

Al-M'eár

(The Touchstone)

Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir

Siddiq-e-Vilayet

Razi Allahu Anhu

The Second Khalifa

of

Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood

Alaihis Salam

Translated by

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Acronyms used in the book

SLM	Sallallahu Alahi Wo Sallam
AS	Alaihis Salam
RZ	Razi Allahu Anhu/Anha/Anhum
RH/RA	Rahmatullahi Alaih

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. We seek help only from Him and my trust is only on Him. All praise is for Allah, in Whose hand is the Dominion, Who bestows upon whom He wills, Who spread this earth and raised the sky with His power. Exalted is He and there is none worthy of worship except Him. He is the One Who bestows favours and removes the hardship of war and the loss of famine from His servants. We sing His praises on receiving frequent blessings from Him and thank Him for His immense favours. And *darood* (blessings) be upon His Messenger Muhammad^{SLM}, who is the lord of the enlightened *shariah* (Islamic law) and the clear and evident *tariqah* (spiritual path), most perfect amongst all Messengers^{AS} and Prophets^{AS}, who will hold the flag of *hamd* (praise for Allah) in his hand and Adam^{AS} and all the Prophets^{AS} will be under his flag¹ on the Day of Judgement. May Allah send *darood* (blessings) upon the the Prophet^{SLM} and upon his honourable and noble progeny.

After praises and salutations, a few words are used here to introduce Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} and his companions^{RZ} because some people who are ignorant of the conditions of the companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}, are in the dark. They assign unwarranted attributes to them and have suspicions about them. They have corrupted beliefs and pass false judgements upon them and are not aware of their conditions.

Therefore, know O friend, that whomsoever Allah Most High wishes to guide towards Himself and draw him near Himself, He separates him from his desires and wishes. He appoints the people over him and makes them his enemy. He sends grief and trouble through the people so that his heart is separated from the relations of this world, the love of *ghair-ullah* (anything other than Allah) and love of the people; and he is dedicated exclusively for the *márifat* (gnosis) and the love of Allah. As the seeker of Allah says:

O Allah, make the entire creation my opponent
And separate me from all the people in the world
Turn my heart away from everywhere

¹ The tenth specific attribute is that it is mentioned in *Fusus* that on the Day of Judgement, all Prophets will assemble under the banner of the Seal of the Prophets^{SLM} and all Saints will assemble under the banner of the Seal of the Muhammadan Sainthood, the Mahdi^{AS}. (See *Khasais Imam Mahdi Mau'ood Khalifathullah*, pages 17-18, by Hazrat Alimbillah^{RH})

Turn my path towards one direction and one face

The response comes from Allah,

With the One you wish to get closer, know that you will not get comfort from Him, I will put you in distress since you are Mine.

The wisdom of turning the people² against him is that while man tries to turn his face away from people and separate himself from his own species, his nature makes him associate with people who are like him.

But Allah, by His grace, separates him from his species and establishes him in a way that pleases Him. Thus, Allah has said about Mustafa^{SLM} (May Peace be upon him and perfect compliments) that, *وَلَوْلَا أَنْ نَبِّئْتَنَّاكَ لَفَدَّتْ كِدَّتْ تَرْكُنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا* (And if We had not strengthened you, you would have almost inclined to them a little.³)

When it is possible for Mustafa^{SLM} to incline towards the people, then how can any other person stay separated from the people. Definitely, Allah appoints the people over His seeker and makes the people enemies of His seeker, so that the seeker can turn the direction of his heart away from the creations (people) and towards the Creator.

Thus, Allah Most High and Sublime has said in favour of His Prophet^{SLM}, *وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا* (And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy - devils from mankind and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion.⁴)

Since Mahdi^{AS} and his companions^{RZ} follow the footsteps of Hazrat Mustafa^{SLM}, the people will definitely have enmity with them too and show opposition to them because when the condition of the *matbu'* (one who is followed, i.e., Muhammad^{SLM}) is such that Allah says in His book, *وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُبْنِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ* (And [remember, O Muhammad^{SLM}], when those who disbelieved plotted against you to imprison you or kill you or evict you. But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners.⁵), then it is imperative that the same thing happens to

² That is, the wisdom of Allah in turning people against His seeker....

³ Surah al-Isra, 17:74

⁴ Surah al-An'am, 6:112

⁵ Surah al-Anfal, 8:30

the *tabe'* (one who follows, i.e., the Mahdi^{AS}) and this is the proof of the veracity of the Mahdi^{AS}.

There are many other proofs which are known through books, but we take recourse to brevity due to fear of lengthening.

A few words are written in these pages so that the person who has suspicion (about the companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS}) and smears false charges on them, gets an opportunity to regret and repent, and the opponent should know that assigning undeserved attributes to the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS} is nothing but blunder because the person who says that the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS} have made the nose a tool of *zikr* (remembrance) and thoughtlessly presents evidences from books and says that Imam Qushairi has said this about the story of Hazrat Ayyub^{AS} and that so-and-so says this, is not aware of the condition of the companions^{RZ} of Syed Muhammad^{AS} and who they follow in all their *ahwal* and *af'ál* (conditions and actions).

O friend, know that the only objective of the companions^{RZ} of Syed Muhammad^{AS} in all their sayings and actions is to achieve the obedience to Allah's Book and the Prophet^{SLM} and to act upon the commands issued by Allah and his Messenger^{SLM} and the sayings of the people of religion. So naturally, they follow the Prophet^{SLM} in the matter of *zikr* also and achieve conformity with the Book of Allah. Thus, Allah Most High says, *وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ* (And remember your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear, without loudness in words, in the mornings and the evenings. And do not be of the neglectful.⁶)

In the story of Zikriya^{AS} too, Allah says in His Book, *إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا* (When he called upon his Lord in secret⁷). The author of *Madarik*⁸ has said in the commentary of this verse that, "He called upon Allah secretly like it has been commanded. This method is free of hypocrisy and closer to purity."

⁶ Surah al-Aa'raf, 7:205

⁷ Surah Maryam, 19:3

⁸ *Tafsir Madarik*, by Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Mahmood al-Nasafi — Translator.

When Mustafa^{SLM} and other prophets^{AS} have been commanded to do *zikh-e-khafi* (secret remembrance), it is understood that *zikh-e-khafi* is superior to all other *azkar* (plural of *zikh*).

And the tool of *zikh* is the heart. The *zákir* (one who performs *zikh*) will not be free of the attribute of inattentiveness until the *zikh* of Allah settles in the heart. It is not possible for the *zikh* of Allah to settle in the heart without the guarding of breath. Without the *zikh* of *pas-anfas*⁹, the heart is not cleansed of thoughts and imagination because the resting place and the birth place of the breath is the heart.

And the story of Ayyub^{AS} which Imam Qushayri has narrated in his book cannot be proof against the *zikh-e-khafi* (secret remembrance) or the *zikh* with *pas-anfas* (guarding of breath) because without the *zikh* of *pas-anfas* it would not be possible to perform *zikh* of Allah all the time and the *zikh* of Allah is a perpetual obligation.

Allah Most High says, فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ (...remember Allah, standing, sitting and reclining...¹⁰). That is, perpetually be in the *zikh* of Allah. And this obligation will not be achieved unless the breath is guarded. And the breath is not confined to the nose, rather it enters all parts of the body. That is why all the wayfarers of the path of Allah and the seekers of the *zath-e-mutlaq* (Absolute Essence) have considered the *zikh-e-khafi* to be better than all other *zikrs* because without the *zikh-e-khafi* and the *zikh-e-pas-anfas* the existence of the *zákir* (one who is perform the *zikh*) is not cleansed of the filth of *riya* and *khud-bini* (duplicity and self-absorption). And perpetual *zikh* will not be achieved (with other types of *zikh*) because if Allah's *zikh* is done with the tongue, then the *zákir*¹¹ will occasionally be occupied in talking or eating and when one is occupied with something and stays away from Allah's *zikh*, then he is included among the *gháfils* (those who are inattentive). And the attribute of *ghaflat* (inattentiveness) is not befitting a *momin* (believer). Rather this attribute is of those people about whom Allah has said in his Book that, وَقَدْ دَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسِ لَّهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلَّ هُمْ أَصْلًا أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ (And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not

⁹ *pas-anfas* - guarding the breath and performing *zikh* through the breath is called *pas-anfas*. —

Translator.

