

من الدعوات الذهبية
بعلو عانته دافيزو كيف
روزوانته تلي عليه آيات
بعوض

Ziyaarat.e

Aal.e

Yaasin

A Brief Commentary

Association of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Ziyaarat-e-Aal-e-Yaasin

A Brief Commentary

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ الْعَصْرِ (ع) أَذْرِكُنَا

Preface

The word ‘زيارت’ is an Arabic term derived from the root ‘زَوَرَ’, which means ‘to visit’. In religious terminology, it implies our conversation with Allah’s sincere creatures and His infallible proofs (a.s.), who are without parallel. They are those whom Allah, the High, has purified from all uncleanness and has created them pure, purified.

Thus, whosoever desires to approach Allah, he should do so through the gates determined by Him. Yes, the infallible Imams (a.s.) from the immaculate Ahle Bait (a.s.) are the gates through whom Allah is approached. They are the medium towards Him and hence, their recognition, their love and treading on their path is obligatory. All these are summarized in one thing i.e. ziyarat.

It is our creed that the souls of the holy Ahle Bait (a.s.) ascend towards the highest heavens and are alive, receiving their sustenance (from their Lord). They look at us, hear our speech and reply to our salutations. As Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) narrates from the Holy Prophet (s.a.),

“Those who die among us, are not (actually) dead.”

The belief of us Shias is contrary to that of the Wahhaabis who think that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is dead and gone and is no longer effective in our lives. We are also against the غلات who

attribute divinity to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)! Allah is Higher than what the unjust believe!

We subscribe to the belief that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is the last Prophet but the most superior of them all. He is followed by his successors, the Holy Imams (a.s.). In our time today, Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), the Promised One, is his successor.

So from among the etiquette of ziyaarat is that the one whose ziyaarat we are about to read, his recognition is a must. It is not possible for us to acquire the recognition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) or the infallible Imams (a.s.) through the faulty or inadequate faculties available to us humans. Just as an ant, in front of a huge mountain or a drop of water when compared to an ocean, are not worth a mention, we too when compared to these great personalities, are even more insignificant and miniscule than the ant or the drop of water. Then how is it possible that we describe or recognize them? Since only Allah the Almighty possesses their all-encompassing recognition, the only method to recognize them is through revelation. If we acquire any other mode of recognition, then indeed we will be among the seventy-two doomed sects.

Then what is the solution? Now, the only way is to describe the sun from the characteristics of its tongue, the ocean from its reflection in the mirror and the height of a mountain from the bird that flies over its top. Therefore, we should acquire the beliefs from these infallible and holy Imams (a.s.) so that we

neither become like the Wahhabis nor become like the exaggerators (غلات).

We also believe that,

'by his (a.t.f.s.) blessing are the creatures sustained and through his existence, the earth and the heavens are firmly established.'

We being among his flock and his guests must necessarily greet him every morning with our salutations. We must offer our greetings as taught unto us by the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and renew our allegiance with him (a.t.f.s.). We should seek from Allah the Almighty with a blazing heart that He hastens his noble reappearance. This is what he (a.t.f.s.) has ordered us to do when he says,

'And pray most for the hastening of the reappearance, for certainly, it is your salvation.'

Since last many years, Association of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) has had the practice of introducing one supplication or ziyaarat of the infallible Ahle Bait (a.s.) in the special issues of Al-Qaem al-Muntazar (a.s.). Approximately three years ago, we undertook the task of a brief explanation of the Ziyaarat-e-Aale Yaasin, the profound and meaningful salutation from Imam al-Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). Due to constraints of space, the explanation could not be published in one issue and as a result, had to be spread over

three special issues of Shabaan al-Muazzam over a span of three years.

Therefore, we decided to publish the entire explanation in a booklet for the benefit of our readers, of course, with minor changes and variations.

We request our respected readers to provide us with their valuable and constructive suggestions to improve upon our efforts in the future. We hope the Almighty Allah, for the sake of His Hujjat (a.t.f.s.), accepts this humble offering.

Finally, before starting to recite the Ziyaarat and its explanation, we go to our master, Imam-e-Zamaana (a.t.f.s.) and plead with him,

Master! The tears of the oppressed are waiting for someone to wipe their tears and console them.

Master! The wounded, the amputated and the injured, victims of the atrocities of the modern superpowers, have lost all faith except in the miraculous touch of Yusuf-e-Zahra!

Master! The stifled cries of the orphans, the dry eyes of the widows and the bleeding hearts of the scholars, have only one hope. You.

Master! The poor and the destitute lie hungry, sick and diseased. They don't expect any solace, comfort and relief from anybody

except the son of Fatemah (s.a.).

Master! Now even the sacred shrines of Karbala and Najaf, the shrines of your noble ancestors, are unsafe from the filthy designs of the present day Pharaohs!

O Allah! Hasten the reappearance of our master, Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and enlist us amongst his companions and helpers! Aameen! Lord of the Worlds!

Association of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

Shabaan al-Muazzam, 1425 A.H. (2004 A.D.)

زیارت آل یس

سَلَامٌ عَلَيَّ آلِ يَسٍّ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَرَبَّانِي
 آيَاتِهِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَابَ اللَّهِ وَدِيَانَ دِينِهِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ
 يَا خَلِيفَةَ اللَّهِ وَنَاصِرَ حَقِّهِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا حُجَّةَ اللَّهِ وَدَلِيلَ
 أَرَادَتِهِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا تَالِيَّ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَتَرْجُمَانَهُ السَّلَامُ
 عَلَيْكَ فِي آنَاءِ لَيْلِكَ وَأَطْرَافِ نَهَارِكَ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَقِيَّةَ
 اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا مِيثَاقَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَخَذَهُ
 وَوَكَّدَهُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي ضَمَّنَهُ، السَّلَامُ
 عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْعَلَمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ وَالْعَلَمُ الْمَصْبُوبُ وَالْعَوْتُ
 وَالرَّحْمَةُ الْوَاسِعَةُ، وَعَدَاً غَيْرَ مَكْذُوبٍ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ
 تَقُومُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقْعُدُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقْرَأُ
 وَتُبَيِّنُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُصَلِّيَ وَتَقْنُتُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ
 حِينَ تَرْكَعُ وَتَسْجُدُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُهَلِّلُ وَتُكَبِّرُ،
 السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَحْمَدُ وَتَسْتَغْفِرُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ
 تُصْبِحُ وَتُمْسِي، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ فِي اللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَعْشَى وَالنَّهَارِ
 إِذَا تَجَلَّى، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْأَمَامُ الْأَمَامُونَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ
 أَيُّهَا الْمُقَدَّمُ الْأَمَامُولُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ بِجَوَامِعِ السَّلَامِ

أَشْهَدُكَ يَا مَوْلَايَ أَتَى أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا
 شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ لَا حَبِيبَ إِلَّا هُوَ
 وَأَهْلُهُ، وَأَشْهَدُكَ يَا مَوْلَايَ أَنَّ عَلِيًّا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حُجَّتَهُ
 وَالْحَسَنَ حُجَّتَهُ وَالْحُسَيْنَ حُجَّتَهُ وَعَلِيَّ بْنَ الْحُسَيْنِ حُجَّتَهُ
 وَمُحَمَّدَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ حُجَّتَهُ، وَجَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ حُجَّتَهُ،
 وَمُوسَى بْنَ جَعْفَرَ حُجَّتَهُ، وَعَلِيَّ بْنَ مُوسَى حُجَّتَهُ،
 وَمُحَمَّدَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ حُجَّتَهُ، وَعَلِيَّ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ حُجَّتَهُ، وَالْحَسَنَ
 بْنَ عَلِيٍّ حُجَّتَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ، أَنْتُمْ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ
 وَأَنَّ رَجَعْتَكُمْ حَقٌّ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ
 تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيْمَانِهَا خَيْرًا، وَأَنَّ الْمَوْتَ
 حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ نَاكِرًا وَنَكِيرًا حَقٌّ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ النَّشْرَ حَقٌّ،
 وَالْبَعَثَ حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ الصِّرَاطَ حَقٌّ، وَالْمِرْصَادَ حَقٌّ، وَالْمِيزَانَ
 حَقٌّ، وَالْحَشْرَ حَقٌّ، وَالْحِسَابَ حَقٌّ، وَالْجَنَّةَ وَالنَّارَ حَقٌّ،
 وَالْوَعْدَ وَالْوَعِيدَ بِهِمَا حَقٌّ، يَا مَوْلَايَ شَقِيٍّ مَنْ خَالَفَكَ
 وَسَعَدَ مَنْ أَطَاعَكَ، فَاشْهَدْ عَلَيَّ مَا أَشْهَدُكَ عَلَيْهِ، وَأَنَا
 وَلِيِّ لَكَ بَرِيٍّ مِنْ عَدُوِّكَ، فَالْحَقُّ مَا رَضِيْتُمُوهُ، وَالْبَاطِلُ مَا
 اسْخَطْتُمُوهُ، وَالْمَعْرُوفُ مَا أَمَرْتُمْ بِهِ، وَالْمُنْكَرُ مَا نَهَيْتُمْ

عَنْهُ، فَنَفْسِي مُؤْمِنَةٌ بِاللَّهِ وَحَدُّهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِرَسُولِهِ
وَبِأَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَبِكُمْ يَا مَوْلَايَ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَخْرِكُمْ، وَنُصْرَتِي
مُعَدَّةٌ لَكُمْ وَمَوَدَّتِي خَالِصَةٌ لَكُمْ آمِينَ آمِينَ.

Ziyaarat-e-Aal-e-Yaasin – A Brief Commentary

The Chain of Narrators

Numerous Shia scholars of the highest stature have documented this Ziyaarat in their compilations and have vouched for its chain of narrators. Here, we shall outline the names of a few books wherein this Ziyaarat has been mentioned. (Being followers of the five infallibles (a.s.) from the Incident of the Cloak (حدیث کساء), we have taken a similar number and have mentioned five references).

(1) Al-Ehtejaaj vol. 2 p. 316-318:

This is the oldest reference available for the Ziyaarat. The compiler of this invaluable work is the great traditionalist – Abu Mansoor Ahmed b. Ali b. Abi Talib Tabarsi (r.a.). This traditionalist of the 6th century Hijri is considered to be one of the all-time great Shia scholars and teachers. Scholars of narrators (Ulama-e-Rijaal) have spoken highly of him for his greatness and piety.

