

السَّالِمِينَ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الرَّضِيَّةُ الْمَرْضِيَّةُ، السَّالِمِينَ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الصَّادِقَةُ الشَّهِيدَةُ، السَّالِمِينَ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْفَاضِلَةُ الرَّحِيمَةُ



**Condolence on the Martyrdom of  
Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S.A.)**

## THE MESSAGE

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# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## Sayings of Imam Ali (A.S.)

1. None can uphold the command of Allah, Glory be to Him, save one who is neither neglectful [in carrying out his duties], nor runs after his personal gains, nor follows coveted desires.
2. The one who pries into others' faults, disapproves of them, and then adopts them for himself, is truly a fool.
3. May Allah have mercy on the man who knows that his breaths are but his steps towards his end, so he hastens to perform good deeds and cuts short his hopes.
4. He who lags behind as a result of his deeds will not be accorded a front position because of his lineage.
5. There is no affliction worse than a lack of intellect.
6. Your secret is a source of happiness for you if you conceal it but if you divulge it, it is your destruction.
7. Whoever would like his sustenance to be amplified and his destined end to be postponed should maintain relations with his kin.
8. Complement your food with hunger and discipline yourself with contentment.
9. Physical beauty is of no benefit without nobility.
10. Whoever wishes to spend the days of his life as a free man must not allow greed to abide in his heart.
11. Jealousy of one's friend stems from weakness in one's love [for him].
12. The foolishness of a man is recognized by three things: idle talk, answering something he was not asked, and being careless in matters.
13. Treat your families to some fruits every Friday, so that they rejoice on Fridays.
14. Every person is inclined towards one who is like him.



## **Your Daily-Life Questions Answered**

**Q.1: If a person passes wind while performing Ghusl of Janabat, must he start over?**

**Ans.:** If one does any act which would invalidate the Wudhu while doing the Ghusl, one does not have to abandon the Ghusl and start all over again. In fact, one can continue with the same Ghusl till completion. However, in this situation, one will have to do Wudhu also, as per obligatory precaution.

**Q.2: A Commercial bank provides home loans to its employees, please tell can we take that loan or not?**

**Ans.:** It is permitted, but if the bank asks for extra return, the person should have intention that he shall try to get the extra amount written off. But if he is not able to do so and has no choice then will pay the extra amount also.

**Q.3: If a person prays wearing dress which has been purchased with the money whose Khums has**

**not been paid, is his prayers valid?**

**Ans.:** If a person purchases a dress with the particular sum of money whose Khums has not been paid by him, then Namaz in that dress will amount to the Namaz in a dress which has been usurped.

**Q.4: What are the criteria for a fish, that it can be accepted as halal?**

**Ans.:** Firstly it should be taken out of water alive i.e. to die outside the water and secondly it should have scales.

**Q.5: A Sunni man gives divorce to his Shia wife according to his madhab. Is this divorce valid for the Shia lady being divorced or it is compulsory to divorce her as per her madhab?**

**Ans.:** The divorce given by her Sunni husband as per his madhab is valid.



## Ista'Aaza – Seeking Allah's Protection From Satan'

*Edited excerpts from the book, "Ista'Aaza" Shaeed-e-Mehrab  
Ayatollah Syed Abdul Hussain Dastghaib Shirazi*

### **The King's Tent & the Ferocious Watch-Dog**

I had cited an example that Satan is like a ferocious dog that lingers at the entrance to the king's tent. Whenever anyone tries to go to the presence of the king, the dog rushes at him with gnawing teeth. This is such a mean janitor that barring the close friends of the king, none other is safe. Only Allah's favorites can reach Him without let or hindrance from this enemy. Anyway, to enter the king's tent we shall have to seek protection from him from the evil dog. There is no other way than seeking Allah's help and protection from the accursed Satan to achieve His nearness! Only Allah's fury can contain the accursed Satan.

Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to seek Allah's protection that with His

attention one can get protection from the mischief of Satan. In this regard the Holy Quran says:

Wa qul aaozu Rabbaka min hamazat il shayateene wa aaoozubeka Rabbe an yahda-roon

Say! O Habib! 'O Lord! I seek Your protection from the fears caused by the satans on my heart and soul!'

Particularly in privacy and loneliness, saving oneself from the fears and temptations created by Satan is rather difficult. In such a situation one must call:

'Ya ghayas al mustagheeseen

Ya malaaz al laezeen

O listener of the plaint of the plaintiff

O provider of succor to the refuge seeker!

'Save me from the machinations of Satan.' If there is no

protection of Allah, one cannot save himself from the onslaught of Satan's subterfuges.

### **Ista'Aaza Should Emanate From the Heart and Not Merely From the Lips**

To gauge the reality of *Ista'Aaza*, only saying *aaoozu billahi min as Shaitan ir rajeem* or saying its translation in one's own language is absolutely insufficient. *Ista'Aaza* is a meaningful and spiritual condition that is conveyed by the words noted above. If *Ista'Aaza* is prompted from the heart of the person, then only it will be effective. Otherwise, just uttering the words would make one the play-thing of Satan

### **The three Types of *Ista'Aaza***

There are three ways the *Ista'Aaza* is done:

1. There are persons who neither have the right spirit of doing *Ista'Aaza* nor are they

aware of the meaning of the words of *Ista'Aaza*. But, all the same, as a force of habit, they utter the words: *aaoozu billahi min al shaitan ir rajeem*. Unless the *Ista'Aaza* comes with feelings, understanding and from the heart, it becomes a satanic joke!

2. There are persons who know the meanings and purport of the words of *Ista'Aaza* and are capable of saying them properly, but they haven't the right feelings in their heart and also their actions are in obedience of Satan. Such *Ista'Aaza* will be for Satan rather than a submission to Allah for His protection against Satan!

3. There is a third group of persons who say the words of *Ista'Aaza* from the depths of their hearts and are fully aware of their meaning, purport and spirit. These persons will be fully aware of the Greatness and Omnipotence of Allah. The *Ista'Aaza* of these persons will always get the accepted by Allah.

## **Seeking Protection in Allah's Obedience**

The deity of the sinners and Allah's disobedient persons is always the Satan. Such persons might curse Satan a thousand times to make a hypocritical show to others. To put the matter in more precise words, such persons outwardly say *aa oozu billahi min al shaitan ir rajeem* but their character is such that they make false allegations against others, use abusive language, trifle with the self-respect of others and reveal others' confidences. Such persons don't refrain from committing any minor or major sin and all the same utter the words of *Ista'Aaza!* In practice their *Ista'Aaza* becomes *'aa oozu bish shaitan min al Rehman*, that would mean seeking protection of Satan to escape from Allah (*Naoozu billah*). On the lips of such persons are the words that in obedience to Allah they are seeking His protection, but their actions are all

contrary to His Commandments. When the curtains of ignorance are raised from the hearts of such persons, they realize that all the time it was Satan who prompted them to utter the words *aa oozu billah* to ridicule their weak faith!

## **A Satanic Book to Refute Satan**

It is said that a scholar of some repute thought of writing a book to warn the people about the treacherous and mean acts of Satan. During the same period a pious person met Satan in a state of apocalyptic revelation. He told to Satan, "O accursed creature! The time has come for your exposure! Such-and-such a maulana is will very soon writing a book about your nefarious acts!" Satan smiled derisively and said, "You are involved in a misunderstanding! This book is being written at my instance!" The pious person asked, "How is it possible?" Satan replied, "I had put doubts in the heart of the scholar that he is a

person of high repute and he should make a show of his erudition. The person doesn't realize that although he has titled the book as 'Refutation of Satan', but his real intent is to make a show of his erudition and achieve name and fame!"

In this way Satan tempts people to curse him and make them involuntarily utter 'aa oozu billahi min al shaitan ir rajeem'.

### **The Politics of the Imperialist Forces**

The imperialist regimes maintain their agents in their settlements who are their instruments for attainment of the imperialistic ends. At certain times, for the sake of their political compulsions, they instruct the agents to criticize and abuse them, their imperialistic masters! All this is done as a camouflage for their nefarious political reality.

How wonderful is Satan's politics! He has the distinction of being the first politician

ever! Satan can no doubt be called the mentor and leader of politicians of all times. Politics, in other words, means working behind the backs of the people. Satan, in this way, fools everyone and doesn't leave behind any footprints. The evil acts are committed by people at Satan's provocation, but they never realize that he is behind their actions!

### **Ista'Aaza Is For Escape from Sins**

"O Allah! Give us courage to keep away from Satan, prevent ourselves from sinning and avoid committing crimes". This Ista'Aaza with Allah keeps us away from sins and reins our tongues from abusive and harmful talk. Instead of using abusive language in anger, we should rather say aaoozu billa at such times of provocation! It is always advisable to seek Allah's protection and help against the machinations of Satan. In other words, the meaning of aa oozu billa is:



aa oozu be taa-at illah min  
taa-at il shaitan

I seek to come in the protec-  
tion of Allah and escape from  
the evil of Satan

### **Keeping the Hand in the Tiger's Mouth and Trying to escape from it with one's feet**

If a person keeps his hands in  
the mouth of a tiger and cries  
that he is very scared of the  
tiger and seeks the safety of  
an invincible fort to save  
himself from the animal  
attacking him! This is like the  
person who keeps crying for  
protection from Satan but is,  
in fact, submissive to and  
under his evil spell.

As long as a person uses foul  
language, he is the follower  
and slave of Satan. In this  
condition his cursing Satan  
will be a stark lie. One should  
seek Allah's forgiveness for  
the Ista'Aaza that he had  
done hypocritically!

The Ista'Aaza of a foul-  
mouthed person, in the eyes

of men of piety (irfaan) is  
tantamount to saying aaozu  
bish shaitan, because he  
sometimes says aaoz and at  
others la haul, but his actions  
prove his falsehood.

If a tiger is chasing you, you  
will try to run into a fortified  
place of safety rather than  
going near it and putting your  
hands into it's mouth and  
keep shouting for help. Similar  
is the reality of Ista'Aaza. It is  
seeking Allah's succor against  
Satan in His strong fortifica-  
tion!

### **A True Dream and Satan's Treachery**

A disciple of Sheik Ansari has  
said that when he was  
studying under him, one night  
he saw the accursed Satan in  
a dream. Satan was carrying  
some bridles in his hand. He  
asked Satan, "Why are you  
holding these bridles in your  
hand?" He replied, "I put them  
in the necks of people and  
drag them! Yesterday I put a  
bridle around the neck of one  
Sheik Murtada Ansari and

dragged him out of his house into the lane. But he escaped from me from the middle of the lane and returned home!"

When he awoke in the morning, he went to the Sheik and related to him the dream. The Sheik said, "Satan has told you the truth. The accursed one did try to tempt me with his glib talk. In fact, at home we needed certain things and I had no money handy at the time. I thought that from the Sahm e Imam I had with me a copy of the Holy Quran. I thought that I would sell it and use the money for my need as a loan to be reimbursed later. I took the copy of the Quran and went into the lane. While buying my needs a thought came to me why I was doing such a thing. I felt penitent, returned home and put back the copy of the Quran in its original place."

