

# **The 7 Issues**

## *Haft Masail*

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## IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

### 1. The Order of Covenant (Silsila-e-Baith)

Hz. Mahdi Alai-his Salam had been ordered, by Allah to say "I am the Servant of Allah and the follower of Mohammed Rasool Allah SAS". Basing on this direction Hz. Mahdi (AS) had followed the Prophet SAS in the matters of Shariah. But inspite of this when some one becomes a disciple (Mureed) of a priest, then the priest will not take the name of the Prophet (salam) in the order of Covenant (Silsila-e-Baith). On this it is observed by some people that the "Source of the Prophet SAS had been left" <sup>1</sup>

In this connection it may be noted that not taking the name of the Prophet SAS in the Silsila (Order) will not have any effect on the Promised Mahdi (AS) being the follower of the Prophet SAS. It is so because the Promised Mahdi (AS) is the Khalifa of Allah, and free from error (Ma'soom Anil Khata). Since he is the Khalifa of Allah (AS), his connection would also be with Allah alone. His knowledge is the inherent knowledge (Ilm-e-Sakuty) and he takes the bliss (Faiz) directly from Allah and being the Concluder of the Vilaya of Mohammad SAS (Khatem-e-Vilayat-e-Mohammadi SAS), he is the link between all the Prophets and saints and Allah. It may be kept in mind that the Prophet (Salam) had called the Mahdi as the concluder of the faith (Khatem-e-Deen). The faith (Deen) includes the Vilaya and Nabuva (Saint-hood and Prophet-hood). One of the pillars of the faith pertaining to Ehsan (perfection) which pertains to the vision of Allah had been accomplished by the Promised Mahdi (AS). The vision relates to Vilaya (nearness to Allah). Therefore he is called the concluder of the Villaya (Khatem-e-

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<sup>11</sup> Translator's Note: It may be noted that at the time of taking Covenant (Baith) the follower or the disciple is taught and made to recite the five declarations of faith (five Kalima). This very much assures the availability of the Shifa at. (Source help) of the Prophet SAS.

Vilayat). All the orders of the Promised Mahdi (AS) are based on the knowledge directly acquired from Allah. Therefore at the time of taking the covenant (Baith) it is taught that "the connection of Mahdi Alae-his-salam, is with Allah".

The concept of knowledge directly from Allah to the Promised Mahdi (AS), is not specially only with the Mahdavia community. Similar is the faith of great saints and Godly scholars. It is written in Fususul Hikam by Hz. Shaik Akbar Mohiuddin Ibne-'Arabi (RAH) that the inherent knowledge' (from Allah) (Ilme-eSakuti) is not given to anyone except the Khatem-ur-Rasool SAS (the concluder of the Prophethood SAS) and the Khatem-ul-Aulia (AS) (The concluder of the Vilaya) and the Prophets and Nabies cannot have the vision of Allah without the Ninche (Mishkat) of the concluder of the Nabvah. Similarly no Vali can have vision without the Ninche (Mishkat) of the concluder of Vilaya. It is to the extent that even the Nabi and Rasools, shall also see Allah through the Mishkat of the concluder of the Vilayat-e-Mohammadi SAS". It is also mentioned in the same book that the "holder of the Vilaya of Mohammed SAS would be a liasion between Allah and all the prophets and the saints . Hz. Jami (RH) in his commentary on Fusus-ulHikam has stated that all the Prophets and the saints are the manifestation of the reality of Mohammad SAS. The Prophets are the exponents of the external Nabova and the saints are representing his inner Vilaya and the concluder of Vilaya (Khatim-e-Vilaya) is the exponent of his total self. (Ahdiyati-ul-Jama) Hz. Abdul Razak Kashani in his commentary on Fusul-ul-Hikam has written that The Vilayat of the Prophet will be hidden till it is exposed with the appearance of the concluder of the vilayat, who is the successor of the external Khilafat and inner Nabovat of the Prophet'. With this statement the status and position of the concluder (Khatim) of the Vilaya is exposed. The concluder of the Vilaya of the Prophet SAS (Khatim-e-Vilayat-e-Mohammadi SAS) is the Promised Mahdi (AS). Thus it is written in a well known book on Tassauf (Sufism) Tajjaliat-e-Rahmani. "The Vilaya of the Prophet SAS shall be concluded on the Promised Mahdi (AS) . Since the Promised Mahdi (AS) is the link between the Prophets AS and saints and Allah; is the successor of the Prophet

Mohammad SAS and he is receiving the bliss (Faiz) directly from Allah; and is passing it on to his followers; therefore the priests of the holy group make their followers to accept and to state that the "connection of the Promised Mahdi is directly with Allah". The purpose of teaching the Silsila (order) is simply that the priest who is teaching it, is showing that his source is up to the Promised Mahdi (AS) and it is not broken anywhere in between. Thus as he was taking the bliss of his priest, his priest has also taken the bliss from his priest and so on. This way the connection reaches to the Promised Mahdi (AS). The follower (Murid) is therefore aware that the connection of his priest is linked with the Promised Mahdi (AS) and he is having the competence and authority and that whatever he says and teaches about the remembrance (Zikr) would be the same which had reached him through various sources from the Promised Mahdi (AS); and the Mahdi (AS) has been taught it by Allah, which he taught to his Khalifa. The Scholar of Devedband would not be recognised without a degree, similarly no priest can be recognised without a proper Silsila and due permission of the competent authority. The teachers of Traditions (Hadith) and the teachers of recitation (Quari) take the names of their teachers from whom the knowledge of Traditions (Hadith) or recitation of Quran has reached them. The purpose is to show that whatever they are teaching is having proper source and recognition. Similarly the priest also reads the Silsila to show that whatever was given to the Promised Mahdi (AS) directly by Allah had reached to him from different sources. Thus the priest to Mahdi (AS) is Allah and the Silsila reaches up to Him.<sup>2</sup>

The fact is that to attain the nearness of Allah, one has to do prayers and hard work. The recitation of Silsila is only a way. The real prayer is Zikr, Salat & Saom etc. Through these prayers the nearness of Allah is attained. The Mahdavi will offer Salah exactly in the manner as it was taught by the Prophet SAS. Similarly other acts are

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<sup>2</sup>Translator Note: The purpose of reading the Silsila is also to invoke the source and bliss of the high priests of the order for the spiritual upliftment of the follower (Murid). This gives the mental satisfaction and spiritual happiness to him and elevates his spiritual status.

also performed by the Mahdavi, in the manner taught in the Holy Book (The Quran) and the Traditions (Hadith). The Tasbeeh which they recite, also indicates the oneness of Allah first, then the Prophet-hood of the Prophet SAS. The method to attain nearness of Allah is remembrance (zikr) and it is to recite Laila ha illallah.

