

Chapter 14: Life of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) – The Fourteenth Infallible

1. Relating to the felicitous birth, name and agnomen of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) and his noble mother

ʿAllāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī writes in his Jilāʿul ʿUyūn that the most renowned date of his (a.t.f.s.)’s blessed birth is that it occurred in the year two hundred and fifty five Hijrah, and also two hundred and fifty six, or even two hundred and fifty eight Hijrah. It is acclaimed that it was Friday night on the fifteenth of the month of Shaʿbān, or even the eighth of that month. It is unanimously agreed that he (a.t.f.s.) was born in Sāmarrāʾ. His (a.t.f.s.)’s eminent name and agnomen (Kunīyah) is similar to the name and agnomen of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). It is not lawful to pronounce his name during the period of his concealment (Gaybah), while the wisdom behind it is a secret.¹ Imām

¹ In this regard, we desire to quote the view of the eminent scholar Sayyid Muḥammad Taqī al Ḥafḥānī. He writes, that by reconciling the two types of Aḥādīth; that is those that prohibit the taking of name (a.t.f.s.) and those that allow, we can conclude that it is not allowed to do so in the gathering of the common people and otherwise it is allowed. Since any act can be considered lawful if it has been performed by an Infallible (Maʿṣūm) or if it was done in his presence but he did not say anything against it. In those Aḥādīth there is no indication that we can give up the traditions that prohibit the mention of name. On the basis of this, it is obligatory to take them into consideration. That which supports our contention are the two written pronouncements (Tawqīʿ), mentioned in the book Kamāluddīn (by Shaikh al Ṣādūq) in one of which the Imām is reported to have said, “Accursed, accursed is the one who utters my name in the gathering of people”. And the other one is that Abū ʿAlī Muḥammad bin Ḥammām says, I heard Muḥammad bin ʿUthmān al ʿAmrī say that a written pronouncement (Tawqīʿ) was issued in a familiar handwriting that said, “Curse of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon the one who utters my name in the gathering of people”. It can also be supported by the statement of Muḥaqqiq (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Dāmād that, “The scholars are unanimous that it is prohibited to mention the blessed name of His Eminence (a.t.f.s.). Also in favour of this is the logical and common perception that to mention a lofty personality by his titles without pronouncing his name is a kind of respect to him as is clear to even lay persons, what to say of the scholars and intellectuals. And the Almighty Allāh (s.w.t.) is aware of the realities of legislations. Another point that supports this is the instance of Ḥadīth al Lawḥ (Ḥadīth of the tablet) in which Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) told Jābir bin ʿAbdullāh al Ansārī to meet him in private. On the basis of this the mention of the Imām’s name in a gathering is not allowed. Without any doubt, it is appropriate and precautionary to mention His Eminence by his titles, even when we are not in gatherings and assemblies, and not to mention his promised name so that we may be free from the doubt of opposing an obligatory order; and also it is a sort of respect and honour towards Imām (a.s.). Rather this manner is seen

(a.t.f.s.)'s blessed titles are mentioned as Al Mahdī (the guided one [by Allāh]), Al Khātam (the Seal [of the Vicegerents]), Al Muntazar (the awaited one), Al Hujjah (the Evidence), Al Şāhib (the Master).

Ibn Bābawayh (al Qummī) and Shaikh al Ṭūsī relate through their reliable chain of transmitters from Bishr bin Sulaymān (al Nakhkhās), a dealer in slaves, who was from among the progeny of Abū Ayyūb al Anşārī, and was among the attendants of Abil Ḥasan (Imām al Hādī) and Abī Muḥammad (Imām al `Askarī) and their neighbour at Surr Man Ra`ā (Sāmarrā'). He says that one day Kāfūr al Khādīm came to me and said, "Our Master Abul Ḥasan `Alī bin Muḥammad al `Askarī (al Hādī) has called you to him". I came to him (a.s.) and sat in his presence. He (a.s.) then told me, "O Bishr! You are from the progeny of the Anşār, while you have not inherited this love (for us), except as inheritance from the former ones to the latter ones. Moreover you are among the reliable ones for us, the Ahl al bait (a.s.). Verily I have selected you and dignified you through an excellence by which you shall attain distinction among the Shī`ah in (our) love and by means of a secret that I shall divulge to you. I dispatch you to buy a slave-girl". Saying this, he (a.s.) wrote down a letter in an elegant Roman handwriting and affixed his seal upon it. Then he removed a yellow bag containing two hundred and twenty dīnār.

Imām (a.s.) handed me the things and told me, "Go to Bagdād with it and be present on the passageway to the Euphrates (Furāt) on morning of such and such day". Then he (a.s.) told me that you shall see a dinghy of slaves arrive beside you containing slave-girls. You shall find there buyers among the agents of the Banī `Abbās commanders and a group of `Arab youth. When you see his, stand far away and look for a man named `Umar bin Yazīd (al Nakhkhās) the entire day. He shall display a slave-girl with such and such qualities to the buyers, who would be wearing two thick silken dresses. She would be refusing to be displayed and touched by the buyers and declining to submit to the one trying to touch her. You shall hear her cry in the Roman language from behind her delicate veil and know that she shall be saying, "O disregard of the veil"! Then one of the buyers shall say, "I shall give you three hundred dīnār, while her chastity has increased my inclination towards her". Hearing this, she shall reply to him in the `Arabic language, saying, "Even if you come in the garb of Sulaymān bin Dāwūd (a.s.) and

in the statements of Imāms (a.s.) and their followers. (Sayyid Muḥammad Taqī al Mūsawī al Işfahānī, "Mikyālul Makārīmi fī Fawā`edil Du`ā' lil Qā'em") And Allāh (s.w.t.) is the Best Knower!
(translator)

the resemblance of his kingdom, yet I shall not be inclined towards you. Then have pity upon your amount”.

