib Aal Abi Talib, vol. 3. pp. 362-363]

When the government of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will be established after reappearance, it will be an era of truth. Nothing except truth will be accepted. We do not intend to say that everyone becomes Haroon Makki and submits completely. It is not possible for everyone to attain the position of Haroon Makki but we can, at least try to follow his path. We have to prepare our souls for submission. Today, we find few people who disagree with the traditions. Sometimes, they say that a tradition is weak and at times, term it irrational. They are favoring their deficient intellects against Imam (a.s.). When they can't accept a few traditions and challenge them, how will they accept the decisions of Imam (a.t.f.s.) after the reappearance and submit to his orders?

This submission is not on the basis of idol worshiping but with the belief that Imam is infallible. We consider him as Proof of Allah and consider his obedience obligatory. Imam Ali (a.s.) has introduced a few of his companions in the following manner *They have absolute faith in their leader and follow him.*

[Nahj al-Balaagha, Sermon 182]

Meeting Imam

We all have a wish and regularly pray for an opportunity to meet our Imam (a.t.f.s.) at least once in our lifetime. If it is not possible during occultation, we may be fortunate after his reappearance. Today, we have neither seen him nor have we got an opportunity to hear his soothing voice. We can neither be present in his company nor converse with him. We shall be blessed with these bounties when he reappears. Oceans of tears have been shed just for a glance of Imam and to hear his voice. For thousands of years, this supplication has been recited

during the night-vigil prayers. Hands are raised daily in Dua-e-Ahad for this longing. People have yearned for years just for a glimpse.

The question arises, is it easy to speak to the one who is the epicenter of characteristics of all the messengers and their successors, the fragrance of the garden of Prophethood and Imamate, Proof of Allah, the greatest Remnant of Allah, the door of proximity to Allah, the one through whom the messengers, their successors, proximate angels and the carriers of the Throne receive favors? We should know that it is not easy to meet Imam (a.t.f.s.). Those who were blessed to see him longed for more, their eyes cast down and were left in the state of unconsciousness. And it should be that way. When Prophet Moosa (a.s.) could not bear the luminescence of the Shias and fell unconscious, how can one face the radiance of the light of Imamate and Mastership?

This glance truly demands ability and capacity. Not everyone can witness it. There has to be some similarity between the two.

Our state today is such that we don't interact with our brothers due to petty issues when there is not much of a difference in the levels of our faith, a minor difference has closed the doors of conversations. How can we then expect to meet Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)? If we really want to meet our Imam (a.t.f.s.) we will have to tread his path vis-à-vis morals, faith, actions, piety, worship, purification of soul, etc. We may not succeed in totality but at least we can try and walk in this direction and adapt ourselves to it

We are unaware when our Imam (a.t.f.s.) will reappear and the announcement from the Holy Kaaba will be made that he (a.t.f.s.) has reappeared while we are not ready with belief, morals, etc. We pray to Allah with utmost sincerity that he adorns us with these traits and enriches us with those attributes required to meet Imam (a.s.). We seek refuge from that day that we go to meet him and he turns away his face from us. We should prepare ourselves such that he welcomes us in the manner Imam Husain (a.s.) welcomed Janabe Hurr (a.s.)

(This article is an excerpt from the article of Hazrat Hujjatul Islam wal Muslimeen Haaj Sayed Alauddin Moosavi, may Allah prolong his life, from Najaf al-Ashraf.)

Exegesis Of Dua al-Ahad

Sources of Dua al-Ahad

Reliable scholars and traditionalists have narrated this noble supplication in their invaluable books such as Allamah Shaikh Muhammad Baqir Majlisi (a.r.) in Behaar alAnwaar, vol. 53, p. 95, chapter 29, tradition 111 has narrated it from Misbaah al-Zaaer of Syed Ibn Tawoos. Apart from this Muhaddis Noori has mentioned this in Mustadrak al-Wasael (vol. 5, p. 393, Chapter 41, tradition 6169) as well as Shaikh Abbas Qummi in Mafaatih al Jenaan. Tuhfah al-Awaam, which is a famous book in the sub-continent, also contains this supplication.