Apart from this it is also to be considered that when any Mahdavi sits for Remembrance of Allah, he first recites the following six Daroods:

- (1) Allah Humma Salli Ala Mohammadin Sayyad ul Ashaqeen
  - (2) Allah Humma Salli Ala Mohammadin Sayyad ul Ma'shuqeen
  - (3) Allah Humma Salli Ala Mohammadin Sayyad ul Mohibeen
  - (4) Allah Humma Salli Ala Mohammadin Sayyad ul Mahboobeen
  - (5) Allah Humma Salli Ala Mohammadin Sayyad ul Muttaqeen
  - (6) Allah Humma Salli Ala Mohammadin Sayyad ul Mursaleen
- Then

- (1) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah Adam Safiullah Salvatu Assalam
- (2) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah Nooh Najiullah Salvatu Assalam
- (3) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah Ibrahim Khaleelullah Salvatu Assalam
- (4) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah Moosa Kaleemullah Salvatu Assalam
- (5) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah isa Roohullah Salvatu Assalam
- (6) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah Mohammad Rasoolullah SAS
- (7) Ilahi Be - Hurmati Lailaha illallah Syed Mohammad Mahdi Khaleefatullah Salvatu Assalam

O! Allah bestow on me Thy love and affection<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Translator Note: After this the Silsillah as taught by the Priest is recited as

- Ilahi Be - Hurmati Hz. Syed Mahmood (Murshad Mian)
- Ilahi Be - Hurmati Hz. Syed Abdul Hai (Ha fiz Mian)
- Ilahi Be - Hurmati Hz..... etc. till it reaches the Promised Mahdi (AS). Then the Zikr is started. (Here the Silsila of the Translator is quoted as example).

After this he starts the Zikr (Remembrance) of Allah. The purpose of recitation of Daroods and the Dua, is to indicate that both these things are the source for the acceptance of the prayer. We have the faith that in every matter the sources of the Prophet SAS is necessary. We all have faith that leaving the Prophet SAS no one can reach Allah. Those who have love for the Prophet SAS and fear of "Allah, will in compliance with the commandment of Allah "(Be obedient to the Prophet)" follow the tradition of the Prophet SAS.

Every Mahdavi according to his capacity will have the desire to follow the Prophet SAS. Because without the Prophet SAS, the faith (Iman) and Islam cannot be attained. These two things have reached through the Prophet SAS only. Iman (faith) is to accept, Allah, the Angels, the Books, the Prophets, the Day of Judgement, the fate, the death and life after death. Islam, is to recite the Kalima, offer salat, observe fast, perform Hajj and pay Zakath. The Mahdavi recite the Tenet (kalima) with the depth of their heart, they offer Salat, observe Fasts and if capable pay Zakat and subject to eligibility perform Hajj and have faith in all the requirements of Iman.

Whenever a Mahdavi becomes a follower of the prophet he recites all the five Kalima, Iman-e-Mujja'mil and Iman-e-Muffas'sil (short and detailed declaration of faith) in front of his priest and makes the priest and others present as witness on this. No Mahdavi denies any of the compulsory acts (Faraiz) and there is no one who feels that it is not necessary to follow the Shariah of the Prophet SAS.

## IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

### 2. The Method of Remembrance (Ta'aleem-e-Zikr)

The sentence Lailaha illallah is specially referred for Zikr (Remembrance of Allah). It is so since the Prophet SAS has stated that the highest of Zikr is Lailaha Illalah. This sentence is defined by the Promised Mehdi (AS) as "Lailaha Hun Nahi", "Illalah Tu hai" i.e. the acceptance of Allah and the denial of every thing including the self. At times the acceptance is put first and then the denial like, "Illa!ah Tu Hai La ilaha Hun Nahi". These words are like the Kalima and the words 'Tu hai' is for acceptance of Haq (the Truth) and 'Hun Nahi' indicates the denial of self. Since any thing other than Allah is farce. This is the concept of the Godly people. For them the real meanings of "Laillaha Illallah" are that 'La-(Maou'gud) Illalah."i.e. the only presence is of Allah ! Or nothing exists except Allah!"

Excepting Allah all other things belong to the person i.e. the seeker (Salik) of Allah. Thus the denial of self by the seeker of Allah (Salik) is the denial of every thing other than Allah. It is a fact that the self (Nafs) is the greatest of the (dummy) gods. Seeking even the rightful things amounts to following the directions of self (Nafs). Allah says, "Have you seen the one who had made his desires his god". Thus the 'seeker' has to get rid of the self (Nafis) conscious (Khudi) and the demand of 'I'. Therefore we keep ourselves busy in the remembrance of Allah, by denial of self and accepting the Almighty Allah as the only reality. The people who are not aware of the truth and the intricacies ask, as to whether the words of "Illallah Tu Hai and La Illaha Hun Nahi" occur in the Holy Quran? There are several such sentences which are not found in the Quran. Such as the explanation of Laillaha Illallah is made with "Lanabudu, Illah Iyyahu". These are not the Quranic words. But the words taught by the Prophet of Allah SAS or the Real guide (Hadi) to his ummat are also from Allah alone and are true. The Promised Mahdi (AS) is the Khalifa of Allah and as explanation he has used the words of 'Tu hai' and 'Hun Nahi', which are also based on the teachings of Allah.