Then Al Nakhkhās shall tell her, “Then what is the solution? There is no way except that I should sell you”. She shall reply, “However what is the haste? There is no other way except that I should select a buyer for whom my heart may find solace and I might be assured of his loyalty and his trustiness”. When you hear this, arise and tell `Umar bin Yazīd al Nakhkhās, “Verily you have a sealed letter from one of the notables written in the Roman language and handwriting. It contains description of his generosity, his loyalty, his nobility and his munificence. Let her read it and reflect upon the character of its writer. Then if she is inclined towards him and is pleased with him, I am his agent in buying her from you”.

Bishr bin Sulaymān says that I complied with all that my Master Abul Ḥasan (al Hādī) had commanded me in matters of the slave-girl. As soon as she looked at the letter, she wept bitterly and then told `Umar bin Yazīd, “Sell me to the writer of this letter”. Then she swore firmly with oath that in case he did not agree to sell her to him, she would kill herself. Then he discussed her price with me until it settled upon the exact amount of dīnār my Master (a.s.) had given me. I paid him the amount and received the slave-girl, who was smiling and was happy. Then I took her to the house that I had rented at Bagdād for her. When she settled down, she removed the letter of our Master (a.s.) from her pocket, touched it, placed it upon her eyes and her cheeks and rubbed it upon her body. Seeing this, I asked her in astonishment, “You kiss the letter without recognizing its writer?” She replied, “O incapable and weak one in recognizing the status of the progeny of Prophets (a.s.)! Lend me your ear and empty your heart (to make you understand). I am Malīkah, the daughter of Yashū`ā (Joshua) bin Qayṣar (Caesar), the emperor of Rome (Rūm). While my mother is from the progeny of the disciples (Ḥawārīyīn) attributed to the vicegerent of Masīḥ (`Īsā) Sham`ūn. I shall relate to you something astonishing”.

Saying this she said that, my grandfather, the Caesar, desired to marry me to the son of his brother, while I was a girl of thirteen years. He gathered in his palace three hundred men from the progeny of the disciples (Ḥawārīyīn) among the priests and monks; seven hundred people from among the noblemen; and four thousand men from among the commanders of the army, chiefs of the troops, notables of the military and the leaders of clans. Then he commanded a throne to

be brought, that was splendour in his kingdom and was studded with various types of gems. He commanded it to be raised upon forty pillars. When his nephew ascended it, while the cross was raised and the bishops stood and opened the scrolls of the bible (Injil), the cross came down and fell upon the earth, while the pillars of the throne collapsed and came down. The boy fell down from the throne unconscious. Seeing this, the colour of the bishops changed and their limbs trembled. Their leader then addressed my grandfather, saying, "O emperor! Excuse us from this assembly that is ill-omened and evidences the downfall of the Christian belief and royal faith".

Hearing this, my grandfather considered it a severe evil portent and told the bishops, "Fix the pillars and raise the crosses, then summon the brother of this miserable one, so that I may marry this girl to him, and transform the ill omen with felicity". When they did so, the incident repeated as before and the people scattered away. Seeing this, my grandfather arose in a dejected state, entered the women's quarters and drew the curtains.

On that very night I dreamt that Masīḥ (ʿĪsā), Sham`ūn and some of the disciples (Ḥawāriyyīn) had gathered in the palace of my grandfather and erected a pulpit (Minbar) of light, whose elevation extended to the heights of the heavens. They placed it at the spot where my grandfather had kept his throne. Just then Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) arrived along with his son in law and his Vicegerent (Imām `Alī) and a group among his children (a.s.). Seeing him (s.a.w.a.), Masīḥ (a.s.) proceeded further and embraced him. Then Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) told him, "O Spirit of Allāh (Rūḥ Allāh)! I have come to betroth Malīkah, the daughter of your vicegerent Sham`ūn, to this son of mine". Saying this, he (s.a.w.a.) pointed towards Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī), the son of the writer of this letter. Hearing this, Masīḥ (a.s.) looked at Sham`ūn and said, "You have been bestowed a dignity. Then link your relationship with the relation of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.)". He said, "I have done so".

Thereafter Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) ascended the pulpit (Minbar), delivered a sermon (Khuṭbah) and married me to his (s.a.w.a.)'s son (a.s.), while Masīḥ (a.s.) bore witness, as also the sons of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and the disciples (Ḥawāriyyīn). When I arose from my sleep, I dreaded to reveal this dream to my father or my grandfather in fear of being killed. I kept it a secret and did not reveal it to them. My heart was replete with the love of Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī), until I stopped food and drink, while my body turned feeble and I became severely ill.

There was no doctor in the Roman towns, except that my grandfather called him and asked for medicine. Then when he lost hope, he told me, "O light of my eyes! Do you have any desire in this world that I can fulfil for you?" I replied, "O grandfather! I see that the doors of relief are shut upon me. Then if you lift off punishment from upon the group of Muslim prisoners in your prison, free them off the shackles, bestow upon them and release them, I hope that Masīḥ (a.s.) and his mother (s.a.) may grant me cure". When he did so, some signs of health manifested in my body and I ate some food. Seeing this, he was joyous and took to honouring and bestowing the prisoners.