Allamah Majlisi (a.r.) writes that "This has been narrated from the manuscript of Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Ali al-Jubaei who has narrated it from Shaikh Ali Ibn al-Sukoon (may Allah sanctify their souls) that our teacher and master al-Syed, the noble, the scholar, the learned jurist, Jalaal al-Deen Abul Qasim Abdul Hameed Ibn Fakhkhaar Ibn Ma'add Ibn Fakhkhaar al-Alawi al-Husaini alMoosavi al-Haaeri (may Allah prolong his life) while reciting it in front of him when he was comparing it to a copy which he received from his father (may Allah have mercy on him) in 676 A.H. who said that my father (may Allah be satisfied with him) informed me that the great scholar Taaj al-Deen Abu Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Ali Ibn al-Husain Ibn al-Darabi (may Allah grant him long life) communicated to me that he heard these words in Rabi al Awwal month of 596 A.H. and thereafter narrators sequentially recited this in front of their teachers that the learned jurist and scholar Shaikh Qiwaam al-Deen Abu Abdillah Muhammad Ibn Abdillah al-Bahraani alShaybaani (may Allah have mercy on him) in the year 573 A.H. from Shaikh Abu Zakariyyaa Yahya Ibn Kaseer from the most majestic Syed Muhammad Ibn Ali al-Qurashi from Ahmad Ibn Saeed from Shaikh Ali Ibn al-Hakam from al-Rabi' Ibn Muhammad al-Musalli from Abu Abdillah Ibn Sulaymaan who has narrated this supplication from Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) in these words.

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 91, p. 41, Beirut Edition]

Benefits and Rewards of Dua al-Ahad

Dua al-Ahad is narrated from Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.), who advised:

"Whosoever prays to Allah for 40 days through this promise and covenant, he will be included among the helpers of our Qaem (a.s.). If he dies before his reappearance, then Allah, the Most High, shall enliven him from his grave and for every word (of this supplication) 1000 good deeds shall be written for him in his scroll of deeds, erase 1000 sins and this supplication is as follows Allahumma Rabba..."

Phrases and Meanings of Dua al-Ahad

"O Allah! Lord of the Great Light, Lord of the Elevate Throne, Lord of the tumultuous seas and the Revealer of Torah (Taurait), Bible (Injeel) and the Psalms (Zaboor), Lord of the shadows and the warmth, Revealer of the Great Quran and the Lord of the proximate angels, the Prophets and the Messengers.."

Dua al-Ahad begins with the aforementioned phrases. Since this is a supplication, the addressee is the True Creator. "Allahumma" means O Allah. Let us take a glance at traditions concerning the word 'Allah

Hisham Ibn Hakam inquired from Imam Sadiq (a.s.): What has the word 'Allah' been derived from? Imam (a.s.) replied: O Hisham! The word Allah is a derivative of 'Ilaah' and the word Ilaah demands that there must be a Ma'looh' servant).

[Al-Kafi, vol. 1. p. 87. Chapter of Al-Ma'bud, H. 2 narrating from Ali Ibn Ibrahim al-Qummi]

The above tradition is a clear affirmation for the fact that the word 'Allah' is derived and not a non-derivative. It is not a proper noun as perceived by some. Its root is 'w-l-h' or 'a-l-h.' Secondly, the word 'Allah' is definite and not indefinite. Alif' and 'Laam' are used to make a noun definite.

Let us try and illuminate ourselves with traditions of the infallible ones (a.s.) concerning this Divine Name

Abdullah Ibn Sinaan inquired about the meaning of 'In the Name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. Imam (a.s.) responded:

(The alphabet) 'Baa' stands for magnificence of Allah, 'Seen' refers to exaltedness of Allah while Meem indicates towards the grandeur of Allah. Some have also narrated that "Meem' refers to the kingdom of Allah. Allah is the Lord of everything, Beneficent for His entire creation but Merciful only for the believers.

[Al-Kaafi. vol. 1. p. 114, H. 1. chapter of 'Meanings of The Names and their derivations']

Imam Moosa Ibn Jafar (a.s.) was asked about the word Allah! He (a.s.) replied:

"(The word 'Allah' means) He is dominant over everything, whether *subtle and delicate or mighty.*"

[Al-Kaafi. vol. 1. p. 114, H. 3. chapter of 'Meanings of The Names and their derivations']

A person asked Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) about 'In the Name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. Imam (a.s.) answered:

"Your saying Allah, it is the greatest name from the names of Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He. It is a name which cannot be attributed to anyone except Allah and no creature can ascribe this name for itself.

The narrator sought the exegesis for the word "Allah. Imam (a.s.) replied:

*"Allah is that Being in whom shelter is sought at the time of every need and calamity when, apart from Him, hopes from everyone else are lost and all means and resources are severed except for Him. Since every great person of this world (who considers himself great) who is respected, irrespective of the wealth he has amassed, or the more rebellious he is or even if many people approach him and address their needs through him but even then, they have many such desires which this affluent person cannot fulfill. Similarly, even that great personality might have many of his wishes which he cannot fulfill all by himself. Hence, when he realizes his helplessness and dependence, he turns towards Allah. But when Allah fulfills his desires, he reverts to his polytheism and rebellion. Have you not heard that Allah, Might and Majestic be He, says **"Say (O Prophet): Tell me if the chastisement of Allah should overtake you or the hour should come upon you, will you call (on others) besides Allah, if you are truthful? Nay,***

Him you call upon, so He clears away that for which you pray if He pleases and you forget what you set up (with Him).