¹⁰ *Surah an-Nisa*, 4:103

¹¹ The person doing the *zikh*.

understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like cattle; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the *inattentive*.¹²⁾

Imam Zahid has said in his *tafsir* that, "The *ziker* of Allah is a perpetual obligation and at no time or condition is this obligation waived because perpetual *ziker* is not bound by any condition whereas the other obligations are conditional." From this too we understand that the *ziker* of Allah is the most important objective among all obligations. Thus, Allah Most High says, وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ (...And establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is the greatest.¹³⁾)

O friend, know that without *ziker-e-dawam* (perpetual remembrance), it is not possible to achieve *tazkiya-e-nafs* (purification of the self) and *tajrid wo tafrid* (separation and isolation); and the heart is not rid of its discord; and tranquillity of the heart is not achieved. Man is unable to escape the whisperings of the devil and the desires and demands of the carnal self. Therefore it is required of him that he takes to *ziker* of Allah in such an incessant way that no moment or condition is devoid of the *ziker* of Allah — going, coming, eating, sleeping, hearing, talking — rather, in all actions one should be present with the moment so that the heart does not spend time in idleness, rather, one should be aware of the breath so that no breath leaves (the body) in inattentiveness. The Prophet^{SLM} has said, كل نفس يخرج بغير ذكر الله فهو ميت ("The breath which leaves [the body] without the *ziker* of Allah is dead.") The Prophet^{SLM} has referred to this breath only because, without the guarding of breath, *ziker-e-dawam* (perpetual remembrance) will not be realised and disassociation with the attribute of the dead will not take place and inattentiveness will not leave the heart.

Guard the breath, if you are an enlightened man;
A single breath will make you the sovereign of both the worlds.

COUPLETS:

The breath which is passing with age is a pearl
Its value equal to the worth of the two worlds
Do not choose to forgo this treasure for free
If you do, you will go empty-handed and penniless to your grave

¹² Surah al-A'raf, 7:179

¹³ Surah al-Ankabut, 29:45

The wisdom in the saying of the Messenger^{SLM} is that the breath enters the heart and all other parts of the body and when it permeates into all parts of the body with the *zikr* of Allah, by the grace of *zikr*, the effect of life is created in all parts of the body. Then, the tree of *eeman* (belief) grows in the heart of the *zákir* (one who performs *zikr*). Therefore, the Prophet^{SLM} said, *لا اله الا الله ينبت الايمان كما يمبت الماء البقلة* ("Lá Iláha Il Alláh grows *eeman* [belief] like water grows vegetables.")

O friend, know that when the objective is for the *zikr* of Allah to settle in the heart with the guarding of breath, and the inhale and exhale of the breath is with the *zikr* of Allah, either through the nose or the mouth, as these are the two paths for the breath to pass through, the nose cannot be (considered as) the tool for *zikr* because the breath is not bound (to the nose). The objective of the companions^{RZ} of Syed Muhammad^{AS} is that by the means of the guarding of breath, the *zikr* of Allah settles in the heart and through it the tranquillity of the heart is achieved. Therefore, Allah Most High says, *وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ* (...whose hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah; now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest.¹⁴)

It is written in *Muhazzab* that, "Zikr and Zikra : the meaning of which is 'to remember'. Yes, it is like this, but one should know what is *zikr* and who is the *mazkur* (one who is remembered). *Zikr* is that through which the existence of all things other than Allah is wiped out." Thus, it is said,

COUPLET:

Wipe out the entire entity in *La Ilah*
So that you reach the abode of the King

And the *zákir* (one performing *zikr*) should not have awareness of anything other than the *mazkur* (one being remembered, i.e. Allah) — neither of himself, nor of his *zikr*, nor of the existence of others – rather, except Allah, the One and Only, no other thing should remain. Allah says, *وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ* (...and remember your Lord when you forget [everything other than Allah]...¹⁵) That is, when you forget yourself and all things other than Allah. In the condition of *beykhudi* (without self-awareness) when it is not possible to contain the Friend, then how can others be contained.

COUPLET:

¹⁴ Surah al-Rad, 13:28

¹⁵ Surah al-Kahf, 18:24

What do you desire from Zikr? Seek the Mazkur,
The entire essence of contemplation is only this.

QUATRAIN:

Whose habit is *fana* (immersion) and constitution is *faqr* (austerity),
He has no *yakheen* (certainty), no *márifat* (gnosis) and no religion;
When the *zákir* no longer exists in between, then only God remains,
It means — when *faqr* (asceticism) is perfected, then he is Allah.¹⁶

And this bliss is not achieved without the *kalima* (testification) *Lá Iláha Il Alláh*, which has the annihilation of the existence of the *ghair* (other) and the affirmation of the *Haq* (Truth). That is why the Messenger^{SLM} said, افضل الذكر لا اله الا الله ("The superior *zikr* is *Lá Iláha Il Alláh*.")

The Prophet^{SLM} also said, افضل ما قلت انا و النبيون من قبل قول لا اله الا الله ("The most superior of my sayings and of the Prophets^{AS} before me is *Lá Iláha Il Alláh*.") And Mustafa^{SLM} too has been appointed by his Lord for this *kalima* only, as Allah Most High says, فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ (So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah...¹⁷). All the prophets^{AS} before the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} have been taught this very *kalima*. Thus, Allah, the Most Glorified, the Most High says, وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا (And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, There is no deity except Me...¹⁸). As for the idolators, Allah says, إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ (... when it was said to them, "There is no deity but Allah, they were arrogant.¹⁹)

Thus, from the Word of Allah and the sayings of the Messengers^{AS}, we learn that all prophets^{AS} and saints^{RH} had the *zikr* of this very *kalima* of *Lá Iláha Il Alláh* and the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} also said the same thing. And in the matter of *zikr*, Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} and his companions^{RZ} conform to the prophets^{AS} and the saints^{RH} and adhere to the Book of Allah in all their sayings and actions.

Thus, what would be the condition of the one who says (regarding the Mahdavis) that saying *Lá Iláha Il Alláh* is being in conformity with the *kafirs* (infidels)? And these are

¹⁶ As Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Qasim Mujtahid-e-Groh-e-Mahdavia^{RH} has written that, "Hazrat Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} said regarding the saying "when *faqiri* is perfected, he is Allah", that "he is the servant of Allah."

¹⁷ Surah Muhammad, 47:19

¹⁸ Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:25

¹⁹ Surah al-Saafaat, 37:35

are] humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allah and do not fear the blame of the blamer.²⁴)

COUPLET:

Be unique in love and what is there to fear from people
The loved one is yours, pour mud on the head of the world

Know, O friend, that when the companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} are from this community, then the people will definitely oppose them, like they had harmed Hazrat Mustafa^{SLM} and his companions^{RZ} and gave them grief because whatever the Prophet^{SLM} said and did was based only on the command of Allah, that is, his every word and action was according to *wahi* (inspiration). Thus, Allah, the Most Glorious, the Most High says, *وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ* (Nor does he speak of [his own] desire. It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired.²⁵) He further says, *قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَتَّبِعُ مَا يُوحَىٰ* (Say: I follow only that which is inspired in me from my Lord. This [Qur'an] is insight from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people that believe.²⁶)

That is, And the Prophet^{SLM}'s speech which he spoke as per the *wahi* (inspiration) and his actions which he performed as per the *wahi* (inspiration) stood against the carnal desires of the people. Since the arrogance of the carnal self was so dominant in them, they did not consider anyone to be their equal and they exulted and were proud of their knowledge of the book they possessed and they used to mock the Prophet^{SLM} and his companions^{RZ}.