After a passage of fourteen nights, I saw the Mistress of the women-folk Fāṭemah (s.a.) visit me, while Maryam, the daughter of `Imrān and a thousand Ḥouries of paradise accompanied her (s.a.). Then Maryam (s.a.) addressed me, saying, "This is the Mistress of the women-folk (s.a.), mother of your husband Abū Muḥammad (a.s.)". Hearing this, I clung on to her (s.a.), wept and complained to her regarding Abū Muḥammad (a.s.)'s refusal to visit me. Hearing this, she (s.a.) replied, "My son Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) shall not visit you until you ascribe associates to Allāh (s.w.t.) upon the Christian faith. While my sister Maryam (s.a.) disassociates herself from your religion in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then if you are inclined towards the pleasure of Allāh (s.w.t.), the pleasure of Masīḥ (s.a.) and Maryam (s.a.) and the visitation of Abū Muḥammad (a.s.), then you should say: I bear witness that there is no other Deity except Allāh (s.w.t.) and that my father Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is the Messenger of Allāh". When I pronounced these words, she (s.a.) pressed me to herself and sanctified me. Then she (s.a.) said, "Now you should expect a visit from Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) and I shall now dispatch him to you". I awoke from my dream and was inclined and expecting to meet Abū Muḥammad (a.s.). When the next night came up, I saw Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) and told him, "You oppressed me O my dear, when I harmed myself in a desire to be treated by your love". Imām (a.s.) replied, "My delay in coming to you was only due to your polytheism (shirk). Now when you have submitted (to Islām), I shall visit you every night until Allāh (s.w.t.) unites us evidently". His (a.s.)'s visitation to me has not stopped from that time until now.

Bishr says that then I questioned her how she landed among the captives. She replied that one night Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) informed me, saying, "Your grandfather shall dispatch an army to fight the Muslims on such and such day and then himself follow them. You should join them at such and such place in disguise

wearing a dress of a maid, along with a group of maids. I did as commanded and we encountered the vanguard of the Muslim army, until my matter reached, as you saw and witnessed. They did not realize that I was the daughter of the Roman emperor until now, except you, when I myself informed you. The person whose share of booty I fell into asked my name and I hid it from him and said that it was Narjis. Hearing this, he said, "Name of a slave-girl"!

Bishr says that again I questioned her, "It is astonishing that you are Roman, while you speak (fluent) `Arabic?" She replied, "Yes, my grandfather deputed a woman translator for me to teach me the etiquettes, due to his fondness and interest. She would visit me every morning and evening and taught me the `Arabic language until I persisted in it and gained control upon it from her".

Bishr continues to say that when I took her to Surr Man Ra'ā (Sāmarrā'), I entered the presence of Abul Ḥasan (Imām al Hādī) and he (a.s.) asked her, "How did Allāh (s.w.t.) display to you the honour of Islām and the dishonour of Christianity, as also the dignity of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahl al-bait (a.s.)?" She replied, "How can I describe to you O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) regarding something that you know better than me?" Imām (a.s.) said, "I desire to favour you, then which among these are dearer to you, ten thousand dinar or glad tidings regarding eternal honour?" She replied, "Rather the glad tidings". Then Imām (a.s.) continued, "Have glad tidings of a son, who shall rule the world, the east and the west; and shall fill the earth with justice and equity as it shall be filled with oppression and inequity". She asked from whom the son would be born to her and Imām (a.s.) replied, "From the one whom the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) betrothed you in the Roman language on such and such night, such and such month and such and such year". She again asked, "Through Masīḥ (a.s.) and his vicegerent?" Imām (a.s.) asked, "To whom did Masīḥ (a.s.) and his vicegerent marry you?" She replied, "To your son Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī)". Then Imām (a.s.) asked her whether she recognized him (a.s.) and she replied, "Did any night pass by when I did not see him (a.s.) from the night I accepted Islām at the hands of the Mistress of the women-folk (s.a.)?" Thereafter our Master (al Hādī) addressed his servant Kāfūr saying, "O Kāfūr! Call my sister Ḥakīmah". When she arrived, Imām (a.s.) told her, "She is the one". Hearing this, Ḥakīmah embraced her for a lengthy period of time and was very pleased with her. Then Abul Ḥasan (al Hādī) told her, "O daughter of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Take her to your house and train her in (Sharī`ah) ordinances and customs. Since she is the

wife of Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī) and the mother of Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.)".

Shaikh al Kulaynī, Ibn Bābawayh (al Qummī), Shaikh al Ṭūsī, Sayyid al Murtadhā and others among the traditionists relate through their reliable chain of transmitters from Ḥakīmah that I possessed a slave-girl named Narjis. My nephew Imām al `Askarī (a.s.) once visited me and kept looking at her. Seeing this, I told him (a.s.), "O my Master! Perhaps you desire her. Then should I send her to you?" He (a.s.) replied, "No O aunt! Rather I am astonished for her". I asked him (a.s.) what astonished him and he (a.s.) replied, "A child shall be born to her, an eminent one near Allāh (s.w.t.), who shall fill the earth with justice and equity as it shall be filled with oppression and inequity". I again asked, "In that case should I send her to you O my Master?" He (a.s.) replied, "Seek permission from my father in this matter".

Hearing this, I came to the house of Abul Ḥasan al Hādī (a.s.), saluted him and sat in his presence. He (a.s.) started his speech, saying, "O Ḥakīmah! Dispatch Narjis to my son Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī)". I replied, "O my Master! I came to you to seek permission for it". Hearing this, he (a.s.) said, "O auspicious one! Verily Allāh (s.w.t.) loves to make you a partner in the reward and bestow you a fortune in goodness". I immediately hastened to my house, decorated her and married her to Abū Muḥammad (a.s.), while I united them in my house. He (a.s.) resided in my house for some days and then returned back to his father (a.s.), while I sent her along with him (a.s.).