[Surah An'aam (6): 40-41].

Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, informs His servants,

O the ones who are in need of My Mercy. I have indeed fastened you to Me under all circumstances. Then, in every trouble that you encounter and desire that your wish is granted and your need fulfilled, seek shelter only in Me because if I intend to bestow you with it, none except Me can prevent granting it to you and if I decide to withhold it from you, then none except Me has the power to grant it to you. Therefore, I am worthy of being implored and pleaded. Whenever you begin with any task, whether minor or major, say 'In the Name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful' i.e. I seek help from Allah in this affair, Allah the One apart from whom none is worthy of being worshipped. When shelter is sought from Him, He grants it and when He is beseeched He fulfills, the Benevolent who provides us with sustenance and who is Merciful towards us in matters of our religion, world and hereafter. He has made religion very moderate for us and made (following it) extremely easy and light. He is Merciful towards us due to our adhering to the boundaries set by Him."

[Al-Tauheed of Shaikh Saduq (a...). p. 230, chap31. H. 5: Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 92, p. 232, chap. 29, H.14)

Rabb al-Noor al-Azeem (Lord of the Great Light)

The interjection "Yaa' has been entirely dropped here. The word Rabb is derived from Rabba, Yarubbo (like Madda, Yamuddo). Just as Farra, Yafirro is derived on the scale of Yazribo of the verb 'z-r-B. According to Arabic grammar, the word Rabb is an adjective similar to a verb on the scale of Rabeeb' like Khasheen or on the scale of "RubaiB' like 'Husain Grammatically, such words are also called as "Muzaaf' (added/subjoined) i.e. a verb which has two repetitive alphabets in its root.

Surprisingly, some litterateurs have considered 'Rabb' from the root of "Tarbiyah (training). This is clearly erroneous since the root of Tarbiyah is 'r-b-w! Apart from this, Murabbi means nurturer whereas Rabb means owner, 'leader, 'master, etc. There are no synonyms in the Arabic language inspired to Prophet Ismaeel (a.s.). Especially, there can never be synonyms in Divine Names, where every name has a specific meaning and interpretation which indicates towards a definite external reality.

Rabb is just like other 'Beautiful Names of Allah which have been coined exclusively for Him and their Architect or Creator is none other than Allah Himself. Hence, as per this meaning, this name cannot be interpreted for anything else except Allah. However, if it is only for literary similarity then its usage is permissible like it is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

"Say (O Prophet), Shall I seek a Lord other than Allah while He is the Lord of all things?"

[Surah Anaam (6): Verse 164]

Imam Zain al-Abideen (a.s.) mentions in Dua on the day of Arafah (Dua no. 47) of Sahifa al-Sajjadiyyah that Rabb al-Rabbi means Lord of the Lords.

Al-Noor al-Azeem (The Great Light)

It means the great light which Allah has created. This light is the first creation of Allah which refers to the light creation of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) like it is found in traditions,

"The first thing which Allah created is the light of your Prophet, O Jaabir!"

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 15.p.24,H. 431)

It is that great light from which all the remaining sacred lights were derived such as the light of existence, light of life, light of power, etc.

The attribution of light to the Lord indicates that it is a creation of Allah and not Allah Himself. In other words, neither is this light a part of Allah's Being nor is it incarnated or derived from Allah's Being. Rather, it is a creation of Allah and totally subservient to Him

The discussion pertaining to the light creation of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is quite detailed but it is not within the scope of this brief exegesis. Those readers who are interested in researching this topic can refer to Behaar alAnwaar, vol. 15, first chapter or Hayaat al Quloob, second volume.

(To be continued Insha Allah in the next issue)

Adherence Of Islamic Laws & Helping Imam (a.t.f.s.)

If you help Allah, He will help you and make your feet steadfast.

[Surah Muhammad (47): Verse 7]

It is evident that Allah the Almighty is not in need of our help in any way. There is no scope of want in His Being. He is Absolutely Needless. Then why has He sought help from the servants?

The fact is that Allah the Omnipotent loves his friends and special servants so much that He considers helping them as helping Him, oppressing them as oppression against him and doing goodness to them akin to being done to Him. He has ordered thus to test His servants. Those who claim to love Allah should love His friends. It is mentioned in various Ziyaraat of the Infallible Imams (a.s.):

"One who loved you has loved Allah and the he who hates you hates Allah".

Ziyaarat-e-Jaame'ah al-Kabeerah) Hence, if someone wishes to help Allah in order to receive divinc bounties and hidden divine assistance must help and assist the friends and special servants of Allah.