This incidence is quoted from the biography of the Sheik 'Seerat wa Shaqsiat' Sheik Ansari- pages 88-89)

Some other persons have related the same incident in the following manner:

When the Sheik's disciple saw the bridles in the hands of Satan, he noticed that one of the bridles was very strong and thick. When he asked the accursed Satan the reason for his carrying the bridles, he replied that they were for putting around the necks of people and dragging them. The person also asked, "For what purpose is the stronger and thicker bridle?" Satan replied, "This is for your mentor, Sheik Ansari. Yesterday I put it round his neck and dragged him into the bazaar. But he managed to free himself and escaped." The person asked, "Which one of the bridles is for me?" Satan replied, "For you there is no need of a bridle. You can become my victim only with my sweet talk!"



## The Behaviour of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (AS)

*By: Allamah Baqir Sharif al-Qurashi*

As for the behavior of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, it was similar to that of his grandfathers, who were the source of guidance to mankind. The Imam spared no effort to follow the behavior and guidance of his grandfather Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful. The narrators said: "He (Imam Zayn al-'Abidin) followed his grandfather's behavior. When worship made him tired, he sighed deeply and said with regret: 'I am not strong enough to perform the worship of my grandfather, the Commander of the faithful.'"

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin carried in his inner self the spirit of his grandfather, the Commander of the faithful and the Lord of those who were cognizant of Allah. He followed his method and imitated his actions. Now, we will talk about some aspects of this part of his life.

### **His Behavior in his House**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) was the most merciful of all the people and the kindest of them to the members of his house. He did not distinguish himself from them, rather he was one of them. It was reported on his authority that he said: "To buy meat from the market with the dirhams which are on me for my family when they long for meat is more lovable for me than freeing a slave." He went out early in the morning to seek the daily bread of his family. He was asked: "Where do you go?" He replied: "I go to seek alms for my family by seeking lawful daily bread because it is (the daily bread) is alms from Allah, the Great and Almighty, for them." He helped his family in meeting their needs. He did not order anyone of them to carry out his personal affairs; he performed them himself, especially if it concerned the affairs of his worship; he did

not ask anyone of them to perform them.

The Imam's behavior toward his household was unique; he behaved exceptionally with his family. His behavior was full of mercy, cooperation, kindness, and self-negation.

### **His Kindness to his Nursemaid**

When Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) grew up, he found out that his mother died, that his nursemaid treated him kindly in order to seek nearness to Allah. As a result he treated her with great kindness to the extent that he prevented from eating with her. The people blamed him for that and asked him frequently: "You are the kindest of all the people and the best of them in taking care of your blood relatives, so why do you not eat with your mother?" He replied to them with great politeness: "I fear that I stretch out my hand for what she stretches out her hand for, then I am disobedient to her."

Which humanity is similar to this humanity? Which angelic soul is this soul? It is sufficient for this Imam that he is the son of al-Husayn, who filled the world with his honor and perfection.

### **His Behavior toward his Parents**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) was the kindest of all the people to his parents because he treated them with great love and mercy and obedience. He was so kind to his father that he asked his aunt Zaynab, the heroine of Karbala', to give the sticks to lean upon and a sword to defend his father at the Battle of al-Taf. This was while he was ill to the extent that he was unable to walk, but his aunt prevented him from doing that lest the progeny of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, should be destroyed. Therefore, which kindness is similar to this kindness? Among the services which he rendered to his father, after his martyrdom, was that he settled the

heavy debts his father spent on the needy and the deprived. Among his acts of kindness to his parents is his supplication for them.

### **His Behavior toward his Children**

As for the behavior of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) toward his children, it is distinguished by exalted Islamic education. He planted in his children his good inclinations and great reformatory trends, so they became among the most brilliant men of thought, knowledge, and struggle in Islam. For example, his son Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (as) is among the most famous Imams of the Muslims and the most knowledgeable of them.

He was the founder of the greatest jurisprudence school from which the great jurists and religious scholars graduated, such as Aban b. Taghlib, Zurara b. A'yun, and the like, from among those who enlightened the ideological life

in Islam. As for his son 'Abd Allah al-Bahir, he was among the leading Muslim scholars with excellent qualities and high scientific position, so the people reported that on his authority.

As for his son Zayd, he was among the great Muslim religious scholars, and he was a specialist in many sciences such as jurisprudence, tradition, interpretation of the Qur'an, theology, and the like. It was he who adopted the rights of the oppressed and the persecuted, and he led their movement of struggle. That was when he proclaimed his immortal revolt which spread political awareness in the Islamic society. He also took part in overthrowing the Umayyad rule.

### **His Commandments to his Children**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) supplied his children with some educational commandments which were the summary of his experiences in this

life, as guidance for them. The following are some of his commandments:

He, peace be on him, recommended some of his children to follow these valuable commandments which shed light on friends, and which made it incumbent on them to refrain from making friends with those who had evil inclinations which might pollute their pure nature. The following is the text of his commandments:

“My little son, beware of five persons. Do not make friends with them, do not converse with them, and do not accompany them.” His son asked him: “Who are they?” He, peace be on him, replied: “Beware of making friends with a liar because he is like a mirage, making you feel that distant things are near and near things are distant. Be careful of making friends with a sinner because he would sell you for a meal or less than that. Beware of making friends with a miser because

he would desert you because of his money when you are in need of him. Guard against a fool because he may intend to benefit you but may harm you. Be cautious of making friends with the one who abandons his blood relations because I have found him cursed in the Book of Allah.”

Indeed, making friends with such people brings about destruction and loss and great harm. Such people are many in the past and in the present while good and pure friends are few!

Among his excellent commandments to his children are these great ones, which read:

“My little son, be patient during a misfortune, do not interfere with rights, and do not force your friend (to do) a thing whose harm is greater than its benefit for you.”

The wise Imam recommended his son to be patient in the face of misfortunes and events that afflicted him and not to collapse before them,

for that would strengthen his character. He also recommended him not to interfere with the rights of others lest they should transgress against him. Moreover, he recommended him not to force his friend to do a certain thing that might bring about harm and loss.

### **His Supplication for his Children**

As for his supplication for his children, it is very wonderful in showing his behavior toward them and what he hoped for them such as excellent manners and noble morals. Now, let's listen to this supplication, which is part of the greatest wealth in the Islamic education.

"O Allah, be kind to me through the survival of my children, setting them right for me and allowing me to enjoy them! My Allah, make long their lives for me, increase their terms, bring up the smallest for me, strengthen the weakest for me, rectify for me their bodies, their

religious dedication, and their moral traits, make them well in their souls, their limbs, and everything that concerns me of their affairs, and pour out for me and upon my hand their provisions! Make them pious, fearing, insightful, hearing, and obedient toward You, loving and well-disposed toward Your friends, and stubbornly resistant and full of hate toward all Your enemies! Amen!"

This paragraph represents the great spirituality the Imam, peace be on him, followed to educate his children. He educated them according to the inclusive setting right and the absolute education. He prayed to Allah to be kind to him. This kindness to children strengthens the ties of the members of family. When the child is brought up according to these high moral traits, his parents will enjoy him.

Let's listen to another part of this holy supplication.

"O Allah, through them strengthen my arm, straighten

my burdened back, multiply my number, adorn my presence, keep alive my name, suffice me when I am away, help me in my needs, and make them loving toward me, affectionate, approaching, upright, obedient, never disobedient, disrespectful, opposed, or offenders! Help me in their education, and my devotion toward them, give me among them from Yourself male children, make that a good for me, and make them a help for me in that which I ask from You!

Give me and my progeny refuge from the accursed Satan, for You have created us, commanded us, prohibited us, and made us desire the reward of what You have commanded, and fear its punishment! You assigned to us an enemy who schemes against us, gave him an authority over us in a way You did not give us an authority over him, allowed him to dwell in our breasts and let him run in our blood vessels;

he is not heedless, though we be heedless, he does not forget, though we forget; he makes us feel secure from Your punishment and fills us with fear toward other than You. If we are about to commit an indecency, he gives us courage to do so, and if we are about to perform a righteous act, he holds us back from it. He opposes us through passions, and sets up for us doubts. If he promises us, he lies, and if he raises our hopes, he fails to fulfill them. If You do not turn his trickery away from us, he will misguide us, and if You do not protect us from his corruption, he will cause us to slip. O Allah, so defeat his authority over us through Your authority such that You hold him back from us through the frequency of our supplication to You and we leave his trickery and rise up among those preserved by You from sin!"

This wonderful paragraph has two important matters, which



are: First, the Imam asked Allah, the Glorified, to help him achieve what he hoped in respect to his pure children. He hoped that:

1. Allah would strengthen his arm through them, for a good child is strength for his father.
2. He would straighten his burdened back.
3. He would multiply their number, so that they would be a notable family before the people.
4. He would adorn his presence and keep alive his name that was through the high standards of his children.
5. He would suffice him when he was away, that was when his children carried out his affairs.
6. He would make his children help him in his needs and not leave him alone.
7. He would make his children loving toward him, affectionate, approaching, upright, obedient, never disobedient, disrespectful, opposed, or offenders!

When children are righteous and obedient to their parents, their parents will enjoy them during the time of their old age which is the center of weakness.

Second, the Imam asked Allah, the Glorified, to protect him and his children from the evil of the accursed Satan, who is the first enemy of man; he tempts man to be disobedient to Allah through committing sins and vices. The Imam has mentioned the authority and domination of Satan over man as follows:

1. Satan tempts man to commit sins, makes easy the punishment Allah has prepared for his disobedient servants, and makes man afraid of those other than Allah, so he makes him afraid of them more than they are afraid of Allah.
2. If man is about to commit an indecency, he gives him courage to do so.
3. If man is about to perform a righteous act, he holds him back from it.

4. Satan opposes man through passions.

5. He sets up doubts for man to make him far from his Lord.

The Imam mentioned all the ways Satan uses to entice man such as lying and deception, and then he warned all the believers from the trickery of Satan. Now, let's listen to the last paragraph of this holy supplication.

"O Allah, grant me every request, accomplish for me my needs, withhold not from me Your response when You have made Yourself accountable for it to me, veil not my supplication from Yourself, when you have commanded me to make it, and be kind to me through everything that will set me right in this world and the next, in everything that I remember or forget, display or conceal, make public or keep secret! In all of this, place me through my asking You among those who set things right, those who

are answered favorably when they request from You and from whom is not withheld when they put their trust in You, those who always seek refuge in You, those who profit through commerce with You, those granted sanctuary through Your might, those given lawful provision in plenty from Your plentiful bounties through Your munificence and generosity, those who reach exaltation after abasement through You, those granted sanctuary from wrong through Your justice, those released from affliction through Your mercy, those delivered from need after poverty through Your riches, those preserved from sins, slips, offenses through reverential fear toward You, those successful in goodness, right conduct, and propriety through obeying You, those walled off from sins through your power, the refrainers from every act of disobedience toward You, the dwellers in Your neighborhood!