His teachings in this respect is the further explanation of 'La Illaha Illallah' and the basis for remembrance (Zikr) of 'Laillaha Illallah'. Allah says 'We have not sent any Prophet SAS before ye, but with the divine word i.e. there is no God but Allah (Laillaha Illallah) and that I alone shall be prayed. It is also evident that in every country the messengers of Allah were sent for guidance of the people. The Holy words that "we have sent in every town one who threatens" are the evidence for this. Now the question arises as to what was the declaration of faith about the unity of Allah for the messengers who were sent outside the Arabian countries.<sup>4</sup>

In countries like Iran, India, Rome and Italy the messengers might have been sent. Obviously the divine word for them to declare the unity of Allah would be in the language of the area and the translation of the same in the Quranic language would be 'Laillaha Illallah', other wise the nations which are not conversant with Arabic language cannot understand the Kalima i.e. declaration of unity of Allah. In the dream of a Muslim who is not conversant with Arabic, if the Prophet SAS appears, in what language he would talk? If he speaks in Arabic the person cannot understand it. Then there would be no benefit of the Prophet's SAS appearing in his dream. Similarly the Promised Mahdi (AS) has explained the Kalema, 'Laillaha Illallah' in our language and had ordered to keep these meanings in view at the time of Remembrance (Zikr) so that it may have effect. The author of the book 'Kashkole-e-Kalimy' has stated that "if the follower (Mureed) is one from Ajam (Non Arab) he shall be taught in his language the different stages (Kashkole-Kalim) Hz. Shaikh Fareed Shakar Gunj RAH, used to teach the remembrance of Allah (Zikr) to his followers in Punjabi language, as Ahwal Ton (the indication towards higher stages) Hawalton' (indication towards lower stages) Tonhi Ton (indication towards the application) Kashkole-e-Kalimy P:86. If a saint who is not free from error is competent to order to remember Allah, in the words which are neither, Arabic nor Quranic or from the Hadith; then the Promised

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<sup>4</sup> Translator Note: Excepting the holy Quran no other divine book is in Arabic language. The scriptures like Bible old and new Testaments are originally in Hebrew language.

Mahdi (AS) who is free from the Errors the Concluder of the Saint hood, on the basis of the divine teachings, explains the declaration of faith (Kalimas) 'LaiIla ha Illallah', in the way, which we can understand, then it would be more apt and appropriate to follow him. It is like the holy verses and the Holy traditions, holy (in nature) and acceptable and is to put to practice. The Remembrance of Allah (Zikr) is of five types:

- (1) Zikr-e-Lesani (Remembrance by tongue)
- (2) Zikr-e-Qalbi (Remembrance with heart)
- (3) Zikr-e-Roohi (Remembrance with the soul)
- (4) Zikr-e-Sirri (Remembrance secretly)
- (5) Zikr-e-Khafi (Remembrance within).

The common priests and sufis will teach their followers the above methods stage by stage and after considerable time they will teach them the Zikr-e-Khafi (i.e. fifth stage). But the Promised Mahdi (AS) had taught the Zikr-e-Khafi right from the beginning and had ordered for its practice since the Prophet SAS had called it the best of the Zikrs. The Prophet SAS himself used to do Zikr-e-Khafi only. It is evident with the holy verse "Remember Thy Lord with fear, within your hearts with submission and not loudly with your tongue, morning and evening and do not be among the negligents". In obedience to these instructions the Prophet SAS used to sit in remembrance and meditation in the morning after Fajar prayer till the sun rise and in the evening after Asar prayer till the Maghrib prayers. But what he was repeating within his heart was not known to any one. It is evident that he used to be in the Zikr-e-Khafi (Remembrance within). Had he used any words with his tongue it would have been reported in any of the numerous traditions. Since the companions who were always close to him such as Hz. Ibn-e-Masood Rz.or Hz. Ibn-e-Abbas Rz. etc. would have heard it and reported. In some of the prayers in which the Quran is recited slowly (Sirri) they have heard and reported the Quranic verses he used to recite.

For instance Hz. Ibn-e-Abbas Rz. reports that he had heard the Prophet SAS atleast twenty times reciting the Quranic Soorah of

'Alkafiroon' and 'Qulhu Allah ho Ahad,' in the sunnah prayer of Maghrib. He has recited it slowly but with the tone which can be heard by one who was standing by his side. Had he performed the Remembrance of Allah (Zikr) in the similar way it would have been heard and reported. To follow the Prophet SAS we sit these two times in Remembrance of Allah within (Zikr-e-Khafi). Our Remembrance is the guarding of the breath. When we breathe in say "Illallah tu Hai but we will not move the tongue. It would be said within our hearts. (And when we exhale our breath we say La illaha Hun Nahi) This is because without proper care of the breath the remembrance of Allah would not establish itself within the heart. Thus the Prophet SAS had said that the breath which had passed without the remembrance of Allah is dead. Thus our method of Zikr-e-Khafi and guarding of the breath is exactly in accordance with the holy Quran and the sunnah.

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL**

### **3. Offering of Tahiyatal Wudhu (ablution)**

According to the Quranic verse "(Remember Allah, while standing sitting and lying on your sides)", the Promised Mahdi (AS) had made the constant remembrance (Zikr) a Farz (Compulsory) and had prevented from other litany, repetitions and Nafil (additional) prayers which are hindrance in performing of Zikr-e-Dawam, which is compulsory. But he had kept intact the offering of two Rak'at of prayers under Tahiyatal wadhu. In spite of prohibiting additional prayers (Nafil) the offering of Tahiyatal wadhu had been permitted. On this also some people raised objections. They say that in spite of the offering of additional prayers (Nafil) by the Prophet SAS, preventing the same is incorrect. What is the reason for permitting Tahiyatal Wadhu? They do not understand that apart from the Farz, whatever religious deeds were performed by the Prophet SAS are called the Sunnah.

The Sunnah is of two kinds (1) Maukadah (2) Ghair Maukadah. The deeds which are not falling within the Sunnat-e-Maukadah or Sunnat-e-Ghair Maukadah are called the Nafil. The deeds which were always performed by the Prophet SAS are called the Sunnat-e-Maukadah. Giving up such deeds without reason is a sin, such as two Rakat before the Farz prayer of Fajr. The prayers which were offered by the Prophet SAS sometimes and which were left out at times is called the Sunnat-e-Ghair Maukadah or Mustahab. Such as the four rakat prayers before Asar or Isha prayers. For Sunnat-e-Ghair Maukadah it is the will of the person. It may be offered at times and at times it may be left or also offered regularly or left out totally. The deeds which are established with the sayings of the Prophet SAS are also treated as sunnats by the scholars. Thus the offering of Tahiyatal Wadhu would be treated as Sunnat but not the Nafil.

