

Mahdavi ki Namaz

(Prayer of a Mahdavi)

By

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Translator's Note

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Prayer is an obligation (*Farz*) in Islam which is expected to be fulfilled by all Muslims. The obligatory prayers, when performed in congregation, fetch a higher reward.

Imam Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} has commanded the performance of obligatory prayers in congregation not only to those who have renounced the world (*Fuqara*) but also to earners (*Kasibeen*). Emphasising the importance of congregatory prayers, the Imam^{AS} has commanded that if a person has to go to the market, he should take a companion along with him, so that when the time for prayer arrives, the prayer can be performed in congregation. This also ensures that when two Mahdavis go together they can form their own congregation and need not join the congregatory prayers of non-Mahdavis.

Imam Mahdi^{AS} has prohibited his followers from following in prayers a person who denies his *Mahdiat*. These commandments of Imam Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} regarding prohibition have been recorded in the earliest and most respectable books of *Mahdavia* like *Aqida Sharifa*, *Insaf Nama* and *Naqliyat e Miyan Abdur Rashid^{RZ}*. It is obligatory on every Mahdavi to accept and adhere to these commandments of Imam Mahdi^{AS}.

Today many Mahdavis are indiscriminately following disavowers of Mahdi^{AS} (*Munkireen*) in prayers believing that there is no difference in our prayers and theirs. The book '*Mahdavi ki NamaZ*' written by Hazrat Muhammad Nooruddin Arabi Saheb^{RH}, written in Urdu, discusses the beliefs and issues related to following an Imam in prayer. It helps Mahdavis to appreciate the importance of performing prayers behind an Imam having correct beliefs and to safeguard their congregatory and obligatory prayers.

I have translated this book into English in the hope that it will benefit Mahdavis who do not know Urdu and can read English.

Please treat any errors in the book with kindness. Send me your comments via email to smsuhael@yahoo.com. I request for your *duas* and hope that this book becomes a source of my salvation.

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Bangalore
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Acronyms used in the book

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

PRAYER OF A MAHDAVI

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Prayer (*namaz*) is the most important obligation (*farz*) of Islam. Allah has commanded its performance at numerous places in the Quran. Hazrat Nabi Kareem^{SLM} has designated it as a pillar of religion (*deen*). This means that one who destroyed his prayer has automatically destroyed his religion.

It is clear from "*Man taraka salaata muta'mada faqad kafara* – one who deliberately forsakes prayer is a disbeliever" that forsaking prayer takes one out of the pale of belief (*Iman*). That is why the Prophet^{SLM} has said that prayer is the "soul of belief" (Baihaqi). There are many other traditions (*ahadees*) from the Prophet^{SLM} on the excellence of prayer. He^{SLM} said, "Prayer is the key to heaven." (Mishkaat) and also said, "Prayer is better than every other deed." (Bukhari), and further said, "Prayer is the key to all the pious deeds (*nekiyan*)" (Abu Dawood). It is not permissible for a Muslim to forsake prayer at any time and in any state. In contrast to other obligations, no excuse is acceptable for forsaking prayers, other than madness and unconsciousness. When the excuse is no longer valid, the lapsed prayers become obligatory.

A wise man is one who is always prepared for this important obligation. It should be performed with all its constituents and conditions and with utmost concentration so that one can hope for its acceptance by Allah. This obligation is as delicate as it is important. A little carelessness and loss of concentration will cause disturbance in the prayer and will make it unworthy of acceptance. Therefore astuteness is required in this matter so that the prayer attains the status of acceptance. That is why a believer (*momin*) always tries to perform prayers behind such a person whose prayers, he is sure, will be accepted by Allah. Earlier, people of the sacred sect (*Groh-e-Muqaddasa*) performed their prayers strictly behind their own *Murshids*, because the position of a *Murshid* can be understood only by a person who has knowledge of Allah (*'Arif Billah*). But the passage of time has changed the situation so radically that there is no importance of prayers at all in the eyes of the people. People only know to perform the prayers. But they are not careful and vigilant in it.