O Allah, give me all of that through Your granting of success and Your mercy, grant us refuge from the chastisement of burning, and to give to all the Muslims, male and female, and all the faithful, male and female, the like of what I have asked for myself and my children, in the immediate of this world and the deferred of the next! Verily You are the Near, the Responder, the All-hearing, the All-knowing, the Pardoner, the Forgiving, the Clement, the Merciful! And give us in this world good, and in the next world good, and protect us from the chastisement of the Fire!”

In the above-mentioned paragraph, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) showed his great loyalty, his turning to Allah, his obedience, and his cleaving to Allah. He asked Allah, the Almighty, to grant him every request, to accomplish for him his needs, to withhold not from him His response when He has made Himself

accountable for it to him, to veil not his supplication from Himself, when He has commanded him to make it, and to be kind to him through everything that will set him right in this world and the next. He humbly supplicated to Allah, and then he asked Him to give to all the Muslims, male and female, and all the faithful, male and female, the like of what he had asked for himself and his children, in the immediate of this world and the deferred of the next.

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) brought up his children according to these manners, which represented the essence of Islam and true faith, so his children were the most pious of the children of all the Muslims in religion.

### **His Behavior toward his Retainers**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) treated his retainers with kindness and mercy; he treated them as he treated his own children. The narrators

said that he did not punish any of his retainers for the mistakes they made against him. One day the Imam called a retainer of his twice, but the retainer did not answer him. At the third time he answered, so the Imam asked him kindly:

"Didn't you hear my voice, my little son?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"What was on your mind so that you did not answer me?" asked the Imam.

"I was safe (from any harm) from you," answered the retainer.

The Imam praised Allah and went out, saying: "Praise be to Allah, Who has caused my slave to be safe (from any harm) from me." The Imam was happy, for he was neither rude nor tyrannical, so the people were not afraid of him nor were they careful of him.

### **His Behavior toward his Neighbors**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a.s.) was the kindest of all the

people to his neighbors. He treated them as he treated his family, maintained their weak and poor, visited their sick, and escorted their deceased to their final resting place. He did a lot of good for them. He took water to his neighbors in the dark night, as al-Zuhri reported. In the history of mankind, there is nothing like this kindness and charity.

### **His Supplication for his Neighbors**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a.s.) was not satisfied with the kindness and charity he did for his Neighbors, rather he supplicated for them. He asked Allah to grant them success, good final results, and correctness, as he prayed for himself and the members of his House. This supplication was among his tasks. He singled out his neighbors with one of his holy supplications. The following is the text of this supplication:

"O Allah, bless Muhammad and his Household and attend

to me with Your best attending in my neighbors and friends who recognize our right and war against our enemies! Give (neighbors and friends) success in performing Your prescriptions and taking on the beauties of Your courtesy through acting gently with their weak, remedying their lacks, visiting their sick, guiding their seeker of right guidance, giving good counsel to their seeker of advice, attending to the one among them who returns from travel, hiding their secrets, covering their shameful things, helping their wronged, sharing kindly with them in goods, turning towards them with wealth and bestowal of bounty, and giving what is due to them before they ask!"

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a.s.) supplicated for his neighbors with this blessed supplication. He singled out with his supplication the believers and those who knew the right of the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on

them, whose love Allah made obligatory, and whom the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, made life-boats, security for mankind, and the ones who guided men to pleasure and obedience to Allah. In the above-mentioned supplication, the Imam asked Allah:

To grant his neighbors success in performing the sunna of Islam and to enliven its duties and teachings.

To grant his neighbors success in taking on the beauties of Allah's courtesy, through:

(A) Acting gently with their weak and having mercy on them.

(B) Meeting the needs of their neighbors and helping them with the affairs of this world.

(C) Visiting their ill brothers.

(D) Guiding their seeker of right guidance.

(E) Giving good counsel to their seeker of advice.

(F) Attending to the one among them who returns from travel.

(G) Hiding their secrets.

(H) Covering their shameful things.

(I) Helping their wronged.

(J) Sharing kindly with them in goods.

(K) Turning towards them with wealth and bestowal of bounty.

These are among the most important issues in the social regulation aimed at spreading love, friendship, and cooperation among people, and aimed at ending all kinds of differences that corrupt social life. Now, let's listen to the last words of this holy supplication.

"Let me, O Allah, repay their evildoer with good doing, turn away from their wrongdoer with forbearance, have a good opinion of every one of them, attend to all of them with devotion, lower my eyes before them in continence, make mild my side toward

them in humility, be tender toward the afflicted among them in mercy, make them happy in absence through affection, love that they continue to receive favor through good will, grant them what I grant my next of kin, and observe for them what I observe for my special friends! O Allah, bless Muhammad and his Household, provide me the like of that from them, appoint for them the fullest share of what is with them, increase them in insight toward my right and knowledge of my excellence so that they will be fortunate through me and I fortunate through them! Amen, Lord of the worlds!"

The most important thing which the Imam wished was that he wanted to do a lot of good for his neighbors. He wanted to:

1. Repay their evildoer with good doing.
2. Turn away from their wrongdoer with forbearance,

this was the behavior of his grandfather, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, who turned away with forbearance from those who wronged him.

3. Have a good opinion of every one of them, for having a good opinion of people spreads love, friendship, and cooperation among them.

4. Attend to all of them with devotion, the weak, the poor, the enemy, and the friend.

5. Make mild his side toward them in humility.

6. Be tender toward the afflicted among them in mercy.

7. Make them happy in absence through affection and mercy.

8. Receive favor continuously.

9. Treat them kindly as he treated his next of kin.

10. Observe for them what he observed for his special friends.

These exalted morals represent the essence and reality

of Islam. They aim at forming a perfect society with united feelings and firm passions.

After the Imam, peace be on him, had made public these noble feelings toward his neighbors, he wanted them to have the same feelings toward him. Then he asked Allah, the Glorified, to provide him the like of that from them, appoint for them the fullest share of what was with them, increase them in insight toward his right and knowledge of his excellence so that they would be fortunate through him and he fortunate through them.

### **His Behavior toward his Friends**

As for the behavior of the Imam, peace be on him, with his friends, it was distinguished by high standards and great Islamic manners. The Imam, peace be on him, respected and honored those who sat with him, thus he said: "I respected and honored those who sat with me."

One day, Nasr b. Aws al-Ta'ī came to the Imam and greeted him, so the Imam returned his greeting and asked him:

"Where are you from?"

"From Tay," replied Nasr.

"May Allah greet you! May He greet the people to whom you belong! The best people are your people!" the Imam said.

Nasr turned to the Imam and asked him: "Who are you?"

"Ali b. al-Husayn." was the answer.

"Wasn't he killed with his father in Iraq?" asked Nasr.

The Imam smiled at him and said: "My little son, if he was killed, you won't see him."

The historians said that Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, peace be on him, did not allow any of his friends to transgress against those who mistreated him. One of his enemies came to him and asked him: "Do you know how to perform the ritual prayers?" Abu' Hazim,

one of the Imam's companions, tried to attack him, so the Imam held him back from doing that, saying: "Abu' Hazim, take it easy! Indeed, religious scholars should be clement and merciful!" Then the Imam kindly turned to the man and said to him: "Yes, I know how to perform them."

The man asked the Imam about the peculiarities of the prayers, and the Imam answered him, so the man became shy of the Imam, apologized to him for that, and said to him: "You have refuted everyone's proof." The Imam treated his friends with high moral standards. In this connection he followed his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who was sent to complete the high moral standards.

### **His Behavior toward his Shi'ites**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a.s.) wanted his Shi'ites to be an excellent example for mankind



in their piety, devotion, and cleaving to religion, so he did his best to educate them with high Islamic manners. He preached to them, gave them commandments, and urged them to cling to piety and good deeds, so he, peace be on him, said to one of his Shi'ites: "Inform our Shi'ites that nothing will avail them before Allah, and that no one will obtain our intercession but through piety."

Indeed, refraining from what Allah has prohibited is among the most important ways that man is saved from the chastisement and punishment of Allah, and it is also among the most successful ways that leads man to obtain the intercession of the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, which is one of Allah's forts.

A group of people came to Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, peace be on him, and told him that they belonged to his Shi'ites, so the Imam considered their faces carefully but did not see

on them the marks of righteousness, so he said to them: "Where are the marks of the faces? Where are the marks of worship? Where are the marks of prostration (in prayer)? Indeed our Shi'ites are known by their worship and their shaggy hair. Worship injures the inner corners of their eyes, their foreheads, and their limbs of prostration. Their 'Abdomens are hollow, and their lips are withered. They glorify Allah when the people keep silent, and they perform the prayers when the people sleep. They are sad when the people are happy. They are known by asceticism. And Paradise distract them (from this world)."

These qualities which the Imam, peace be on him, concern the special Shi'ites and the followers of the Imams, peace be on them, such as 'Ammar b. Yasir, Abu' Dharr, Salman al-Farisi, Maytham al-Tammar, and the like, whose souls were full of piety and righteousness, and

who understood the message of Islam. As for the overwhelming majority of the Shi'ites, they are the lovers and followers of the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them. It is worth mentioning that following the Imams, peace be on them, brings about forgiveness. This can be indicated through the following tradition which has been reported on his authority. When he became ill, a group of the Companions of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, came to visit him and asked him:

"Son of the Apostle of Allah, may our souls be ransom for you, how are you?" "I am very well," replied the Imam, "I am grateful to Allah for that, and how are you?" "We are very well," they answered, "Son of the Apostle of Allah, we love you and follow you."

So the Imam gave them good news of Heaven because they loved and followed the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them,

saying: "Whoever loves us for Allah, Allah will make him dwell in a very shady place on the Day of Resurrection, the day when there will be no shade except His shade. Whoever loves to reward us, Allah will give him Heaven as a reward. Whoever loves us for this world, Allah will give him his livelihood from where he does not expect."

### **His enjoining the Shi'ites to practice Precautionary Dissimulation**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) made it incumbent on his Shi'ites to conform to precautionary dissimulation because they witnessed critical conditions during the rule of the Umayyads, who spared no effort to look for the followers of the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, and to kill them, thus the Imam enjoined his followers to practice precautionary dissimulation and to conceal their belonging to him. This order of the Imam, peace be on him, agreed with

wisdom and the spirituality and essence of Islam. In this connection, he, peace be on him, said: "Allah forgives the believer every sin and purifies him from it in here and the hereafter except two sins, namely leaving precautionary dissimulation and losing his brothers (friends)."