(2) Behaarul Anwaar:

The compiler of this Shiite Encyclopaedia needs no introduction. He is the pride of the Shiite world and one of its greatest

traditionalists- Allamah Shaikh Muhammad Baqer Majlisi (r.a.)
Considering the importance of Ziyaarate Aal-e-Yaasin, he has
mentioned it in 3 places:

- i) vol. 53, p.171-73 under the Chapter of letters (توقيعات) of
Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.)
- ii) vol. 94, p. 5-6 under the Chapter of Allah's remembrance
and supplications
- iii) vol. 102, p. 81-83 under the Chapter of Ziyaaraat.

**(3) Fauze Akbar dar Tawassulate Imam-e-Muntazar (a.t.f.s.)
p. 68-70:**

Hujjatul Islam Mirza Muhammad Baqer Faqih Eemaani (r.a.) is
the compiler of this book. It is noteworthy that he has mentioned
this Ziyaarat right at the beginning before other Ziyaaraat.

(4) Takaaliful Anaam fi Ghaibatil Imam (a.t.f.s.) p. 135-38:

Sadrul Islam Hamadani (r.a.) has recorded this Ziyaarat in the
25th duty during the major occultation (غيبية).

**(5) Mafaatihul Jinaan (Urdu translation Allamah Zeeshan
Haider Jawadi (r.a.) Tanzeemul Makatib Lucknow edition)
p. 956-959:**

The compiler of this momentous work is Shaikh Abbas al-
Qummi (r.a.).

The main narrator of this Ziyaarat is Abdullah b. Jafar (r.a.) [240 A.H.-300 A.H.].¹ Shaikh Sadooq's (r.a.) father – Ali b. Baabwaiyh (r.a.), Muhammad b. Hasan (r.a.) (Shaikh Sadooq's (r.a.) teacher) and Muhammad b. Yaqoob Kulaini (r.a.) have reported this Ziyaarat along with numerous other traditions from Abdullah b. Jafar (r.a.). Given this list of illustrious personalities who have narrated this tradition, there remains no doubt about the authenticity of the chain of narrators.

A Peculiar Feature of the Ziyaarat

A very exceptional trait of this Ziyaarat is that the instructor of this Ziyaarat is also its addressee, i.e. the one conveying salutation (salaam) and the one to whom the salutation is addressed is one and the same. Such ziyaaraat are indeed very few. Generally, Ziyaaraat are recorded from one infallible (a.s.) addressing another infallible (a.s.). For instance, Imam Sajjad (a.s.) has taught his Shias the Ziyaarat of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) introduced the Ziyaarat of the martyrs of Karbala (r.a.).

About the introduction of Ziyaarat-e-Aal-e-Yaasin, it is narrated that Janabe Himyari (r.a.), the narrator of this Ziyaarat, received a letter from Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) in which, he (a.t.f.s.) first answered the queries asked. Then he wrote,

¹ Qurbul Asnad, p.2-3.

'You (people) neither understand Allah's affair (ولایت) nor acknowledge His friends (Imams (a.s.)). The Imam is Allah's Perfect Wisdom but it has become futile to frighten the people with it. Salutations be upon us and upon Allah's pious servants. So, whenever you intend to turn your attention towards Allah through our mediation or wish to turn towards us then say as Allah has ordered,

“سَلَامٌ عَلٰی آلِ اِيسٍ...”

We beseech Allah to give us the grace to convey the exegesis of this invaluable Ziyaarat to our readers (keeping brevity in mind).

۱. سَلَامٌ عَلٰی آلِ اِيسٍ

Salutation upon Aal-e-Yaasin means salutations upon the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). This opening salutation has great significance. For, this is a Ziyaarat related to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and all salutations after the opening one are addressed to him. Yet, Imam (a.t.f.s.) has commenced it by sending salutations upon all his family members. It is apparent that the opening salutation on the infallible progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is derived from two Quranic verses. The first verse is derived from Surah Yasin, verse 1

يس

The second verse is derived from Surah Saaffaat, verse 130

سَلَامٌ عَلَيَّ إِلَىٰ يَاسِينَ

Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) was asked, ‘O son of Allah’s Prophet, what is the meaning of the divine word يس?’

He (a.s.) replied,

اسْمٌ مِنْ أَسْمَاءِ النَّبِيِّ وَ مَعْنَاهُ يَا سَامِعَ الْوَحْيِ .

“It is a name from the Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) names and implies, ‘O hearer of revelation’.”¹

As far as verse 130 of Surah Saaffaat is concerned, several Quranic exegeses and readers of the Holy Quran like Naafe’, Abu Aamir and Yaqoob have recited it as Aal-e-Yaasin. (اليساسين) is in reality Aal-e-Yaasin).²

In addition to this, even traditions of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) support this explanation. For instance, Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) has narrated a tradition from his grandfather Ameerul Momineen

¹ Maanil Akhbaar by Shaikh Saduq (a.r.), p. 22; Tafseer-e-Burhaan by Sayed Haashim Bahraani (a.r.), vol. 2, p.3.

² Tafseer-e-Abul Futooh, vol. 9, p. 338; Tafseer-e-Majma-ul-Bayaan by Shaikh Tabarsi (a.r.) vol. 8, p. 456.

(a.s.) regarding the Quranic verse

يَسُّ مُحَمَّدٌ وَنَحْنُ آلُ يَسِّ.

*'Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is Yasin and we (Ahle Bait (a.s.)) are Aal-e-Yaasin.'*¹

During the reign of the Abbaside Emperor a debate was organised between Imam Reza (a.s.) and the scholars of the Ahle Sunna vis-à-vis the excellence of the infallible Ahle Bait (a.s.). Imam Reza (a.s.) demanded,

'Inform me about the saying of Allah, Mighty and Glorified be He,

Yaasin – By the Noble Quran – Surely, You (O Muhammad) are from the Messengers On the Right Path.'²

Who is Yaasin in this verse?'

The scholars replied: Yaasin is Muhammad (s.a.w.a.), none doubts about it.

On this, Imam Reza (a.s.) exclaimed,

¹ Tafseere Burhan, vol. 2, p.33.

² Surah Yaasin (36): Verses 1-3.

“Surely Allah – Mighty and Glorified Be He – has granted Muhammad and Ale Muhammad a virtue, on account of this, the essence of which none can reach except through his intellect. That is, Allah – Mighty and Glorified be He – has not send salutations on anybody except the Prophets (a.s.). Thus He – Blessed and High be He – says, ‘Peace be on Nuh in the worlds.’¹ and ‘Peace be on Ibrahim’² and ‘Peace be on Moosa and Haroon.’³ But He did not say, ‘Peace be on the progeny of Nuh’ nor did he say, ‘Peace be on the progeny of Ibrahim’, nor did He say, ‘Peace be on the progeny of Moosa and Haaron.’ But He – Mighty and Glorified Be He – did say, ‘Peace be on the progeny of Yaasin.’⁴ i.e. the progeny of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.).⁵

Revered commentators of the Ahle Sunnah like Qurtubbi in his Tafseer (vol. 15 p.119) and Aaloosi in Tafseer-e-Ruhul Ma’ani (vol. 23 p. 142) too have advanced similar views.

٢. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَرَبَّانِي آيَاتِهِ

Salutations upon you, O the caller of Allah and the

¹ Surah Saaffaat (37): Verse 79.

² Surah Saaffaat (37): Verse 109.

³ Surah Saaffaat (37): Verse 120.

⁴ Surah Saaffaat (37): Verse 130.

⁵ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 23, p. 167, H. 1, narrating from Oyoon-o-Akhbaar al-Reza, p. 131.

nourisher of His Creation

The opening salutation is addressed specifically to Imam's (a.t.f.s.) holy and glorious existence. From among his innumerable attributes, we find two attributes highlighted in the first salutation.

- a. داعى الله (Caller of Allah)
- b. رَبَّانِيَّ آيَاتِهِ (Nourisher of His Sign)

The first attribute داعى is a Subject (فاعل) (according to Arabic grammar) and means – the one who calls or invites. Over here it means that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) invites the people towards Allah.

The Significant Position of Inviting towards Allah

The opening salutation of this Ziyaarat mentions inviting towards Allah. This is from among the exalted attributes of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) that right from 260 A.H. till date and from today till the day of his reappearance, he has and will continue to persistently and tirelessly invite the people towards Allah.

The other attribute highlighted in the opening salutation is رَبَّانِيَّ. Marhoom Turaihi (a.r.) writes that in Tafseer-e-Kashshaaf of Zamakhshari, the word رَبَّانِيَّ refers to the one who is firmly attached to religion and his obedience to Allah is firm and

intense. In Qamoos, رَبَّانِيّ is defined as one who worships Allah with recognition. Tabarsi (a.r.) writes that the one who improves and regulates the affairs of the people is called as رَبَّانِيّ. This is also supported by the tradition

لَا عِلْمَ إِلَّا مِنْ عَالِمِ رَبَّانِيّ

“There is no knowledge except from the divine scholar.”¹

In view of the above explanation, the first line of the Ziyaarat can be read as, ‘Salutation upon you who invites towards Allah’s Religion and who himself is Allah’s Religion. Your obedience is tantamount to divine obedience. Salutation upon you, the one who improves and regulates the affairs of Allah’s creatures.’ Allah, Glorified be He, has delegated the regulation of all His creatures to His cherished one – Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) and his infallible family – the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Today our Imam – Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the representative of this family and has been entrusted with this all-important responsibility.

۳. اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَیْكَ يَا بَابَ اللّٰهِ وَدَيَّانَ دِيْنِهِ

Salutation upon you, O Allah’s Door and the regulator and governor of His Religion.

¹ Majmaul Bahrain, vol. 2, p. 65 under the alphabets رَبَّ.

Like the previous salutation, this salutation also embraces two attributes. The first is ‘Allah’s Door’ and this attribute is indeed very popular and finds mention in several Ziyaaraat. In traditions, the Ahle Bait (a.s.) are referred to as ‘Allah’s Door’. For instance, Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) informs

الْأَوْصِيَاءُ هُمْ أَبْوَابُ اللَّهِ الَّتِي يُوتَى مِنْهَا وَ لَوْ لَا هُمْ مَا
عُرِفَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَ بِهِمْ احْتَجَّ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى عَلَى
خَلْقِهِ

‘The Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) successors are the ‘Doors of Allah’ through which He can be accessed. If they were not there, Allah the Almighty would not have been recognized. Through them, Allah the Almighty has completed His arguments against His creatures.’¹

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) declares

نَحْنُ حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ وَ بَابُ اللَّهِ

‘We are Allah’s Proofs and Allah’s Door.’²

In Duae Nudbah, which is associated with Imam (a.t.f.s.) himself, we address him:

¹ Tafseer-e- Burhaan vol. 1, p. 190.