Couplet:

That work which is done without care is not good
That talk which has no thought in it is undesirable

Due to ignorance of beliefs some Mahdavis do not see any harm in performing prayers behind a disavower (*Munkir*) of Mahdi^{AS}. Whereas, it is obligatory on every Mahdavi, who has complete faith on the *Imamat* and *Mahdiat* of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri^{AS}, to follow his commands also. Because he (Mahdi^{AS}) has said that, "Every command which I

say is from Allah and I say it on the command of Allah. The person who denies even one letter of these commands will be called to account before Allah." (*Insaf Nama*)

Hazrat Mahdi Mau'ood Alaihis Salaam has told his followers about prayer that, "Do not perform prayers behind people who deny Mahdi. If you have performed the prayer (behind them), repeat it." (*Aqida Sharifa*)

When Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} had halted in Thatta (Sindh) some companions had gone to the city on some need and performed the obligatory prayers behind an opponent of Mahdi^{AS}. Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} commanded them to repeat their prayers. (*Insaf Nama*)

The companions of Mahdi^{AS} too are unanimous in the opinion that prayer should not be performed behind disavowers (*munkiran*) of Mahdi^{AS}. (*Insaf Nama*)

In the village of Bhadriwali, Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir Siddiq-e-Vilayet^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Shah Nemat^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Malikji^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Abu Bakr^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} and other companions^{RZ} had a consensus (*ijma*) on this matter that "whoever follows a disavower of Mahdi in prayer, we will call him an outcast (*kharji*)."

Once in the city of Naharwala, at the time of *Maghrib*, when the teacher (*Muallim*) Shaikh Ahmed went forward (for leading the prayers), Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} caught his hand, pulled him back and said "You are a disavower (*munkir*) of Mahdi. It is not permissible to perform prayers behind you." Similarly, in a congregation of Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, a teacher (*muallim*) expressed the desire to lead prayers. One of the inhabitants of the Daira caught hold of his hand, pulled him behind and said, "You are a disavower of Mahdi^{AS}. It is not permissible to pray behind you." (*Naqliat-e-Miyan Abdur Rashid^{RZ}*)

The key reason, which is understood, for not performing prayers behind a disavower of Mahdi^{AS} is that he is a disbeliever (*kafir*). It is written in a Sahih Hadees that Hazrat Rasoolullah^{SLM} has said, "*Man ankaral Mahdi faqad kafara* - Whoever denies the Mahdi is a disbeliever." (*Hidayatul Kalam*)

Even in the Quran, as per the Ayat, "*Afaman kaana...*" (11:17), which is in praise of Mahdi^{AS}, hell is promised for a disavower of Mahdi^{AS}. It is apparent from, "*waman yakfur bihi mina al-ahzaabi fa annaru mawaiduhu* - but those of the Sects that reject him,- the Fire will be their promised meeting-place" (11:17) that, whosoever denies the Mahdi^{AS} from the other sects, the fire of hell is promised for him.

Further, there are many narrations of Mahdi^{AS} about the disavowers of Mahdi^{AS} being disbelievers. He said in plain words that denying his self (*zath*) is disbelief (*kufir*). Sometimes

he said, "My denial is the denial of Allah, the Quran and the Messenger of Allah^{SLM}." At other times he said, "My denial is the denial of all the prophets and their books." The reason for this is that whatever he has said or did was on the command of Allah and in the light of the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet^{SLM}. His teachings are the gist of (the teachings of) all the prophets and their books. Therefore, his (Mahdi's^{AS}) denial is absolute disbelief. Because the denial of all is evident from this, a Mahdavi, if he is really a Mahdavi, has to decide on his own whether a disavower of Mahdi^{AS} is a disbeliever (*kafir*) or not. And if this is his (disavower's) state, then what is the meaning of prayers behind him?

Amongst scholars (*Aimma*) the purity of the beliefs of the Imam is an important factor towards the soundness of the *namaz* and its following, without which the correctness of *namaz* is affected. In the case of inner purity or incorrect faith, the rule is that if a person has a defect in his belief and the defect is not to the extent of making him a disbeliever (*kafir*), then praying behind that person is permissible, but with abhorrence (*karahat*). If the defect in belief is such that the person falls in *kufir* (disbelief), then praying behind such a person is not permissible. This is written in Fatawa Alamgiri. It means that if that person has not become a *kafir* then praying behind him is permitted, but with abhorrence (*karahat*). Otherwise, it is not permissible.