When Abul Ḥasan (Imām al Hādī) passed away, Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī) succeeded him, and I visited him as I visited his father (a.s.). One day Narjis came to me to remove my footwear and said, "O my mistress! Let me remove your footwear". Hearing this, I said, "Rather you are my mistress and my lady! By Allāh (s.w.t.)! I shall neither let you remove my footwear, nor serve me; instead I shall serve you with my eyes". When Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) heard this, he told me, "May Allāh (s.w.t.) reward you with goodness O aunt"! I sat near him (a.s.) until sunset and then called a slave-girl, saying, "Bring me my veil so that I may leave". Hearing this, he (a.s.) said, "Sit with us tonight. For tonight a child shall be born who shall be eminent near Allāh (s.w.t.) and Allāh (s.w.t.) shall enliven the earth for him after its death".¹ I asked him (a.s.), "From whom O my Master? Since I do

¹ Refer to the Qur'anic Verses, **"He brings forth the living from dead and brings forth the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after its death, and thus**

not see any signs of pregnancy in Narjis". He (a.s.) replied, "From Narjis and none else apart from her". Hearing this, I went to Narjis and made her lie upon her back; however I did not see any signs of pregnancy in her". I returned back to him (a.s.) and informed him what I had done. Hearing this, he (a.s.) smiled and said, "Her pregnancy shall manifest upon you at Fajr. Since her similarity is that of the mother of Mūsā (a.s.). Pregnancy did not manifest from her, while none recognized it until the time of her delivery, since Fir`awn would split open the bellies of the pregnant ones in search of Mūsā (a.s.); while he (a.t.f.s.) is a similarity of Mūsā (a.s.)".

It is related in another report that Imām (a.s.) said, "We, the group of Vicegerents (a.s.) are not borne in the bellies, rather we are borne in the flanks. And we do not arrive from the wombs; rather we arrive from the right thighs of our mothers. Since we are the Light of Allāh (s.w.t.) that is not soiled by impurities".

I went back to Narjis and informed her, while she said, "I neither see anything nor any sign". Therefore I spent the night there, broke my fast and slept near Narjis. I looked at her every time and found her sleeping, ultimately my confusion increased. Then I remained awake more that night and performed abundant Prayers. While I was performing the Witr Prayers of the Nightly Prayers, Narjis arose, performed her ablutions (Wudhū`) and started to recite the Nightly Prayers. As soon as the initial Fajr came up, doubt arose in my heart, when Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) called out to me and said, "Do not make haste O aunt! For the matter has neared". Suddenly I saw discomfort in Narjis and I pressed her to my heart and recited the Names of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon her. Again Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) called out to me, saying, "Recite Sūratul Qadr upon her". I started to recite it upon her and then asked her how she left. She replied, "The matter that was informed to you by my Master (Imām al `Askarī) has manifested". I continued to recite (Sūratul Qadr) as commanded by my Master (a.s.), while the child in the womb replied to

shall you (too) be brought forth (after you are dead)". (Sūratul Rūm: 19); **"And of His signs is that He shows you the lightening causing awe and hope, and sends down from the heavens water and gives life with it to the earth after its death; verily in this are signs for a people who understand".** (Sūratul Rūm: 24); **"Look then at the traces of Allāh's Mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death; verily He is the Giver of life to the dead; and He has power over all things".** (Sūratul Rūm: 50); and **"Know you that Allāh enlivens the earth after its death; indeed have We made the signs clear unto you, that you may understand".** (Sūratul Ḥadīd: 17) (translator)

me and recited similar to me and even saluted me. I was awe-struck when I heard it, when Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) called out to me, saying, "Do not wonder at the Decree of Allāh (s.w.t.). Allāh (s.w.t.) has bestowed us with wisdom during (our) infancy and made us His Evidence (Ḥujjah) upon His earth in (our) old age".

His (a.s.)'s speech had not yet concluded when Narjis disappeared from my sight and I could not see her, as if a curtain was placed in between us. I ran screaming towards Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) and he (a.s.) told me, "Return back O aunt, for you shall find her in her place". I returned back and soon the curtain was lifted off between us. While I was in that state, a light came upon her that stunned my eyes. Just then I saw a child (a.t.f.s.) prostrating upon his face, kneeling upon his knees, lifting his fingers towards the heavens, while he was saying, "I bear witness that there is no other Deity except Allāh, there is no partner for Him. And verily my grandfather is the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and my father is the commander of the faithful (Amīrul Mu'minīn)". Then he (a.t.f.s.) named each Imām (a.s.), one after the other, until he reached himself and said, "O Allāh (s.w.t.)! Fulfil what You promised me, and complete my matter, and establish my feet, and fill the earth with justice and equity through me".

According to a report (from Ḥakīmah) it is related that when the Master (a.t.f.s.) was born, I saw a light dazzling from him that reached the horizon of the skies. I saw white birds descending from the heavens and caress their wings upon his head, his face and his entire body. Then they flew away and Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) called out to me, saying, "O aunt! Hand me over my son". When I uncovered him (a.t.f.s.), I saw him duly circumcised, glad, pure and purified (state), while it was written on his right hand, **"And say you: the truth has come and the falsehood has vanished; verily falsehood is (a thing by nature) vanishing"**.¹ Then when I brought the child (a.s.) to him (a.s.) and placed him in the hands of his father, he (a.t.f.s.) saluted him (a.s.). Then Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.t.f.s.) lifted him up and placed his tongue in his mouth, while he caressed his back, his ears and his limbs. Then Imām (a.s.) told him (a.t.f.s.), "O my son! Speak by the Power of Allāh (s.w.t.)". He (a.t.f.s.) sought Refuge of Allāh (s.w.t.) from the Shayṭān, the castaway, and started to say, **"In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. And intend We to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were considered weak in the land, and to make**

¹ Holy Qur'ān, Sūrat Banī Isrā'īl: 81

them the Imāms (Guides in faith), and to make them the heirs. And to establish them with power in the earth; and to show the Fir`aun and Hāmān and their hosts to see from them what they did dread.”¹ According to the reliable Aḥādīth, this verse (Āyah) was revealed in praise of Imām (a.t.f.s.) and his eminent Forefathers (a.s.).