Such has always been the way of the *ahl-e nafs-o-hawa* (people of the self and lust). Thus, Allah Most High says, *فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَحُوا بِمَا عِنْدَهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ وَخَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ* (And when their messengers came to them with clear proofs, they [merely] rejoiced in what they had of knowledge, And that at which they used to mock, befell them.²⁷) They asked, "How can the unlettered people be worthy of it." They became ignorant due to their envy and enmity, despite the knowledge which was in their imagination. Thus, they

²⁴ Surah al-Maidah, 5:54

²⁵ Surah al-Najm, 53:3-4

²⁶ Surah al-A'araf, 7:203

²⁷ Surah Ghafir, 40:83

ended up refuting their own messenger and book because they said, مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ (Allah did not reveal to a human being anything.²⁸)

The reason for refuting a person who brings news from Allah is because most people do not give up the imitation of their forefathers and do not follow the messenger. Thus Allah Most High says, وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ (And similarly, We did not send before you any warner into a city except that its affluent said, 'Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are following their footsteps.'²⁹)

So far, Allah has given the news of the wealthy and the leaders of the world. But the mischief of refutation, killing and malevolence against the prophets has emanated only from the leaders of the world with power and pelf.

Thus, Allah, the Most Glorified, the Most High says, وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكْبَرًا مُّجْرِمِيهَا لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ (And thus We have placed within every city the leaders of its criminals to plot therein. But they plot not except against themselves, and they perceive [it] not.³⁰)

Thus, know O friend, that when Mahdi Alaihis Salam is *tabe'* (follower) of Mustafa^{SLM} and the other prophets^{AS}, then surely this group of leaders too will have enmity against Mahdi^{AS} and will oppose him. Thus, Muhiyuddin Ibn Arabi^{RH} narrates that, "When this Imam Mahdi emerges, none other than the scholars will be his open enemies because their rule will no longer remain." This point is proof of the veracity of Mahdi^{AS}.

Thus we learn that the person who follows the prophet^{AS} will never get respite from abuse of the people until the day of judgement and the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS} also belong to this group as they follow Mustafa^{SLM}, so the people will definitely oppose them too and will harm them and ascribe undeserved attributes to them.

²⁸ Surah Al-An'am, 6:91

²⁹ Surah al-Zukhruf, 43:23

³⁰ Surah al-an'am, 6:123

Thus, one of the opponents says that the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS} refute all the books and perform the *tafsír* (exegesis) of the Quran as per their opinion and consider *kasab* (business, occupation) to be *haram* (impermissible) and do not recite the entire *kalima* (islamic testification) and everyone amongst them claims to have seen Allah and they have made the nose a tool for the *zikr* (remembrance) of Allah.

All these things which they have attributed to the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS} are only lies because the companions are seekers of the Truth and to seek the Truth, they study all the books. They act upon those things which are in these books and are in conformity with the Book of Allah and the *ahadees* (traditions) of Rasool^{SLM}. And *tafsir-bir-rai* (exegesis as per one's opinion) is one in which the *mufassir* (exegist) does not get knowledge from Allah, but he does *tafsir* as per his thinking, when his condition is that he himself is trapped in desires of the carnal self and explains the *tafsir* of the Quran as per his condition.

Further one should know that every verse of the Quran has a *shan-e-nuzool* (circumstances or context of revelation), but the meaning of the Quran is absolute. That is, for every person, it is a proof upon his religion until the day of judgement. And the companions^{RZ} of Syed Muhammad^{AS} also submit their condition to the Book of Allah and strive to follow the Quran. After this, they explain the Quran in a way that is closer and more appropriate to the order and expression of the Quran because there are many aspects to the Quran and everyone understands it as per his capacity and explains it as per that understanding, and so do the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS}.

In the verse of '*ya ahl-al kitáb*' (O People of the Book), the purport of *ahl-e-kitab* is taken to mean the scholars of Bani Israeel and people like them.

The answer to the point that the companions of Syed Muhammad^{AS} consider *kasab* (business, vocation) to be *haram* (impermissible), is that the companions^{RZ} do not consider *kasab* (business, vocation) as *haram* (impermissible) but say within their group that the seeker of Allah should view with justice the work he is engrossed in and if that work hinders the remembrance of Allah and attention towards Allah, then he should leave it and consider that work as *haram* (impermissible) for himself, rather, consider it to be an idol as the Prophet^{SLM} has said, *ما شغلك عن الله فهو صنمك اى فهو طاغوتك* ("Whatever turns you away from Allah is your idol. That is, it is your *taghoot* (evil).")

So, everything like buying and selling, investments, leasing and business is *halal* (permitted) in *sharah* (Islamic law). Allah has made these things *halal* (permissible) to test His friends.

Thus, it is narrated regarding the companions of the Prophet^{SLM} that after the infidels were defeated in the battle of Badr, the believers got the war booty which was *halal-e-tayyib* (permissible and good). Allah says, *وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا* (...in order that He might test the Believers by a fair test from Himself...³¹)

When the companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM} were tested with *halal-e-tayyib* (permissible and good) war booty, how can other people who indulge in things which are *halal* in *sharah* (Islamic law) escape this test? Rather, the *bala-e-husna* (fair test) as per the purport, is greater than those tests which are against the purport, because forgoing *halal* is not for everyone, but it is the speciality of the companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM} and some *tabayeen* (companions of the companions^{RZ}) that they would abandon all things other than Allah and would not get engrossed in anything other than Allah, because provision, life, comfort and rest is from the Beloved to the lover as the Prophet^{SLM} has said, *لا راحة للمؤمنين دون لقاء الله تعالى* ("The believers do not get comfort in anything other than the vision of Allah.") When the condition of the lover is such that he is distressed and wandering for his Beloved, then how will he get engrossed in anything.

Thus, we learn that a believer will not leave the presence of Allah and get engrossed in other things in the pursuit of provision and will not leave the company of the Messenger^{SLM}. Therefore, Allah gives news about those people who abandoned the presence of Allah and the company of the Messenger^{SLM} in the pursuit of provision. Allay says, *وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا أَنْفَضُوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَخَيْرٌ مِنَ الرَّزْقِينَ* (But when they saw merchandise or pastime, they break away to it and left you standing. Say, What is with Allah is better than pastime and than merchandise, and Allah is the best of providers.³²)

And the Messenger^{SLM} has also said, *اطلب الرزاق و لا تطلب الرزق لان الرزق طالبك و الرزاق مطلوبك* ("Desire the Provider, not the provision because the provision is your *tálib* [desires

³¹ Surah al-Anfal, 8:17

³² Surah al-Jumu'ah, 62:11

you] and the Provider is the *matlúb* [your object of desire].") Thus, we learn from the Word of Allah and the saying of the Messenger^{SLM} that the desire for Allah is obligatory on all believers (all accepted believers) and desire for provision is not obligatory because the objective of Allah in creating them is for them to achieve the *márifat* (gnosis) of Allah and to worship Allah. Thus Allah says, وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.³³) So what will you name and by which clan will you address a person who has turned his back to the servitude and *márifat* (gnosis) of Allah and has embraced the pursuit of life? Surely, he will be included among those people about whom Allah has addressed Mustafa^{SLM} and said, ذَرُّهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِيهِمُ الْأُمَلُّ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ (Let them eat and enjoy themselves and be diverted by [false] hope, for they are going to know.³⁴) What would be the status of those people regarding whom such a command is issued to Mustafa^{SLM} when it is weighed against the *márifat* (gnosis) and love for Allah (i.e. they are poles apart). These people have bound their desire to the world and have grasped the world in such a way that they will never turn their face away from the world and will not turn towards Allah and will never look into Allah's verses because these people (seekers of the world) do not have any hope whatsoever of the vision of Allah as Allah says, إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا أُولَئِكَ مَأْمُونُونَ (Indeed, those who have no hope of seeing Us and are satisfied with the life of this world and feel secure therein and those who are heedless of Our signs. For those their refuge will be the Fire because of what they used to earn.³⁵)

Thus, when a person claims the vision of Allah and talks about the *márifat* (gnosis) and love for Allah before these kinds of people, then surely these people will have enmity towards him and oppose him, rather they would call him astray and mad. Thus, in the *Futuhát-e-Makkiya*, in the passage about Mahdi^{AS} it is written, "When Mahdi^{AS} will rule against their creed, they will certainly take him to be astray because their belief would be that the era of *ijtihad* (interpretative judgement) is over and there would be no one who could have the rank of *ijtihad* after their Imams. And in their view, the person who claims the *márifat* (gnosis) of Allah in accordance with the *shariat* would be a mad person and one with corrupted thinking. Those people will not turn towards him."