Among the pure chain of the Allah's friends, the most beloved friends and special servants are the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahle Bait (a.s.). These pure personalities are the source of divinc blessings. Whatever is bestowed upon the servants from Allah's side is through their medium. In today's era, Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the rightful owner of the Prophetic caliphate, successorship and mastership. He (a.t.f.s.) is the medium of bounties between the Creator and the creation.

"Through his blessings the creation is granted sustenance and due to his existence, the earth and sky stand firm."

[Mashaareqo Anwaar al-Yaqeen fi Asraar Ameeril Momineen (a.s.). p. 157]

Virtues of helping Ahle Bait (a.s.)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said to Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.),

"O Ali, your example is like that of Surah Tauheed (Qul howa Allaho Ahad). Whoever recites it once, it is as if he has recited one third of the Quran. One who recites it twice it is as if he has recited two thirds of the Quran. One who recites it thrice then he has recited the entire Quran. Similarly, O Ali, he who loves you in his heart, it is as if he has obtained the reward of the good deeds of one third of the servants. And he who loves you in his heart and helps you verbally, it is as if he has attained the reward of the good deeds of two third of the servants. And the one who has your love in his heart and along with helping you verbally also helps you with actions then he has earned the reward of the good deeds of all the servants."

[Al-Mahaasin, vol. 2. p. 251, H. 473: Behaar al Anwaar, vol. 27. p.94. H. 54]

Allamah Majlisi (a.r.) narrates:

Once a very young Hishaam Ibn Hakam was in the presence of Imam Sadiq (a.s.). There were other great companions present too. When Imam (a.s.) saw him, he (a.s.) accorded him great respect and honour and made him sit in a place closer to him, better than the seats of other

companions who were elder to him. People did not find this appropriate which Imam (a.s.) sensed and announced:

"He is our helper with his heart, tongue and hand".

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 10, p. 295, H. 4]

Practicing the religion of Islam and helping Imam (a.s.)

During this time of occultation of Imam (a.s.) when we do not have access to him, while we cannot directly serve and help him, it cannot be assumed that the door of practically helping Imam (a.s.) during occultation is shut and we should only restrict ourselves to praying and that apart from it, there is no other way to help Imam (a.s.). Without doubt, supplications are also a very important responsibility and are one of the methods of helping Imam (a.s.). However, supplicating is a verbal help which is always a level below helping by action. Today, we are deprived of the sight of the luminous presence of Imam (a.s.). In order to express our feelings of love for Imam (a.s.), we are, even after exerting ourselves, unable to trace his location. Hence, this relationship of our intense love for Imam demands, that during the era of occultation we perform such actions, attach ourselves with religious knowledge and truly act upon it and shun those actions which Imam (a.s.) dislikes. Thus, we can help Imam (a.s.) through our actions even during occultation. By demonstrating practical help to Imam (a.s.) we can prepare the grounds for his reappearance. Let us see the various means of helping Imam through our actions.

Fear of Allah

During Imam's occultation, by acting upon the obligatory acts and refraining from the prohibited ones i.e. through piety and fear of Allah, we can exhibit practical help to Imam (a.s.). Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) wrote to one of his Shias in a letter:

"Know that your Imam has taken only two pairs of clothes and two loaves of breads from this world, and know that you are not capable of following me to this extent. Then help me with abstaining from the prohibited, acting upon obligations, piety and treading the right path."

[Nahj al-Balaagha, pp. 944-945]

Many such traditions are present in reliable books in which the Infallible Imams (a.s.) have exhorted their Shias to assist them by acting upon religious laws and practicing piety. It is also known that after reappearance, the divine promise will be fulfilled as there will only be goodness on the earth and all evil will be eradicated, which is the aim of man's creation and of the universe.

Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), may our souls be sacrificed for him, says in a Tauqee:

"Fear Allah, Mighty be His Grandeur, and help us in order to protect yourselves from the disorder which has engulfed you from all sides."

[Al-Ehtejaaj of Shaikh Tabresi (r.a.). vol. 2, p. 497]

Explanation

Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) has been given a great responsibility by Allah the High to guide the servants of Allah towards goodness and success. This is the main responsibility which Imam (a.s.) needs to fulfil at the time of his occultation as well as in his presence. Now, if a person

guides even one of the servants of Allah towards the path of goodness, then he shall get the honour of helping Imam to the extent of his effort of guiding that person. This is regardless of whether he guides a person towards goodness or he himself acts upon the orders of Islam, stays away from its prohibitions and turns pious. This is because he himself is also among the people whose guidance is the responsibility of Imam.