Ḥakīmah continues to say that then he (a.t.f.s.) invoked (Allāh’s) salutations upon the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), upon Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.) and the A’immah (a.s.), one after the other, until he reached his father. Birds were flapping their wings upon his (a.t.f.s.)’s head, then Imām (a.s.) told one of them, “Carry him and safeguard him, and bring him to us every forty days”. The bird carried him (a.t.f.s.) and flew towards the heavens, while all the other birds followed it. I heard Abū Muḥammad (a.s.) say, “I hand you over in the protection of the One Whose protection the mother of Mūsā (a.s.) handed over Mūsā (a.s.)”. Hearing this, Narjis wept and he (a.s.) said, “Remain silent! For verily suckling is unlawful upon him (a.t.f.s.) except through you. He (a.t.f.s.) shall be returned back to you similar to Mūsā (a.s.) who was returned back to his mother. Then Allāh (s.w.t.) says: **So We restore him to his mother that her eyes might be refreshed**.”² Ḥakīmah says that then I asked him what was the bird and Imām (a.s.) replied, “It is Rūḥul Quds, the one authorized upon the A’immah (a.s.) to adapt them, direct them and foster them with knowledge”.

Ḥakīmah continues to say that after a passage of forty days, the boy returned back and my nephew (a.s.) summoned me. When I entered his (a.s.)’s presence, I saw a lad (a.t.f.s.) moving and walking near him. I told him (a.s.) in astonishment, “My Master! This child looks two years old”! Imām (a.s.) smiled and then said, “Verily the sons of Prophets (a.s.) and Vicegerents (a.s.) are A’immah (a.s.), they grow up opposite to others. And verily the lad (a.t.f.s.) is from amongst us (the A’immah), then his month is equal to a year (of others). Moreover, a child from among us (the A’immah) speaks in his mother’s womb, recites the Qur’ān and worships his Lord (s.w.t.); while the Angels obey him during the days of his suckling and visit him every morning and evening”.

Ḥakīmah says that I would constantly see the boy every forty days until I saw him transformed into a man some days before the death of Abū Muḥammad (al

¹ Holy Qur’ān, Sūratul Qaṣaṣ: 5-6

² Holy Qur’ān, Sūratul Qaṣaṣ: 13

ʿAskarī). I asked Abū Muḥammad (al ʿAskarī) in astonishment, "Who is this man that you command me to sit in his presence?" Imām (a.s.) replied, "He is the son of Narjis, while he is the Caliph (Khalīfah) after me. After some time you shall lose me, then listen to him and obey him". After some days Abū Muḥammad (al ʿAskarī) passed away and people quarreled among themselves. However I, by Allāh (s.w.t.), would see him (a.t.f.s.) every morning and evening. He (a.t.f.s.) would inform me whatever I inquired from him, by Allāh (s.w.t.), I would desire to question him (a.t.f.s.), however he would precede me in replying to them.

It is stated in another report from Ḥakīmah that after three days (of his birth), I longed to see the 'friend of Allāh' (she meant Imām al Mahdī) and therefore went to meet them and inquired regarding him. Imām (al ʿAskarī) replied to me, saying, "The one who is more worthy of him than you has taken him away. Then come to us on the seventh day". Thus I went to him (a.s.) on the seventh day and saw my Master (a.t.f.s.) in a cot, while light was emanating from him, similar to a (full) moon of the fourteenth". Then Abū Muḥammad (al ʿAskarī) told me, "Bring my son to me". I brought him (a.t.f.s.) to him (a.s.) and he placed his blessed tongue in his mouth and then told him, "Speak my son". He (a.t.f.s.) said, "I bear witness that there is no other Deity except Allāh (s.w.t.)"! Then he (a.t.f.s.) invoked salutations upon Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.), Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) and the A'immah (a.s.) and stopped at his father (a.s.). Then he (a.t.f.s.) continued, **"In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. And intend We to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were considered weak in the land, and to make them the Imāms (Guides in faith), and to make them the heirs"**.¹

Then Imām (al ʿAskarī) addressed him (a.t.f.s.), saying, "O my son! Read what Allāh (s.w.t.) revealed upon His Prophets (a.s.) and his Messengers (a.s.)". Thus he (a.t.f.s.) started with reciting the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) of Ādam (a.s.) and recited it in the Syriac (Suryāniyyah) language, followed by the Book of Idrīs (a.s.), the Book of Nūḥ (a.s.), the Book of Hūd (a.s.), the Book of Ṣāleḥ (a.s.), the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) of Ibrāhīm (a.s.), the Torah (Tawrāt) of Mūsā (a.s.), the Psalms (Zabūr) of Dāwūd (a.s.), the Bible (Injīl) of Īsā (a.s.) and the Furqān (Qur'ān) of my grandfather, the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). Thereafter he (a.t.f.s.) started to relate the incidents relating to the Prophets (a.s.) and the Messengers (a.s.) until

¹ Holy Qur'ān, Sūratul Qaṣaṣ: 5

his age.