³³ Surah al-dharyat, 51:56

³⁴ Surah al-Hijr, 15:3

³⁵ Surah Yunus, 10:7-8

O friend, when Mahdi^{AS} and his companions^{RZ} are from the community which talks of the vision, the *márifat* (gnosis) and the love of Allah, then surely the scholars of the day (seekers of the world) will accuse them of going astray, and due to their ignorance, they will have enmity with them. Thus, it is well known that a man incurs enmity due to his ignorance and it is not surprising if an ignorant man refutes the vision of Allah because the knowledge of a man itself is a veil (so why will ignorance not be a veil too). Thus, the Prophet^{SLM} has said, العلم حجاب الله الاكبر "Knowledge is a veil before Allah." And this veil will not go away until man leaves the prison of *bashariat* (humanness).

Thus, an *a'rif* (gnostic) says:

*You say you will find Allah using knowledge and intellect
You are a blind man, what can I tell you
Where this breath reaches
There, knowledge and intellect are great veils
Seek such knowledge which will stay with you
Seek that breath which will rescue you from your self
Until you study the obligatory knowledge and the knowledge of gnosis
Verily you will not know the attributes of Allah*

That is, until man comes out of the prison of *bashariat* (humanness) and becomes free and achieves the glory of *تخلقوا باخلاق الله* (create the characteristics of Allah in you), he would not be worthy of the *márifat* (gnosis) of Allah.

Thus, an *a'rif* (gnostic) says:

MASNAVI:

None could know Allah by himself
He can be known only by His self
With the sway of the self, intellect and lust
How would you know Allah

Thus, we learn from the sayings of these gnostics, that the person who desires the vision and the *márifat* (gnosis) of Allah should come out of his self and should achieve the status of *موتوا قبل ان تموتوا* ('die before you die').

Thus the Prophet^{SLM} has said, احدكم لا يرى ربه حتى يموت ("None among you will see his Lord until he dies.") And the consensus of the *Mashaiqeen* (preceptors) found in the book *ta'reef* that ان الله لا يرى في الدنيا ولا يراه احد من الخلق ("Allah cannot be seen in this world and no one will see him") has been taken by ignorant people as proof against the

vision (of Allah). They do not understand that this saying is an exhortation to the seekers of Allah. It means that the person who desires Allah and is a seeker of the vision of Allah, should separate himself from the world and its inhabitants, come out of the attribute of *bashariat* (humanness) and achieve the status of *fana* (immersion).

It is said that a person came to Mustafa^{SLM} and questioned, *ما الدنيا يا رسول الله قال دنياك نفسك*, فاذا افنيتهها فلا دنيا لك ("O Messenger of Allah, what is (meant by) the world?" The Prophet^{SLM} replied, "The world is (nothing but) your *nafs* (self/ego). If you annihilate your *nafs* (self/ego), then there is neither the world nor its inhabitants for you.")

When these veils (the world and its inhabitants) are removed, then no other thing remains as an obstruction for the vision of Allah. Thus, Allah says, *فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا* (...whoever expects to see his Lord, let him do righteous work (renunciation of the world), and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner.³⁶)

Know O friend, that some people are ignorant of *fana* (immersion) and *aml-e-saleh* (righteous work) and due to their ignorance they think that these sayings, which are for the removal of veils, are proof for negating the vision of Allah and do not realise that this is nothing but an error. That is because, if a person says that vision of Allah is not permissible in this world but is permissible in the hereafter, then that person attributes helplessness to Allah because if something is applicable to Allah to be permissible at a point of time, then it is permissible at all other times as well. That is because no attribute of Allah is *hádith*³⁷ (has a beginning).

And all the scholars of the religion and the *mashaiqeen saheb-e-yaqeen* (preceptors who have reached the status of certainty) have reached a consensus that the vision of Allah in this world is permissible and none from the *ahl-e-sunnat wal-jamat* disagree on the permissibility of the vision of Allah in this world. Some people have disagreement on its occurrence and many among them give evidence of the vision of Allah by Mustafa^{SLM} on the night of *me'raj*. Thus, Hasan Basri^{RH} says, "By Allah, Muhammad^{SLM} saw his Lord with his eyes." Further, the author of *Maghna* has narrated from Ibn

³⁶ Surah al-Kahf, 18:110

³⁷ *Hádith* is the opposite of *Qadeem*. Allah and His attributes are eternal and have no beginning, hence termed as *Qadeem*. A thing which is newly created or which has a beginning is *hádith*. — Translator

Abbas^{RZ} that, "Are you astonished by the fact that friendship is for Ibrahim^{AS}, speech is for Musa^{AS} and vision is for Muhammad^{SLM}."

And it is written in the *Tafsír-e-Rahmani* under the explanation of verse, *وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ* (And he certainly saw him in another descent.³⁸) that, "he saw his Lord during the descent, which was other than the first descent."

And it is written in *Tafsír-e-Dailami* under the explanation of the verse, *مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ* (The heart did not lie.³⁹) that: "That is, the heart did not reject it nor did it deny it nor did it doubt what the eyes saw and witnessed his Lord with his vision face-to-face. Thus, Allah says, *أَفْتُمِرُونَ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ* (So will you dispute with him over what he (Muhammad) saw⁴⁰), the essence and attributes of his Lord. Thus, do not have doubt in this, this is the vision of the Prophet^{SLM} that he saw his Lord with the eyes of his head, seeing face-to-face and he saw Allah a second time."

And Mustafa^{SLM} himself gives evidence when he said, *رايت ربي ليلة المعراج في احسن صورة* ("I saw my Lord on the night of Me'raj in an excellent form.")

In another place, when Abu Zar^{RZ} asked, *هل رايت ربك قال انى اراه* ("Did you see your Lord?" the Prophet^{SLM} replied, "Certainly, I see him.")

The sayings of the companions^{RZ} also give evidence of vision. Thus, the saying of Umar^{RZ} is, "I have not seen anything without seeing Allah in it."

And Ali^{RZ} also says, "By Allah, never have I worshipped Allah without seeing Him."

It is written in *Zahidi* in the story of Abdullah bin Umar^{RZ}, that :

Abdullah was standing at the place of *tawaf* (i.e., at the *kaaba*) and Usman^{RZ} passed him and said *salaam* to him. Abdullah did not reply. Usman^{RZ} went and complained to Umar^{RZ} that, "I said *salaam* to your son Abdullah and he did not reply." Umar^{RZ} rebuked his son and said, "O boy, you did not recognize the superiority of Usman^{RZ} and did not reply to his *salaam*." Abdullah, presented his excuse saying, "We were looking at Allah at that time. We were looking at each other, I was looking at Allah

³⁸ Surah an-Najm, 53:13

³⁹ Surah an-Najm, 53:11

⁴⁰ Surah an-Najm, 53:12

and Allah was looking at me and at that time I was unaware of myself and his *salaam*." Many verses of the Quran support this meaning and are in agreement with it. Thus, Allah says, *فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا* (When his Lord manifested His glory on the mountain, He made it crumble into dust. And Musa fell down in a swoon.⁴¹) This verse is *nass*⁴² regarding the vision of Allah.