On the other hand, if a person, along with fulfilling the responsibility of guiding others, is not himself attentive to the Islamic laws, his words will not have any effect. Guidance through action is much more effective than through mere words. The effects of his action, character and piety transfer onto others. Hence such a person is a cause of pride for Imam, like he himself says:

"Be a cause of adornment for us and do not be a cause of embarrassment for us."

[Al-Amaali of Shaikh Saduq (a.r.), p. 400, H. 17]

To summarize, when one loves Imam (a.s.) becomes pious in the true sense, fear of Allah finds place in his heart. And when fear of Allah is entrenched in someone's heart, nothing else can guarantee the purity of his character. Due to this fear of God, he will be mindful of the rights of people, take conscious steps and not violate the rights of others.

Helping the Believers

There are many pious and good people in this world who face arduous difficulties. To solve their problems and to drive away their difficulties is also one of the best ways to help Imam (a.s.) through actions. This method of helping Imam (a.s.) is to provide means of worship and obedience and solve the problems of the pious people. For example, to provide means of guidance in a place where there are believers but there is neither anyone to guide and show the way nor anyone to enjoin towards goodness. Similarly, we should provide means and convenience for worship and obedience for people. Or we should try to help the pious people in their worldly matters and solve their financial and other problems. There are several believers in different parts of the world facing difficulties. illnesses, poverty, ignorance, surrounded by chemics, prejudice, modern day corruption, domestic problems, divorce, daughter's marriage, unemployment etc. are various problems which Muslims encounter and especially Shias today. If we pick up any one of the above mentioned issues and work in that field to solve these problems, wouldn't it be a cause of happiness for Imam (a.s.)? And when a person is relieved from a problem, it has two outcomes

1. Providing relief to the heart of a grief struck person by solving his problem is a great worship
2. When a grief struck person finds relief from his problems, he is able to worship better and we indirectly become party to this worship as we drew him out of his problems which facilitated his worship. This is the real help of Imam (a.s.)

The great scholar Syed Ibn Taawoos (a.r.) mentions in Mohajj al-Da'waat that a person asked Ameerul Momineen (a.s.): I have decided to spend some money in the way of Allah. Please tell me how should I spend it in order to seek divine pleasure? Imam (a.s.) replied:

"Spend it in the way of helping the pious and the worshippers because spending for them is like spending in the way of Allah's worship as they derive strength from that help and worship God."

Let us see this last tradition on this aspect before concluding the discussion. There are some traditions mentioned in Tafseer attributed to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) under this subject:

"If someone helps a weak and helpless person, Allah will help him and appoint certain angels on the Day of Judgment to help and protect him from the severe stages and the pits of fire and make him reach heaven safely. If someone helps a person in distress due to which he gets support in his business and his problems are solved, Allah will relieve him of problems on the Day of Judgment. He will be separated from the group of evil people and will be enumerated among the good doers."

(Tafseer of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). p. 635)

We pray to Allah the Almighty that he gives us the opportunity to help his proof, please him with our actions and character and through the medium of helping Imam, He separates us out from the evil people and enumerates us among the good doers in this world itself. Aameen!

Belief In Awaiting For Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) – A Prerequisite For Acceptance of Deeds

Everything has some prerequisites and conditions without which it is not accepted. For example voting in India requires that the voter must be an Indian citizen. Similarly, to be declared successful in a particular course, the enrolled learner requires certain grades without which he will not be declared successful in that course.

Similarly, Allah's acceptance of His servants' deeds also requires certain criteria and conditions. The collection of these conditions and criteria is termed as religion. But this religion should be as per the norms laid down by Allah the High himself. Of course, correct beliefs are prior to the forms of the actions. Belief in Allah the Almighty as our Creator comes prior to the method of praying for the prayers to be acceptable. Allah the Majestic has indicated in Holy Quran to this fact by saying:

"Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam."

[Surah Aale Imran (3): Verse 18]

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) while inviting people to be steadfast in their religion says:

"O people! Take care of your religion! Take care of your religion! Attach (yourselves) with it and do not let anyone deprive you out of it. Since a bad deed in (your) religion is better than a good deed in other religion. For, a bad deed in (your) religion can be forgiven whereas a good deed in other religion is not acceptable."

[Ma'aani al-Akhbaar, pp. 185-186]

Any amount of charity or good morality will be rejected by Allah the High if performed by a person who does not confess to the Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.). But a believer in Allah, His messenger (s.a.w.a.) and his true successors (a.s.), despite having performed bad deeds, has the hope of intercession and acceptability of his deeds.

Hence, if a person wishes that his actions be acceptable to Allah the Almighty, he must know and follow these conditions. These conditions become very clear to us by referring to the narrations of the infallible ones (a.s.) who have been appointed by Allah the Omniscient to explain the religion to the people and guide them to their fortune in this world as well as hereafter.