None of the Islamic sects has the view that praying behind a *kafir* is permissible. Therefore, it is written in *Kifaya Sharah Hedaya (Hanafi Fiqh)*, "It is not permissible to pray behind the Jahmi and the Qadri who believe that the Quran is a creation (*makhlooq*) and behind the extremist *Rafzis* who deny the caliphate of Abu Bakr^{RZ}." (*Kashful Ghata*)

Similarly, it is clearly stated in *Al Muntahi Sharah wo Fayeeg (Hanbali Fiqh)* that, "Namaz behind a *kafir* is not correct. If the person is not aware of his *kufir*, then the *namaz* is okay for himself but not for others. This is irrespective of whether he is only a basic disbeliever (*kafir*) or he is an apostate (*Murtid*) because of some innovation (*bid'at*), etc. Further it is stated in the same book, "The *imamat* of a sinner will not be absolutely correct, irrespective of whether his sin is due to beliefs or it is due to committing unlawful deeds because Allah commands that "Afaman Kaana Muminan Kaman kaana fasiqan la yastawoon - One who is believer (*Momin*), will he be like a sinner? These two will not be the same." (32:18)

Further, it is written in *Balghatul Salik (Maliki Fiqh)* "Islam is the condition for an Imam, therefore *namaz* behind a disbeliever (*kafir*) is not correct, even if his disbelief (*kufir*) is not known at the time of praying behind him."

Similarly, it is stated in *Nihayatul Muhtaj (Shafi' Fiqh)*, "It is not correct to pray behind a person whose *namaz* is known to be false (*batal*) because he is a disbeliever (*kafir*) or is without ablutions (*wuzu*) or there is an overriding suspicion of falsehood."

Further, it is written in *Kitab Al Fiqh Ala' Mazhabul Aimmatul Arba'* that there are some conditions for congregatory prayers to be correct, one of which is Islam. Thus the Imam of a Kafir is not correct.

It is written in *Hadiyatul Mahdi (Ahle Hadees)* that, "Prohibition of praying behind an innovator (*bid'ati*) is based on abhorrence, provided the innovation (*bid'at*) does not extend to *kufir*. Otherwise *namaz* is not permissible behind him."

Shia also follow the principle that, "It is not permissible to follow in prayer one who opposes the people of truth (*shia*), a man of unknown lineage, a sinner, an uncircumcised man, a bastard, a minor and a mad man." (*Kashful Ghata* referencing *Hadiyatul Hedaya-Shia Fiqh*)

It is written in *Wasail-e-Shia*, "Muhammad bin Ali bin Jalbi has narrated from Hazrat Abu Abdullah^{AS} that he said, 'Do not follow in prayers one who calls you a disbeliever (*kafir*) nor one who you believe is a disbeliever (*kafir*).'" (*Kashful Ghata*)

It is written in *Miftah-us-Shifa'ath (Shia Fiqh)* that, "Janab Sadiq Alaihis Salam has said, 'Do not perform prayers behind a *Ghali*² or behind a person of unknown origin and one who openly commits sins' and he also said, 'Do not pray behind a person against whom you give testification of disbelief (*kufir*) nor behind one who gives testification of disbelief (*kufir*) against you.'"

From these commands, it is proved that nearly all the people of religion believe that it is not permissible to pray behind a person on whom disbelief (*kufir*) is applicable because he possesses the traits leading to disbelief (*kufir*). And in Hanbali and Shafi' Fiqh, it is not permissible to perform prayers behind a sinner even though sinning is not as big a religious crime as disbelief (*kufir*).

Owing to the necessity of companionship which Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} has prescribed for us, there will not be any Mahdavi who has not pledged allegiance (*ba'it*) to a *Murshid*. When such is the case, then every Mahdavi who is connected to a *Murshid* should reflect on what he pledged at the time of *ba'it*. Wasn't he asked to pledge that "Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} has come and gone and one who accepts is a believer (*momin*) and one who denies is a disbeliever (*kafir*)?" Apart from an untrustworthy person or a coward who has no respect, no person would want to turn away from his pledge and do deeds which are contrary to what he has pledged. Especially when the pledge has the status of a declaration on oath. People sacrifice their lives to uphold their pledge (*ba'it*) but pity the person who affirms to one thing in his pledge and then he himself acts against it. What is the trustworthiness of the pledge, speech

¹ A person belonging to a sect which believes that Hazrat Ali^{RZ} is god (translator).

or actions of such a person? If this is the condition of such a person in this world, then it is feared that he will be disgraced in the hereafter.