Since it is established with the action and saying of the Prophet SAS. In the book of Traditions Mishkat-e-Shareef in the chapter of

Tatwah first section, through Hz. Abu-Hurairah Rz. and in the second section through Hz. Bardha Rz., what ever narrations are reported about this prayer are indicative of the facts that the Prophet SAS once asked Hz. Bilal Rz. that he had seen him ahead of himself in the heavens. What is the special deed performed by him which helped him to attain such position. Hz. Bilal Rz. answered that I offer two Rakat of Prayer after every Wadhu. Further it is also reported in the same book through Hz. Ali Rz. that "one who commits sins then do Wadhu (ablution) and offer two Rakat of Salat, Allah would forgive his sins". With the deeds of the Prophet SAS also the offering of this prayer is established,

Maulvi Ehteshamul Hasan Gandhlvi in his book Ruffeq uI Hajj P:157, had quoted the Tradition (Hadith) that "Hz. Abdul Rahman Bio'uf says that I was lying in the Mosque of the Prophet SAS in a corner. I saw the Prophet SAS going out. I got up and followed him. He entered a garden, made ablution (Wadhu) and offered two Rakat of Salat and offered long Sijdah. The author of the Book Malabud Main, has treated the Tahiyatal Wadhu as Sunnat Prayers. In the Books, Ghayatul Autar and Durr-e-Mukhtar, the virtues of the Salat are highlighted.

Apart from this the Prophet SAS had induced to offer this prayer. It is reported in Sahee Muslim that Hz. Atbah .Bin Anvar had narrated that Hz. Rasool Allah SAS had stated that any Muslim who performs Wudhu (ablution) properly and stands up and offers two Rakat of Salat by turning his face and heart (towards Allah), his getting in to the Heaven had become 'Mandatory (Wajib)'. Through this narration (Hadith) it is evident that the prayer is a Sunnah prayer. But not the additional (Nafil). For this reason only the Mahdavi offer this prayer as Sunnat-e-Ghair Maukadah or Mustahab. Offering it regularly is left to the will of the individual.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Translator Note : As per the instructions of the Promised Mahdi (AS) the Mahdavis offer this Salat as a thanks giving prayer to Allah invariably after every ablution (Wudhu)

The offering of additional prayers (Nafil) by the Prophet SAS is always a matter to be considered. His action would be called as Sunnat, but not the Nafil or additional prayers. The deeds which he had performed regularly, would be called Sunnat-e-Maukadah such as Tahajud prayer (Late night prayer), this is farz for the Prophet SAS, over and above the five times prayer. On the command of Allah, the Prophet SAS had performed it as a compulsory prayer (Farz). But for his Ummat (followers) it is not compulsory (Farz). The scholars and the interpreters of the Shanah have termed it as the Sunnat-e-Maukadah. Hence the offering of this prayer as an additional prayer (Nafil) and that too very regularly cannot be true.

The remembrance of Allah always (Zikr-e-Duam) is compulsory (Farz), according to the holy verse "(Remember Allah while standing sitting or lying on sides)". Thus in view of this the Nafil prayers (Additional) are to be given up for performance of the Farz (compulsory). Specially the Nafil (Additional prayer) which is not established with any True Hadith. This is because if out of two deeds, the performance of only one is possible and the performance of other will hinder the first one, the performance of the important deed shall be accomplished. For instance if for the Fajr prayer the time is short and by performance of Sunnat prayer, there will be no time left for Farz prayer, then the Sunnat prayer is to be left and the Farz prayers completed. The same will apply here also. Performance of Zikr and its importance is established with the Holy Quran. Allah "offer prayers since Salat will prevent from evil deeds, but the remembrance (Zikr) of Allah is the greatest (deed)". In view of this specially when the importance and compulsory nature of it is established with the Holy Quran, it is necessary to give up the additional (Nafil) prayers for Remembrance (Zikr).

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL**

#### **4. Equality Among the Concluders AS (Tasviyat-e-Khatmeen AS)**

The Mahdavis do have belief that the Promised Mahdi (AS) is the follower (Taabeh) of the Prophet SAS as well as equal to him in the status. Some people have objection on the issue since they feel that the follower can not be equal to one to whom he is following. Hence they conclude that we have the faith that the Promised Mahdi (AS) is not the follower of the Prophet SAS!. This is not correct. The Promised Mahdi (AS) himself had said that he is the follower of the Prophet SAS, no person, who had accepted him as the Promised Mahdi (AS) will have a faith contrary to this. If some one is having a faith against this saying of the Promised Mahdi (AS), then he is not a Mahdavi. Similarly by the Promised Mahdi (AS), being the follower of the Prophet SAS there cannot be any effect on the equality of the Prophet SAS and the Mahdi-e-Maud (AS). Allah had ordered the Prophet SAS thus "O Mohammad SAS, follow the people of (Millat) of Ibrahim (AS)" <sup>6</sup>

Allah further says: "They (Messengers) are the people to whom Allah had guided. (O Mohammad) you follow them". Hz. Mohammad SAS, inspite of following Hz. Abraham (AS) and also following other Prophets (AS), is the highest in the status. This is because the Prophet SAS had the collective qualities of all the messengers and Prophets (AS), which were with them individually. The Prophet SAS is having the collective perfection of all the good qualities. Therefore he is the highest of all. Similarly Hz. Mahdi (AS), is the perfect follower (Taabeh-e-Taam) of the Prophet SAS. It is a fact that the followers would be of two kinds. One is defective

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<sup>6</sup> Translator Note : "Millat" had been translated as "Deen" by many of the translators. But the following of the people of Ibrahim (AS) by the Prophet SAS is evident from the "Sae" which is one of the basic deeds during the performance of Hajj. This is nothing but the following of Bibi Hajira Rz. who was a member of the "Millat" of Ibrahim (AS)

follower the second is the perfect follower, which is termed as Taabeh-e-Taam. The defective follower is one who would follow his leader in certain matters and in other matters he would not follow. This type includes all the people of the 'Ummah', who being not free from Errors, could not have perfect following of the Prophet SAS. The 'Taabeh-e-Taam' is one, who follows the person, to whom he had to follow, perfectly. This is the Promised Mahdi (AS), who being the Khalifa of Allah (AS) and is free from Errors'. (Masoom Anil Khata) is the perfect follower of the Prophet SAS. There is no doubt of any error in his following. He had all the perfections by the following which were with the Prophet SAS.