Here, we would like to mention that when we say an action being acceptable to Allah the Majestic, we mean that He will grant reward and not punishment, in this world and as well as the hereafter, to the person whose deeds are under consideration.

A person came to Imam Muhammad al Baqir (a.s.) with a document. Before the person could open his document, he (a.s.) said: "This is a document of dispute, which questions regarding the religion in which the action is accepted." That person said: May Allah have mercy upon you! This is the same thing which I want. At that moment Imam (a.s.) informed him:

"I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, the One, there is no partner for Him and indeed Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is His servant and His Messenger. You acknowledge whatever he has brought from Allah and the Mastership for us, Ahle Bait (a.s.) and disassociation from our

enemies and submission to our affairs, precautionary piety (wara'), humility and awaiting our Qaem (a.t.f.s.); then indeed there is a government for us when Allah wills He will establish it."

[Al-Kafi, Book of Belief and Disbelief, Chapter 13. H. 13]

As per this narration, awaiting the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) along with the belief in Allah as our Lord, Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Mastership of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) are among the fundamentals of the religion through which the deeds are accepted.

Another narration to indicate that awaiting the reappearance of the awaited one from the progeny of Muhammad (a.t.f.s.) is among the prerequisites for the acceptance of the actions is a narration from Abu Baseer. He narrates that Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) one day said: "Shall I inform you regarding that which Allah, the Mighty, the Majestic, will not accept an action from any servant except because of it?" Abu Baseer said: 'Yes, please do so? Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said:

"Testifying that there is no God except Allah, indeed Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is His servant and His Messenger, acknowledgment of whatever Allah has ordered, our Mastership and disassociation from our enemies (of the Imams (a.s.) specifically), submission to them (Imams), precautionary piety, struggle, dignity and awaiting the Qaem (a.t.f.s.)

(Ghaibat-e-Nomani, Chapter 11, H. 16]

Let us analyze the belief in awaiting for Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). According to the Shiite school of thought, this belief implies awaiting the reappearance of the true and divinely appointed 12th successor of Holy prophet (s.a.w.a.) whose famous title is 'Mahdi, who will establish the true monotheistic religion of Islam and spread justice and peace universally on his reappearance but whose time of appearance is not known. It encompasses the fundamental beliefs of the religion of Islam without which no deed will be accepted and one who does not profess this belief has in fact gone out of the fold of Islam.

For example, one who truly awaits believes that Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), whose reappearance he is awaiting, is the Imam of the time. This testifies his belief in the Imamate of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). This belief has been considered as the most important prerequisite after the two testimonies (of Divine Monotheism and Prophethood) for the acceptance of the deeds. In fact, belief in Imamate is the completion of the belief in Divine Monotheism and Prophethood. There are many narrations from the Ahle Bait (a.s.) indicating this matter.

Muhammad bin Muslim said: 'I heard Abu Ja'far (a.s.) say:

"Everyone who is obedient to Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, by worship in which he exerts effort, but who does not have an Imam (appointed) from Allah, his strivings are unacceptable; and he is astray and bewildered. Allah detests his actions... He who wakes up in this community without having an Imam (appointed) from Allah, to whom belong Might and Majesty, who is manifest and just, wakes up astray and lost. If such a person dies in this condition, he dies the death of unbelief and hypocrisy. Beware, O Muhammad! Unjust Imams and their followers have been expelled from the religion of Allah. They are misguided and they misguide others. So the actions which they perform are like ashes over which the wind blows hard on a tempestuous day. They have no power over anything they **have earned. That is the far error.** ' [Surah Ibrahim (14): Verse 18] [Al-Kafi, Book of Proof, Chapter 7, H.]

The above narration explicitly states that acceptance of deed requires belief in Imamat. Belief in awaiting implicitly includes the belief in Imamat

In one of the salutations of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) which is mentioned in "Mafaatih al Jinaan, we find the following phrases:

"... I bear witness that through your Mastership, actions are accepted, deeds are purified, goodness is multiplied and bad deeds are erased. Then the one who accepts your Mastership and acknowledges your Imamat, his actions are accepted, his words are affirmed, his goodness is multiplied and his bad deeds are erased..."

Mafaatih al-Jinaan, Section of Ziyaaraat of the 12th Imam (a.t.f.s.). Ziyaarat after Ziyaarat Aal-e-Yaseen]

It becomes crystal clear that the belief in awaiting which includes the belief in Imamat is a must for the deeds to be considered as worship and be accepted by Allah, the Almighty

Hence to summarize, we can state that the belief in 'awaiting means:

1. Belief in Oneness of Allah, as Allah the High has introduced Himself to us in the prior worlds of lights, souls, particles, etc.

When the Imam of the time (a.t.f.s.) reappears, he will remind the whole world about that recognition.