It is foretold thus about Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} in the Holy Quran :

"*Ya ayyuha allazeena amanoo man yartadda minkum an deenihi fasawfa yatee Allahu biqawmin...* - O you who believe! whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a community, He shall love them and they shall love Him..." (5:54)

Here the community which is referred to is the community of Mahdi^{AS}. And its advent happens at a time when people would turn their backs to their religion. That is, there would be no belief (*Iman*) left in the world. After the advent of Mahdi^{AS}, belief (*Iman*) would be bestowed afresh on those who accepted the claim of Mahdi^{AS}. Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} says that, "Allah has made and sent this servant as Mahdi at a time when religion had disappeared from the entire world; it had remained only with *majzoobs*" (*Insaf Nama*). At the time of the advent of Hazrat Mahdi^{AS}, the condition of the followers of Islam was such, that all their deeds like leading prayers (*Imamath*), passing judgments (*qaza'at*), learning of the Quran by heart (*Hifz*), obtaining knowledge, holy wars (*Jihad*), etc. were done for the sake of this world. Thus in the real sense, they had turned away from their religion and till today the condition of the opponents of Mahdi^{AS} is the same.

Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} says, "Allah sent this servant at a time when in the entire world, the work of religion was done for the sake of the world. Prayers, fasting, hajj, Quran and spiritual leadership (*Mashaiqi*) were all done for obtaining the world. No one was doing deeds for the sake of Allah. This servant was sent by Allah so that people are show the path of Allah." (*Naqliat Miyar Syed Alam^{RH}*)

In these circumstances, following an opponent of Mahdi^{AS} in prayer would mean that a religious person (*deendar*) is following an irreligious person (*bey-deen*) in prayer.

There are some *ahadees* of Rasoolullah^{SLM} which reveal that there are some people whose prayers are not accepted. He^{SLM} said, "Allah has refused to accept the prayer of an innovator – man or woman (*bid'ati*)." (*Ibn Maja*) He further said, "The prayer of sinners and of those who do not forsake obscene habits is not done." (*Tafseer Ibn Kaseer*) He also said, "The prayer of a drunkard is not accepted by Allah." (*Nisa*) Thus, when the prayer of an innovator and wrong-doer cannot gain the level of acceptability, then, to believe that the prayer of a non-believer (*ghair momin*) and irreligious person is really a prayer and to follow him is a huge mistake, especially when Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} has specifically said, "Whoever follows me is a *momin* (and not the one who hasn't followed)."

One of the important conditions of prayers is ritual purity (*taharat*). Hazrat Imam Ghazzali^{RH} has explained four levels of purity. The first level is to clean the heart of all things other than Allah. The second level is to clean the heart of undesirable characteristics like arrogance, greed, enmity, pride, etc. The third level is (avoiding) telling lies, back biting, eating unlawful things, cheating, looking at non-*mahram* women and to keep the hands and legs away from sins. The fourth level is to keep clothes and body clean of filth. (*Kimiya-e-Sa'adat*)

Hazrat Imam Ghazzali^{RH} has considered outer and inner sins also as filth and obviously disbelief (*kufri*) is greater filth than sins. Can we then believe that the prayers of a person who indulges in such filth will be accepted by Allah? With the mystics of Allah (*'Arifan-e-Ilahi*), inner filth is a much more serious issue than outer filth and they put more effort to keep the heart free of such filth.

Once a man entered the meeting of Hazrat Bayazid^{RH} and started looking here and there. Hazrat Bayazid^{RH} asked him what he was looking for. He said, "I am looking for a clean place to perform *namaz*." Hazrat Bayazid^{RH} replied, "Clean your heart and perform *namaz* wherever you wish." From this it is evident how important it is in Allah's view to clean the heart of things other than Allah. Hazrat Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} has made forsaking all things other than Allah an obligation upon his community because piety (*taqwa*) will not be complete without it. In contrast, leaving all things other than Allah has no meaning for those who do not believe in his *Mahdiat*. Therefore, how can a person who is on a high station of piety offer prayers behind a person who is trapped in the attachment and love of things other than Allah?