Indeed precautionary dissimulation prevented the blood of the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, from being shed during those black times when the Umayyads sought them everywhere and killed a great number of them to the extent that they (the Shi'ites) preferred belonging to the Jews and Christians to belonging to the followers of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. Those who have no awareness from among those who harbor malice against the members of the House (ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, condemned the Shi'a for precautionary dissimulation,

for they did not know that it was an important Islamic measure for the Shi'ites to save themselves from being killed. Were it not for that the Shi'ites cleaved to precautionary dissimulation, no one would adopt the doctrine of the pure Imams.

### **His Asking Forgiveness for the Shi'ite Sinners**

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as) loved his Shi'ites and followers to the extent that he supplicated for them every day, so he, peace be on him, said to Umm Farwa, daughter of al-Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abu' Bakr: "I supplicate for the Shi'ite sinners a hundred times a day, for we are patient toward what we know, and they are patient toward what they do not know." This tradition shows that the Imam was kind to his Shi'ites, for he asked Allah, the Glorified, to forgive the Shi'ites and to be pleased with them. Therefore which kindness is better than this kindness?



## Multidimensional Personality of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (SA)

*By: Mohsin Reza, MD PhD*

### **Abstract**

Women can perform different roles in an Islamic society. Many of these roles may not be mandatory according to the teachings of Islam, but can be performed based on the talent, faith and sense of responsibility. Overall life with its various activities is much easier now as compared to that of the time of Prophet Muhammad (s). Women in the time of advent of Islam were under severe pressure due to Paganic thinking prevalent at that time and with Islam as a new system presenting them their dynamic role. Added to it was the oppression, migration, battles and other hardships endured by the Muslims at that time. These harsh conditions can never be compared to any other period in Islamic history after the Prophet (S). Under such circumstances, Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) performed several

individual and communal roles. She was a role model daughter, wife, mother, teacher, mentor, social worker, helper and supporter of needy, house-master, worshipper in nights, an active promoter of Islamic modest dress and modest values for women, a financial manager, a mujahida, and a true follower of Islam. All these roles point to her multidimensional personality and such par excellence performance could only be possible with her strong and intimate bond with God and His Prophet. I conclude that Muslim women in today's world can benefit a lot in their performance of different roles in a Muslim society as well as in their personal lives, if they set the illuminating and magnificent personality of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) as their ideal.

## **Introduction**

Women can play many roles in a society. In an Islamic Society, women can fulfill several individual and collective responsibilities in different spheres and under different conditions. However, many of these roles and responsibilities are not set mandatory by the teachings of Islam and these often reflect personal effort, attributes and talent on the part of a woman. Setting this as a prelude, one can investigate and analyze different roles played by Muslim women during various periods of history after the advent of Islam.

Today's modern technology with all its sophisticated tools available for the acquisition of knowledge, making the life easier and high speed communication cannot be compared with the life and times of Prophet of Islam (a) and those who lived with him at that time with harsh physical and socio-political environment in Arabia. One can easily

appreciate that performing various intellectual pursuits such as seeking knowledge, imparting education and training, communication, even living a normal life was in no way comparable with today. Added to this was the time of conflict prevalent in the Arabia due to the advent of Islam with wars and social upheaval resulting from the opposition of the mushrikin, the Jews and the opponents of Islam.

In such a society, where women were considered lower than males or rather even not considered as human and with the beginning of Islam as a new socio-religico-political order or rather as a new overall system struggling to give back to women, their divinely ordained status of womanhood and their rights, Muslim women in that time were additionally overburdened and over whelmed by the old pagan (jahiliyyah) thinking prevalent among the minds. They were, at that time under enormous addi-

tional confrontation and psychological pressure to perform their model Islamic role. The hostile environment then, with all its aggressiveness is in no way comparable to any other time in the history after *sadr-e Islam*. Thus, women who really stood for the Islamic values and performed their role and responsibilities in the time of beginning of Islam or *sadr-e Islam*, can be considered as the role model for the women that came later, even today.

This is not an assumption; rather, it is based on observation of the historic phenomenon of Islam in the society of Arabia with all the opposition, aggression, oppression, misery, migration and battles that resulted in the time of Prophet of Islam (s). The Muslims, in particular women, were under a lot of physical, mental and psychological pressure.

At this point, let us briefly overview the difference between male and female

from various aspects in the light of modern medical research. Females are physically weaker and more vulnerable to physical, mental, psychological and emotional stress than males.

Females suffer additional pain, distress and long duration of physical hardship due to their role as mother. Females are more emotionally bound to their offspring and their loved ones than their male counterparts. All these facts and several other similar findings put females in a special position with regards to performance of their roles in a society, both individually and collectively.

With this introduction, I would like to now talk about the role played by Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) during her life in the Arabian society and the harsh times of *sadr-e Islam*. One can then compare her role with other Muslim women of her time and appreciate the excellences of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa).

Traditions from the Prophet of Islam (s) and verses of the Holy Quran are sufficient as proof to the par excellence personality of Hazrat Zahra (sa). However, I will not bring forth these as a support for my argument. Rather, let us imagine for a while the real life of Hazrat Fatima (sa) with the conditions of the personalities whom she was related to by family, conditions of the followers of Islam she was religico-socially associated with and the condition of the hostile environment she was in due to her being a Muslim, then analyze and envisage and appreciate, that how difficult it is for us living under modern times, to even imagine different roles that she performed during her relatively short life.

### **Individual Role and responsibilities**

Her role and responsibilities due to her family ties Her role as a daughter can be seen in her fulfillment of duties towards her father in different

and very harsh times. The incidence of kuffar (infidels) throwing filth on Prophet (s) in the house of God and her bravely coming and removing it in the midst of enemies is an example. The respect Prophet (s) showed towards her by giving her his own seat is another poof of Hazrat Fatimah Zahra (sa) as a role model for daughters. Her role as a wife can be seen in her excellent management of home and support for her husband, Imam Ali (as), who more than any other companion of Prophet (s) was involved in the defense of Islam and Muslims and was away from the house during battles and other missions he was sent by the Prophet (s). She was a close and sincere friend to her husband and a partner in performing her duties not only towards him but also towards needy Muslims. Incidence of her and Imam Ali (a) sleeping hungry while feeding a Muslim passenger is an example. Her role as a

mother can be seen in the light of her upbringing of her children, Imam Hassan and Hussain (as) and Hazrat Zainab (sa). These children were brought up in such a manner by her that reflected high level moral, intellectual and spiritual indoctrination. Lives of these personalities and their brilliant and par excellence role in the most adverse moments of the history of Islam is a litmus proof to the best upbringing they received from their mother. Truly, Hazrat Fatima (sa) was a great mentor of her children.

### **Her role as a teacher and mentor**

Her role as a very talented teacher can be seen in her training of Imam Hassan and Hussain (as) and Hazrat Zeinab (sa). Lives of these great personalities need no words of introduction. The incidence of Imam Hassan and Hussain (as) teaching wudhu (minor ablution) to an elderly companion of Prophet

(s) in manner that didn't hurt his self- respect highlights many aspects of her mastery of teaching not only Islamic fiqh and upbringing but also as an expert of practical ethics. One can imagine high level of depth, observation, and behavioral indoctrination she imparted to her children in the area of ethical conduct.

### **Her role as master of her maid-servant, Fizzah**

Her role as master to the maid-servant bestowed to her by Prophet of Islam (s) is yet another example of her multidimensional role she played as an active and compassionate Muslim woman. Not going into details, we cannot find a single instance in the history of Islam, whereby a house master would take turns every other day with her maid-servant in house hold work. So one day Hazrat Fatima (sa) will do the household work while her maid servant Fizzah would take rest! This unique routine is in the midst of hardships in



the life of Muslims in Medina where in ten years, when Prophet (s) was present in 27 battles and Imam Ali (as) was present in many more, being away from house. How could a house master allow this alternate day house chores under such dynamically adverse life style of her husband and father except that she had a strong sense of human values and human rights to its utmost level.

### **Collective or Communal Responsibilities**

Her role and responsibilities due to her affiliation towards the members of society she lived in. One can easily appreciate from the historical records as to how she performed different duties towards the members of the society she was living in at that time. She was seen giving away her own marriage dress, jewelry, food and other material possessions to the needy Muslims whenever required. Not only towards Muslims but she also per-

formed her similar role as a helper and supporter, whenever required towards the followers of other religions. She fulfilled her social responsibilities to the utmost level of self-sacrifice, and not seeking any thanks or returns only as a duty toward God and His religion. These social duties and responsibilities were fulfilled by her in such a manner that her own life and of her immediate family members were risked due to lack of food and other necessities. Can we find in history a woman who would give away her and her children's food for three days to needy only for the sake of love of God? This highly unique style of fulfilling social responsibilities was not limited to giving away in the way of God, even when she would pray whole night to God the well-being of others, she would give preference to the members of the Muslim society over her own family members. Such high level of uniformity in thinking and

action and sense of responsibility is unfounded in Muslim history.

### **Her role as a voluntary social worker**

Her role as a voluntary social worker in the way of Islam can be seen her helping the Muslim army, performing role as a nurse, consoling the families that had lost their dear ones, helping needy and orphans irrespective of her own needs and difficult situation.

The door of her house was always open towards anyone seeking remedy of his or her needs.

Her role as a manager for the distribution of wealth obtained from Fadak and other properties gifted to her by the Prophet of Islam Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) performed role of a distribution manager for the wealth obtained from the land of Fadak and other properties gifted to her by the Prophet (s). This wealth was distributed by her according

to the principles taught to her by the Prophet (s) to needy Muslims and families of the orphans and widows who were martyred in the battles. Her role is yet another bright aspect of her personality as a manager of revenues and its distribution to the needy according the principles of Islam.

Her role in preservation of modesty and promotion of modest Islamic dress, Hijab Hazrat Zahra (sa) on several occasions performed her role to emphasize women's modesty and her preservation of Islamic modest dress, the Hijab. History has recorded instances of her peculiar behavior and sayings emphasizing the necessity of modesty and modest dress for Muslim women. The point worth pondering here is that women can perform their social activities and play their role actively in society while behaving modestly towards na mahrum (males towards which contact is forbidden)

and keeping Islamic dress code. Personality of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) is certainly a model in this regard.

There several other roles performed by this noble personality that are beyond the time and space allotted for this presentation.

### **A thought provoking question**

Before I conclude my talk, let us ask a question to ourselves: How could Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) have performed all these different multidimensional roles often at the same time during her life, that are recorded in history books? Moreover, certainly, these roles and responsibilities are just a glimpse of her multidimensional life. Her whole life was certainly not encaged in the history books. How a Muslim woman in that society under harsh desert of Arabia could perform so many different tasks during her lifetime with apparently the conditions of a

lot of stress, psychological pressure, mental and physical hardships? How was it all possible? How was it possible for her to endure all the hostilities, may it be from enemies within and without, harsh environmental conditions, lack of necessities of life, wars, social isolation, physical migration and other unforeseen hardships? The only answer that I can think of is her strong relationship with God, and his Prophet (s), Her total submission to, and merger in Islam and its divine values, her intimate and strong relationship with God and her nearness to Him. This particular relationship of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) with God is partly reflected in her Dua al-Noor and her elegant sayings on various Islamic topics recorded in history books and instances and special circumstances of her ibadat recorded in history.