Then Imām (al `Askarī) continued to say that when Allāh (s.w.t.) bestowed me Al Mahdī (the guided one) of this community (Ummah), He (s.w.t.) dispatched two Angels, who lifted him (a.t.f.s.) up until the pavilion of the Divine Throne, in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then Allāh (s.w.t.) addressed him (a.t.f.s.), saying, "Welcome to you my slave (designated) for defense of My Religion, and manifestation of My command and the guided one (al Mahdī) for my slaves. I have sworn that I shall reproach (the sinners) on your behalf, and on your behalf bestow (the righteous), and on your behalf forgive (the ones seeking pardon), and on your behalf chastise (the sinners). Return him (a.t.f.s.) back O Angels! Return him back! Return him back to his father (a.s.), a clement returning, and inform him that he (a.t.f.s.) is under My Guarantee, and My Shelter and My Protection; until I establish right through his medium and vanish the falsehood through him, the Religion would be constantly obeyed for Me".¹ Here concludes whatever we have quoted from the book Jilā'ul `Uyūn (of `Allāmah al Majlisī).

The circumstances relating to his (a.t.f.s.)'s birth is mentioned in similar context in Ḥaqqul Yaqīn (of `Allāmah Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī), while some more reports are added in it. Among them a report by Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī, who says that when the Master (a.t.f.s.) was born, Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī) said, "Call Abī `Amrū (`Uthmān bin Sa`īd al `Amarī) to me". When he came to him (a.s.), Imām said, "Buy ten thousand pound of bread and ten thousand pound of meat and distribute it". I suppose he (a.s.) said, "(distribute it) Among the Banī Hāshim". Then he (a.s.) performed his (a.t.f.s.)'s `Aqīqah with such and such (quantity) of sheep.

It is related from Nasīm and Mārīyyah, the slave-girls of Ḥasan bin `Alī (al `Askarī) that when the Master of the Age (a.t.f.s.) arrived from the womb of his mother, he knelt down upon his knees and raised his fingers towards the heavens. Then he (a.t.f.s.) sneezed and said, "All Praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds and Allāh (s.w.t.) salutations upon Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his Progeny (a.s.). The oppressors allege that the Evidence of Allāh (Ḥujjatullāh) is invalid. And if we are given permission to speak, suspicion would end".

¹ Refer to the Qur'ānic Verse, "**And His it is whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and to Him (only) should obedience constantly be; do you then fear (anyone else) other than Allāh?**" (Sūratul Nahī: 52) (translator)

It is also related that Nasīm says that I entered the presence of the Master of the age (Ṣāhib al Zamān) one night after his birth and sneezed. He (a.t.f.s.) said, "May Allāh have Mercy upon you". Hearing this, I was overjoyed and he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Should I give you glad tidings for the sneezing one?" I replied in the affirmative and he (a.t.f.s.) said, "It (sneezing) is a protection from death for three days".

As regards his (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed names, our Sheikh Thiqatul Islām (Mīrzā Ḥusain) al Nūrī mentions one hundred and eighty two names of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) in his book *Al Najmul Thāqib*. We content ourselves to quote a few herein below.

First, Baqīyatullāh (the remaining one with Allāh). It is related that when he (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, he shall rest his back to the Ka`bah, while three hundred and thirteen men shall gather near him. The first thing that he (a.t.f.s.) utters shall be this verse (Āyah), **"That what remains with Allāh is good for you if you be believers"**.¹ Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall say, "I am the remaining one with Allāh (s.w.t.) upon His earth, and His Caliph (Khalīfah) and His Evidence (Ḥujjah) upon you". Then no saluting one shall salute him (a.t.f.s.), except with words, "Peace be upon you O remaining one with Allāh upon His earth"!

Second, Ḥujjatullāh (the evidence of Allāh). This title is among his (a.t.f.s.)'s renowned titles quoted in numerous supplications (Ad`iyyah) and reports, while majority of the traditionists have mentioned it. And even though this title is shared between all A`immah (a.s.), since all of them are Evidences of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon His creatures, yet it is specialized for him (a.t.f.s.), since if it is mentioned without any indication (to any Imām), it refers to him (a.t.f.s.) and none else. It is also said that his (a.t.f.s.)'s title Ḥujjatullāh means the Dominance of Allāh (s.w.t.) or His Sovereignty upon His creatures, since both of these facts (Allāh's Dominance and His Sovereignty) shall materialize upon his reappearance (Zuhūr). It is engraved upon his (a.t.f.s.)'s ring, "Anā Ḥujjatullāh (I am the Evidence of Allāh)".

Third, Al Khalaf (the descendant) and Al Khalaf al Ṣāleḥ (the righteous descendant). This title manifested abundantly upon the sacred tongues of the A`immah (a.s.), while Al Khalaf means a person who inherits a seat of another. Moreover he (a.t.f.s.) is the descendant of all the Prophets (a.s.) and Vicegerents, and the inheritor of all their attributes, their knowledge and their qualities, apart from all the inheritances of Allāh (s.w.t.) that they (a.s.) inherited. In the renowned

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūrat Hūd: 86

Ḥadīth al Lawḥ (tablet), that was seen by Jābir bin `Abdullāh al Anṣārī with Fāṭemah al Zahrā' (s.a.), he is mentioned after Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.) as, "Then I shall complete it (My matter) by means of his son, a mercy for the worlds, he shall possess the perfection of Mūsā (a.s.), grandeur of `Īsā (a.s.) and forbearance of Ayyūb (a.s.)".