The Prophet SAS said that "the name of the Mahdi (AS) would be my name and his character would be like mine". (Abu Dawood, Tabrani). There is yet another narration (Hadith) in which it is stated that the Prophet SAS had stated the conditions and the character of the Promised Mahdi (AS) as forecasts. Then the holy companions asked "O Rasooli Allah, are you coming again? The Prophet SAS kept quite. (The Hadith). The vilaya of the Promised Mahdi (AS) is, like the Nabuvah from God (Wahbi) and his Imamah (leadership) is special. Apart from the Promised Mahdi (AS), no saint would be a saint (vail) by birth nor the Imamah (leadership) of any one (such as Imam Azam RAH, Imam Shafai RAH etc.) is supported by the Holy Book. Hz. Mohiuddin Ibn-e-Arabi RAH has written that "the concluder of Vilaya, is the Vali from the times when the clay of Adam (AS) was getting fragmentated. Apart from the Concluder of Vilaya, all the saints would become saints when the saint-hood (vilaya) is conferred on them on the fulfilment of the conditions for acquiring the vilaya".

The faith and belief of the Sunnat-ul-Jamaat is that excepting the Prophets (AS) no one is free from Errors (Ma'soom). For Mahdi (AS) the Prophet SAS by saying that he would not err had made the Mahdi (AS) free from Errors (Masoom) and had made him attached to the Prophets (AS). Contrary to this among the saints (Vail) no one is free from Errors (Ma'soom). The evidence for this is that among the Sunni people the Kashf (Divine word, revelation) of a Vali is

binding on him only but not for others. The rejection of the word of any Saint, main or the Mujtahid is not a blasphemy. But to have faith on the Promised Mahdi (AS), and to accept his words is compulsory (Farz), because every saying of the Mahdi (AS) is based on the teachings of Allah. The earlier saints and the scholars of the Ummah also had the faith that "who ever would be the Mahdi (AS) would be equal to the Prophet SAS. In the book Aqduldarr, the statement of Hz. Ibn-e-Sereen Rz. is reported that the Mahdi (AS) would be superior to Hz. Abu-bakar Rz, and Hz. Umar Rz and would be equal to the Prophet SAS . Another statement of Hz. Ibn-e-Sereen Rz. is that The Mahdi (AS) would be superior to some of the Prophets (AS) and would be equal to our Nabi SAS . The above statements quoted from "Fusoosul Hikam and the commentary on" Fusousul Hikam" lead to the conclusion of equality among the Prophet SAS and the Promised Mahdi (AS). Thus our belief is correct and in accordance with the belief of the Sunnis.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Translator Note: Hz. Syed Khundmir Siddiq-e-Vilayat Rz., Khalifa II of the Promised Mahdi AS, in his booklet "Baaz-ul-Ayat has, written that the Prophet SAS had said that for every prophet there would be one person like him (Identical/Equaling) in his Ummah; and the like would be one whose status with Allah would be like that of the prophet himself. Thus if he is having the status of the prophet, it is necessary that he should be the Khalifa of Allah (AS). For the concluder of the Nabuvah (the Prophet Mohammad SAS), also in his Ummah their would be one person like him and that person is the Promised Mahdi AS.

Mian Abdul Malik Sajavandi Alem Billah, the Khalifa of Hz. Shah-e-Dilawar Rz., has written a book in Arabic language with the title of Khasayes-e-Imam Mahdi (AS) in which he has discussed the status of the Promised Mahdi (AS) in the light of the Traditions (Ahadith) and the consensus of the great Sunni scholars and had proved that the Promised Mahdi (AS) is superior to the Khalifs, Hz. Abubakar Siddiq Rz. and Hz. Umar Rz. and that he is equal to the Prophet SAS. It is evident that this book was written for the scholars of the Makkah and Madina for their benefit.

The great, scholar of the holy group Meeran Syed Qasim Mujtahid-e-Groh RAH. in his following books has discussed the matter of equality of the concluders i.e. the Prophet SAS and the Promised Mahdi (AS) and has proved that there can not be any discrimination between the two concluders i.e. the Prophet SAS and the Promised Mahdi (AS).

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- (a) Risala Dar Saboot-e-Mahdiat
  - (b) Madan ul Aadab wa Mahkmat wa Takmeel-e-Iman
  - (c) Al Hujjat
  - (d) Jamai-ul-usul
  - (e) Risala Tasviyat-e-Khatmeen.

Another scholar Hz. Syed Shabuddin Shaheed-e-Sidot (Cuddpah) has written a book 'Mahiat ul Tasdeeq Fl Tasviatul Khatmeen' on this topic and has proved the equality among the Prophet SAS and the Promised Mahdi (AS).

The author of the book Al-Mahdi Al Maud (AS), Mian Syed Hussein (Pannagudi) has written that there is a consensus of the companions and Mohajreen of the Promised Mahdi (AS) on the equality of the Promised Mahdi (AS) and the Prophet SAS. The authors of the Kohlul Jawahar, Muqadama-e-Siraj ul Abbsar etc. have also had the same views. The scholars like Allama Shamsi RAH Allama Saadatullah Khan RAH and others have expressed the same faith in their works. It is evident that it is an admitted faith of the entire holy group from the very beginning till now. There is no contradiction on this issue from any corner. Hence the faith of equality among the Promised Mahdi (AS) and the Prophet SAS, is the faith of the holy group in the light of the Holy Quran, the Traditions (Ahadith), the Narrations (Naqleyat-e-Mahdi AS). It is also in conformity with the opinion of the great Sunni scholars like Hz. Mohiuddin Ibn-e-Arabi RAH etc.