Her relationship with Her father, the Prophet of Islam was not merely a physical and

emotional relationship of father and daughter, rather it was a strong spiritual relationship. Father was as a divinely ordained prophet and recognition of his being divine Prophet by her was the strongest bond between her and her Father.

### **Conclusion**

The multidimensional personality of Hazrat Fatima (sa) is an illuminated example for today Muslim women living in not only in an Islamic Society. A woman can be at the same time a good mother, daughter, wife, teacher and mentor of her children, a voluntary social worker, a distributor of wealth and property among destitute and needy of the society, a compassionate house master, a model of self-sacrifice to give away any possession in the way of God, a promoter of Islamic modest dress and modesty for women, a mujahida in the time of war and supporter of Muslim army, an 'abida (worshipper) praying to God in night and

much more. Setting Hazrat Fatima Zahra (sa) as a role model, a woman can perform all these roles under different circumstances, whether the society is at peace or at war, whether there is economic or material hardship or whether members of society are hostile or whether support from creatures is lost, and when the only hope is with God the Almighty. Life of Hazrat Fatima (sa) is certainly a bright guiding star under all circumstances for a Muslim woman.



### **Hazrat Zahra (SA) recited this upon Prophet's (S) demise**

'The person who smells the sweet fragrance of the grave of the Prophet (S) so what if he does not smell any other fragrance for long times to come?

Agonies & anguishes & griefs poured upon me in such a way that had they poured upon days those would have turned into nights.



## Different Treatments of Spirituality

By: Dr. Mohammad Ali Shomali

In this issue we will study the ways the Qur'an and hadiths have treated the process of self-development and described man's effort and struggle to achieve piety and spirituality.

### 1. Spirituality as Combat with the Self

According to this approach, self-building is an internal battle against the enemy within. In a very well-known and inspiring hadith, we read that once, in Medina, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saw a group of his companions who had won a battle approaching. The Holy Prophet said:

مرحبا بقوم قضاوا الجهاد الأصغر  
ويبقى الجهاد الأكبر قيل يا رسول  
الله وما الجهاد الأكبر قال جهاد  
النفس

"Well done! Welcome to those people who have completed the minor struggle and on whom the greater struggle is still incumbent." The Apostle

of God was asked: "What is the greater struggle?"

He replied: "To fight one's own self." [1]

The companions had defeated their enemies in a severe battle and had been prepared to give up the dearest thing to them, their life, to defend Islam. They were astonished and wondered what could be greater than that. The Holy Prophet replied:

'Jihad al-nafs.' This means to fight one's own self, to struggle with your own self.

In a well-known hadith Abu Dharr asked the Prophet Muhammad: 'Which struggle is the best?'

The Holy Prophet replied:

ان يجاهد الرجل نفسه وهواه

"To struggle against one's own self and lusts". [2]

The likening of self-development to an internal battle is indeed rooted in the

Qur'an itself. For example, the Qur'an says:

وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

"And whoever strives, he strives only for his own soul; most surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above (need of) the worlds." (Qur'an Surah Ankabut 29:6)

According to many exegetes of the Qur'an, this striving or struggle (jihad) which has been mentioned here is a spiritual jihad. There are two main pieces of evidence that they use to prove this. Firstly, the use of the word "himself": this is significant as in a war a soldier fights for a cause; it may be for the oppressed, for the dignity of Islam or for his country. However this verse mentions the cause as "himself." Secondly, previous to this verse Allah (SWT) says:

مَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ  
اللَّهِ لَآتٍ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

"Whoever hopes to meet Allah, the term appointed by

Allah will then most surely come; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing." (Qur'an Surah Ankabut 29:5)

This concept of meeting Allah (SWT) is also a spiritual concept and so it is consistent with the following verse i.e. the verse 29:6 being about jihad for the self, as this too is a spiritual concept. Of course, this is not to suggest that this verse does not include the militant jihad, but that it also includes the spiritual jihad.

The following verses also refer to the spiritual jihad, though they may also include the militant jihad, since the militant jihad also needs purification of the intention and the soul:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ ...

"And wage jihad for the sake of God, a jihad which is worthy of Him..." (Qur'an Surah Hajj 22:78)

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ  
سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them in Our ways; and Allah is most surely with the doers of good.” (Qur’an Surah Ankabut 29:69)

To fight an internal enemy is the greater struggle because it is more difficult. When an enemy is found inside it is more dangerous and more difficult to defeat. An internal civil war is more difficult to face than war against an external foreign enemy on one’s borders. It is much more difficult to expel someone who has occupied our house than to repel someone who is only outside it. If our enemy is inside us then he knows all our secrets. He knows our weak points and our strong points and he knows exactly how to ‘play’ with us.

An internal enemy is always with us and allows us no rest. We might be able to negotiate a cease-fire with an external enemy but with an internal enemy the fight goes on day

and night, unceasingly. And unfortunately we love and admire this enemy because it is our own soul. He has done so many bad things to us and yet we still love him. So this is a very difficult and complex battle. We should be really determined and fully alert. Indeed, God should have mercy upon us if we are to win this battle.

We should know that, despite all the challenges to be faced in this struggle, in the end it is not so difficult. God will guide and make it easy for those who sincerely want it. It is very important that when we know something we must put it into practice. If we put our knowledge into practice, then God will give us knowledge of the things that we do not know. If we put into practice the small things that we know, it will enlighten the path before us.

## **2. Spirituality, a Medicine**

Another approach is to consider spirituality as a kind

of medicine for our soul or spirit. Spiritual problems are described as illness and so we need to treat ourselves with special medicines. We are patients in need of a cure, in need of medicine. Just like our bodies, our souls may also become ill. Unfortunately the most difficult sort of illness is when we suffer deep inside. In twelve verses, the Qur'an talks about a group of people who suffer from "disease in their hearts". This disease may be increased by God because they do not want to be cured and insist on being ill. For example, we read:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ  
مَرَضًا

'In their hearts is a disease and God has increased their disease.' (Qur'an Surah Baqarah 2:10)

The Qur'an also talks about hearts which are healthy and pure:

وَلَا تُخْزِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ، يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ  
مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ، إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ  
بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

'Do not disgrace me on the day when people are revived, the day on which neither money nor children can help, except the one who comes to Allah with a healthy (pure) heart.' (Qur'an Surah Shu'ara 26:87-89)

This is the prayer of the Prophet Abraham (A.S). In verses (37:83 & 84), God informs us that this request was granted:

وَإِنَّ مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ لَإِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِذْ جَاءَ  
رَبَّهُ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

'Indeed, Abraham was among his [i.e. Noah's] followers, when he came to his Lord with a healthy (pure) heart.'

Thus, we can understand that having a pure and healthy heart is so important that someone like Prophet Abraham, the father of all monotheistic religions, asks God for it. Indeed, this is the only thing which will be useful on the Day of Judgement when neither children nor money will benefit us. In Nah al-



Balaghah, sermon 388, Imam Ali says:

ألا وإن من البلاء الفاقة وأشد من  
الفاقة مرض البدن وأشد من  
مرض البدن مرض القلب

'One of the catastrophes that may happen to a person is poverty, but more difficult than poverty is illness. And more difficult than illness of the body is illness of the heart.'

Therefore the worst poverty is to suffer from a lack of piety. The concept of medicine is also a very important related topic. Imam Ali (A.S) says in his Sermon of the Pious:

أما الليل فصافون أقدامهم تالين  
لأجزاء القرآن يرتلون بها ترتيلا  
يحزنون به أنفسهم ويستثيرون به  
دواء دأنهم

"[Pious people are] those who stand up and recite the Qur'an at night, and they try to make themselves sad. They try to take from the Qur'an the treatment as medicine for their illnesses." [3]

Imam Baqir (A.S) told Jabir b. Yazid al-Ju'fi:

واعلم أنه لا علم كطلب السلامة  
ولا سلامة كسلامة القلب

"And know that there is no knowledge like seeking health, and there is no health like the health of the soul." [4]

In the case of spiritual medicine, the most important point is that we must try to prevent illness from penetrating our souls, in the same way as we might try to maintain a distance from people who are ill, so that the disease does not affect us; by being close to them we endanger our own health.

However, there are cures to our illnesses, as Allah (SWT) is the Most Forgiving. Furthermore, we need a guide who can show us what to do and how to prevent or cure our illnesses. One of the beautiful things Imam Ali (A.S) mentions about the Holy Prophet (SAW) is that he was a doctor, but he did not wait for the sick people; instead he

went to them himself, taking the equipment with him.

طبيب دَوَّارٍ بطبهِ، قد أَحْكَمَ  
مَراهِمَهُ، وَأَحْمَى مَواسِمَهُ، يَضَعُ  
ذَلِكَ حَيْثُ الحَاجَةُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ قُلُوبِ  
عُمَمِي، وَأَذَانِ صُمِّ، وَالسَّنَةِ بَكْمِ..  
مَتَّبِعِ بِدَوَائِهِ مَواضِعَ الغَفَلَةِ،  
ومَواظِنِ الحِيرَةِ

The Prophet was like a roaming physician who has set ready his ointments and heated his instruments. He uses them wherever the need arises for curing blind hearts, deaf ears, and dumb tongues. He followed with his medicines the spots of negligence and places of perplexity.[5]

There were people who were deaf, blind, or those people who could not speak the truth, and the Holy Prophet (SAW) used the appropriate medicine to cure them. Imam Mahdi (A.S) who is the Imam of our age has also a significant role; and if Allah (SWT) pleases we can receive guidance and healing from him (A.S).

### 3. Spirituality as a Journey

In Islamic literature, spirituality is also described as a journey. We should think of ourselves as wayfarers. We have all embarked on a journey away from God and then we are going back to Him. We have all been created by God and this creation is a sort of separation from our origin. Before we were created we were not separate from God but now we are. However, God has given us the chance to return to Him. The Qur'an says:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"Truly we belong to God and to Him we will return".  
(Qur'an Surah Baqarah 2:156)

When we depart, our destination is clear. But in order to reach our destination we must be very careful about our direction. If we are on the right path, we will certainly reach our destination. However, if we are on the wrong path, we will not reach our destination and may even go

farther and farther away from it. We are not in a static or fixed position. Every day and every hour we are moving and getting either further from or closer to our destination. The Glorious Qur'an says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ  
كَدْحًا فَمَلَأَقِيهِ

"O man, you are trying hard to reach your Lord and you will finally meet Him." (Qur'an Surah Inshiqaq 84:6)

Having read this verse, some may think that there is nothing to worry about because we have all come from a good place and there is a good destination ahead. But our status when we meet God is of utmost importance. There are two states of reaching God: to reach Him while He is happy with us or to reach Him while He is angry with us. Human beings are among the very few creatures whose levels of perfection are not fixed, that is, they have been given the

capacity to upgrade or degrade themselves.