And it is due to these reasons that the ignorance of those denying the vision of Allah becomes evident.

Imam Zahid has said in his *tafsir*, "Some scholars say that vision in this world is from the impossibilities and not from the permissible. Their saying is wrong because Musa^{AS} desired for vision in this world. If vision in this world was from the impossibilities, then (it has to be accepted that) Musa^{AS}, despite being *kaleemulla*, *habeebulla* and *abdullah* (One who converses with Allah, a friend of Allah and a servant of Allah respectively), asked for something which was impossible and we don't have such a suspicion about Musa^{AS}, nor do we have such a suspicion about any prophet. And some of the scholars argue using the verse, *كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ* (All that is on earth will perish⁴³) to say that vision of Allah is not permissible in this world. This too is their error because Musa^{AS} was sure of his death, yet he asked for the vision in this world. Therefore, the vision in this world is permissible."

The author of *Madarik* has written in his *tafsir* in the explanation of the verse, *لَنْ تَرَانِي* (You will never see Me...⁴⁴) that its meaning is: "O Musa, you will never see what you asked for with your perishable eye, but with Our grace and bestowal you can see Us with your abiding eye. And our argument too is this because Allah never said that 'I can never be seen' which would have negated the permissibility of vision."

O friend, know that the scholars and preceptors too are giving evidence of the permissibility of the vision of Allah and some companions of the Prophet^{SLM} too are narrating from the Prophet^{SLM} about the permissibility of the vision of Allah.

⁴¹ Surah al-A'raf, 7:143

⁴² In Quranic terminology, a verse is categorised as *nass* when its meaning is clear from the text and only one meaning exists (see Itqan by Jalaluddin Suyuti) - Translator

⁴³ Surah ar-Rahman, 55:26

⁴⁴ Surah al-A'raf, 7:143

Thus, what would be the condition of the person who denies the vision of Allah and says that it is never permissible in this world and what would you call him and in which group will you include him? Without doubt, he will be included in the group whose condition is described by Allah in His book. Thus, Allah says, *قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً قَالُوا يَا حَسْرَتَنَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِيهَا* (They indeed are losers who denied the vision of Allah until, when the Hour is suddenly on them, they cry: Alas for us, that we neglected it!⁴⁵)

Apart from this, there are many other verses in the Quran which give evidence of the threat made against to the deniers of the vision of Allah. Allah says, *سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ (٥٣) أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ فِي مَرِيئَةٍ مِّن لِّقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ أَلَّا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ* (We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness? Beware! They are in doubt concerning the vision of their Lord? Beware! It is He that surrounds all things!⁴⁶)

Thus, O friend, know that the person who has made the world his home and sanctuary and has turned his face away from the remembrance, love and *márifat* (gnosis) of Allah and the extent of his knowledge is in such a state that his every word and action is for the world, then inevitably it is about such a person that Allah says (to his beloved, the Prophet^{SLM}) that, *فَاعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ذَلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ* (So turn away from whoever turns his back on Our remembrance and desires not except the worldly life. That is the extent of their knowledge.⁴⁷)

It is written in *Nisab-ul-Akhbar* that the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} was asked as to who was the most wicked person among men. The Prophet^{SLM} said, *العالم اذا فسد* ("The scholar, when spreads corruption (*fasád*).") The corruption of a scholar is that he earns wealth and position through his knowledge. Thus Allah says, *فَخَلَفَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَدْنَىٰ وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا وَإِن يَأْتِهِم عَرَضٌ مِّثْلَهُ يَأْخُذُوهُ* (Then after them succeeded an (evil) generation, which inherited the Book, but they chose (for themselves) the vanities of this low life (wealth and pleasures of this world) saying (as an excuse): "(Everything) will be forgiven

⁴⁵ Surah al-An'am, 6:31

⁴⁶ Surah Fussilat, 41:53-54

⁴⁷ Surah an-Najm, 53:29-30

for us." And if (again) similar vanities (wealth and pleasures of this world) came their way, they would (again).⁴⁸)

What interest will such people, about whom Allah and his Messenger^{SLM} have given such news, have in the Prophets^{AS}, the Book of Allah and the Mahdi^{AS}? Since all the Prophets^{AS} and all their followers talk of the oneness of Allah and the love and *marifat* (gnosis) of Allah and separate the people from the world and exhort them to the worship and obedience of Allah—and this talk is against the carnal desires of these people (the seekers of the world), so obviously they call the Prophets^{AS} and their followers liars and kill them.

Thus, Allah says, - أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ (Is it that whenever there comes to you a messenger with what you yourselves desire not, you grow arrogant and some you called impostors, and others you killed).⁴⁹)

And since Mahdi^{AS} follows the Messenger^{SLM} and talks about the oneness, love and *marifat* (gnosis) of Allah and calls people towards Allah and separates them from people of the world, calling Mahdi^{AS} a liar becomes imperative for the seekers of the world. They dispute the truthfulness of the Mahdi^{AS} just as they disputed the truthfulness of Mustafa^{SLM} and said that this Muhammad^{SLM} is not the one whose tidings Allah had given in our books and they called the Book of Allah which he presented as *Asatir-ul-Awwaleen* (stories of the people of the past). Sometimes they called him a magician, sometimes a poet, sometimes a slanderer, sometimes a madman, thus labelling Mustafa^{SLM} with improper attributes. They quibbled with him and would say that we will not believe in you until you present proof of your prophethood and you show us the signs, in spite of the fact that his holy personality had all the proofs of prophethood and as these people did not recognise them, they refuted him.

And the proofs which prove the prophethood are as follows. The scholars of the *salaf* (first few generations after the prophet^{SLM}) have said that there are differences amongst the scholars regarding the method of recognising the prophethood in the

⁴⁸ Surah al-A'raf, 7:169

⁴⁹ Surah al-Baqarah, 2:87

children of Adam. The *mutakallimeen*⁵⁰ say that miracles are the way of recognising and one group of the *ahl-e-dil* (enlightened people) says that the condition of the prophet is itself proof of prophethood and this condition is confined to two things. The first is to exhort the creations towards the obedience and *márifat* (gnosis) of the Creator. The second is to separate the creations from the desire of the world. We found both these attributes in the personality of Muhammad Rasoolullah^{SLM} because his only objective was to separate the creations from the service of *ghair-e-khuda* (things other than Allah) and put them into the service of Allah. He never paid attention to the world, desire and lust. Therefore, his condition was proof of the veracity of his prophethood.

Since Mahdi^{AS} is a perfect follower of Mustafa^{SLM} — as the Prophet^{SLM} had said that, انه يقفوا اثرى و لا يخطى ("Verily he [Mahdi] will walk in my footsteps and will not err.") — this evidence is sufficient to prove the *mahdiat* of Mahdi^{AS}. A group of Muslims found this sign in him and investigated. Other evidences from the *ahadees* were also proven.

Thus, it is stated in Bukhari, Muslim, Masabeeh, Mashariq and Qurtubi that the Prophet^{SLM} said, المهدي منى اجلى الجبهة اقنى النفس مقرون الحاجبين ("Mahdi will be from me, he will have a bright forehead, a pointed nose and joined eyebrows.")

The Prophet^{SLM} said, انه يقفوا اثرى و لا يخطى ("Verily he (Mahdi^{AS}) will walk in my footsteps and will not err.")