² Ibid.

أَيْنَ بَابِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي مِنْهُ يُؤْتَى

'Where is Allah's Door, through which He is accessed?'

What is the meaning of *بَاب*? *بَاب* means door or gate. However, this by no means, implies that Allah resides in an abode, the door of which is Ahle Bait (a.s.). To dispel such misleading notions, it is necessary that we first understand some peculiarities about a door. Take the door of any house or garden. What is the function and purpose of the door? The primary and most critical function of the door is to allow access to the house or garden and to that extent it is unique. Of course, a person can still jump the wall or sneak inside through the window, but that is not in keeping with the norms of a cultured society and any rational person will disapprove of such uncivilized behaviour. The Islamic Shariat and intellect have condemned this in no uncertain terms.

The renowned commentator on the Holy Quran belonging to the Ahle Sunnah – Hafiz Jalaluddin Suyuti narrates, 'Once the second caliph, Umar b. Khattab, was on his famous night strolls. Suddenly he heard some strange sounds from a house, which aroused his suspicions. He went to the periphery of the house and seeing no way to enter it jumped the wall. Inside the house, he was surprised to see a man, drinking wine and seated with a woman in a compromising position. The caliph exclaimed, 'O

Allah's enemy! Do you really believe that your disobedience is concealed from Him?' The man, though drunk, shot back instantly, 'O Amirul Momineen! Don't act in haste. If I have committed one sin, you are guilty of perpetrating three major sins. Allah commands,

'... and do not spy'¹

and you have disobeyed him by spying (on me). Allah commands,

'...and go into the houses by their doors',²

while you have jumped the wall. Allah commands,

'Do not enter the houses until you are acquainted and saluted their inmates',³

while you have neither sought permission nor saluted us.'⁴

It is in conformity with etiquette and intellect that man enters a garden, house or a city through their doors.

The other term used in the salutation is دَيَّانٌ دَيْنُهُ. What is the meaning of دَيَّانٌ and why is Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) being referred

¹ Surah Hujuraat (49), Verse 12.

² Surah Baqarah (2), Verse 189.

³ Surah Noor (24), Verse 27.

⁴ Tafseer-e-Durrul Manthoor, vol. 6, p. 93.

to as دَيَّان? Tabarsi (r.a.) records, دَيَّان is among the titles of Allah. It means dominant, ruler and judge. In the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) praise and eulogy, he says

يَا سَيِّدَ النَّاسِ وَ دَيَّانَ الْعَرَبِ

'O leader of men and the ruler (or judge or dominator) of the Arabs.' Likewise traditions declare

كَانَ عَلِيٌّ دَيَّانَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهَا

*'Ali (a.s.) is the ruler (or judge or dominator) of this nation after the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).'*¹

It is evident that the entire progeny of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) also possesses these merits and can be ascribed with them (and this fact is highlighted in several Ziyaaraat). In this era, Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the sole representative of the Prophet's infallible progeny (a.s.) and by virtue of this, he is the sole possessor of these merits.

٤ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا خَلِيفَةَ اللَّهِ وَ نَاصِرَ حَقِّهِ

Salutations upon you, O Caliph of Allah and the Helper (in the way) of His Right.

¹ Majmaul Bahrain vol. 6, p. 253, Aqrabul Mawaarid.

This salutation also highlights two vital attributes – Allah’s Caliphate and the support of His Right. In Arabic terminology, a caliph has been described as:

مَنْ يَخْلُفُ غَيْرَهُ وَ يَقُومُ مَقَامَهُ وَ السَّلْطَانُ الْأَعْظَمُ وَ فِي
الشَّرْعِ: الْإِمَامُ الَّذِي لَيْسَ فَوْقَهُ أَمَامٌ (أَقْرَبُ الْمَوَارِدِ، مَادَّةُ
خَلْفٌ)

‘Caliph is the successor of another and the one appointed by him. That is why a king is referred to as a Caliph.’

According to the Islamic Shariat, the caliph is the Imam, and he is matchless in his superiority and supremacy.

In the current era, Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the Imam and the sole claimant to the exalted and lofty status of Imamat. He is the dominant and supreme king, in front of whom, even Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) and Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.) with all the embellishments of their monarchies, appear small and miniscule. He is the true Caliph and Guide, who is unchallenged in his caliphate and guidance. In this regard, Hafiz Muhammad b. Yusuf Ganji Shafei’, the illustrious Sunni scholar, has recorded a pertinent tradition in his compilation ‘Al Bayaan fi Akhbaar-e-Sahibiz Zaman (a.t.f.s.) (Chapter 15)’

يَخْرُجُ الْمَهْدِيُّ وَ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ غَمَامَةٌ فِيهَا مُنَادٍ يُنَادِي هَذَا

الْمَهْدِيُّ خَلِيفَةُ اللَّهِ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ

'Mahdi shall reappear while there will be a cloud hovering over him. From within it, an announcer shall announce – This is Mahdi, Allah's Caliph, so obey him!'

وَ نَاصِرَ حَقِّهِ

This is the second important attribute underlined in this salutation. While it's true that all prophets (a.s.) and successors (a.s.) were helpers of the divine cause, it is noteworthy that Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) has been specially preserved for this motive. In order to appreciate this point, it is necessary that we understand the word حَقِّهِ. حَقِّهِ means His (Allah's) Right. Imam (a.t.f.s.) is the helper of Allah's right (i.e. His cause). What is Allah's right? The fourth Imam – Imam Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) explains Allah's right in the very beginning of his compilation 'Risaalatul Huquq'

فَأَمَّا حَقُّ اللَّهِ الْأَكْبَرُ عَلَيْكَ فَأَنْ تَعْبُدُوهُ (و) لَا تُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا

'The greatest right that Allah, the Almighty, enjoys upon you is that you worship only Him and do not

*associate partners with Him.*¹

As explained by Imam (a.s.), Allah's right upon His Creatures is the belief in monotheism. It means that we should worship only Him and not set up partners for Him. As we have mentioned earlier, this is the objective with which all prophets (a.s.) and messengers (a.s.) were raised. However, none could accomplish complete success in this regard. For instance, Hazrat Nuh (a.s.) propagated for 950 years, but despite his massive efforts, the Holy Quran says

وَمَا آمَنَ مَعَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ

“And none believed with him (Nuh) but a few.”

However, while prophesizing about Imam-e-Asr's (a.t.f.s.) advent, Allah says,

يَعْبُدُونِي ۚ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا.

‘...they shall serve Me, not associating aught with Me...’²

In this momentous endeavour, Allah, Himself, shall help Imam (a.t.f.s.) through His angels. In Dua-e-Iftetaah, Imam (a.t.f.s.)

¹ Khesaal by Shaikh Saduq (a.r.), p. 522.

² Surah Nur (24): Verse 55.

espouses this fact,

اللَّهُمَّ اَعِزَّهُ وَاَعِزِّرْ بِهِ وَاَنْصُرُهُ وَاَنْتَصِرْ بِهِ وَاَنْصُرُهُ نَصْرًا
عَزِيزًا وَاَفْتَحْ لَهُ فَتْحًا يَسِيرًا وَاَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ لَدُنْكَ سُلْطَانًا
نَصِيرًا

‘O Allah! Honour him (Imam (a.t.f.s.)) and through him honour us. Help him and through him help us avenge our enemies. Help him with a mighty helping and grant him an easy victory. And arrange from Your side a dominating and overwhelming support for him.’¹

۝ . اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا حُجَّةَ اللّٰهِ وَدَلِيلَ اِرَادَتِهِ

‘Salutations upon you, O Allah’s Proof and the indicator towards His intention.’

Imam’s (a.t.f.s.) brilliant personality is Allah’s most magnificent proof and argument on the earth. Allah shall complete His argument upon His creatures through Imam (a.t.f.s.) and the creatures shall witness Allah’s argument through the persona of Imam (a.t.f.s.). This means that if a person cannot recognize His Creator through the mediation of Imam (a.t.f.s.), he will never arrive at the truth and all his attempts in this regard will prove

¹ Mafaatihul Jinaan; Iqbaalul A’maal by Sayyed b. Tawoos (r.a.) p. 142.

futile.

Hakimah Khaatoon (r.a.), the daughter of Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.), informs, ‘As soon as Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) stepped into this world, he immediately fell in prostration. On his arm were engraved in a radiant light, the words:

جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَ زَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ

‘Truth has come and falsehood vanished.’¹

I took the infant in my arms and carried him over to his father Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). Imam (a.s.) ran his fingers lovingly across the head of his beloved son and urged,

تَكَلَّمْ يَا حَجَّةَ اللَّهِ وَ بَقِيَّةَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ خَاتَمَ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَ
صَاحِبَ الْكَرَّةِ الْبَيْضَاءِ وَ الْمَصْبَاحِ مِنَ الْبَحْرِ الْعَمِيقِ
الشَّدِيدِ الضِّيَاءِ. تَكَلَّمْ يَا خَلِيفَةَ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ وَ نُورَ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ.

‘Speak up O Allah’s Proof and the remnant of the past prophets, O the seal of successors, O restorer of brilliance and light to the deep ocean, speak up, O Caliph of the Pious Ones and the Light of the Successors.’

¹ Surah Bani Israel (17): Verse 81.

Later, again we see Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) giving glad tidings to Imam (a.t.f.s.) at noon when the latter was offering water to his father for ablutions:

أَبَشِّرُ يَا بُنَيَّ فَأَنْتَ صَاحِبُ الزَّمَانِ وَأَنْتَ الْمَهْدِيُّ وَأَنْتَ
حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى أَرْضِهِ وَأَنْتَ وَوَلَدِي وَوَصِيِّ...

*'O my son, I give you glad tidings that you are the Master of the Age, you are the Mahdi, you are Allah's Proof on the earth, you are my son and my successor...'*¹

Another significant fact revealed in this salutation is دَلِيلِ إِرَادَتِهِ

This can be read as,

'Salutations on the one who signifies Allah's Intention.'