The world, and love and desire for it, are included in things other than Allah. Every Mahdavi believes that renouncing the world (*Tark-e-Duniya*) is obligatory and has made the desire of Allah his creed. A seeker of the world will not be a seeker of Allah. After accepting '*La Ilaha Illa Llah*', the love and desire of every other thing, except Allah, is forbidden for a believer (*Momin*). Instead, the belief (*Iman*) of such a seeker and lover is under question, because having contact with things other than Allah is in reality polytheism (*shirk*).

Allah says, "Woe on those polytheists who do not offer zakat". (41:6-7) In this Ayat, those who fail to pay *zakat* are termed as polytheists (*Mushriks*). This is because they do not pay *zakat* due to their love of money and that is polytheism (*shirk*). Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} has termed in clear words a seeker of the world as a *kafir* and has read this *Ayat* about them, "*Man kaana yuridul hayatad duniya wo zeenataha... annar* - Whoever desires this world's life and its finery, We will pay them in full their deeds therein, and they shall not be made to suffer loss in respect of them. These are they for whom there is nothing but fire in the hereafter." (11:15-16)

Amongst the opponents of Mahdi^{AS} it is neither necessary to keep the heart free of the love of the world nor does the renunciation of the world have any importance. Instead the world is their object of love. This is evident in the saying of Mahdi^{AS} itself that these people denied the Mahdi^{AS} because Mahdi^{AS} condemned the world and commanded it renunciation. (*Insaf Nama*) Thus, how will the prayers of a seeker of Allah be possible behind a seeker of the world when between the two there is a world of difference in beliefs and actions.

Allah " *Inna salaati wa nusuki... aalameen* - Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No associate has He; and this am I commanded, and I am the first to be Muslim. " (6:162-163). This command means that Allah's worship should be only for the sake of Allah and hoping for any reward from anyone is wrong.

Couplet:

This is not trading, it is Allah's worship
O Ignorant, leave the desire of reward also

In this matter, the Mahdavi viewpoint is clear – he desires only Allah from Allah.

Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} has said,

Even if all the eight paradises are given to you
Do not be content with them, and go ahead
Be magnanimous and ambitious, be in love with the Truth
You are the Phoenix of the near-by mountain. Soar (as high as you can)

But such an expectation from an opponent of Mahdi^{AS} is useless since his worship and religious practice is only to obtain the world. Thus in their mosques, Imams who lead prayers do it for a salary and compensation. Their *Huffaz* (those who remember and recite Quran) demand and take large sums of money for leading *taraveeh* prayers. If their compensation or salary is stopped, they will stop offering prayers. In such a situation, how can the prayers be for Allah? And when the prayers, instead of being for Allah, are for other than Allah (*Ghair Allah*), how can a Mahdavi tolerate such idol worship and follow them in prayers?

Quartet:

Whatever worship you do is for this world
From whom do you expect the reward
Alas! You do not have faith in Allah
What hope have you of your supplications being effective

In *Kifaya Sharah Hedaya*, which is the book of *Hanafi Fiqh*, it is written, "Do not perform prayers behind a person who takes compensation for leading the prayers." This is written by Ibn Tameem. If it is given without condition, then there is no harm.

Hazrat Rasoolullah^{SLM} has said, "*La Salatu Illa Bi Huzooril Qalb* - There is no prayer without the presence of heart." Presence of the heart is an important condition for prayers amongst all *Auliya Allah* and *Sufiya Ikram* and without renunciation of the world (*Tark-e-Duniya*) there is no chance of having presence of the heart. Therefore, Imam Ghazzali^{RH} writes, "If a person wishes to perform prayers with presence of the heart, then before performing prayers, he should cure his heart and should clean it. This is achieved by keeping the business of the world away from his heart." (*Kimiya-e-Sa'adat*)

Mystics of Allah (*Arifan-e-Ilahi*) and people who experience divine manifestations (*sahaban-e-kashf*) have always refrained from performing prayers behind those people who did not have the presence of heart. It is narrated that Bandagi Miyan Syed Abdul Latheef^{RH} once joined the *Maghrib* prayers and after one or two cycles of prayer (*rak'ats*) he broke away from the congregational prayers and performed them separately. When questioned about it, he said that the Imam was not present and had gone to the shop to purchase oil for the lamp. The Imam also acknowledged this and said that his heart was worried about the same thing.