The Prophet^{SLM} said, يرضى عنه ساكن السماء و ساكن الارض لا تدع السماء من اقطارها شيئاً الا وصبتته الا و اخر حتى يتمن الاحياء الاموات ("The inhabitants of the earth and the heavens will be pleased with him and the sky will not hold back anything in its regions but pour it out and the earth will not hold back its produce but throw it up and those who are alive will wish for the dead (to be alive too).") The scholars of *ahl-e-tahqiq* (people of realities) have explained this *hadees* in this way: All the angels, fairies and men will be pleased with his (the Mahdi^{AS}'s) excellent character and the sky will not hold back anything from its rainfall but will shower it and the earth will not hold back anything from its produce but will sprout it so much so that the alive will wish for the dead. That is, during his time, Allah will open all the doors of mercy in the sky and

⁵⁰ *Mutakallimeen* - Plural of *Mutakallim*. A scholar of *Kalam* is known as *Mutakallim*. *Kalam* (also referred to as *ilm-e-kalam*) is one of the sciences of Islam which uses rational thought and argument to derive Islamic beliefs and doctrines from the Quran and Hadees.

on the earth and the boundless shower of Allah's *faiz* (bounty) will pour into the hearts of those who have the capability and the seeds of Oneness and *márifat* (gnosis) in their hearts will sprout and the effect of life will be created in their hearts, so much so, that they will yearn for their dead to be alive during that time.

And the Prophet^{SLM} said, *بلاءٌ يُصِيبُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ، حَتَّى لَا يَجِدَ الرَّجُلُ مُلْجَأً يُلْجَأُ إِلَيْهِ فَيَبْتَغِي اللَّهُ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي* ("This Ummah will face a trial and none will get any refuge to protect himself. Then (to save the Ummah from these harsh conditions), Allah will send a man from my family whose name will be my name.")

And the Prophet^{SLM} said, *كَيْفَ تَهْلِكُ أُمَّتِي أَنَا فِي أَوَّلِهَا وَعِيسَى فِي آخِرِهَا وَالْمَهْدِيُّ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي فِي وَسْطِهَا* ("How can my Ummah be destroyed when I am at its beginning and Esa is at its end and Mahdi from my family is in its middle.")

And the Prophet^{SLM} said, *لَوْ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا يَوْمٌ وَاحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ رَجُلًا مِنْ عَتْرَتِي فِيمَلَأَ بِهِ الْعَرْضَ قِسْطًا وَعَدْلًا كَمَا مَلَأْتَ جُورًا وَظُلْمًا* ("If only a day remains of the world, Allah will prolong that day so that a man from my progeny will come who will fill the world with equity and justice as it is filled with oppression and tyranny.")

And the Prophet^{SLM} said, *إِنِّي أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِثْلَكُمْ يَوْشِكُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَنِي رَسُولُ رَبِّي فَاجِيبْ وَأَنَا تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ* ("Listen O people! I am only a man like you. Soon a messenger will come from my Lord and I will accept his call (My departure from this world is near). I am leaving behind two significant things among you. One is the book of Allah, which has the *nur* (light) and *hidayat* (guidance). So take the Book of Allah and hold fast to it. The second is my *Ahl-e-Bait* (members of my family). I remind you of Allah in my *Ahl-e-Bait*. I remind you of Allah in my *Ahl-e-Bait*.")

مسكين ابو ذر يمشى وحده والله فى السماء فرد و ابو ذر فى العرض فرد كن فرد الفرد يا ابا ذر ان الله جميل يحب الجمال ثم قال يا ابا ذر اتدرى ما غمى و فكرى و الى اى شئى اشتياقى فقال اصحابه خبرنا يا رسول الله بغمك و فكرك ثم قال اه و شوقا الى لقاء اخوانى فقال اصحابه نحن اخوانك يا رسول الله قال انتم اصحابى و هم اخوانى يكونون من بعد شانهم كشان الانبياء و هم عند الله بمنزلة الشهداء يفرون من الآباء و الامهات و الاخوات و الاخوان و الابناء ابتغاء لمرضات الله تعالى و هم يتركون المال و يزولون انفسهم بالتواضع لا يرغبون فى الشهوات و فضول الدنيا و يجتمعون فى بيوت الله تعالى مغمومين محزونين من حب الله و قلوبهم الى الله و روجهم من الله و عملهم لله اذا مرض واحد منهم هو افضل عند الله من عبادة الف سنة و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلى يا رسول الله قال الواحد منهم يموت فهو كمن مات من فى السماء لكرامتهم على الله و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلى يا رسول الله قال الواحد منهم يوذيه قملة فى ثيابه فله عند الله اجر سبعين حجه و غزوة و كان له اجر عتق اربعين رقبة من ولد اسماعيل عليه السلام كل واحد منهم باثنى عشر الفا و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلى يا رسول الله قال الواحد منهم يذكر اهله ثم يغتم يكتب له بكل نفس الف الف درجة و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلى يا رسول الله قال الواحد منهم يصلى ركعتين فى اصحابه افضل عند الله من رجل

يعبد الله تعالى في جبل لبنان عمر نوح عليه السلام الف سنة و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلئى يا رسول الله قال الواحد منهم يسبح تسبحة خير له يوم القيامة من ان يسير معه الجبال الدنيا ذهبا و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلئى يا رسول الله قال من نظرة ينظر الى بيت احد منهم احب الى الله من نظرة الى بيت الله و من ينظر اليه فكانما ينظر الله و من ستره فكانما ستر الله و من اطعمه فكانما اطعم الله تعالى و ان شئت ازيدك يا ابا ذر قال قلت بلئى يا رسول الله قال يجلس اليهم قوم مصرين مثقلين من الذنوب ما يقومون من عندهم حتى ينظر الله اليهم و يغفر لهم ذنوبهم لكرامتهم على الله يا ابا ذر ضحكهم عبادة و مزاجهم تسبيح و نومهم صدقة ينظر الله اليهم فى كل يوم سبعين مرة انى اليهم مشتاق الى لقائهم ثم اطرق راسه طيا ثم رفع راسه و بكى حتى دمعت عيناه فقال واشوقا الى تقائهم و قال صلى الله عليه و سلم اللهم احفظهم و انصرهم على من خالفهم و اقر عيني بهم الى يوم القيامة ثم قرأ أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ –

(Translation of above *hadith* - START)

And further the Prophet^{SLM} told Abu Zar^{RZ}, " *Miskeen* (poor) Abu Zar is walking alone and Allah is alone in the heavens and Abu Zar is alone on the earth. O Abu Zar! Become one for the One. Allah is *Jameel* (beautiful) and loves *Jamaal* (beauty)."

Then the Prophet^{SLM} said, "O Abu Zar! Do you know what my grief and worry and what I yearn for?"

The companions^{RZ} replied, "Tell us O Rasoolullah^{SLM} about your grief and worry".

Then the Prophet^{SLM} said, "Aah! I yearn to see my brothers."

The companions^{RZ} said, "We are your brothers."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "You are my companions. They are my brothers who will come after me. Their stature will be that of prophets. And their rank near Allah will be that of martyrs. They will separate from their fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters to please Allah. They will forsake wealth for the sake of Allah. In their humility, they will think of themselves to be lowly. They will not be inclined towards the lusts and the futile matters of the world. They will assemble in one of the houses of Allah Most High. They will grieve and become desolate in the love of Allah. Their hearts will be attached to Allah and their provision will come from Allah. And all their work will only be for Allah. If one of them falls ill, his illness before Allah will be superior to a thousand years of worship. Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, "Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "O Abu Zar, if one of them dies it would be like the death of one of the inhabitants of the heavens, such is their honour in the eyes of Allah. O Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, " Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "If a louse in the clothes of one of them bites him, he will get the reward of seventy Hajj and *Ghazwaat*⁵¹ and the reward of releasing forty slaves of the progeny of Ismail^{AS}. Each of them will be worth twelve thousand. O Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, " Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "If one of them remembers his family and grieves, he will get a thousand ranks in lieu of his every breath. O Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, " Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "If one of them performs two *rakat* prayers with his companions, then in Allah's eyes he is superior to that person who worshipped at Mount Lebanon for a span of time equal to the age of Nuh^{AS}. O Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, " Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "If one of them glorifies Allah (*tasbeeh*), then on the day of judgement it is better for him than the mountains of the world turning into gold and accompanying him. O Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, " Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "If someone casts a glance at the house of one of them, it would be dearer to Allah than seeing *Baitullah*. And if someone sees one of them, it would be as if he is seeing Allah. And if someone covers one of them, it is as if he has covered

⁵¹ Ghazwa is a battle in which the Prophet^{SLM} himself participated.