Thus, the spiritual journey consists of trying to increase our closeness and proximity to God. It should be noted that God is always close to us, but we are not necessarily close to Him. We can reach a position in which we can get closer and closer to God through self-purification, and, as suggested by the Glorious Qur'an, "meet" Him. Mystics normally speak of the possibility of losing our own selfhood, limits and boundaries and then becoming identified with God. I am not commenting on this concept here, but in any case it seems obvious that we can get closer and closer to God to the extent that nothing will remain between us and Him and this is what we mean by returning to God.

So this life is a journey and we cannot say that we do not want to go on this journey. We are all on this journey and it is up to us to gather enough provisions for ourselves. One

of the main goals of self-building is to try to reduce this distance by wayfaring towards Allah (SWT). The path towards Him is infinite and full of challenges. However, for the people who embark on this journey, all the support and guidance are provided. In this regard, Imam Sajjad (A.S) says:

سبحانك ما اضيق الطرق على  
من لم تكن دليله وما اوضح الحق  
عند من هديته سبيله

“May you be glorified! What a narrow path it is for whom You do not guide, and what a clear path it is for whom you have guided!”[6]

### Conclusion

In this part we have discussed spirituality or the process of self-building as a kind of battle, medicine and as a journey. Allah (SWT) is encouraging and guiding us by demonstrating many analogies. He is showing us that there is always hope of reaching Him, and appeals to us in many different ways to

encourage us to come closer to Him. He is the Most Merciful.

### Notes:

1. Al-Kafi, Vol. 5, p. 12, no 3 and Al-Amali by al-Saduq, Session 71, p. 377, no 8. There is an addition to the above hadith, which can be found in Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 67, p. 62 and reads as follows:  
ثم قال ص أفضل الجهاد من  
جاهد نفسه التي بين جنبيه  
‘The best struggle is to fight one’s own self.’
2. Nahjul Fasaha, 230, 397.  
أفضل الجهاد أن يجاهد الرجل  
نفسه وهواه
3. Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 193.
4. Tuaf al-‘Uqul, p. 284.
5. See Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 108.
6. Mafatih al-Jinan, Munajat al-Muridin.



## Miraculous Healing in the Holy Quran

*By: Jafar Ali Asil*

### **Rubbing of Garments / Earth as a Healer in the Holy Quran**

Alas! The Lovers of the Progeny of Muhammad (S) are grieved that their crying does not result in the loss of their sight! And by Allah! If we cry so much that the light of the eyes disappears, then Allah would restore sight to those eyes, for He promises thus in the Quran; Take this, my shirt, and cast it over the face of my father; he will be able to see. And bring me your family, all together. (Surah 12, Yusuf verse 93).

It is noteworthy that the association of a shirt, indeed any fabric, with the body, is temporary – a month, two months, a year, two years – after that it deteriorates and eventually loses all association with the person. The temporary garment of a prophet, and the shirt that had a short-lived association with the body of a prophet, was of

such importance that blind eyes had sight restored to them when rubbed by the shirt.

Indeed the sole cause of blindness in the first instance was crying in the separation of a (still) living son. Restoration of sight was only because of the garment that had albeit a temporary association with the body of a prophet.

Now it is important to ponder very calmly and rationally, that when the touching of a temporal garment of a prophet to the eyes of a blind man can restore sight, then what wonders can those things bestow which bear an eternal association with chosen people? Just ponder over the blessed burial places, the dust and earth of the Prophet and the Infallible Imams and martyrs in Allah's path (AS): by their eternal association with those places, does the earth from there not become a healing dust,

antimony for the eyes, or medicine for the ill? Indeed it does!

The rubbing of Yusuf (AS)'s past, temporary garment – a shirt –on the prophet Yaqub (AS)'s face is not considered an innovation, harmful or wrong in any way, therefore it is considered a sunnah (recommended practice) of the prophet. Then how can taking the earth from the Prophet (AS) and his progeny's (AS) graves and rubbing it on the face and head be considered an innovation and unlawful?

Can anyone answer this question of ours effectively? Or shall we answer it, that when the prophet Yusuf (AS) said, 'take this shirt of mine and put it on my father's face so that he may see', and indeed this did happen, then this was the act of two prophets. Could it be possible that both Yusuf (AS) and Yaqub (AS) were not aware of what an 'innovation' would be? May I ask today's so

called strict Muslims, that Allah forbid, was there a weakness in the faith of these two prophets?

If there were no weakness – and indeed there was not – then will those who scream 'innovation' review their own faith? Perhaps, as a poet stated, they question people's faith as they themselves lack faith. Perhaps it is for this reason that they are in fact going against the actions of previous prophets and the words of the Quran.

Again, let us ponder further on the temporary association of a garment with the body of a prophet: by virtue of having touched him, it becomes so special and distinctive that it even restores the sight of one who has become blind! In fact the garment even emanates a special fragrance. This fragrance was apparent thousands of miles away to Yusuf (AS)'s father but not to his brothers. Why was that? Rather than arguing personal points of view, it is incumbent

that we take proof from the Quran in order to answer this question.

Let us examine the following verses; And when the caravan departed [from Egypt], their father said, "Indeed, I find the smell of Yusuf [and would say that he was alive] if you did not think me deluded / weakened in mind." They said, "By Allah, indeed you are in your [same] old error." And when the bearer of good tidings arrived, he cast it over his face, and he returned [once again] seeing. He said, "Did I not tell you that I know from Allah that which you do not know?" (Surah 12, Yusuf verses 94 - 96)

Is it not a clear meaning of these verses that the only one who will smell such a fragrance is the one whose love is true and sincere? Otherwise how else would it be possible that despite the fragrance being a reality, others could not smell it?

These proofs that we have presented from the Quran can

only be negated if we consider the prophet Yaqub (AS), Allah forbid, to have been deluded. And yet even the brothers of Yusuf (AS) did not consider him deluded or weak of mind, but instead stated that, 'because you love Yusuf (AS) to the furthest limit as you did before, therefore you can smell him'.

It is a shame on today's Muslims that instead of repeating these lines of the brothers of the prophet Yusuf (AS) on the lovers of the progeny of Muhammad (AS), they rather accuse them of disbelief and idolatry. How aptly Iqbal stated about such 'custodians of knowledge'; They change not themselves, rather alter the Quran. How senseless the Custodians of Knowledge have become!

We must also mention here that it becomes compulsory on us to respect things that are associated with revered personalities: the prophet Yusuf's shirt became important because of its associa-

tion with his body, otherwise on its own merit, what was the significance of this mere shirt? If the same shirt were on the body of another, neither would it be respected nor would it be of any importance.

### **Kissing Objects / Places Associated with Revered Persons**

Now let us imagine for one moment: when prophet Yusuf (AS)'s shirt was placed on the face of prophet Yaqub (AS), then what must have been the reaction of Yaqub? How must a father's love have been kindled and awakened!

Indeed he must have clung to the shirt with great longing: he must have kissed it, held it against his chest, rubbed it on his eyes. Do all these actions not fall within the definition of love and respect? If they do, then why do people argue that loving and respecting things associated with revered holy personalities is tantamount to idolatry and innovation?

If the shrines of the Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (S) and his progeny, the martyrs of Karbala and indeed other martyrs in Allah's path, are kissed then we are told this is polytheism, unlawful, innovation. What kind of an outcry is this? How can kissing someone or something ever be considered idolatrous or innovation? It is difficult to comprehend this thought both intellectually and logically.

Who does not kiss his/her child? Do those who cry 'idolatry, innovation!' never kiss their children? As far as a lustful kiss is concerned, would they be the first to cry that that is also an innovation? They can then judge for themselves whether all kissing is the same. The same emotional difference can be applied to our discussion in hand: to kiss someone or something by thinking it is worthy of worship is one thing, but to kiss it with love, conviction and devotion is another. To kiss with the



thought that this object of desire is the Creator is indeed idolatrous. But to kiss it on the basis of devotion, intoxicated with love, is neither idolatry nor innovation, but indeed it is a commendable act, worthy of spiritual reward.

Another point springs to attention here: and that is that one can only kiss a person or thing physically before one. As Allah is free from body or materiality, then the question of 'kissing' His 'blessed feet' or 'blessed hands' cannot even arise. So we have to accept that kissing is not an act that can be associated with Allah: it is only for a non-divine entity. And thus how could it ever possibly be idolatrous?

### **Respecting 'Associated' Objects / Places**

As far as respecting things associated with someone or a place of importance is concerned, we find that Allah the Generous Lord has made the

respecting of many such 'associations' compulsory upon us. Indeed Allah has named such associations as 'The Signs of Allah'. Even according to the Quran such associations become His Signs. The Quran elucidates this matter in the following terms; O you who believe! Do not violate the signs appointed by Allah nor the sacred month, nor (interfere with) the offerings, nor the sacrificial animals with garlands / collars. (Surah 5, al-Maidah verse 2)

**Respecting the sacrificial animal is evident:** it is obvious that it is about to be sacrificed in Allah's path therefore Allah has designated it as one of His Signs. Because of this fact, it is compulsory to treat it with respect. But why would Allah designate the garland / collar that is put around that animal's neck also as one of His Signs? (Bear in mind that the collar was put around the animal's neck by us.)

Furthermore, the garland / collar is only temporary, that is, it is only around the animal's neck for a few days. And yet it is so dear to Allah that He designates it as one of His Signs and makes its respect incumbent upon us!

It is noteworthy here that this animal is not going to sacrifice itself in Allah's path, but is going to be offered as a sacrifice. Furthermore, the animal does not have any knowledge of this impending sacrifice. And yet one who is not offering himself as sacrifice, his collar is to be revered so much! And yet one who actively sacrifices himself, along with his sons, brothers, nephews and friends, in order to save Allah's religion, whilst in the grips of thirst and hunger, how is it that things which have been rubbed against their blessed bodies cannot be considered Signs of Allah?

Rather they are considered idolatrous and innovation? How strange! Bravo oh

faithful Muslim! Is this the extent of your faith in the Quran? The collar around the animal's neck is but a temporary association, and yet still designated a Sign of Allah: and yet the places where the pure bodies of those martyred in Allah's path are buried are permanently associated with them. If a temporary association is so honourable, then how honourable and highly ranked must a permanent association be?

To honour and give respect to something or someone is neither idolatry nor innovation nor unlawful, because the difference between respect and worship is immense. Nothing but God could possibly be worshipped, and yet respect can be offered to one other than Allah: for example we respect and honour parents, scholars, the elderly, etc, all on the basis of laws of respect dictated by Allah.