2. Belief in Allah who is Just and will establish a universal just government under the guidance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

3. Belief in the absolute freedom of Allah the Omnipotent in postponing or hastening the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

4. Belief in the existence of a divine proof on this earth and acknowledgement of Hadees-e-Saqalain (two weighty things).

5. Belief in the truthfulness of the atrocities, crimes and injustices perpetrated against the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Since Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the one who will seek revenge for all these especially for his grandmother Janabe Fatima Zahra (s.a.) and her son Imam Husain (a.s.).

We pray to Allah that He increases our cognition of the Imam of our time (a.t.f.s.) and gives us the grace and opportunity to be among those who truly await him (a.t.f.s.), due to which we achieve success in this world and hereafter and be included among his true and followers in this world and be included among his neighbors in the hereafter. Aameen!

Discussion Of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) In Yanaabi' al Mawaddah

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

Some people harbor the misconception that the belief in Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is restricted to Shias, who fabricated such beliefs after facing several setbacks in history. However, on studying the books of Ahle Tasannun, we find that their extremely reliable books are replete with the mention of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). These books not only talk about Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance in the last era but also outline his characteristics in great detail. Also several reliable scholars have written series of books on this topic and this continues till date.

(Interested readers may refer "Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in Traditions of Ahle Sunnah' for details.)

The book **Yanaabi' al-Mawaddah Fi Shamaacl al-Rasool (s.a.w.a.) wa Ahl al-Bait (a.s.)** too is one such book written by a Hanafi scholar from Ahle Tasannun. His name was Hafiz Sulaymaan Ibn Ibrahim al-Qundoozi alHanafi al Balkhi. He was born in 1220 A.H. and expired in 1270 A.H. in Constantinople. In this book Shaikh Sulaymaan Qundoozi has collected traditions which mention the excellences of the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Moreover, he has devoted several chapters to Imamate of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) which we shall discuss in this brief article.

In the second volume of his book Shaikh Sulaymaan Qundoozi has devoted several chapters to Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). Here, we will mention one tradition from each of them.

Chapter 71: Kitab al-Muhajjah contains conditions at the time of the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) citing verses of the Holy Quran.

Tradition: Imam Sadiq (a.s.) while explaining the verse of Holy Quran (Surah Aale Imran (3): Verse 38), "And everything that in the heavens and the earth shall submit to Him willingly or unwillingly" says:

"When our Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) reappears, all places on the earth shall resound with the testimony of "There is no God except Allah and certainly Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah!"

Chapter 72: Traditions that have been narrated by the author of the book "Mishkaat al-Anwaar' about the signs of the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

Umm Salmah (s.a) narrates that she heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saying that Mahdi is from my progeny and from the children of Fatima (s.a.).

Chapter 73: Traditions narrated by the author of the book, Jawaahir al-Uqdain

Tradition: It is narrated in a tradition attributed to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) that he (a.s.) has said:

"Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is from the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Allah shall reform his affairs in a single night."

Chapter 74: Sayings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) about Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) from Nahj al-Balaagha.

Tradition: Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) informs:

"Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) shall turn desires into guidance when people will have turned guidance into desires. He will subject the opinion of people to the obedience of the Holy Quran while people will have taken the Holy Quran as per their views."

Chapter 75: The calamities which shall befall Ahle Bait (a.s.) till the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)

Tradition: Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.):

"O Ali! Beware of the jealousy and enmity present in the hearts of the people against you which they shall exhibit after my martyrdom. These are those upon whom is the curse of Allah and the curse of those who curse." Then he (s.a.w.a.) wept and said: "Jibraeel has informed me that they shall oppress them (my Ahle Bait) after me till the reappearance of our Qaem (a.t.f.s.)."

Chapter 76: Names of the 12 Imams from Faraid al-Simtayn

From a lengthy tradition wherein a Jew called Nasal put forth several questions before Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), we shall mention one portion in which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has mentioned about the occultation of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.):

"Surely the twelfth son from my progeny shall have a long occultation so much so that people shall not see him. A time will befall my nation when nothing will be left of Islam except its name and of the Holy Quran except its script. At that time, Allah shall grant permission to Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) to reappear. Through his reappearance Allah shall grant victory to Islam and renew it."

Chapter 77: "There shall be 12 Caliphs after me" and what has been narrated in the book Jam' al-Fawaaid with respect to this tradition.

Tradition: It is narrated from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, "This world shall not end till a person from the progeny of Imam Husain (a.s.) shall lead my nation. He shall fill the earth with justice and equity just like it would be filled with injustice and inequity."

Chapter 78: What has been narrated about him (a.s.) in the book Faraaid al-Simtayn and other books.