Indeed Imam's (a.t.f.s.) glorious existence is a proof and indicator of Allah's Intention. Before deliberating on the proof of intention, it is necessary first to understand the meaning of Allah's Intention. Allah's Intention has two aspects the World of Creation (عالم تكويني) and the World of Action (عالم تشريعي). In (عالم تكويني), Allah's Intention implies His Creation like earth, sky, sun, moon, etc. Regarding (عالم تشريعي), Allah only has to say 'Be' كُنْ and 'It is' (فَيَكُونُ). In Aalam-e-Tashreei, Allah's Intention is

¹ Al-Ghaibat by Shaikh Tusi (r.a.) p. 165.

His Commands and Prohibitions that He has defined for his creatures.

In the light of the above explanation, when we reflect upon Imam's (a.t.f.s.) attribute of being a pointer towards Allah's Intention, we realise that he guides us towards both these worlds. In *عالم تكويني*, every creation points towards Allah's Intention. However, Imam's (a.t.f.s.) wonderful existence is the best pointer towards Allah's Intention taking precedence over all other creation. This is because, if it weren't for the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his infallible progeny (a.s.), there would not have been earth, sky, Chair, Throne, jinn, men, etc. nay rather nothing would have existed at all.

Allah Himself declares

لَوْلَاكَ لَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْأَفْلَاكَ

‘O Prophet, but for you, I would not have created the world.’

أَنِّي مَا خَلَقْتُ سَمَاءً مَبْنِيَّةً وَ لَا أَرْضًا مَدْحِيَّةً وَ لَا شَمْسًا
مُضِيَّةً ... إِلَّا لِأَجْلِ وَ مَحَبَّةٍ هَؤُلَاءِ الْخَمْسَةِ الَّذِينَ هُمْ
تَحْتَ الْكِسَاءِ

‘Surely I (Allah) did not create the elevated sky, the

expansive earth, the brilliant sun....but for the sake and for the love of these five persons, who are inside the cloak.”¹

Moreover, Allah conveys His Intention to His creatures through Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.). Imam Sadeq (a.s.) while instructing the Shias about the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (a.s.) declares

إِرَادَةُ الرَّبِّ فِي مَقَادِيرِ أُمُورِهِ تَهْبِطُ إِلَيْكُمْ وَ تَصْدُرُ مِنْ
بُيُوتِكُمْ

“(O Ahle Bait!) Allah’s intention in the destinies of His affairs descends on you and emanates from your houses.”²

In another tradition, Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) informs,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَعَلَ قُلُوبَ الْأَئِمَّةِ مَوْرِدًا لِإِرَادَتِهِ فَإِذَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ شَيْئًا
شَاءُوهُ وَ هُوَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ وَ مَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

“Surely Allah has made the hearts of the Imams as a place for His intention’s descent. Thus, whenever Allah intends a thing, they too intend the same and this is the

¹ Hadis-e-Kisa.

² Furu’ al-Kafi by Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Yaqub al-Kulayni (a.r.), Kitabul Hajj, The Chapter of Ziyaarat of Imam Husain’s (a.s.) grave, Hadees 6; Mafaatihul Jinaan, Imam Husain’s (a.s.) first ziyaarat.

meaning of the verse,

‘And you intend not (a thing) but that Allah intends (it).’¹

In yet another tradition, Imam Sadeq (a.s.) declares,

إِنَّ الْإِمَامَ وَكَرًّا لِرَادَةِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ

“Surely the Imam is the nest for Allah’s (Mighty and Glorified be He) intention.”²

As for *عالم تشريعي*, an Imam is the best guide towards Allah’s commands and prohibitions. In other words, there is none in the world, who can comprehend Allah’s laws better than the Imam or perform them in a manner more appropriate than him. Hence, if any one desires to see as to which type of worship includes Allah’s satisfaction, he must look at Imam and attempt to imitate him to the best of his abilities.

٦ . اَسْلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا تَالِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَتَرْجُمَانَهُ

Salutation upon you, O the reciter of Allah’s Book and its interpreter

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 25, p. 372.

² Ibid, p. 385.

Like the previous statement, this is also a salutation on two entities. However, unlike the previous salutation, the entity in question is one and the same – the Holy Quran. Or to be precise it deals with the two Qurans – the Silent Quran (the book itself) and the Speaking Quran (Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.)) and highlights the cohesive and durable bond between the two. Indeed, the two shall always remain united in this world until they meet the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the hereafter. The renowned prophetic tradition underlines this fact:

اِنِّى تَارِكٌ فِىكُمْ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتَابَ اللّٰهِ وَ عِتْرَتِىْ اَهْلَ بَيْتِىْ مَا اِنْ
 تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوْا بَعْدِىْ اَبَدًا فَاتَّهَمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتّٰى
 يَرِدَ عَلٰى الْحَوْضِ

'I am leaving behind in your midst, two weighty things: the Book of Allah and my progeny. If you fasten to them, you will never be led astray after me and these two shall not separate from each other till they meet me at the pond (حوض) of Kausar.'

Traditions like this or with similar implications are aplenty. These are recorded by the Ahle Sunnah and Shia scholars and are deemed authentic and reliable by them. In view of the tradition mentioned above, it is evident that every age has a representative of the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) progeny and in this era, Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) holds this esteemed position.

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) warns Amr b. Ubaid,

فَأَمَّا عَلَى النَّاسِ أَنْ يَقْرَأُوا الْقُرْآنَ كَمَا أَنْزَلَ فَإِذَا احتَاجُوا
إِلَى تَفْسِيرِهِ فَالِاهْتِدَاءُ بِنَا وَ الْيُنَا يَا عَمْرُو

*'O Amr, it is obligatory on the people to recite the Quran as it was revealed. When they feel the need to interpret its verses, they should necessarily refer to us and acquire guidance.'*¹

٧. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ فِي آنَاءِ لَيْلِكَ وَأَطْرَافِ نَهَارِكَ

'Salutations upon you in the night time and during the day.'

With this salutation, you are announcing your intention to send peace upon Imam (a.t.f.s.) at every moment, be it day or night.

This statement is borrowed from the Quranic verse

وَمِنْ آنَاءِ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَطْرَافِ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَى

'...during hours of the night do also glorify (Him)

¹ Tafseer-e-Furaat al-Kufi, p. 91.

and during parts of the day...'¹

٨. اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَیْكَ يَا بَقِیَّةَ اللّٰهِ فِي اَرْضِهِ

Salutation upon the Remnant of Allah in His earth

Over here, Imam (a.t.f.s.) has been addressed with the renowned title that finds a mention in the Holy Quran.

بَقِیَّةُ اللّٰهِ خَیْرٌ لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِیْنَ

“Surely the remnant of Allah is good for you if you are believers.”²

The word بقیة has several meanings. However, for brevity we have delved only on one meaning which is relevant to our discussion over here.

بَقِیَ مِنْهُ: تُرِكَ بَعْضُهُ

i.e. some of it's part is left.

This means that Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the last link preserved by Allah in His chain of Prophets (a.s.) and their successors (a.s.) sent for mankind's guidance.

¹ Surah Taha (20): Verse 130.

² Surah Hud (11): Verse 86.

This is also the meaning used in Ziyaaraat and supplications.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَقِيَّةَ مَنْ أَوْلِيَّائِهِ وَ حُجَّجِهِ

*'Salutation upon the Remnant of Allah, from His Friends and His Proofs.'*¹

اللهُ بَقِيَّةُ اللهِ was the title of even the previous Imams (a.s.). However, it is used more specifically for Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.). The following tradition underscores this fact.

A denier of the Holy Quran approached Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and asked him, 'I have read in the Quran, 'the Remnant of Allah is better for you.' Who is this Remnant of Allah?

Imam (a.s.) informed,

*'This refers to the Mahdi, who shall reappear after a period of intense examination. He shall then fill the earth with justice and equity as it would have been filled with tyranny and injustice. Among his signs are occultation and a concealed lifestyle. At that time, rebellion and upheavals will be common and the fire of vengeance will be stoking strongly among the people.'*²

When Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) introduced Ahmed b. Ishaq

¹ Fauz-e-Akbar, p. 71.

² Behaarul Anwaar vol. 93, p. 115.

(r.a.) to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) while he was still an infant, Imam (a.t.f.s.) declared to Ahmed b. Ishaq (r.a.)

أَنَا بَقِيَّةُ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ

'I am the Remnant of Allah on His earth.'

This is the very statement that Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall proclaim on his reappearance. Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall be sighted first in the precincts of the Holy Kabaa where while leaning against the sacred monument. Kabaa, he shall recite the above statement.

٩ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا مِيثَاقَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَخَذَهُ وَ وَكَّدَهُ

Salutations upon you O Allah's Covenant that he has taken and emphasized upon it.

The poet has depicted this thus:

وَ نُخْبَةَ الْوُجُودِ مَا شِئْتَ فَقُلْ

The remnant of Allah and the
chosen one of messengers

بَقِيَّةُ اللَّهِ وَ صَفْوَةَ الرُّسُلِ

The selected among the
existents, say as you please

ميثاق means pledge and allegiance. Reliable traditions reveal that in عالم ذرّ (the world that preceded this material world and roughly translated as 'the world of particles'), Allah had taken the pledge from the Shias with regards to the mastership of the

infallible Imams (a.s.) of the Ahle Bait (a.s.). That is why in this Ziyaarat we refer to Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) as ‘Allah’s Covenant’. Imam (a.t.f.s.) is the covenant on which Allah has put a lot of stress and emphasis for His creatures.

In عالم ذرّ, when all the creatures were present in the form of particles (ذرّ) they were made to affirm the pledge regarding Allah’s divinity, the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) prophethood and Ameerul Momineen’s (a.s.) mastership. However, when the creatures were examined in this matter with complete free will and without any compulsion, most of them were unsuccessful and failed to affirm the allegiance. After this triple allegiance (divinity, prophethood and mastership), Allah questioned the creatures regarding Imam-e-Asr’s (a.t.f.s.) occultation and reappearance, in which, even more creatures were unsuccessful and failed to affirm the pledge regarding Imam-e-Asr’s (a.t.f.s.) occultation and reappearance. Therefore, this pledge has become a subject of divine emphasis. It is this very covenant, the affirmation of which made some prophets (a.s.) reach the exalted station of ‘firm in determination’ (أولو العظم), in preference over other prophets (a.s.).