## The Promised Imam al-Mahdi

*By: Ayatullah Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari*

"Allah has promised those of you who have faith and do righteous deeds that He will surely make them succeed (the present rulers) on the earth, just as He made those who were before them succeed (others), and He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange security after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe no thing as partner unto Me. And those who disbelieve henceforth, they are the miscreants." [1]

In continuation to the discussion, we had regarding the holy being of Hujjat ibn al-Hassan; we shall also dedicate this meeting to the discussion of the same issue. Our discussion will be based on historical facts. Those who have no information in this regard, especially the people who do not believe in the fundamental principles of the Shi'ah ideology, think that

belief in Mahdism dates back to the middle of the third century AH, which is the time of the Imam's birth. I want to tell you about how and where this topic began and whether it has been specifically explained or not.

### **Mahdism in the Qur'an and in the sayings of prophets**

Firstly, this matter has been spoken about in the Holy Qur'an in the most explicit way in the form of general glad tidings. Whoever studies the Holy Qur'an will see that in numerous verses the Holy Qur'an has mentioned that the outcome that is derived from the holy being of the Imam of the Time is something that is definitely going to take place in the future. One such ayah is, "Verily, we have written in the Scripture, after the Reminder: 'Indeed My righteous servants shall inherit the earth'." [2]

Allah says in the Qur'an that We have in the past (after dhikr where they have said it means) written in the Psalms, after announcing it in the Torah [Zabur] that, "Indeed My righteous servants shall inherit the earth." [3]

This does not pertain to a specific area or city. Thought is as extensive as the earth: the earth will not always be in the hands of the powerful oppressive tyrants. This is a temporary matter. In the future, the pious will be the leaders. They are going to rule the whole earth. There is not even the slightest shred of doubt in this issue.

It has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an that Islam will become the universal religion of mankind and that all other religions will perish or be overshadowed by Islam which is another one of the outcomes of the holy being of the Promised al-Mahdi.

"He is it who has sent His Messenger with the guidance

and the religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, however much the idolaters may be averse." [4]

He sent this religion through His Prophet so in the end He will make it victorious over all other religions in this world, which means all the people in the world will become the followers of this religion (and other verses as such). After the Qur'anic verses comes the issue of the Prophet's sayings. What has the Prophet said in this regard? If the sayings related to the Promised al-Mahdi were exclusive to Shi'ah narrations, then there will be a point for skeptics to be critical of. If the issue of the Promised al-Mahdi is real, then the Prophet must have mentioned it; and if the Prophet has mentioned it, then it should have been narrated by other Islamic sects and not only the Shi'ahs alone.

Coincidentally, narrations about the Promised al-Mahdi

have not only been narrated by the Shi'ahs. The Sunnis also have narrations regarding this issue if not more than the Shi'ahs. Books have been written in this regard which can bare witness to this fact. During the years we were in Qum, two books were written concerning this issue.

One is by the late Ayatullah Sadr (may God raise his status), which of course is written in Arabic and is entitled, "al-Mahdi" and has, I think, been published as well. In that book, all the narrations he has quoted are from Sunni sources. When one studies it, he will see that the issue of the Promised al-Mahdi is more visible in the narrations quoted by the Sunnis than those quoted by the Shi'ahs.

There is also another book which, fortunately, is in Farsi, titled, "Muntakhab al-Athar". It is written by one of the scholars of Qum Theological Center called, "Aqa Mirza Lutfullah Safi" (Golpaygani). It

was written under the supervision of the late Ayatullah Bojnurdi; that is, he gave a general request for this book, chose the design, layout and customs of the book. It was followed up by this gentleman who later wrote the book. If you read this book, you will see that many Sunni traditions have been quoted in it in this regard, for various definitions and contents.

I would like to stress that I do not want to touch upon these sayings or verses in much detail. The main question I would like to discuss is another aspect of this issue: what effect has this issue had on Islamic history?

When we study the Islamic history we see that apart from the narrations of the Prophet and Imam 'Ali in this regard, events have been taken place in the Islamic history as a result of declarations about the Promised al-Mahdi.

### **Imam Ali's saying**

Before I begin to speak about the first historical event

regarding this issue, I will quote you sayings by Imam 'Ali which can be found in the Nahj al-Balaghah and I have heard from Ayatullah Bojnurdi. These sentences can be found in sources other than the Nahj al-Balaghah.

In his conversation with Kumayl ibn Ziyad Nakha'i, 'Ali talks about this issue. Kumayl says, "It was during night time. 'Ali held my hand (this was apparently in Kufah) and took me to the desert with himself. When we reached the desert, he took a very deep breath. He sighed from the bottom of his heart and then said, 'People are three groups: numinous scholars, the learner and the idiotic people.' Then, he complained, saying, 'Kumayl! I cannot find a worthy person, onto whom I could pass what I know. There are those who are good people but idiotic and there are those who are clever but not religious, who only use religion as a tool for their worldly interests. Kumayl! I

feel lonely. I do not have someone worthy of knowing the secrets I have in my heart.' In the end he suddenly said, 'But, of course, the earth will never stay empty.' He said, 'At the same time, the earth will not stay empty of Allah's proof, either the evident proof or the proof that is hidden and concealed from eyes'."

### **Mukhtar's uprising and belief in Mahdism**

The first time we see the effect of Mahdism emerging is in the event of Mukhtar's revenge for Imam al-Husayn's murder. Mukhtar was undoubtedly a political man, who had a political approach rather than a religious one. I of course do not want to discuss whether Mukhtar was good or evil. I have no business in that aspect.

Mukhtar knew that, even though the issue was about taking revenge from the murderers of Imam al-Husayn and that the conditions were

just right, people were not willing to accept his leadership. He may have (according to a narration) contacted Imam Zayn al-'Abidin on this issue but the Imam did not approve of it either. He raised the issue of the Promised al-Mahdi, about whom people had been informed of. He told them that Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah, 'Ali's son and Imam al-Husayn's brother, was the Promised al-Mahdi, whose name was Muhammad. This was because the Prophet had said, "His name is the same name as mine." Mukhtar declared, "O people! I am the representative of the al-Mahdi of the Time, the al-Mahdi whom the Prophet had given news of." [5] He carried out his political play for a while with the name "Representative of the al-Mahdi of the Time". Now did Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah truly accept himself as the Promised al-Mahdi? Some say he accepted so they could take revenge but this is not proven.

There is no doubt that Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah was introduced as the al-Mahdi of the Time by Mukhtar and this is where the Hanafiyyah ideology emerged from later. When Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah died, they said, "The Promised al-Mahdi will not die before he has filled the earth with justice and fairness, so Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah has not died. He is hidden in the Radwa Mountain."

### **The words of Zuhri**

There are again other events in the Islamic history. Abu Faraj Isfahani who is an Umawi by birth and is not a Shi'ah historian writes in "Maqatil al-Talibiyyin", "When the news of Zayd ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn [6] reached Zuhri [7], he said, 'Why are the Ahl al-Bayt rushing it so much. The day when the al-Mahdi will emerge from them will come.' It is, therefore, determined that the issue of the Promised al-Mahdi was so clear and definite that when

they give the news of Zayd's martyrdom to Zuhri, his mind immediately gets directed to another issue: Why Zayd even rebelled? And asked, 'Why are the children of the Prophet rushing? They must not fight back now; their rebellion is for the Promised al-Mahdi.' I do not want any business with whether Zuhri's objection is valid or not, which it is not, my point is: Zuhri said, 'A day will come when one from among the Prophet's Household will emerge and his rising will be successful and redeeming.'"

### **The rising of "Nafs Zakiyyah" & the belief in Mahdism**

Imam al-Hassan has a son who has the same name as he had; thus they called him, "Hassan al-Muthanna", which means the Second Hassan, al-Hassan ibn al-Hassan. The "Second Hassan" was Imam al-Husayn's son in law. Fatimah bint al-Husayn was the wife of the "Second Hassan". A son is born from Hassan al-Muthanna and

Fatimah bint al-Husayn by the name of "'Abd Allah". Because this son reached Imam 'Ali and Hadrat Fatimah from both his mother and his father and was very pure, they called him, "'Abd Allah al-Mahdi", which meant someone who is a pure 'Alawi and a pure Fatimi.

'Abd Allah al-Mahdi has two sons called, Muhammad and Ibrahim. Their time is contemporaneous with the end of the Umawi era, which was about the year 130 AH. Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah was a very noble man and was famously known as "Nafs Zakiyyah". At the end of the Umawi era, the Hassani sayyids rose (which has a long story). Even the 'Abbasids gave oath of allegiance to Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Mahdi. They also invited Imam al-Sadiq to a meeting and told him that they had planned to uprising and give their oath of allegiance to Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Mahdi. "You are also a



Hassani sayyid, so give oath of allegiance”, they said. The Imam replied, “What are your intentions in this task?” If Muhammad wants to uprise under the slogan of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, I will accompany him and will approve of him. But he is making a mistake, if he wants to uprise as the al-Mahdi of the Nation. He is not the al-Mahdi of the Nation, someone else is, and therefore I will never approve of this. This mistake may have, up to some extent, been made about ‘Abd Allah al-Mahdi, because he too had the same name as the Prophet and had a beauty mark on his shoulder. People were saying, “Could this be a sign of him being the al-Mahdi of the Nation? Most people gave oath of allegiance to him under the title al-Mahdi of the Nation.”

It is then evident that the issue of the al-Mahdi of the Nation was so definite among Muslims that when someone

who was a bit religious rose they would say, “He is the one, he is the al-Mahdi of the Nation that the Prophet foretold about.” This would not have happened, if the Prophet had not said so.

### **The deceit of Mansur, the ‘Abbasid Caliph**

We even see one of the ‘Abbasid caliphs having the name al-Mahdi who was the son of Mansur, the Third ‘Abbasid Caliph. Their First Caliph was Saffah, the second was Mansur and the third was Mansur’s son: Mahdi ‘Abbasi. Historians including “Darmster” have written that Mansur deliberately named his son Mahdi so he could use it politically to deceive people and say, “The Mahdi you are awaiting is my son.” Maqatil al-Talibiyyin and others have therefore written that when he sometimes confronted those who were close to him, he would confess that this was not true. Once he confronted a man called Muslim ibn Qutaybah who was one of

his relatives, and said, "What is this 'Abd Allah Al-Mahdi saying?" He replied, "He says I am the al-Mahdi of the Nation." Mansur said, "He is wrong, neither he nor my son are the al-Mahdi of the Nation." But, at other times when he confronted other people he would say, "This 'Abd Allah is not the al-Mahdi of the Nation, my son is the al-Mahdi of the Nation."

As I said the majority who gave oath of allegiance, believed they were pledging their allegiance with: the al-Mahdi of the Nation. People had heard the Prophet's saying about al-Mahdi; however, since they would not fully investigate to find out more about the person claiming to be the al-Mahdi of the Nation, public mistakes were constantly made.

### **Muhamamd ibn 'Ijlan and Mansur 'Abbasi**

We again see more events in the history of Islam including: one of the scholars from

Medina called "Muhammad ibn 'Ijlan" went and gave oath of allegiance to 'Abd Allah al-Mahdi. Bani al-'Abbas, who were their supporters at the beginning, when the issue of vice-regency was put forward, they took over the vice-regency and then killed the Hassani sayyids (the descendent of Imam al-Hassan (a)).