Tradition: Ibn Abbas narrates that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) prophesied:

"Surely my Caliphs, my Successors and the proofs of Allah upon the people after me are the twelve Imams of whom Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is the first and the last is my grandson Mahdi (a.s.). 'Ruhullah' Isa Ibn Maryam (shall descend from the heavens after his reappearance) shall pray behind him..."

Chapter 79: The proofs of the blessed birth of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Tradition: A slave girl by the name of Naseem narrates that after the birth of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) when I sneezed before him he (a.s.) said:

"May Allah have mercy upon you, sneeze is a safety from death for three days."

Chapter 80: Traditions narrated by Imam Ali Reza (a.s.) and Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) concerning Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Tradition: Imam Reza (a.s.) has said: "Surely after me, my son Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) shall be the Imam. After Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) his son Ali Nagi (a.s.) shall be the Imam. After Ali Nagi (a.s.), his son Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) shall be the Imam. After Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) his son al-Hujjat al-Qaem (a.s.) shall be the Imam. He shall be awaited during his occultation and obeyed after his reappearance. He *shall fill the earth with justice and equity like it would be filled with injustice and tyranny.*"

Chapter 81: The miracles of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

In this chapter some miracles of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) have been recorded which we are not reproducing here for the sake of brevity.

Chapter 82: Introduction by Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) of his son by the title "Qaem

Tradition: In the book Kitab al-Ghaibah it is narrated by Abu Ghanim that a son was born to Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) whose names he (a.s.) kept as MHMD. On the third day of his birth, he (a.s.) presented Imam Mahdi (a.s.) before his companions and said to them:

"He is your Imam (a.s.) after me and my Caliph over you. He is the same al Imam al-Qaem who will be awaited."

Chapter 83: Those who have met Imam Mahdi (a.s.) during major occultation.

Chapter 84: The views of people of cognition and witness and views of some spiritual personalities from among the religious scholars.

Some spiritual personalities have narrated. The earth shall flourish, be purified and shine through the presence of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). Through his (a.s.) presence rivers shall flow and corruption will come to an end. Goodness and blessings shall multiply.

Chapter 85: Things which are mentioned in the book Asaaf al-Raaghebeen

Tradition: The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) has said:

"I give you glad tidings of Mahdi (a.s.) who shall be from the Quraish and from my progeny. He shall appear at the time of conflicts among people. He shall fill the earth with justice and equity just as it will be filled with injustice and oppression. The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth shall be pleased with him (a.s.). He shall distribute wealth with equity. He shall fill the hearts of the nation of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) with needlessness."

Chapter 86: Views of scholars who opine that the promised Mahdi is the son of Imam Hasan Askari a.s.).

In this chapter, the views of Ahle Tasannun scholars have been mentioned which narrate the birth, longevity, existence and occultation of Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

Question: Was Sulaymaan bin Ibrahim al-Hanafi al-Qundoozi a Shia?

When Ahle Tasannun are left with no choice they call their own scholars as belonging to the Shia faith. Such is the case with Shaikh Sulaymaan Qundoozi too. When they were unable to prove him to be a Shia then they presented an objection that Aqa Buzurgh Tehrani (one of the great Shia scholars) has said the following about Shaikh Sulaymaan al Qundoozi in his book al-Zareeah:

The author of this book (Yanaabi' alMawaddah) is not known to be a Shia but rather he was a Sufi and this book is included among the books of the Shia.

[Al-Zareeah, vol. 25, p. 290]

Reply: It should be noted that the Ahle Tasannun purposely shorten the name of Shaikh Sulayman al-Qundoozi which Aqa Buzurgh Tehrani has mentioned in his book i.e. his full name was 'Sulaymaan bin Ibrahim al-Hanafi al-Qundoozi! He belonged to the Hanafi school of thought. Aqa Buzurgh (r.a.) has written that Shaikh Sulaymaan Qundoozi was not a Shia. What is established though is that he loved the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and has collected traditions of the ancient scholars of the Ahle Tasannun that mention the excellences of the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Hence, we present his book as a testament to the excellence and superiority of the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

Another thing that the Ahle Tasannun try to hide is that Aga Buzurgh Tehrani (r.a) in the 21st volume of his book on page 307 writes:

"The book Yanaabi' al-Mawaddah which has been written by Hafiz Sulaymaan bin Ibrahim al-Qundoozi al-Balkhi al-Hanafi was a Sufi and belonged to the Naqshbandi school

Hence, no matter how much the Ahle Tasannun claim that Shaikh Sulaymaan Qundoozi did not belong to the Ahle Tasannun, it is proven through various chains that he did belong to them as has been established above.

We conclude our brief discussion with the following supplication: O Allah! For the sake of Your Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahle Bait (a.s.), hasten the reappearance of the Imam of our age, Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and include us among his companions, helpers and servants! Aameen, O Lord of the worlds!