In this aspect, Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) declares

وَ أَخَذَ الْمِيثَاقَ عَلَىٰ أَوْلِي الْعِزْمِ أَنِّي رَبُّكُمْ وَ مُحَمَّدٌ
رَسُولِي وَ عَلِيٌّ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ أَوْصِيَاءُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَ وِلَاةُ

أَمْرِي وَ خُزَّانُ عِلْمِي وَ أَنَّ الْمَهْدِيَّ أَنْتَصِرُ بِهِ لِـدِينِي وَ
أُظْهِرُ بِهِ دَوْلَتِي وَ أَنْتَقِمُ بِهِ مِنْ أَعْدَائِي وَ أَعْبُدُ بِهِ طَوْعًا وَ
كَرْهًا...

*'Allah has taken this pledge even from the اولو العزم Prophets (a.s.): I am your Lord, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is My Prophet, Ali (a.s.) and his infallible sons (a.s.) are the masters and treasurers of My affair. I will most certainly help My religion through Mahdi and through him My government will prevail. Through him, I will avenge My enemies and through him all will submit to My Worship willingly or otherwise.'*¹

As is evident from the tradition, all the اولو العزم Prophets (a.s.) have testified to the fact in Aalam-e-Zarr that religion will be helped by and attain deliverance through Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

١٠ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي ضَمَّنَهُ

Salutation upon you, O Allah's Promise regarding which He has given His Assurance

In several supplications and Ziyaraat, Imam (a.t.f.s.) has been referred to as the 'Promised One' and this is a fairly common

¹ Usul al-Kafi, vol. 2, p. 8, Chapter 3, Tradition 1.

title. A distinctiveness of Ziyaarat-e-Aal-e-Yaasin is that Imam (a.t.f.s.) over here has been addressed as ‘Allah’s Promise’, a promise that has been endorsed further by a divine assurance. Perhaps, Imam (a.t.f.s.) has been referred to as a Promise, because of the hopes and expectations behind his promised advent. In fact, the word Promise only evokes Imam’s (a.t.f.s.) remembrance and mention as is evident in 75th verse of Surah Maryam:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ

“Till they see what they had been promised.”

Under the exegesis of this verse, Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) reveals,

فَهُوَ خُرُوجُ الْقَائِمِ

‘Here the Promise refers to the advent of Qaim (a.t.f.s.).’¹

Likewise, readers can refer to other Quranic verses like Surah Nur: 55.

Another noteworthy point on the subject of promise is that Allah never reneges on His Promise. When it comes to honouring one’s word and abiding by a promise, indeed who can take

¹ Usul al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 231, Tradition 9.

precedence over Allah? Certainly none! Allah's promise itself is sufficient for any event to occur. Then, what about the Promise for which Allah has given an added assurance. In this era, it is our duty to wait for the realization of the divine promise. It is regarding this Promise that we find in Ziyaaraat:

السَّلَامُ عَلَى الْمَهْدِيِّ الَّذِي وَعَدَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ بِهِ الْأُمَّمَ أَنْ
يَجْمَعَ بِهِ الْكَلِمَ وَيُلْمَّ بِهِ الشَّعْتَ وَيَمْلَأُ بِهِ الْأَرْضَ قِسْطًا
وَعَدْلًا وَيُمْكِّنُ لَهُ وَيُنَجِّزُ بِهِ وَعَدَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“Salutation upon Mahdi – Allah’s Promise to the nations. Through him (Imam (a.t.f.s.)) Allah will gather the people and unite the scattered ones and fill the earth with justice and equity as it would have been filled with tyranny and injustice. And it is through him (Imam (a.t.f.s.)) that Allah will fulfill His Promise to the believers.”¹

١١ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْعَلَمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ

Salutation upon you, O Raised Standard

Over here, Hazrat Baqiatullah (a.t.f.s.), has been referred to as the ‘Raised Standard’. It is possible that the term – Raised

¹ Mafaatihul Jinaan, p. 530, Aadaab-e-Sardaab.

Standard over here isn't used alone, rather a word 'Master' is concealed before it. So this verse should have read as

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا صَاحِبَ الْعَلَمِ الْمَنْصُوبِ

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

Salutation upon you, O Master of the Raised Standard.

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

The respected scholar of Al-Abqari al-Hesaan writes, 'When Imam's (a.t.f.s.) reappearance draws near, his standard shall start unfurling on its own, without anyone's intervention. Then Allah shall bestow the power of speech to this standard, which shall exclaim – O Allah's Servant, reappear now and destroy Allah's Enemies.'¹

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

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ

¹ An-Najmuz Zaahir, vol. 2, pg. 52, Al-Abqari al-Hesaan.

لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

‘...This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion...’¹

On the second standard shall be written:

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا

‘They fulfill vows and fear a day the evil of which shall be spreading far and wide.’²

The third standard shall be adorned with the words:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ عَلِيُّ وَلِيُّ اللَّهِ وَ خَلِيفَتُهُ
الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ وَ لِتِسْعَةٍ مِنْ وُلْدِ الْحُسَيْنِ أَوْصِيَاءُهُ

‘There is no God except Allah. Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is His Messenger. Ali (a.s.) is His Slave and His Caliph. Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.) and the nine sons from Husain’s (a.s.) progeny are His Successors.’³

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) informs:

¹ Surah Maidah (5): Verse 3.

² Surah Insaan (76): Verse 7.

³ Bughyatut Taalib fi man ra’a Imamal Ghaib (a.t.f.s.), pg. 39.

'Imam-e-Zamana's (a.t.f.s.) standard is a unique flag – the very flag which Hazrat Jibrail (a.s.) brought during the battle of Badr and entrusted to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). This is the very flag that Ameerul Mo'mineen (a.s.) had unfurled during the Battle of Jamal and which resulted in his triumph. After this he wrapped up the flag and handed it over to his son, Imam Hasan Mujtaba (a.s.). In this manner the flag was passed on from one Imam (a.s.) to another as a legacy and an invaluable treasure. The Imams (a.s.) maintained the flag, but none got the opportunity to unfurl it. Now this flag shall unfurl at the hands of the last surviving member of this immaculate household – the Qaim, Mahdi of Ale Muhammad (a.s.).¹

١٢ . وَالْعِلْمُ الْمَصْبُوبُ

(Salutation upon you), O overflowing knowledge...

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

Like the earlier statements, this statement also throws up two possibilities. One possibility could be that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) is the possessor of overflowing knowledge and the other is that Imam's (a.t.f.s.) personality is overflowing with

¹ Kamaluddin, pg. 672; Ghaibat-e-Nomani, pg. 307.

knowledge. At this stage, my pen confesses its helplessness in describing ‘absolute knowledge’. For how can ‘the overflowing ignorance’ have the audacity to elucidate the reality of ‘the overflowing knowledge’! Indeed this is only possible if we restrict ourselves to the traditions of the infallibles (a.s.) to unravel the reality of ‘the overflowing knowledge’. In this regard let us cast a glance at the traditions, supplications and Ziyaraat related to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). (Readers are requested to read the following lines with rapt attention)

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ كَنْزِ الْعُلُومِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ

‘Salutation upon you, O the treasure of divine knowledge...’¹

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا مَعْدِنَ الْعُلُومِ النَّبَوِيَّةِ

‘Salutation upon you, O storehouse of the prophetic knowledge...’²

أَنْكَ خَائِزُ كُلِّ عِلْمٍ

‘Indeed you are the collection of every knowledge and

¹ Misbahuz Zair, pg. 437; Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 226.

² Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 117.

science.’¹

أَنْتَ خَازِنُ كُلِّ عِلْمٍ وَفَاتِقُ كُلِّ رَتْقٍ

‘Indeed you are the collection of every knowledge and the splitter of every sewn thing (of every branch of knowledge).’²

السَّلَامُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْجَدِيدِ وَالْعَالَمِ الَّذِي عِلْمُهُ لَا يَبِيدُ

‘Salutations upon the revived truth, (the revived truth implies that Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall revive the truth on his reappearance as the truth will have been corrupted and scarred beyond recognition until then) and the scholar whose knowledge shall never be ruined.’³

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

أَيْنَ أَعْلَامُ الدِّينِ وَقَوَاعِدُ الْعِلْمِ

‘Where is the standard of religion and the foundation of knowledge.’

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

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 99, Misbahuz Zair, pg. 437.

² Mafatihul Jinaan, Ziyarat-e-Sahebil Amr, second Ziyarat, pg. 961, Urdu Translation by Maulana Nazim Ali Khairabadi.

³ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 228.

يَا بْنَ الْعُلُومِ الْكَامِلَةِ

'O son of the complete sciences'

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

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

*'Surely the knowledge of Allah's Book (Quran) and the traditions of his Prophet (s.a.w.a.) grows in the heart of our Mahdi just like crops grow in the best place of vegetation.'*¹

We have mentioned only a few instances of traditions to give readers an idea about 'the overflowing knowledge'. Indeed the actual number is innumerable and will overwhelm the reader like the boundless ocean amazes the onlooker at the shore. The dawn of reappearance is still away. Imam (a.t.f.s.) is still awaiting those trusted and upright companions who will help him establish the objectives of reappearance and will be the subject of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) limitless affection and benefaction. 'The overflowing knowledge' is sealed in the holy personality of Imam (a.t.f.s.). The brilliance of his knowledge is beyond the

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 51, pg. 36.

gloom of darkness and cannot be overwhelmed by it. In fact, this knowledge is too high for our thoughts to comprehend. Our imagination fails to grasp the reality of this knowledge. Consider that 124,000 prophets (a.s.) have been raised by Allah, who collectively have informed us of only 2 alphabets of knowledge. When Imam (a.t.f.s.) reappears he will unfold the remaining 25 alphabets. Glory be to Allah! All praise be to the Great Maker, the Comprehensive Power and Creator who has bestowed His Slave with this knowledge. The light of Imam's essence illumines the heavens and the earth. Indeed, we confess our helplessness in grasping this reality. From the depth of our hearts, we summon all our strength and insight and proclaim:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْعَلْمُ الْمَنْصُوبُ وَالْعِلْمُ الْمَصْبُوبُ

'Salutation upon you, O Raised Standard and the overflowing knowledge'

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

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

Allah, the Almighty, bestows knowledge on Imam (a.t.f.s.). So Allah is **صَابٌّ**, one who pours (knowledge) and Imam (a.t.f.s.) is **مَصْبُوبٌ**, the one overflowing with knowledge. Imam (a.t.f.s.)

himself confers some drops of this knowledge on the Shias in which case he becomes صابّ and the scholars are مصبوب.