Couplet:

Your Imam has no presence, your prayers have no delight
Leave such prayers and leave such Imams

Now, if a person does not believe that renunciation of the world is obligatory and does not think ill of having love for the world and instead his worship is for worldly gain, then praying behind such a person is to destroy our prayers with our own hands.

Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} has made obligatory the desire for vision of Allah and said, "One who does not see Allah with physical eyes, or with the eye of the heart or in a dream, is not a believer (*momin*), except for a true seeker..." (*Aqida Sharifa*) As per this edict, a believer is one who sees Allah. If this is not the case, then a true seeker is also included in the community of believers. Then, the purpose of worship of those people who are practically careless about the desire for vision of Allah and their prayer is not the same as that of a Mahdavi. Hazrat Rasoolullah^{SLM} himself has said that the reason for worship of Allah is the vision of Allah. He said, "*Inna Na'budu Allah kanaka Tara* - Worship Allah in such a way, as if you see him." By saying "*Assalaatu Meirajul Momineen* - Prayer is the ascension of believers", he made it clear that the prayer of one who does not have access up to the skies, are not prayers. In other words one who does not have this characteristic is not a believer. Thus what right do

those people, whose life does not have a subject called desire for vision of Allah, have to lead prayers with a seeker of Allah following them?

Quartet:

The Prophet^{SLM} said that *namaz* is *meiraj* (ascension)

Thus a *namazi* is one who has achieved vision (of Allah)

Will a coward even get the dust of the feet

Of a believer who has achieved the presence in the court of Truth (Allah)

There is a well known issue of Shariat that one should not follow a blind man in prayers. A denier of Mahdi^{AS} is blind because neither does he believe in the vision of Allah nor does he adhere to its conditions. Mahdi^{AS} has read this *ayat* for such a person "*Wa Man kaana fi hazihi...wo zallu sabeela* – One who is blind in this world is also blind in the hereafter and he has lost his way." (17:72) Here it is worth noting that those who are not bestowed with vision of Allah are by the command of Allah also considered to be misguided.

Couplet:

The purpose of eyes is to see in Your (Allah's) direction

If You are not near me, then what use are the eyes

Further Allah says, "*Qul hazihi sabili ... wo manit tabani* – Say this is my way towards Allah. I call upon His vision – I and the one who follows me." (12:108) Here 'one who follows' refers to Mahdi^{AS}. He has bestowed such a vision (*baseerat*) on his community because of which its inner eyes has been opened and it obtained the vision of Allah. In these circumstances, the act of a Mahdavi who has received guidance and vision (*baseerat*), in following a misguided and person not having the vision, will be a astounding action which is against wisdom and rightful conduct.

The purpose of the advent of Mahdi^{AS} was to call people towards the vision of Allah and to deliver people to a high spiritual station which is mankind's highest destination. He said that the reason for the creation of mankind was for the vision of Allah and said,

I have been created for the Vision of the Friend (Allah)

Otherwise, what other work remained for Mahdi^{AS} to be created

The effect of his teaching was that the eye of the man started seeing Allah without any veil in between and people left the world of humanity (*nasoot*) and reached the ranks of the divine (*malkut*), omnipotence (*jabroot*) and divinity (*lahut*). The Quran itself had prophesised that during the time of Mahdi^{AS} many people will see Allah.

Allah has said, “*Summa Inna Alaina Bayanahu... Yufala biha fakhirathun* – Then on Us is the explanation (to be given through the Mahdi^{AS}). But (when the Mahdi^{AS} explains you will surely deny because) you love the world and you have abandoned the hereafter (by becoming fearless of its punishment) whereas (the time of Mahdi^{AS} would be such that) on that day many faces (who believed in the Mahdi^{AS}) will be in full bloom (*ba-rounaq*) and will look towards their Lord (and will be bestowed with His vision) and many faces (who denied the Mahdi^{AS}) on that day will be gloomy (*be rounaq*) and will be thinking that they will be subjected to back-breaking treatment (that those who have believed in Mahdi^{AS} and they will leave them and will suffer loss in the world).” (75:19-25)

Thus, if the community which has been bestowed with the bounties of the vision of Allah follows the non-Mahdavis in prayers, it would amount to lowering one’s status and suffering from an inferiority complex.