It is stated in the renowned report of Mufadhhdhal (bin `Umar al Ju`fī) that when Imām (a.t.f.s.) shall reappear, he shall enter the Ka`bah, rest his back to it and call out, "O creatures (of Allāh)! Beware! One who desires to look at Ādam (a.s.) and Shīth (a.s.), then here I am that Ādam and Shīth". Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall mention all the Prophets (a.s.) from Nūḥ (a.s.), Sām (s.a.), Ibrāhīm (a.s.), Ismā`il (a.s.), Mūsā (a.s.), Yūsha` (s.a.), Sham`ūn (s.a.), the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and all the A`immah (a.s.) in the same manner.¹

¹ We quote a part of this lengthy Ḥadīth related by Mufadhhdhal bin `Umar from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.), for the benefit of our esteemed readers. Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) says that our Master Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall rest his back to the Ka`bah and call out, "O creatures (of Allāh)! Beware! One who desires to look at Ādam (a.s.) and Shīth (a.s.), then here I am that Ādam and Shīth. One who desires to look at Nūḥ (a.s.) and his son Sām (s.a.), then here I am that Nūḥ and Sām. One who desires to look at Ibrāhīm (a.s.) and Ismā`il (a.s.), then here I am that Ibrāhīm and Ismā`il. One who desires to look at Mūsā (a.s.) and Yūsha` (s.a.), then here I am that Mūsā and (his vicegerent) Yūsha`. One who desires to look at `Īsā (a.s.) and (his vicegerent) Sham`ūn (s.a.), then here I am that `Īsā and Sham`ūn. One who desires to look at Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and Amīril Mu`minīn (a.s.), then here I am that Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.). One who desires to look at Al Ḥasan (a.s.) and Al Ḥusain (a.s.), then here I am that Al Ḥasan (a.s.) and Al Ḥusain (a.s.). One who desires to look at the A`immah (a.s.) from the progeny of Al Ḥusain (a.s.), then here I am those A`immah (a.s.). Respond to my call, for I shall inform you regarding what you have been informed and what you have not been informed. Then the one who has read the (Divine) Books and Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf), should hear them from me". Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall start to recite the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) that Allāh (s.w.t.) descended upon Ādam (a.s.) and Shīth (a.s.), such that the nation of Ādam (a.s.) and Shīth, the Gift of Allāh (Hibatullāh), shall say, "This by Allāh (s.w.t.), are those scriptures in reality! We have been shown that what we did not know from it, what was hidden from it upon us, and what was missed by us from it, and altered and distorted". Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall read the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) of Nūḥ (a.s.), the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) of Ibrāhīm (a.s.), the Torah (Tawrah), the Bible (Injīl), and the Psalms (Zabūr), such that the possessors of the Torah (Tawrah), the Bible (Injīl), and the Psalms (Zabūr) shall say, "These by Allāh (s.w.t.), are the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) of Nūḥ (a.s.) and Ibrāhīm (a.s.) in reality, and what was missed from them, and altered and distorted from them. These by Allāh (s.w.t.), are the comprehensive Torah (Tawrah), the complete Psalms (Zabūr) and the perfect Bible (Injīl),

Fourth, Sharīd (the expelled one). The A'immah (a.s.) have mentioned this title abundantly, especially Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) and Imām al Bāqir (a.s.). While Al Sharīd means the one expelled by those people who do not consider the right of his esteem, do not recognize his worth and his right, moreover they do not thank (Allāh) for this favor (upon them). Rather they struggle against him (a.t.f.s.) after their despair to gain victory upon him (a.t.f.s.) and quelling him, moreover killing and suppressing the Chaste Progeny of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.); and they struggle in their opposition to disapprove him, while denying his blessed existence with their tongues and pens. Then they stand firm to forward evidences and proofs denying his blessed birth and erase his remembrance.

To this effect, he (a.t.f.s.) addressed Ibrāhīm bin `Alī bin Mahzayār, saying, "Verily my father (a.s.) took an oath from me that I should not reside upon the earth, except upon a place that is the most concealed one and the farthest one, in order to conceal my affair and in protection of my whereabouts from the machinations of the people of perversion and apostasy. Then he (my father) said,; Then O my son! It is necessary for you to seek shelter in the concealed part of the earth and search for its farthest part, for there is a violent enemy and a disputing opponent for every Friend, among the Friends of Allāh (s.w.t.)".

Fifth, Al Garīm (the creditor). It is among his (a.t.f.s.)'s distinguished titles by which he is referred to in numerous reports. Al Garīm means a creditor and lender and is also used to mean an indebted one and a loanee. The first one is the most apparent meaning and was used in dissimulation (Taḳīyyah) similar to the title Al Gulām (a lad). The Shī`ah would refer to him (a.t.f.s.) as Al Garīm when they desired to dispatch some amount to him or someone among his agents; or even when bequeathing anything for him or claiming his wealth from someone else. Since he (a.t.f.s.) owned amounts (of Religious dues) from the farmers, traders and employers of crafts and industries. While we have already quoted an incident dealing with Muḥammad bin Şāleḥ (bin Muḥammad al Hamdānī al Dihqān) in discussing the lives of the companions of Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.).

while they are additional of what we read from them". Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall recite the Qur'ān, while the Muslims shall say, "This by Allāh (s.w.t.) is the Qur'ān in reality, which was descended by Allāh (s.w.t.) upon Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.), and what was missed from it, and altered and distorted". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār"; Ḥusain bin Ḥamdān al Khuṣaybī, "Al Hidāyatul Kubrā"; Ḥasan bin Sulaymān al Ḥillī, "Mukhtaṣarul Baṣā'ir") (translator)

`Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī is of the opinion that perhaps Al Garīm points out to the second meaning that means a creditor, due to the similarity of his (a.t.f.s.)'s state to a creditor, who hides from people lest they claim it from him. Or it even means that people seek him in matters of the Sharī`ah and Religious ordinances, while he flees from them in dissimulation (Taḳīyyah) and he (a.t.f.s.) is a concealed creditor.