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

۱۳ . وَالْعَوْتُ

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

يَا عِيَاثِي عِنْدَ كُرْبَتِي! يَا عِيَاثَ الْمُسْتَعِينِينَ! يَا عِيَاثَ مَنْ لَا عِيَاثَ لَهُ!

*O Resource in my neediness! O Rescuer of those who appeal! O Shield for the defenceless!*¹

Of course the true and rightful shelter and succour is Allah, Himself at a fundamental level. However, as is the case with other divine traits, His Appointees (i.e. Prophets and Imams) are the perfect manifestation and the complete reflection of divine

¹ Dua-e-Jawshan-e-Kabeer, 11, 14, 28, parts.

shelter and succour. Consequently, we see even the infallibles (a.s.) being addressed with the titles of غياث or غياث.

For instance, in the Ziyaarat of Ameerul Mo'mineen (a.s.) on 17th Rabbiul Awwal, which is narrated by Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.), we address Imam (a.s.):

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا غِيَاثَ الْمَكْرُوبِينَ

*'Salutations upon you, O shelter of the aggrieved and distressed.'*¹

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

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

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

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

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 100, pg. 375; Mafatihul Jinaan (Urdu translation), pg. 537.

distressed.'¹

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

يُخْرِجُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ غَوْثَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَغِيَاثَهَا

*'Allah shall manifest the saviour and shelter of this nation through my son (Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.)).'*²

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

السَّلَامُ عَلَىٰ غَوْثِ اللَّهْفَانِ

*'Salutations be upon the shelter and succour of the distressed.'*³

Similarly, Imam Mahdi's (a.t.f.s.) most esteemed forefather – the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has described him (a.t.f.s.) with such titles. Our religious responsibility is that in all our problems, be it major or minor, social or personal, religious or worldly, we implore only Imam (a.t.f.s.) for succour and reject all other

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 28, pg. 39; Amaali-e-Sadooq, pg. 101 (Assembly 24).

² Uyoon-o-Akhbaar al-Reza (a.s.).

³ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 102, pg. 53.

imposters like the Sufi mystics and sages who have no divine mandate and authority and are the biggest shams, to put it mildly. If with such a benevolent and divinely guided Imam to help us, we still knock at the door of others, we have rejected Imam and its precepts.

Often we wonder how to beseech Imam (a.t.f.s.) for help as we are not well-versed with the etiquette of supplication and invocation. The following pointers may be of use in this regard:

First:

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

Second:

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

- يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ اغْنِنِي يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ أَدْرِكْنِي.
- يَا مُحَمَّدُ يَا عَلِيُّ يَا فَاطِمَةُ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ أَدْرِكْنِي

وَلَا تُهْلِكْنِي.

- يَا أَبَا الْقَاسِمِ أَغْنِنِي يَا أَبَا صَالِحِ الْمَهْدِيِّ أَدْرِكْنِي
- أَدْرِكْنِي وَلَا تَدْعِنِي فَإِنِّي ذَلِيلٌ عَاجِزٌ.
- يَا مَوْعُودُ الْمُنْتَظَرِ أَنْظِرْ إِلَى الْمُحْتَضِرِ.
- الْمُسْتَعَاثُ بِكَ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ.

Third:

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

١٤ . وَالرَّحْمَةُ الْوَاسِعَةُ

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

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

فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَأَسِعَةٍ

‘...then say: Your Lord is the Lord of All-encompassing mercy’¹

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

اللَّهُمَّ ذَا الرَّحْمَةِ الْوَاسِعَةِ

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

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ الَّتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

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

Apart from Allah, this manner of addressing (i.e. ‘All-encompassing mercy’) has been used only for the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and Imam (a.t.f.s.).

¹ Sura Anaam (6): Verse 147.

In the Majestic Quran, Allah, the Almighty declares:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

‘And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.’¹

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

وَأَكْمَلُ ذَلِكَ بَابِهِ م - ح - م - د رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

‘I (Allah) shall complete the chain of Imamat through his son (i.e. son of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.)) M H M D – a mercy for the worlds.’

Imam (a.t.f.s.) is referred to as the All-encompassing mercy because with his advent there shall not remain a soul on this earth but he will have embraced Islam. Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) elaborates, ‘After Imam’s (a.t.f.s.) advent, the Meccans shall slay both representatives appointed by Imam (a.t.f.s.) in Mecca. Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall dispatch his army for the third time with the explicit command – Don’t spare anyone but ensure that he embraces Islam. This is because Allah’s All-Encompassing Mercy includes everything and I am that All-encompassing

¹ Surah Ambiya (21): Verse 107.

mercy. Certainly I would also have preferred to turn towards them along with you so that no excuse remains between Allah and them and between them and me.’¹

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

١٥ . وَعَدَاً غَيْرَ مَكْدُوبٍ

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

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَعَدَ اللهُ الَّذِي ضَمَّنَهُ

Our earlier discussion on this topic should suffice.

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

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 53, pg. 11.

١٦ . اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ

١٧ . اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقْعُدُ

'Salutations be upon you when you stand.'

'Salutations be upon you when you sit.'

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

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

اَلْحَسَنُ وَ اَلْحُسَيْنُ اِمَامَانِ قَامَا اَوْ قَعَدَا

*'Hasan and Husain are the two Imams, regardless of whether they are standing or sitting.'*¹

Over here standing indicates to rise or revolt in order to claim one's rights. Sitting indicates to negotiate peace in line with the circumstances and demands of the situation and concede one's rights. Peace is resorted to when a war would go against the larger interests of the Muslims. In light of the above interpretation, we can translate this statement thus:

¹ Elalush Sharaa'e, pg. 211, chapter 159.

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

١٨ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَقْرَأُ وَتُبَيِّنُ

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

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

So in light of this, we can say -

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

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

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

لَا بُدَّ لِمَنْ يَصَاحِبُ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ مِنْ غَيْبَةٍ وَلَا بُدَّ لَهُ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ مِنْ
عُزْلَةٍ وَنَعْمَ الْمَنْزِلُ طَيِّبَةٌ وَمَا بِثَلَاثِينَ مِنْ وَحْشَةٍ

‘Occultation is necessary for the Master of this affair (Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)). And in occultation his separation (from the people) is also necessary. What a wonderful place is Medina? He will be accompanied by 30 people who will serve to ward off loneliness and fear from him.’¹

(These 30 companions are special and privileged. They spend every moment of their lives in the glorious presence of Imam (a.t.f.s.)) It is possible that in this era of occultation Imam (a.t.f.s.) arranges for a class or an assembly of these companions

¹ Ghaibat-e-Nomani, pg 188; Usul-e-Kafi, vol. 1, pg. 340; Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 52, pg. 153.

and instructs them with lofty religious concepts on a regular basis.

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

أَنَا الْجَاهِلُ فِي عِلْمِي فَكَيْفَ لَا أَكُونُ جُهُولًا فِي جَهْلِي؟

'When I am so ignorant in my knowledge, then how ignorant am I in my ignorance!?'¹

١٩ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُصَلِّي وَتَقْنُتُ

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

In Arabic literature, Salaat means to glorify Allah (تسبيح) and recite supplication (دعاء). Over here it refers to the obligation of namaz imposed on every Muslim by the Islamic Shariat.

¹ Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 98, pg. 225; Mafatihul Jinaan – اعمال يوم عرفة -
Dua-e-Imam-e-Husain (a.s.).

Likewise, Qunoot in Arabic literally means obedience to and humility in front of Allah, the Great. Here, it refers to the act of performing Qunoot in namaz.

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

We eagerly await the day when we shall be able to witness this Namaz and Qunoot performed with the highest level of servitude. Not only we, but Prophet Esa (a.s.) is waiting in anticipation for the day when he shall have the honour and distinction of praying namaz behind Imam (a.t.f.s.).

The renowned Ahle Sunnah traditionalist, Muttaqi Hindi, records a tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.),

'On his reappearance, Mahdi shall advance towards Hazrat Esa (a.s.) and request him to undertake the responsibility of leading the congregational prayers. Hazrat Esa (a.s.) will humbly reply, 'The congregational prayers have been established for you

to lead.¹

This verse of the Holy Quran deserves attention:

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ

‘Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil...’²

Under the exegesis of this verse, Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) relates, ‘This verse has been revealed in honour of the Qaim of Ale Muhammad (a.t.f.s.). By Allah! He (a.t.f.s.) is the ‘distressed one’ in this verse. When he will recite two rakat namaz behind Maqam-e-Ibrahim and supplicate to Allah, Allah will answer his prayers and deliver him from the difficulties and appoint him as the Caliph on the earth.’³

This is the prayer of a helpless soul, on reciting which Imam (a.t.f.s.) shall be ordered to rise. The command shall be issued in this manner,

‘O Allah’s slave, rise and seek vengeance against Allah’s enemies.’

As far as Imam’s (a.t.f.s.) Qunoot is concerned, there are several

¹ Al Burhaan fi alamaate Mahdi Akhiriz Zaman, pg. 160.

² Surah Naml (27): Verse 62.

³ Tafseer-e-Ali b. Ibrahim, vol. 2, pg. 129.

supplications that are associated with Imam (a.t.f.s.). Interested readers can refer to some of these books viz. Muhajjud Daawaat pg 67, Al-Baladul Ameen 569 and Behaarul Anwaar vol. 85, pg. 233.

٢٠. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَرَكَعُ وَتَسْجُدُ

Salutation upon you, while you bow and prostrate

We have already explained the significance of conveying salutations to Imam (a.t.f.s.) while he is engaged in various acts of salaah under the verse:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُصَلِّي

Perhaps it is due to the importance of these two acts (bowing and prostration) that they have been given a special mention. Or it could be a pointer towards Imam's (a.t.f.s.) prolonged bowing and prostration. Even Imam's (a.t.f.s.) revered grandfather – Imam Moosa b. Jafar Al-Kazim (a.s.) has prayed for Imam's (a.t.f.s.) reappearance with a mention of his bowing and prostration. Yahya b. Fazl Nawfali narrates,

“I was in Baghdad in the presence of Imam Kazim (a.s.). Imam (a.s.) had completed the Asr prayer. As per his practice, he (a.s.) raised both his hands towards the sky and recited:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ

'There is no god save You. You are the First and the Last and the Apparent and the Concealed.'