Allah. If someone feeds one of them, it is as if he has fed Allah. O Abu Zar, if you wish, I would like to say more."

Abu Zar^{RZ} said, " Certainly, O Rasoolullah^{SLM}."

The Prophet^{SLM} said, "If habitual sinners who are full of sins, get up to depart after sitting with them, Allah will cast a glance of mercy at them, and due to their honour, those sitting with them will be forgiven. O Abu Zar, their laughter is worship. And their humour is glorification of Allah (*tasbeeh*). Their sleep is charity (*sadaqa*). Allah looks at them seventy times every day. O Abu Zar, I desire to see them."

For some time, Rasoolullah^{SLM} bent his head down. Then he lifted his head and wept so much that tears flowed from his eyes. And then he said, "How much I desire to see them! O Allah, protect them. And help them against their opponents. And provide coolness for my eyes with their vision on the day of judgement."

Then he recited this verse. "*Behold! verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve;*"⁵²

(Translation of above *hadith* - END)

These *ahadees* which are in favour of Mahdi^{AS} have been given the rank of *tawatur*⁵³ by the scholars of *salaf* (first few generations after the Prophet^{SLM}). Thus, it is stated in *Qurtubi* that the *ahadees* from the Prophet^{SLM} regarding Mahdi^{AS} have reached the level of *tawatur* and their narrators are abundant.

As for those *ahadees* which have contradictions, their reconciliation is done this way — the coming of Mahdi^{AS} is true, but there is disagreement in the signs. Thus, it is written in *Shob-ul-Eeman* that, "People have disagreed in the matter of Mahdi^{AS}. One group has abstained and has left the knowledge of this matter to its Knower, Allah Most High and have the belief that Mahdi will be from the progeny of Fatima^{RZ}, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah^{SLM}, and will emerge in the last era."

⁵² *Surah Yunus, 10:62*

⁵³ *Tawatur* - a rank of *hadees*. Such a *hadees* is called a *Mutawatir hadees*. A *mutawatir hadees* is one which has been reported by many different chains of transmission and by a number of narrators in every generation.

It is written in the *Sharah Maqasid* that, "The scholars have inclined towards the point that Mahdi is a just Imam from the progeny of Fatima^{RZ}, he will be born when Allah wishes, and He will send him to help His religion."

There are many other narrations. Thus, it is written in *Futuhát*⁵⁴ that,

Know that the *khátim-ul-awliya* (Seal of Saints) will come
 When the *imámul a'rifeen* (Leader of Gnostics) has departed
 He is the leader Mahdi, from the progeny of Ahmed
 He is the Hindi⁵⁵ sword who will remove innovations
 He is the sun who will dispel all darkness
 He bestows his *faiz* (bounty) like the downpour of seasonal rain

Ameer-ul-Mumineen Hazrat Ali ibn Abu Talib Karam-Allahu Wajhu has said:

O my dear Son, when the Turks invade then wait
 For the Mahdi^{AS}, he will be the ruler and will judge
 And the kings of the children of Hashim will be disgraced
 Allegiance will be pledged to a weak and frail man among them
 He will be a child among children and will not speak as per his opinion
 He will neither strive nor will he possess intellect
 And then one among you will establish the truth
 He will come to you with the truth and will act upon the truth
 He will have the name of the Messenger of Allah^{SLM}
 My life for him! O my son, do not leave his company and hurry in pledging allegiance to him.

These attributes which are proven from these *ahadees* and narrations are evident in the holy personality of Syed Muhammad Mahdi^{AS}. There is no dispute in it because Allah's objective in sending the Mahdi^{AS} is to help Allah's religion and for people to achieve Allah's *tawhíd* (unity) and *márifat* (gnosis) through this holy personality.

And the other signs which are disputed are against the objective⁵⁶ (of Allah). If those signs are not found in Mahdi^{AS} and solely on account of these signs if one calls this holy personality a liar and opposes him, then he would be wronging his own self

⁵⁴ *Futuhát-e-Makkiyah* by Hazrat Ibn Arabi^{RH}, Vol 3, Chapter 366, p.365

⁵⁵ Hind - Arabic word for Hindustan or India. Indian is called as Hindi is Arabic language.

⁵⁶ 'They are against the objective' - That is they are against the Unity of Allah (*tawhíd*) and the gnosis of Allah (*ma'rifat*)

because Mahdi^{AS} says that, 'Whatever I do and say, it is based on that which I receive from Allah'. And to support his claim he presented the Book of Allah as proof.

And there are only two possibilities in this matter. Either he is telling the truth or he is lying. If he is lying, its harm and adverse consequences will be upon him as he is more unjust. If he is telling the truth, then harm and adverse consequences will be upon the deniers as they are more unjust. Therefore, Allah says, *فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ - وَإِنْ يَكُ كَاذِبًا - كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ* (So who is more unjust than he who invents a lie about Allah or denies His signs? Indeed, the criminals will not succeed.⁵⁷) Allah further says, *وَإِنْ يَكُ كَاذِبًا - فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُ وَإِنْ يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِيبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ* (And if he should be lying, then upon him is [the consequence of] his lie; but if he should be truthful, there will strike you some of what he promises you.⁵⁸) Allah has revealed this verse for encouragement and for soothing the hearts of believers because in every era the people have opposed the messenger sent by Allah and the deniers have taunted the believers, opposed them and have asked, 'Why do you trust the word of a liar? You will perish.' Allah says that it is not like that. Rather, it is Allah's favour upon the truthful, who have obeyed the messenger of Allah for the sake of Allah and the consequences of his lie will not recoil on them. If the messenger of Allah is true in his claim then Allah promise of favours will be for the truthful. This approach is sufficient for the seekers of the truth and the men of understanding. Allah has informed about the men of understanding (*Ulul-Albab*) in His book. He says, *رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا - وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ* (Our Lord, indeed we have heard a caller calling to faith, [saying], 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed.⁵⁹) Mahdi^{AS} is also a caller from among all the callers and makes this same call (saying) 'Believe in your Lord'. On hearing this call of Mahdi^{AS}, the men of understanding saw that he was *Mukhbir-e-Sadiq* (Bringer of True Information) and his call is true, so they immediately obeyed and submitted to him and said, 'we have believed'.

Thus, know O friend! The person whom Allah has made capable for this claim of Mahdiat and his speech and the actions are proof of his excellence – then the fact that all his conditions and actions are in conformity with the Book of Allah and His Messenger^{SLM} make his acceptance compulsory. Therefore, the person who is hostile to and who opposes such a personality due to envy and enmity, would be an opponent

⁵⁷ Surah Yunus, 10:17

⁵⁸ Surah Ghāfir, 40:28

⁵⁹ Surah Aal-e-Imran, 3:193

of the Book of Allah and the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} and would be excluded from the consensus of the *ulama-e-salaf* (scholars of the earliest generations of Islam). Because, the consensus of the *salaf* is that it is obligatory to accept the thing which is proven by the Book of Allah and Sunnah. The *ulama-e-salaf* (scholars of the early generations of Islam) have discussed about belief in this way.

Maqsad-e-Sani

(The Second Objective)

On the topic of whether *eeman* (faith) increases and decreases. One group has affirmed it and others have negated it. Imam Razi^{RH} and many *mutakallimeen* (theologians) have said that this discussion is literal because it (the increase and decrease) is a part of the *tafseer* (illustration) of faith.