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL**

## **5. Common Benediction Day (Bahra-e-'Aam)**

The Promised Mahdi (AS) has stated that his religion is the Book of Allah (The Holy Quran) and the following of the Prophet SAS. Thus he had prevented from all the deeds which fall in the category of innovations (Bidat). In this connection some people have doubt about the performance of Bahra-e-'Aam (common benediction day). On this day the activity is that a day earlier to the day of the anniversary of any saint, people will assemble with their priest and collectively fetch water or collect the fire wood or attend to other items of work required. This they will do collectively without any discrimination of big or small, poor or rich etc. Then the priest will distribute among the people present, whatever he had at that time. This is the Baher-e-'Aam and there cannot be any mark of innovation on it, since such type of collective efforts are not prohibited in Islam. Bahra means benediction. The assembly a day before the Anniversary of a saint is called Ijmah. The benediction and spiritual bliss of that saint is distributed to commoners on that day. The distribution is made in the manner that the people will approach the priest one by one and spread their cloth and the priest will lift with both the hands whatever edible is available at that time and put it in the spread out cloth .Very simple things like bangal gram lobha etc duly boiled would be distributed This is called Nareeza .

Once when Hz. Malik Alhadad Khalifa Groh Rz., had nothing except few breads or chapaties . The bread (Nan) was broken into small pieces and distributed to the gathering . Since that day it is called, Nan-Reza (Bread crumbs), and due to frequent use it has become Nareeza.

This type of distribution is exactly in accordance with the Hadith of the Prophet Salam that once Hz. Abu Hurairah Rz. told to the Prophet Salam that "O Prophet SAS my memory is very weak and I cannot remember any thing". The Prophet SAS asked him to spread

his cloth. Hz. Abu Hurrairah Rz. spread the cloth (of his shirt). The Prophet SAS joined his both the hands like lifting some thing and poured it in the spread cloth of Hz. Abu Hurrairah Rz. This was repeated two or three times. Hz Abu Hurrairah folded the cloth and embraced it. After that Hz. Abu Hurrairah Rz. reports that his memory became very sharp and he forgot nothing. The reason for his remembering so many traditions (Hadiths) is the same. What was given by the Prophet SAS and what was taken by Hz., Abu Hurrairah Rz. is known to these two holy personalities alone.

But it was certainly the bliss or the benediction which was given to Hz. Hurrairah Rz. On the similar lines the priests distribute the benediction in the shape of material things. Since the eyes of the receiver cannot see the spiritual bliss and the saint of whom the common benediction is distributed will have spiritual effect on the material goods. The priest who is distributing the benediction is the successor of the same saint, who had availed the bliss of the saint through different links like a chain. The best example of this is the cover of the Holy Ka'bah. If the cover is sent from a particular place, the people would touch it with respect put it on their heads and eyes and kiss it. Even though it is not put on Ka'bah, yet, it is respected since the name of Ka'bah is attached to it. This gives a connection to the cloth which elevates its status, among the eyes of the believers. On that day (the day of common benediction) fetching the water and bringing the fire wood on heads also indicates the respect and spiritual heights of the saint whose common benediction is held. These activities which are very insignificant and menial are also given respect.<sup>8</sup>

The simplicity is the basic concept of Islam. Such simple works were attended to by the Prophet SAS himself. The details can be seen in the books on the biography of the Prophet SAS. Once in a journey a goat was slaughtered. One item of work such as to skin it, cut it, and cook it was entrusted to each one of the Holy companions. Then the Prophet SAS said that he himself would collect the 'fire wood'. Thus

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<sup>8</sup> Translator Note: This teaches the dignity of labour and also collective efforts for common cause, which was the back-bone of the Islamic society and forgotten over a period of years

in this manner on a collective occasion, collecting the fire wood is the Sunnah of the Prophet SAS, which is revived on the common benediction day of each of the holy souls. In the Bahra-e-'Aam, rich people, ministers and poor persons will lift water pots or wood bundles on their heads and bring to the 'Daira' along with the priest. Any rich person or even the king doing this simple work in front of his subjects, kills his self pride (Nafs). In spite of the feeling that the servants and the people on whom they rule, may look them down for doing such insignificant work, the rich noble and even the kings do this, which is not only a lesson of equality, but also kills the pride and proud of the individual. This will help him in attaining the heaven in the Hereafter. For a work relating to the community, he had not cared about his position and the taunts of people. This is not a simple matter. Now since the water supply is available at each house, through water taps, and the electric (LPG) stoves are in use, the fetching of water or the fire wood will appear to be an additional item and uncalled for. But for performance of any Sunnat or the practices of the high priest, any such thought would be treated as a Satanic one' The running between Safa and Marva, (Sae) or throwing stones to Satan, were the acts of Hz. Ibrahim AS, Ismail AS and Hajira Rz., and were done on necessity at that time. But even when there is no necessity, today it is in practice and Allah and the Prophet SAS have ordered for and have made such things as religious work, which are Sunnat and are in accordance with the Islamic teachings, have provided basis for their retention as remembrance for future.

The importance of Bahra-e-Aam is that on that day the priest talks about the life and practices of the saint of whom the Bahra-e-Aam is conducted. This will increase in the hearts of the listeners a desire to do good deeds. Besides this, the knowledge about the religion, faith and the culture and history will also increase. The reason in conducting Bahra-e-Aam a day before the anniversary of the saints is that the Anniversary is the last day of the life of the saint, in this world. Whenever a highly placed person stays at a place and leaves it, he would give some tips, (Bakashish) to the people who have served him, before his departure. Similarly the high priests before

departing from this world to the next (Hereafter) bless them with their high spiritual positions etc. This is remembered by celebrating the Bahra-e-Aam. On the day of demise of the high priests, by celebrating the anniversary, the poor and needy people and the dependents on Allah (Fuqura) are fed. Since the meaning of the food of Urus is the food of marriage. This is to indicate that today such and such high priest had joined his real lover (Allah). Apart from this there is no other concept for this. This deed is neither prohibited nor against the Sunnah of the Prophet SAS.

The Prophet SAS, himself with the intention for the benefits and virtues for the soul of Hz. Hamza Rz. had distributed the palm dates received to him in the name of Allah. For the deceased believers, cooking some food and feeding to poor and depends of Allah (Fuqura) is not only permissible but also desirable. Since as per the saying of the Prophet SAS the best (Sadqah) charity is the feeding to hungry. Since this deed is a charity and is the source of virtues, the fixation of time for it is also not undesirable. For the reason that there will be always a thinking about performing it (which itself is a bless) and after completing it by feeding the poor, hungry and dependents on Allah (Fuqura) will be entitled for the virtues and blessings, as well as will also be a reason for increasing the virtues of the dead. For the starving poor, dependents on Allah, the saying of the Prophet SAS is enough - "For the dependents of Allah (Fuqura) the night of starvation is the night of Mairaj". Feeding the starving carries the virtue and bliss that cannot be seen by the ordinary eyes.