Mansur summoned this learned man (Muhammad ibn 'Ijlan). He investigated and it became evident that he has given oath of allegiance to 'Abd Allah al-Mahdi. He ordered for his hands to be chopped off. Mansur said, "The hands that have given oath of allegiance to my enemy must be chopped off."

They have written that Medina scholars gathered and interceded and said, "O Caliph! It is not his fault; he is a learned man and a possessor of knowledge in narrations. This man thought 'Abd Allah al-Mahdi is the al-Mahdi of the Nation and he therefore gave oath of allegiance to

him. He otherwise has no hostile intentions towards you." This is why we see that the issue of the Promised al-Mahdi is among the definite and certain issues in Islamic history.

As we review the past ages, we see incidents emerging in Islamic history that were initiated by the very issue of belief in the reappearance of the Promised al-Mahdi. When the majority of our pure Imams passed away, a group would come and say: maybe he has not died, maybe he has disappeared, maybe he is the al-Mahdi of the Nation. This happened in Imam al-Kazim' case, even in Imam al-Baqir's case, and apparently also for Imam al-Sadiq as well as some of the other pure Imams.

Imam al-Sadiq had a son called Isma'il. The Isma'ilis are attributed to him. Isma'il passed away when the Imam was still living. The Imam loved Isma'il very much. When Isma'il passed away

and was made ready for burial, the Imam would go over Isma'il's head, open his coffin, show Isma'il's face and say, "This is my son Isma'il. He has died. Tomorrow do not claim that he was the al-Mahdi of the Nation and he has disappeared. Take a good look at his corpse. Look at his face, identify him and then bear witness."

These all show that the issue of 'the al-Mahdi of the Nation' was so definite that left no place for doubt and hesitation. As far as I have researched, up to the time of Ibn Khaldun, maybe not even one scholar had been found to have said, "The narrations about Mahdi have no basis." They all had accepted it. If there was any disagreement, it was on minor things such as if al-Mahdi was this person or that person? Is he the son of Imam al-Hassan al-'Askari or not? Is he from the children of Imam al-Hassan or Imam al-Husayn? And, therefore, there was no hesitation in the

reality of the al-Mahdi and him being from among the children of the Prophet and that his task is to fill the world with justice and equality.

### **The words of Di`bil**

Di`bil al-Khuza`i comes to Imam al-Rida and recites his lamentations, O Fatimah! If you find your al-Husayn fallen while he has died thirsty next to the Furat River.

He addresses Hadrat al-Zahra and lists the calamities that had fallen upon her children one after the other. They are among the most eloquent odes of the Arabic language and one of the best lamentations written in this regard.

Imam al-Rida cried a lot. Di`bil, in his poem and his expression of sorrow, names the children of Hadrat al-Zahra one after the other; the graves that are in "Fakhkh", the graves that are in Kufah. He refers to the martyrdom of `Abd Allah al-Mahdi. He refers to the martyrdom of his brother. He refers to the

martyrdom of Zayd ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn, the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn and the martyrdom of Musa ibn Ja`far, "And a grave in Baghdad for a pure soul."

It is written that at this stage, Imam al-Rida said, "I too will recite a poem and you add it to yours, 'And a grave in Tus, and what a tragedy!'"

When Di`bil said: "Sir! But I do not know this grave." The Imam replied, "This is my grave."

In these poems, Di`bil has an ode, which refers to the issue of Mahdism, in which Di`bil clearly states all these stories existed and still exist and will exist until the reappearance of an Imam whose reappearance will unquestionably and definitely take place.

There are many more historical facts we can list but I do not think that it would be necessary to mention all of them. I mentioned these facts because I wanted to say that the issue of the Promised al-

Mahdi was certainly a definite matter for Muslims since the beginning of Islam and imitated major historical events from the second half of the first century.

### **Mahdism in the Sunni World**

If you want to find out if this issue is only exclusive to the Shi'ahs,[8] take a look and see whether the Sunnis have claimed belief in Mahdism or not. You will see that those claiming belief in Mahdism are also numerous among the Sunni people one of whom is "Mahdi Sudani" or "Mutamahdi Sudani" who appeared less than half a century ago in Sudan and created a mass there that was still in existence until just recently. Basically, when this man appeared, he appeared claiming that the belief in Mahdism existed among the Sunni resident countries to an extent that created the grounds for false Mahdis to emerge. Those claiming to be Mahdi were also numerous in other countries. In India and

Pakistan, the Qadiyanis emerged claiming to be Mahdi. It has also been mentioned repeatedly in our narrations that impostors, claiming to be the Mahdi, will be plentiful.

### **References:**

1. Surah al-Nur 24:55.
2. Surah al-Anbiya' 22:105.
3. Surah al-Anbiya' 22:105.
4. Surah al-Tawbah 9:33.
5. In the beginning of Islam, the time of reappearance of was never specified.
6. In our opinion, Zayd was a noble and righteous person.
7. Zuhri is a Sunni. Zuhri and Sha'bi are two of the later generations of the Prophet's companions. They are people who apprehended the companions of the Prophet and not the Prophet himself. They are among the erudite and major scholars of their time.
8. What of course is exclusive to the Shi'ahs has certain characteristics that are not accepted by the Sunnis, some of them, though, agree with it.



# Kids Corner

## **Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S.A.) & Hazrat Maryam Mother of Isa (A.S.)**

Dear kids! Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.) was the leader of the women of the worlds, the only daughter of the Holy Prophet (S), the wife of Amirul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and the mother of the leaders of youth of Paradise i.e. Imam Hasan & Imam Husain (a.s.).

Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.) completely resembled the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Prophet (S) considered her the part and parcel of his life, and used to say repeatedly,

"Fatima (s.a.) is a piece of me, whosoever troubles her

has troubled me, and whoever makes her happy has pleased me."

Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.) was martyred at the age of 18 years on 13th Jamadi ul-Awwal or 3rd Jamadi us-Sani in the 11th year of Hijrah only 75 or 95 days after the heavenly departure of the Holy Prophet (S).

On this deeply grieved and sorrowful mourning occasion, we extend our heartfelt deepest grief and condolences to all the followers and lovers of the Holy Ahlul Bait (a.s.) in the world.

Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari has narrated that Prophet Muhammad (S) had not eaten anything for several days. Hunger was making him suffer. He went to the houses of his wives, but found nothing there to eat. He then went to the house of Fatima Zahra (s.a.) and told her, "O my daughter! Do you have anything for me to eat as I am very hungry?"

Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.) replied, "No my dear father."

As soon as Prophet Muhammad (S) left her house, one of the neighbors brought Fatima Zahra (S) some bread and meat. She accepted the offer, put it in a dish, and covered it. Although Fatima Zahra (s.a.) and her family were in much need for food she said, "I consider the Messenger of Allah as being prior to me and my family in this meal."

Fatima Zahra (s.a.) then sent Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husain (a.s.) after Prophet Muhammad (S). When Prophet Muhammad (S) returned, Fatima Zahra (s.a.) said, "Allah (SWT) has sent us some food that I have put aside for you." Prophet Muhammad (S) asked her to bring the food. Fatima Zahra (s.a.) brought the dish. When she uncovered it, she found it full of bread and meat. Being surprised,

she realized that it was Allah's (SWT) blessing. She thanked Allah (SWT) and praised His Prophet Muhammad (S). When Prophet Muhammad (S) saw the dish, he said, "From where have you gotten this food?" She said: It is from Allah. Surely Allah gives sustenance to whom He pleases without measure. (Noble Qur'an, 3:37) Prophet Muhammad (S) praised Allah (SWT) and said, "Grace be to Allah who has made you similar to the best woman (Maryam) of the world during the time of the tribe of Israelites. When Hazrat Maryam (s.a.) was asked about who sent her the food, she would reply, "Allah gives sustenance to anyone He wants without counting."

Prophet Muhammad (S) then sent someone after Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). Then Prophet Muhammad, Imam Ali, Fatima Zahra, Imam Hasan, Imam Husain (a.s.)

and all the wives and family of Prophet Muhammad (S) ate from that food, but still the dish remained full. Fatima Zahra (S) said, "I gave some of that food to all the neighbors. Allah (SWT) has blessed that food, just like the one of Maryam's (s.a.)."



### **Imam Sajjad (A.S.) and As Sahifa Al-Kamilah Al- Sajjadiyya (The Psalms of Islam)**

Dear kids! The fourth bright star of Imamate Imam Sajjad (a.s.) appeared on the horizons of the sky of Wilayat in Madina on 15th of Jamadi-ul-Awwal in the 38th year of Hijrah. On this joyous occasion we extend our heartiest greetings to all the followers and lovers of Ahlulbait (a.s.) and pray to Almighty Allah to give us strength to follow our Imams in every respect and imitate their actions.

At the time of our fourth Imam, Imam Sajjad (a.s.) it was very difficult for Imam (a.s.) to teach Islam to the people. This was because Yazid's men used to keep a close watch on Imam Sajjad's (a.s.) movements.

Imam Sajjad (a.s.) had seen his father, Imam Hussain (a.s.), and other loyal friends and family die for the sake of Islam. Imam Sajjad (a.s.) decided that the best way to teach people about Islam, was by way of supplication (Dua). As a result, we have today a beautiful collection of his Duas in a book called: "As Sahifa Al-Kamilah Al-Sajjadiyya (The Psalms of Islam)".

An extract from a dua for Sunday (the 1st verse) from As Sahifa Al-Kamilah:

"In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

In the name of Allah (SWT) from whom I hope for noth-



ing but bounty, and from whom I fear nothing but justice! I rely only upon His word, and I cling only to His cord!"

Just in these few lines Imam Sajjad (a.s.) is teaching us so much: He (a.s.) is teaching us that only Allah (SWT) is the provider. Imam Sajjad (a.s.) is teaching us that we should not fear Allah (SWT) as He is the most forgiving and the most Merciful but at the same time HE is also the Most Just and it is this justice that we should be afraid of.

There was once a man who was a very religious and because he was so sure of himself he always used to pray to Allah (SWT) to judge him on Justice, (however we are told always to pray to Allah (SWT) to judge us with His mercy).

When this man died he saw a scale which was being weighted down with all his

good actions. The angels then brought an apple which they put on the other side of the scale and the scale came down on the side of the apple.

The man did not understand how a single apple could outdo all his good actions. He was then told that, that apple was one that he had tasted in the market without the permission of the shop owner. Because the man had insisted that Allah (SWT) judge him on justice, Allah (SWT) did not intervene with His mercy.

Imam Sajjad (a.s.) then finished the 1st verse with the lesson that we should only rely on Allah (SWT) and attach ourselves to Him alone.

Moral: We should always ask Allah (SWT) to judge us with His mercy.

We should try to read duas from As Sahifa Al-Kamilah, as there is so much to learn from them.



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