If we say it is *tasdiq* (acceptance with the heart), then *eeman* (faith) does not accept an increase or decrease because what is *wajib* (essential) is that *yaqeen* (certainty) and it is true that *yaqeen* (certainty) does accept a disparity with respect to its essence because disparity is nothing but accepting the possibility of contradiction. If the possibility of contradiction is due to a far-fetched reason, it would negate the certainty and cannot be combined with the certainty. And with respect to the related matters (non-essence), it is negated because of all those things which have evidently been accepted as having been brought by the Messenger^{SLM}. And as to the whole, it will not be found in parts and if it is found to be in parts, it cannot be considered as the whole.

And if we say it (faith) is the deeds, either on their own or along with *tasdiq* (affirmation), then faith accepts both the increase and decrease and this is evident. And the truth is that *tasdiq* (affirmation) accepts increase and decrease from both perspectives. That is, by its essence or along with its constituents and it accepts both strength and weakness, because *tasdiq* (affirmation) is from the natural behaviours which increases or decreases as per strength or weakness.

Your saying — that it is that very *yaqeen* (certainty) which is *wajib* (mandatory) and there is no increase or decrease except due to the possibility of contradiction — is not acceptable to us. It is true that increase or decrease is solely due to this possibility. That is because this is permissible that strength and weakness occur without the possibility of contradiction.

Thus, the point which you mentioned requires that the faith of a prophet and his *ummah* (believer from the prophet's community) be equal and this is false as per

consensus. And the saying which you have mentioned is incorrect. And that is because the mentioned equality should have a reason and the saying of Ibrahim^{AS} that Allah has mentioned in the Holy Quran contradicts your saying. *وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي* (But [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied.⁶⁰) This verse proves the increase of the certainty of *tasdiq* (faith) as we have proven it earlier.

And it is evident that a strong supposition, in which the possibility of contradiction does not occur to the mind, will also be decreed as a certainty as far as true faith is concerned because the faith of most of the common people will be of this kind. On this basis, acceptance of faith will clearly be capable of increase.

Yes. With respect to the related matters too your saying is not correct. Because the acceptance of the constituents is upon people through that thing whose coming is known, in the condition such that it is a part of faith and reward is given for it. The meaning of reward for *tasdiq-e-ijmali* (collective acceptance) is that there are many things which were brought by the Messenger^{SLM} and are included in the *tasdiq-e-ijmali* (collective acceptance). When one part of it is known, and it is accepted, then this is the increase of this *tasdiq-e-ijmali* (collective acceptance) and it is a part of faith. And there is no doubt that *tasdiq-e-tafseeli* (detailed acceptance) accepts increase and decrease and so is the case with faith and the verses of the Quran also prove this.

Therefore, Allah says, *وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا* (...and when His revelations are recited unto them, they increase their faith.⁶¹) This verse is proof for increase and decrease in faith with the second reason. And the verse, *وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي* (But [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied.⁶²) proves the increase and decrease of faith along with the first reason and it is in sync with its explanation.

But the answer to the point that deeds as per their essence increase and faith neither increases or decreases is that the contexts need to be understood.

The first context is that it is true that deeds are not included in *eeman* (faith) as has been mentioned earlier. Because the reality of faith is acceptance. And also because in the Quran and Sunnah, faith is *ma'tuf-alaih* (coupled word) and righteous deeds is

⁶⁰ Surah al-Baqarah, 2:260

⁶¹ Surah al-Anfal, 8:2

⁶² Surah al-Baqarah, 2:260

ma'tuf (coupling word) as is evident from the verse, إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ (Indeed, those who bring faith and do righteous deeds⁶³) with such finality that *ma'tuf* (coupling word) and *ma'tuf-alaih* (coupled word) are disconnected and the *ma'tuf* (coupling word) is not part of the *ma'tuf-alaih* (coupled word).

And faith has been made a condition for correctness of deeds and the condition is separate from its object as Allah says, وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ (But he who does righteous deeds while he is a believer...⁶⁴) There is finality in this verse that the object of the condition is not part of the condition itself because a thing cannot become a condition for its own essence.

Further the abandoners of some deeds have been confirmed as having *eeman* (faith) as has been explained previously. As Allah says, وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا (And if two factions among the believers should fight...⁶⁵), this verse has the certainty that their faith is proven because a thing does not exist without its constituents and this point is not hidden.

These reasons can be proof only against those people who consider compliances as a part of the reality of faith on the basis that they do not consider abandoners of deeds as *momin* (believers), as is the opinion of the Mu'tazila, and it is not a proof against those people whose creed is that deeds are a part of complete faith on the basis that abandoners of deeds are not excluded from faith, as is the creed of Imam Shafai^{RH} and the answers to the Mu'tazila along with proofs have been discussed earlier.

The second context is that the reality of faith neither increases nor decreases as it has been explained earlier that *tasdiq* (acceptance) by the heart is that which has reached the level of determination and obedience and increase or decrease cannot be perceived in it, so much so, that *tasdiq* (acceptance) of one who has reached the reality of acceptance will persist irrespective of whether he obeys or perpetrates disobedience. His *tasdiq* (acceptance) persists under both conditions and there will be no change in it. And the verses which prove the increase of faith convey the thing which Abu Haneefa^{RH} has mentioned that people had brought faith summarily, then one thing after another would be made *farz* (obligatory), and they would bring faith on every

⁶³ Surah al-Baqarah, 2:277

⁶⁴ Surah Ta-Ha, 20:112

⁶⁵ Surah al-Hujurat, 49:9

specific *farz* (obligation). The result was that faith would increase due to increase in that thing which was obligatory for faith and this thing cannot be imagined after the era of the Prophet^{SLM}. And there is a view about this context that it is possible for the details of *faraiz* (obligations) to emerge after the era of the Prophet^{SLM} and faith is obligatory in summary in the aggregate knowledge and nothing is hidden here because the detailed knowledge is more, rather it is complete.

And the explanation that comprehensive faith (*ijmali eeman*) does not fall below its designated level holds true only when it is characterised with the real faith. And it has been said that increase is permanent and continuous on this comprehensive faith at every moment. The understanding from this is that faith increases with time because it is an indication which cannot remain without revival and example. And there is consideration in this too because after a thing has become non-existent getting the similar thing does not happen with an increase of a something else as is present in the majority.

Some scholars have said that the meaning of faith is the increase in its fruit and the radiance of its light and its luminosity is in the heart because it increases with good deeds and decreases with sins.

As for those whose creed is that the deeds themselves are faith, then accepting the increase and decrease in faith is obvious and that is why it is said that this matter is a branch of obedience being the faith.

Some *Muhaqqiqeen* have said that they don't agree that the reality of acceptance does not accept increase and decrease, rather there is increase and decrease in its strength and weakness because there is finality in the point that the acceptance of an *ummati* (follower) will not be like that of the Prophet^{AS} and that is why Ibrahim^{AS} said, *وَلَكِن لَّيَطْمَئِنُّ قَلْبِي* (But [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied.⁶⁶)

There is also another argument here which is that the creed of some Qadariya is that faith is the name given to *márifat* (gnosis). The scholars of our Mahdavia community have agreed upon its invalidity because the people of the book had recognition of the prophethood of Muhammad^{SLM} as much as they had recognition of their own children,

⁶⁶ Surah al-Baqarah, 2:260

so their *kufr* (infidelity) is certain when they did not accept him. And due to the reason that some infidels had certainly recognised the truth but refuted him due to enmity and arrogance, Allah says: *وَاجْتَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ* (And they rejected them, while their [inner] selves were convinced thereof, out of injustice and haughtiness.⁶⁷)

Thus, the explanation of the difference between recognition of the commands and their certainty and their acceptance and belief upon them becomes necessary so that the faith in the second (acceptance and belief) and not in the first, that is the faith in the recognition and the certainty, becomes true.

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Versions

Date	Version	Description
14/05/2020	V1 Draft 1	First completed draft.
20/12/2020	V1 Draft 2	Incorporated review comments from Janab Syed Mukarram

⁶⁷ Surah an-Naml, 27:14