"The clothing of such people was the clothing to God" "Their feeding amounted to feeding Allah Himself".<sup>9</sup>

However according to the Hadith of the Prophet SAS, if some one offers prayers (Salat), observes fast (Soum) or gives charity (Sadqua) the virtue and bliss of the same if offered to his dead parents or

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<sup>9</sup> Translator Note: This is a stanza from a Hadith which was translated in Urdu poem, describing the status of the people of the Ummah who were in the end (Gruh-e-Mahdi AS) (Please see 'Almi'ar )

relatives will reach to them invariably. Offering funeral prayer, offering Fatiha at the graveyards or arranging Hajj in Lieu (Hajj-e-Badal) are such type of acts. Therefore among the Mahdavis, the offering of saathi (sixty fastings or paying the cost of food for sixty pors) in lieu of the broken fast (Soum) or for missed prayers is for the only reason that the deceased shall not be caught hold, hereafter if such things are due by him and the compensation of such defaults is not made.

"The lifting of the dead body after payment of saathi is the source for the Salvation of the dead one".

## IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

### 6. The Method to Pray (Dua)

According to the traditions (Hadiths) in Mishkat-e-Shareef on certain occasions, the Prophet SAS, had prayed asking mercy of Allah (Dua), by raising his hands. In the holy group of Mahdavis there is no evidence of raising hands for asking mercy of Allah (Dua). The reason is that firstly there are differences in the traditions (Hadith). The tradition which is in accordance or in conformity of the holy Quran is the true tradition. Even if such traditions (in Mishkat-e-Shareef) are true, the explanation would be that the actions of the Prophet SAS, were different in different times and on different occasions. Such as at times while offering Salat, he had raised his hands (Raf-e-Yadain) and had stopped it later on. At times he had offered Salat keeping his hands hanging on the sides. Such traditions are reported in the books of Traditions. But for a particular deed the last action of the Prophet SAS will cancel the earlier action for such deed. Thus now the procedure adopted for Salat by the Hanafies is considered to be the procedure according to the practice (Sunnah) of the Prophet SAS.

Quran says "Call thy Rab with humility and secretly". Thus it is better to call Him within the heart or in sijdah.

It is possible that the traditions about Dua by raising both the hands by the Prophet SAS, might be earlier to the revelation of the above Quranic verse, and after the revelation of the verse, he might have never raised his hands for pray (Dua).

H. Anas Rz. says that "I have seen the Prophet SAS praying with raised hands on two occasions. One is pray for rain fall and the other at the Graveyard, for the salvation of the dead. (Mishkat).

The Mahdavis also follow the practice as reported in this hadith. In the book "Allam ul Muqain" , written by Allama Ibn-e-Qeem, it is written that after the Farz (compulsory) prayer, the Imam's turning

face towards the congregation for Dua, is not the practice of the Prophet SAS. Therefore the Mahdavis considering it against the Sunnah avoid it. After the Farz (compulsory) salat, they pray within their hearts according to the practice of the Prophet SAS. We are not against the Dua. If it were true, the system of Dua in Sijida, after Tahiyatul Wadhu would not have been in practice with us. (which is perfectly according to the practice of the Prophet SAS) nor we would have prayed (Dua) after the performance of the Salat for 'Liatul Qadr' inspite of the practice of secrecy in pray (Dua) in sijda the pray (Dua) loudly on the occasion of Lilatul Qadr is an exception. Such exceptions will be with every deed.

For example the Salat of Zuhr and Asar in day time are to be performed silently. But on Friday, the Friday Salat though performed at of the time of Zuhr Salat, it is performed loudly in two Rak'at instead of four for Zuhr. Similar is the practice of performing Dua, Loudly on Shab-e-Qadr. On the night of power (Shab-e-Qadr), the Imam (AS) performed the same Dua which was done by the Prophet SAS himself "i.e. Allah Humma, Ahiyana Miskinawn Amatna Miskinawn Ahsharna Yawmal Quiyma Fizumratil Masakeen', but he includes the congregation also in the Dua by saying Ahyana' Amatna' and Ahshrna'. The Prophet SAS used to read the litany of Subhana Ziul Mulki Wal Malkuty' and on the third time he used to raise his sound. Thus on Shab-e-Qadr (night of power) doing Dua or offering the Tassbihat of Taraveh loudly is not objectionable.

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL**

## **7. The Salat of the Night of Power (Shab-e-Qadr)**

The Promised Mahdi (AS), for offering thanks according to the command of Allah had made this salat a Farz (compulsory) on his group. It is similar to the action of Hz. Adam (AS) for Fajr prayer, Hz. Ibrahim (AS) for Zuhr, Hz. Yakoob (AS) for Asar, Hz. Dawood (AS) for Maghrib and Hz. Younus (AS) for Isha Salat, which were offered for thanking Allah for His bless and favours. These five prayers have been made compulsory (Farz) for the Ummah. On the compulsion (Farz) of the Dugana-e-Lailatul Qadr some ignorant persons, say that it is an additional prayer in the shariat and is Nasq (cancelled), even though the consensus of scholars (Ijmah) had not treated the sixth prayer as Nasq (cancelled). Apart from the five time Salat, there are other Namaz which are compulsory (Farz) and Mandatory (Wajib), such as the Juma Salat, Eids (Festivals) Salat. The last two are mandatory (Wajib).