Imam (a.s.) repeated this sentence 10 times. After invoking Allah in these words, he (a.s.) supplicated,

أَسْتَلِكُ بِاسْمِكَ الْمَكْنُونِ الْمَخْزُونِ الْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ الَّذِي لَا
يَخِيبُ مَنْ سَأَلَكَ بِهِ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَنْ
تُعَجِّلَ فَرَجَ الْمُنتَقِمِ لَكَ مِنْ أَعْدَائِكَ وَأَنْجِزَ لَهُ مَا وَعَدْتَهُ
يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ.

'I beseech You with Your Concealed and Treasured Name, O Ever Living, O Controller (of all creation), the Name with which when You are invoked, one is never disappointed. Send salutations upon Muhammad and his progeny and hasten the reappearance of the one who will avenge Your enemies. And fulfil the promise You have made to him, O Majestic, O All-Revering!'

The narrator asked Imam (a.s.), 'Who is the beneficiary of your supplication?' Imam (a.s.) replied:

ذَاكَ الْمَهْدِيِّ مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

'He is the Mahdi of Muhammad's progeny (a.s.).'

Thereafter, Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) elaborates further on Imam Mahdi's (a.t.f.s.) excellence:

بَابِي أَسْمَرَ اللَّوْنَ يَعْتَوِرُهُ مَعَ سُمْرَتِهِ صُفْرَةً مِنْ سَهْرِ اللَّيْلِ.
بَابِي مَنْ لَيْلُهُ يَرْعَى التُّجُومَ سَاجِدًا رَاكِعًا.

*'May my father be sacrificed on your wheat complexion that has long since turned yellow due to incessant night vigils. May my father be sacrificed on the starry nights, which find you engaged constantly in bowing and prostration (of the night-vigil prayers)!'*¹

In the last tradition, mention has been made of Imam's (a.t.f.s.) solemn bowing and prostration in the dead of night. Only Allah is Aware what prayers and supplications keep His best creation engaged. Indeed, what can one say about the intense bowings and prostrations that are offered with such sincerity to Allah, the Almighty. One point worth highlighting over here is that the statement

بَابِي مَنْ لَيْلُهُ يَرْعَى التُّجُومَ

¹ Behaarul Anwaar vol. 86, p. 81.

means that Allah, the Almighty, likes to see His servants alert and vigilant about performing salaah and other acts of worship at its time. It means that one should use the heavenly bounties to dutifully observe one's religious obligations. In this regard, Mulla Mohsin Faiz Kashani (r.a.) records a tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

أَحَبُّ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُرَاعُونَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالْأَضَلَّةَ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

*'The most beloved of Allah is the one who is always attentive of the Sun, the Moon and the shadows for the remembrance (and worship) of Allah.'*¹

٢١. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُهَلَّلُ وَتُكَبَّرُ

'Salutation upon you, when you declare that 'there is no god but Allah' and when you proclaim 'Allah is the Greatest'.

To declare that there is no god but Allah and that Allah is the greatest are among the greatest signs of Allah's Unity (توحيد). It is a declaration of the truthfulness of Islam and its being in compatibility with human nature. Once a Zoroastrian youth, who wished to convert to Islam, was introduced to Ayatullah Husain

¹ Khulaasatul Azkaar, pg. 6.

Tabatabai Burujardi (r.a.). The people explained to the revered Ayatullah that the youth wished to embrace Islam. The Ayatullah asked him, 'What did you find so appealing about Islam?' He replied, 'Islam's truthfulness and its compatibility with human nature.' The Ayatullah commanded him to recite the Kalemah.

The youth says, 'I heard the Ayatullah recite the Kalemah with such awe and reverence that I never heard anything similar to it ever after that. When he was reciting 'There is no god but Allah', I could feel an awareness of Allah's Unity (توحيد). When the general deputy of Imam (a.t.f.s.) (نائب عام) has such an awesome impact in his recitation of the kalemah, then what can one say about the Imam (a.t.f.s.) who has been reciting these divine glorifications since the beginning of the world, rather, even before the initiation of the creation of the world. He is none other than the one who has instructed the Prophet (a.s.) and the proximate angels with these praises.¹

O Allah! Grant us the grace to listen to the divine praises of Imam (a.t.f.s.) in person. We admit our ears are obsessed with prohibited things like music and are unworthy of listening to the pure and chaste recitations of Imam (a.t.f.s.), but Your Boundless Mercy makes us hopeful of being granted this priceless bounty. O Allah! Grant us the grace to recite these holy incantations.

¹ For details readers are requested to refer to Behaarul Anwaar vol.18, p. 345, Elalush Sharaae', Oyoon-o-Akhbaar al-Reza (a.s.).

In this regard Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) narrates,

وَمَنْ كَبَّرَ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ الْإِمَامِ وَقَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ رِضْوَانَهُ الْأَكْبَرَ وَمَنْ يَكْتُبِ اللَّهُ لَهُ رِضْوَانَهُ الْأَكْبَرَ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ فِي دَارِ الْجَلَالِ

*'One who declares 'there is no god but Allah' and 'Allah is the Greatest' in front of the Imam (a.t.f.s.), Allah will write for him His great satisfaction'. And for one whom Allah writes His great satisfaction, He will gather him along with Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.), Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and the Messengers (a.s.) in the House of Majesty.'*¹

Indeed, beholding the Proof (حجت) of Allah is equal to declaring 'there is no god but Allah' and glancing at the slave (ولى) of Allah is to declare that He is the Greatest. This is because Imam (a.t.f.s.) is the manifestation of divine majesty and splendour and is the standard-bearer of divine unity. When will we witness that moment when we can glance at the one who is the best in declaring the Oneness and Greatness of Allah? Indeed, when we will see you, our hearts will swoon and we will

¹ Tafseer-e-Burhaan vol. 3, p. 329 under the exegesis of the verse

لَيَقُومَنَّ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

uncontrollably exclaim **اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ** and **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ**. Indeed, when we hear you recite **اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ** and **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ**, we will not remain ourselves and will recite

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُهَلِّلُ وَ تُكَبِّرُ

To conclude, we shall mention another tradition on this topic.

Fuzail relates that either Imam Baqer (a.s.) or Imam Sadeq (a.s.) urged the people,

أَكْثَرُوا مِنَ التَّهْلِيلِ وَ التَّكْبِيرِ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ
مِنَ التَّكْبِيرِ وَ التَّهْلِيلِ

'Recite excessively 'there is no god but Allah' and 'Allah is the Greatest'. For surely there is nothing more beloved to Allah than proclaiming 'there is no god but Allah' and 'Allah is the Greatest'.¹

Certainly, in today's age, Imam (a.t.f.s.) is the most beloved one of Allah and he is engrossed in reciting that which is dearest to Allah.

¹ Al-Kafi, vol. 2, Chapter of تهليل, تكبير, tradition 2.

٢٢ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تَحْمَدُ وَتَسْتَغْفِرُ

Salutation upon you, while you praise Allah and seek forgiveness from Him.

This salutation draws our attention to the fact that among Imam's (a.t.f.s.) regular recitations is extolling and praising Allah, the Almighty, and his oft turning to Him in seeking forgiveness and clemency. Praising Allah and seeking His Pardon is directly proportionate to one's level of recognition. As the latter increases, the former is augmented. Hence, Imam Sadeq (a.s.) informs,

'Everyday, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) used to praise Allah 366 times i.e. equal to the number of veins in his body, in this manner:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ كَثِيرًا عَلَىٰ كُلِّ حَالٍ

*'All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, as much as possible, in every condition.'*¹

Likewise, Imam Sadeq (a.s.) narrates with regards to seeking forgiveness,

¹ Al-Kafi, vol. 2, Book of Supplication, Chapter of Praise, tradition 3.

*'It was the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) practice that whenever he departed from an assembly, no matter how small and insignificant, he would seek divine forgiveness at least 25 times.'*¹

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself declared,

وَأَنَا أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ سَبْعِينَ اسْتِغْفَارًا

*'I seek forgiveness from Allah seventy times.'*²

Indeed seeking forgiveness becomes even more admirable considering that these personalities (a.s.) were infallible and sinless. Perhaps, the unaware and vulnerable are actually deceived by seeking forgiveness of this kind. While seeking forgiveness is the subject of a detailed discussion, we shall try to address it briefly so as to alleviate doubts from the minds of the skeptics.

Seeking forgiveness has several rationales:

1. Seeking forgiveness and clemency is one of the greatest and most laudable acts of worship.
2. The Islamic nation has been bestowed with knowledge due

¹ Al-Kafi, vol. 2, Book of Supplication, Chapter of Seeking Forgiveness, tradition 2.

² Majmaul Bahrain vol. 3, p. 427.

to this exalted worship.

3. This act of worship is one of the best forms of expressing humility and remorse in front of Allah, the Almighty.
4. Every moment, the infallibles (a.s.) are elevated by Allah in degrees. When they look back at their (lower) position, they express contrition and penitence by turning to Allah in forgiveness.
5. *حَسَنَاتُ الْأَبْرَارِ سَيِّئَاتُ الْمُقْرَبِينَ* ‘The virtuous actions of the righteous are like sins for the proximate servants of Allah.’
Let us see how we can understand this better with the help of an example. There is a child who prays salaah and feels that with this he has worshipped Allah in a befitting manner even while his salaah may not be fundamentally correct. As opposed to this, a religious scholar, whose faith is elevated by degrees, prays salaah with total concentration and tranquillity and with a feeling of abject humility and degradation. After completing salaah in this manner, he collapses in prostration and weeps uncontrollably and exclaims in anguish, ‘O Allah! Indeed I have failed miserably in fulfilling the right of Your worship. O Allah! I implore You to forgive me for my shortcomings.’

When the imploring of an ordinary scholar does not astonish us, why should we take exception to the entreaties and beseeching of the infallible Imam (a.t.f.s.)? These immaculate souls were

stationed at such high degrees of divine recognition that it is nigh impossible for our imperfect intellects to fathom them.