Quartet:

Love of the world has stopped you here
The destination of vision was just before the eyes
Pity on him who left the meeting without quenching the thirst
The gaze of the *saqi* (Allah) was on the thirsty (person)

These are a few reasons which clearly negate the performance of prayers behind a non-Mahdavi.

But the effect of new knowledge has afflicted the mind of the young man. And mostly due to the company of outsiders, they do not exercise caution in this respect. Some of them say that when there is no difference between us and outsiders in the constituents and conditions of prayer, then what is the harm in praying behind them. But because of conformity in visible constituents (*arkan*) of prayer it does not become necessary to perform prayer behind someone. Instead, if the Imam’s belief is incorrect, then prayers behind him are not permissible.

We can get many such examples from the books of *fiqh*. For example, amongst the compulsory acts (*faraiz*) of *wuzu*, one is the *masah* (wiping) of the head. Some have taken it to be the entire head. Some have said that if *masah* is done on one-fourth head then the compulsoriness (*farziyat*) is fulfilled. But those who believe in the compulsoriness of the *masah* of the complete head will not pray behind those who believe in the *masah* of one-fourth of the head because in their view the *wuzu* itself has not been done correctly. When *wuzu*, which is a condition for prayer, is not correct, then how can the *namaz* be correct. But the *namaz* of those who do *masah* of one-fourth head will be fulfilled behind those who perform complete *masah*. Because as per their belief, the *wuzu* is correct and therefore the *namaz* is okay.

There are other such issues which have been clarified in *Kashful Ghata*. If a person with *wuzu* opens a vein to be bled (*fasad kholna*) or applies a scarificator (*pachna*) and blood comes out of his body then as per the creed of Imam Azam^{RH} his *wuzu* is broken but as per Imam Shafi^{RH} the blood or other matter which comes out on opening a vein for bleeding or applying a scarificator, *wuzu* is not broken by it. Hence, it is written in *Bajori Shafi Fiqh* that apart from private parts, if body secretions come out of other parts, for example, after opening a vein for bleeding or applying a scarificator, and if the Imam leads the prayer without performing *wuzu* afresh then a man from the Hanafi *mazhab* cannot follow this Imam because as per the *mazhab* of the Hanafi follower (*Muqtadi*) Imam is without *wuzu*. And in this very book, with reference to *sharah Al Iqtah (Shafi Fiqh)* it is written, "If you believe that a person's *namaz* is false, then following him is not correct, like a Shafi following such a Hanafi who has touched his private parts." It is written in *Ghayatul Tahqeeq (Hanafi Fiqh)* that this is the ordain on following an opponent of *mazhab*. And it is written in *Miftah Ashifa'a (Shia Fiqh)* that Janab Sadiq Alaihis Salaam has said that, "Do not do *masah* over leather socks and do not follow in prayers one who does *masah*."

When *namaz* is not possible behind one another in these cases, then how will it be possible when there is a difference of a key belief. When here the debate of *kufr* and *Eeman* is present and with a Mahdavi, the values of piety, abstinence and other constituents of religion is realised only with the acceptance of Imamana^{AS}.

Quartet:

There are scholars, *qaris* and *hafiz* all
 There's everything but the Sheikh has no belief
 Belief is for that slave of Allah
 Who is not a seeker of riches nor a follower of the devil

There are some whose eye is on numbers. They say that performing prayers along with a big congregation leads to greater reward (*sawaab*) and the congregations of opponents are very big. However, neither is there such rule in *Shariat* nor is belief based on surplus or scarcity of people. It cannot be said that the group which is big is *momin* and the group which is small is *kafir*. As against this, the people of *eeman* have been less in every era. If this was not the case then as per the population one would have to accept Muslims as *kafirs* and non-Muslims as *momins* because they have greater numbers. The Quran clearly says, "... *wa lakin aksaranasu..* – Most people will not believe" (13:1) And Allah says, "*Laqad zarana li jahannama kaseera* - We have created man and jinn for hell in large numbers." (7:179) He further says, "*Qaleelan ma tu'minoona* – Very few people will believe." (69:41) We learn from this that people with belief have always been less in number and will always be less in number. Identifying *eeman* based on excess or scarcity of people is wrong. Whereas one who accepts the principles on which *eeman* is based is a *momin* and one who

denies is a *kafir*. This is the way to investigate *eeman* and *kufr*. The denial of Mahdi^{AS} is also *kufr* as per the Quran and the Hadees. Thus, irrespective of whether the congregation is big or small, the belief of the Imam has to be taken into consideration. If he is not a *momin*, then following him in prayers should be avoided. Instead, one who knowingly follows is a sinner.