It is a fact that there is no much difference between Farz (compulsory) and Wajib (Mandatory) Salat. The Tahajjud prayer was compulsory (Farz) for the Prophet SAS and for the 'Ummah' it is a Sunnat Prayer (action of the Prophet SAS), But for some saints (Aulia), who felt that the following of the Prophet SAS is compulsory (Farz), had made Tahajjud prayer a compulsory Salat (Farz) for themselves. Hz. Imam Zafar (Rh) had treated vitar prayer as a compulsory salat. Other scholars treat it a Sunnah Salat or Mandatory (Wajib) since the source to determine the status is Quranic verses or the Hadiths, no one treats such conclusions as cancellation of shariah (Nasq) or an addition, But even by offering vitar Salat at Isha, or Frday prayer at the time of Zuhr, it is not treated as sixth prayer. The number of Salat remains five only. Thus treating the Dugana Lailatul Qadr, which is offered after Isha Salat, as sixth prayer is wrong. The salat remain five only. The Scholars who are not free from Error can treat vitr or Eid prayers as Farz or Wajib. Their conclusion is based on their interpretation and their

opinion. Thus the Promised Mahdi (AS) who according to Hadith is free from Error (Ma'soom) and Khalifa of Allah, according to the command of Allah, if he treats the Salat of Shab-e-Qadr as Farz, then it shall be Farz (compulsory) only. This will not be an addition or cancellation (Nasq) of Shariah, Apart from the direct knowledge from Allah, his conclusion is also based on the Quran and the Hadith.

The Quran had shown the greatness of Shab-e-Qadr (Night of Power) which means excessive prayers on that night and the Hadith says that who ever with full faith on Allah offers prayers in, Shab-e-Qadr, his past and future sins will be wiped off (Kunzi-ul-A'mal). Among the Islamic methods of prayer, the best is salat, and the minimum of salat is two Rakat.

In accordance with the Quran and the Hadith, the Promised Mahdi (AS), had made two Rakat of Salat compulsory on that night. The Prophet SAS himself had made special arrangements for the prayers on that night. Hz. Abu Zar Ghaffary Rz. says that "On the 23rd night of Ramadhan, the Prophet SAS came out and lead the Salt upto 1/3 rd night. On 24th night he did not come. On 25th night he came and lead the salat upto midnight (Half night), we said O Prophet SAS, it would be better if you lead the prayer for the whole night. Said one who stands for salat with the Imam and concludes the Salat with him shall have the benefit of Salat for the whole night. Thereon 26th night he did not appear. On 27th night he came out, and called all of us and the family members, and offered salat tilt we had fear that the Sahar would go". (Ghaniyat Talebin).

Hz. Mahdi AS has revived this practice of the Prophet SAS. He offered Salat with his family members, the inmates of Daira and others. The salat was offered till the time of Sahar had come. This practice is in vogue till this day with the holy group. This salat is offered after the half night, at about 2/3rd night, since it is the time for the descent of the bliss and favours of Allah. The reason for delay in conducting this prayers is that the people instead of sleeping shall sit and wait for the salat (performing Zikr-e-Khafi). According to the Hadith one who waits for the salat is treated as one who is

performing the salat. Thus the people who are waiting for the Shab-e-Qadr salat will have the benefit of offering the salat for the whole night. If the Salat is offered in early hours of the night people may go to sleep and may lose the blessings.<sup>10</sup>

The Prophet SAS had instructed to search for the night of power (Shab-e-Qadr) in the last 10 days of Ramadan. It cannot be said that the Prophet SAS did not have the knowledge of the correct night of power. The reason for concealing it was that the same was to be disclosed through the Promised Mahdi (AS) as a favour and bless on the holy group, for accepting the Promised one.

Haz. Ibn-e-Umar (Rz) says that "Prophet SAS said your life incomparision to past Ummahs is so small that it is equalent to the time in between Asar prayers and the sunset. And the example between you and the Jews, Christians is like a person, who had taken some one for labour on the condition on performance of half of his work he will get one qirat (coin). Thus a Jew did labour for half day and got one qirat each. He again said who will do my labour for one qirat. The Christians did it upto Asar Salat and got one qirat. Then he said who so ever perform my labour from Asar to Maghrib prayers shall get two qirats. Thus you are the people who by performing labour from Asar to Maghrib prayer shall get double wages. The Jews and the Christians got angry and said we did more labour and got less wages. Allah said had I reduced any thing in your wages and had been cruel to you? They said no. There is no cruelty. Whatever was agreed upon was paid to them. Then Allah said, this is my favour and shall show to anyone whom I liked".

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<sup>10</sup> Translator Note : The salat of Li'lat-ul-Qadr is treated as a special deed to be performed by the saint or Murshid. it is treated as one of his specialised act by the early saints. Thus it is to be lead by a priest or one who had special permission to do so from his priest. If this prayer is missed there is no Qaza for this prayer. Similarly to Fnday prayers which has no Qaza. This indicates specialty and high status of this Salat. Permission for Qaza would be like the permission for neglecting it. Some believe that it cannot be offered individually

Further the Prophet SAS said that "In the end of his Ummah, a race shall come who will get the blessing and virtues of the early Ummah". They shall be engaged in preventing the 'donot' and establishing the 'dos'. (Amarbil Mairoof 'Nahen Anil Munkir) and shall fight with those who create troubles. (Al Masabeh II vol) He further said at its end (last of Ummah) there shall be a big group with great virtues" (Mishakat).

The Prophet SAS had given the example of the labour, a similar example had been cited by the Christ (AS) that one person engaged another at a certain wage and sent him in his garden for work at early morning. After the rise of sun he engaged a few more persons and sent them for work in the garden. After noon he engaged few more persons and sent them in the garden. After midday he engaged few more labourers. Then an hour before the sunset he engaged a few more persons. At the time of disbursement of the wages he gave one Deenar to each one of them. Then the first engaged person objected that the persons who laboured for only one hour have been paid wages equal to them, even though they had laboured whole day in burning sun. The owner said that he had not committed any injustice to them. The wages agreed by them are paid properly. The matter of giving equally to others depends on his will. (Bible ch.20). In this example, the people who came early in the morning are the ancient communities. The people who came after the rise of sun are the followers of the Moses (AS). The people who came after noon are the people of the Christ (AS). The people who came after 2/3rd day are the Ummah of the Prophet Mohammad SAS. The people who came an hour before the sunset are the holy group of the Promised Mahdi (AS) which has been described by the Prophet SAS as the last of Ummah and had said that "My Ummah is like rain. It is not known as to whether its beginning is good or its ending" (Mishkat). This small prayer of Shab-e-Qadr which had made the group of the Promised Mahdi (AS) (end of Ummah) eligible for equal benefit to other people even with a small span of life of the group when compared to others.