٢٣ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ حِينَ تُصْبِحُ وَتُمْسِي، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ
فِي اللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى

'Salutation upon you in the morning and in the evening. Salutation upon you in the night when it darkens and in the day when it brightens up.'

In this Ziyarat, we have mentioned the times of day in three places. The first time was when we recited

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ فِي آتَاءِ لَيْلِكَ وَأَطْرَافِ نَهَارِكَ

The second and third times are underlined in the above two sentences. What is the reason behind such time-related salutations? This poser is best answered by the personality addressed in this Ziyarat. We beseech Allah to hasten the reappearance of Imam (a.t.f.s.) and to give us the grace to hear directly from him the various aspects of this and other Ziyaraat and supplications. At this stage all we can say is that:

عِبَارَاتُنَا شَتَّىٰ وَحُسْنُكَ وَاحِدٌ

وَ كُلُّهُ إِلَىٰ ذَاكَ الْجَمَالِ يُنِيرُ

“Our phrases are many while your splendour is one

And all of these indicate towards your beauty

٢٤ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْأَمَامُ الْمَأْمُونُ

Salutation upon you – O Protected Imam!

According to Arabic Grammar, the word مامون is the Nominal Object of اَمَّن. Its meaning can have various connotations – protected, contented, reliable and trustworthy. It means that Imam (a.t.f.s.) is the leader who has been protected and secured by Allah and He found him so contented that He appointed him (a.t.f.s.) as a leader and guide over His Creatures. Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) is so trustworthy that the archangel Jibraeel (a.s.), the Trustworthy prides over him (a.t.f.s.).

٢٥ . السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْمُقَدَّمُ الْمَأْمُولُ

Salutation upon you – O the Foremost, the Hope of Creation!

This statement can be translated in two ways. One is by making مامول as the attribute (صفت) and مقدم as the attributed one (موصوف) i.e. O Foremost One, who is the hope of creation. The second way to translate the statement is by reversing the roles of these two words and making مقدم as the attribute (صفت) and

مامول as the attributed one (موصوف), i.e. O the One who is Foremost in being sought with hope and expectation (by the creatures).

Indeed Hazrat Baqiatullah (a.t.f.s.) is the splendour of hope of all mankind. Rather, he is hope of all Prophets (a.s.), the Successors (a.s.) and most importantly he is hope of Her Majesty Fatema Zahra (s.a.). Every true and righteous Muslim awaits the reappearance of the Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) who is expected to revive the Holy Quran and its edicts:

أَيْنَ الْمُؤَمَّلِ لِأَحْيَاءِ الْكِتَابِ وَحُدُودِهِ

*'Where is the Expected One who will enliven the Book (Quran) and its statutes'?*¹

Yes, Imam's (a.t.f.s.) reappearance is an event that is eagerly anticipated by all righteous servants. Imam's (a.t.f.s.) illustrious ancestor, Ameerul Momineen Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) has also referred to Imam (a.t.f.s.) in this manner:

... ثُمَّ يَقُومُ الْقَائِمُ الْمَأْمُولُ ...

'...then the Qaim (a.t.f.s.), the Expected One, shall

¹ Dua-e-Nudbah.

reappear...¹

Likewise Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) has also reminisced over Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) with this title.²

٢٦ . اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ بِجَوَامِعِ السَّلَامِ

Salutation upon you with a comprehensive salutation.

This is the last statement of Ziyarate Ale Yasin. The reciter of this Ziyaarat has now reached a stage where he has completed reciting the Ziyaarat and describing Imam (a.t.f.s.) with the most perfect and choicest of attributes. Instead of endlessly reciting – ‘Salutation upon you...’ it makes sense to recite a single salutation that can convey a sense of completeness and totality. That is why he recites, ‘Salutation upon you with a comprehensive salutation’.

The word *جوامع* is the plural of *جامع*. Gramatically, *جامع* is the Nominal Subject and means ‘to collect the scattered ones’. A word that, albeit small in appearance, unravels profound concepts, is referred to as *جامع*. In the context of the Ziyaarat it means – Whenever a salutation is recited and whatever be its kind, may it all be addressed to you O Imam (a.t.f.s.)!

¹ Al-Ghaibah of No’maani p. 275, Chapter 14, tradition 55; Behaarul Anwaar vol. 52, p. 236.

² Kamaluddin p. 334, Chapter 33, tradition 4; Behaarul Anwaar vol. 48, p. 15.

After this we call upon Imam (a.t.f.s.) as a witness and testify that there is no God save Allah and Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is His Messenger and His worshipper. Then we testify to the Imamat of each and every Imam by name and proclaim the certainty of each and every stage of Resurrection right from death to Heaven and Hell.

٢٧. يَا مَوْلَايَ شَقِيٍّ مِّنْ خَالَفِكُمْ وَسَعِدٍ مِّنْ أَطَاعِكُمْ،
فَأَشْهَدُ عَلَى مَا أَشْهَدْتُكَ عَلَيْهِ، وَأَنَا وَلِيٌّ لَّكَ بَرِيٍّ مِّنْ
عَدُوِّكَ

‘O my Master, wretched is the one who has opposed you. Fortunate is the one who has obeyed you. You be a witness to all that I have testified by making you a witness. I come to you in friendship expressing disgust against your enemy.’

The above statement enlightens the reader with some critical concepts related to Islamic belief. The reasons for being among the wretched (شقى) and fortunate (سعيد) i.e. among the inhabitants of heaven and hell, are highlighted. In this Ziyarat we proclaim – O Master, indeed all those who have disobeyed you have earned the right to enter the Fire of Hell. They are wretched and despicable and their hearts are devoid of the light of guidance. On the other hand, all those who have obeyed your

diktats, complied with your instructions and conformed to your standards are among the inhabitants of Paradise. In other words, being wretched and fortunate dictates who will enter Paradise and who will be relegated to Hell.

Another important point that comes out strongly from this is that man is wretched and fortunate based on his own actions. There is no scope for anyone to claim (on the Day of Resurrection) that he was made to enter Hell as he was (inherently) wretched. None can take recourse to the excuse of compulsion and hold his pre-ordained destiny responsible for his evil and corrupt actions. If one is wretched, he is so as a direct consequence of his immoral actions and if he is fortunate, then it is the outcome of his virtuous actions and of course, divine help and grace. After this we declare our friendship and love for the Imams as their Shias and in the same breath we distance ourselves from their enemies. It will not be out of context to mention over here the equal significance that Islam attaches to loving the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and detesting their enemies. No Shia worth his salt can ever be attached to the enemies of Ahle Bait (a.s.) and can never harbour any love and inclination towards them. (In this regard please refer to Surah Ahzab (33): Verse 3 and its exegesis)

٢٨ . فَالْحَقُّ مَا رَضَيْتُمُوهُ، وَالْبَاطِلُ مَا اسْخَطْتُمُوهُ،
وَالْمَعْرُوفُ مَا أَمَرْتُمْ بِهِ، وَالْمُنْكَرُ مَا نَهَيْتُمْ عَنْهُ

'Then truth is what pleases you and falsehood is what

displeases you. Your command constitutes goodness and your prohibition signifies evil'.

This statement highlights that the only criterion for determining truth, falsehood, good and evil is the Ahle Bait (a.s.). All that satisfies the Ahle Bait (a.s.) is good even if it appears repulsive to us or even if our defective intellects fall short of grasping the rationale behind it. All that displeases the Ahle Bait (a.s.) is evil even if it appeals to us.

The Holy Quran declares,

عَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا
شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ

‘...Perhaps you may dislike a thing while it is good for you, and perhaps, you may love a thing while it is evil for you...’¹

The 19th verse of Surah Nisaa reiterates this concept.

The verse of Surah Baqarah underlines the helplessness and vulnerability of our intellects in determining on the one hand, everything that is good and beneficial for us and on the other, all that is evil and harmful for us. Our intellects at best can only inform us about the truth and falsehood of the general (like

¹ Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 216.

honesty, virtue, lies, deceit, etc), and cannot enlighten us about the reason and purpose behind all actions, many of which may apparently even go against the apparent intellect, like struggling in the way of Allah.

This point is well-highlighted in the incident involving Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) and the man from Khorasan. Imam (a.s.) orders the man from Khorasan to leap into the blazing fire-pit. Imam's (a.s.) seemingly preposterous demand is not only at odds with man's inherent nature of self-preservation, but does not find any favour with the intellect either. What the intellect cannot fathom is Imam's (a.s.) implicit objective of revealing the reality of the situation to the Khorasani. Obviously the Khorasani refused to oblige. When the same command was made to Haroon-e-Makki, a close companion of Imam (a.s.), he instantly leaped into the blazing fire-pit without any fuss. When Imam (a.s.) lifted the cover of the fire-pit, the man from Khorasan saw Haroon-e-Makki sitting comfortably, a scene that shocked him no end.

This is also the case with goodness and evil. If Imam (a.s.) commands us towards an act, it is good, and whatever he prohibits is evil. Now that we are aware of this reality, we are duty-bound to give due attention to all our actions and thoughts and must gauge the truthfulness and falsehood of the same in light of Imam's (a.s.) commands and prohibitions.

٢٩ . فَنَفْسِي مُؤْمِنَةٌ بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَّهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِرَسُولِهِ
 وَبِأَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَبِكُمْ يَا مَوْلَايَ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَخْرَكُمْ،
 وَنُصْرَتِي مُعَدَّةٌ لَكُمْ وَمَوَدَّتِي خَالِصَةٌ لَكُمْ آمِينَ آمِينَ

'I have believed in Allah, the One – there is no associate for Him. And I have believed in His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) and in Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and in the foremost from amongst you as well as those who succeeded them. My help for you is ready at all times and my love for you is sincere. O Allah! Accept our supplication! Accept our supplication'!

A point worth appreciating is that the Ziyarat employs the second person plural in the finishing line as opposed to the second person singular in earlier sentences. This is because at the end we are addressing all the Imams (a.s.) and our expression of sincere love and help extends to all the Imams (a.s.). It is possible that this verse is referring to the Raj'ah, when all the Imams (a.s.) shall return and avenge the Pharoahs of their times for the oppression and affliction that was heaped upon them.

O Allah! We implore You to grant us the grace to be worthy of being alongside the Imams (a.s.) when they return so that we can also contribute in relegating their enemies to the blazing fire of Hell.

O Allah! Hasten the reappearance of our Master, Hazrat Baqiyatullah (a.t.f.s.). Aameen! Aameen!

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