Some people who have performed Haj, see the big gathering of lakhs of Muslims in Kabatullah. On seeing the big congregation, they think that at such a time and in such a holy place and that too when such a big congregation would not be available elsewhere, performing their own *namaz* by leaving such a big congregation is incorrect. But the question is, who is leading the prayers of this big congregation? Is he being paid any salary or not? If he is getting a salary, then what is he performing the *namaz* for? Will the *namaz* performed for things other than Allah become *namaz* for Allah, just because it is performed in Kaaba?

The second thing is, will a man with wrong beliefs become one with correct beliefs as soon as he enters Kaaba? If it is so, then there are 73 sects amongst Muslims and the existence of these sects is as per the prophesy of Nabi Kareem^{SLM} and its wordings are this, "Amongst them 72 sects will go to hell, only one sect will enter paradise." Saying that one will go to hell means saying that he is a *kafir*. Because as per Quranic Ayats only *kafirs* will enter hell. We have to ask, if a sect believes that it is destined for heaven, then will the other sects who have separate beliefs, on entering Kaabatullah, become destined for paradise without changing their beliefs due to the sacredness of the place? If that is not the case, then why should a Mahdavi be compelled to think that people of other sects have become *momins* by entering or by being at the Kaaba? Once upon a time, the Kaaba had idols in it. But because of the sacredness and high stature of the Kaaba they did not become worthy of worshipping. Instead, those who worshipped them were still considered misled.

In the fourth and fifth century, this very Kaaba was under the domination of the Fatimi Khalifas of Egypt for nearly 80 years. In the sight of Ahl-Sunnat, during this period could *namaz* could be performed behind the Fatimi Khalifas and their appointed Imam who were Shias by faith? If the answer is no, then how can there be a justification now that just because a disavower (*munkir*) of Mahdi^{AS} is appointed the Imam there, he is also considered to be with *eeman*? Kabatullah is a place about which Huzoor^{SLM} has said, "One *namaz* here fetches the reward of one lakh prayers." So what kind of wisdom is it that such a tremendous reward is lost by following an Imam with incorrect belief?

Quartet:

One whose inside is black will not gain anything
Even if he confines himself to the House of Allah
Even if he forgetfully steps in a house of idols
A believer will not come under the trap of the devil

For a *momin*, as much as swiftness and preparedness is required in the worship of Allah, keeping an eye on the condition of the heart is equally required.

The self (*nafs*) and the devil (*shaitan*) always accompany the man. And at every step the possibility of being misguided and going astray exists. Various apprehensions are born in the heart and the devil, using all kinds of beautiful words, tries to misguide man from the guided path. The first obligation on a Mahdavi is that he reflects on these things and never does anything which has even a hint of misguidance and by which his *eeman* is disgraced.

Quartet:

The devil is behind you day and night
Your self residing within you is also after you
If there is a thought to escape from this wickedness
It cannot be obtained through anything, except the remembrance of Allah

A Mahdavi should be rightly proud that Allah has given him the acceptance (*tasdiq*) of Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} and has elevated his status. Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} says, "Everyone's utmost limit (*intiha*) is our starting point (*ibtheda*)."
By the command of Allah he has made the commands of *vilayet* obligatory on his community and has bestowed the status of *vilayet* on every member of the community. Hazrat Imam Ghazzali^{RH} has told of three statuses of the creations of Allah. The common (*aam*), the specific (*khas*) and the specific of specifics (*khasul khas*). When others' utmost limit is the starting point for Mahdavis, their inclusion will be in the specific of specifics. In such a situation, how can he follow in prayers a person whose religious status is far behind his own.

Quartet:

One's starting point (*ibteda*) is another utmost (*inteha*)
He who has access to the high skies every moment
Why will he cast a glance on the two worlds?
How will he allow his stature to diminish?