Sixth, Al Qā'em (an establisher or a riser). It means a riser in establishing the command of Allāh (s.w.t.), since he (a.t.f.s.) awaits His (s.w.t.)'s command and waits his reappearance day and night. It is also related that he (a.t.f.s.) is entitled Al Qā'em due to his establishment of truth.¹

It is related from Al Ṣaqr bin Dulaf that I asked Muḥammad bin `Alī al Ridhā (al Jawād), "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Why is he (a.t.f.s.) named Al Qā'em?" Imām (a.s.) replied, "Since he (a.t.f.s.) shall arise after the demise of his remembrance and the apostasy of the majority of people who accept his Imāmah (and later refuse it)".

Abū Ḥamzah al Thumālī relates that I questioned Al Bāqir (a.s.), "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Aren't all of you risers in establishing the truth?" He (a.s.) replied in the affirmative and I asked, "Then why is Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) entitled by it?" He (a.s.) replied, "When my grandfather Ḥusain (a.s.) was killed, the Angels clamored in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.) while weeping and lamenting. They said: Our Lord and our Master! Shall You be heedless towards those who killed Your choicest one and son of Your choicest one (s.a.w.a.), and Your chosen one and son of Your chosen one (s.a.w.a.) among Your creatures?" Allāh (s.w.t.) revealed to them, saying, "Be pleased my Angels! For by My Honor and My Grandeur! I shall seek revenge from them, even though after a while". Then Allāh (s.w.t.) revealed the A'imma (a.s.) from the progeny of Ḥusain (a.s.) to the Angels and they were pleased due to it. Then one among them was standing in Prayers and Allāh (s.w.t.) said: I shall seek revenge from them through that risen one (Al Qā'em)".

We (the Author) say that we shall later quote in the sixth section regarding recommendation of standing up on mention of this auspicious name in his

¹ As related from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir and Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) in separate Aḥādīth. (translator)

(a.t.f.s.)'s honor.

Seventh, Mīm Ḥā Mīm Dāl (Muḥammad). He (a.t.f.s.) has been mentioned by this name and it is related in numerous successively quoted reports from the Shi`ah and Ahlul Sunnah that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is from my sons, his name is my name".¹ While his (a.t.f.s.) name is mentioned in the extensive Ḥadīth al Lawḥ (tablet) as, "Abul Qāsim Muḥammad bin al Ḥasan is the Evidence of Allāh (Ḥujjatullāh), the Establisher (Al Qā'em)". However, there are numerous reliable reports that say that pronouncing this auspicious name in gatherings and congregations is unlawful until he (a.t.f.s.) rises. While this command is among his (a.t.f.s.)'s distinct specialties and among the established facts in the eyes of the Imāmīyyah, their jurists, scholastics and traditionists. It is evidenced from the statement of the ancient Sheikh Al Ḥasan bin Mūsā al Nawbakhtī that this command is among the specialties of the Imāmīyyah faith. There was no difference in their opinions until the age of Khwājah Naṣīruddīn al Ṭūsī (d.672), who considered it (pronouncing his name) to be lawful. Again there was no difference in opinions until the author of Kashful Gummah (Shaikh `Alī bin `Īsā al Irbilī [d.692]).

This issue became a hot subject of research and debate among the learned personalities and scholars during the time of Shaikh al Bahā'ī (d.1030), while they authored books and treatises dealing with it. Among them, Shar`atul Tasmīyyah by Muḥaqqiq (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Dāmād, Risālah Taḥrīm al Tasmīyyah by Shaikh Sulaymān al Māḥawzī, Kashful Ta`mīyyah by Shaikh (Muḥammad bin Ḥasan) al Ḥurr al `Āmelī, etc. While this topic is dealt with detail in the book Najmul Thāqib (by Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī).

Eighth, Al Mahdī (the guided one). The most renowned among his titles and names

¹ The entire Ḥadīth as quoted in Ahlul Sunnah books is that he (s.a.w.a.) said, "If only one day remains upon the world, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall prolong that day until a man from among my sons shall arise. His name shall be my name". Hearing this, Salmān arose and asked, "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! From which of your sons?" He (s.a.w.a.) replied, "From this son of mine", saying this, he (s.a.w.a.) struck his hand upon that of Ḥusain (a.s.). (Muḥibuddīn al Ṭabarī, "Ḍakhā'erul `Uqbā fī Manāqib Ḍawil Qurbā"; Yaḥyā bin Sharaf al Nawawī, "Ḥilyatul Abrār wa Shi`āru Akhbār"; Yūsuf al Maqdisī al Shāfe`ī, "Iqdul Durar fī Akhbāril Muntazar"; Abū Nu`aym al Aṣbahānī, "Arba`ūn Ḥadīthan fil Mahdī"; etc. There are still numerous Aḥādīth with various textual variations in Ahlul Sunnah books; however we content to quote one above. (translator)

among all the Islāmic sects.

Ninth, Al Muntazar (the awaited one).¹ He (a.t.f.s.) is the awaited one, since the entire creation awaits his elegance appearance.

Tenth, Al Mā'īl Ma`īn (the flowing water). It is related in Kamāluddīn (of Shaikh al Ṣadūq) and Al Gaybah of Shaikh (al Ṭūsī) that Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) said regarding the words of Allāh (s.w.t.), **“Say you (O Our Prophet): See you? If your water should go down (into the earth), who then can bring you flowing water?”**² He (a.s.) said, “This is revealed for Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.). If your Imām is concealed from you and you do not know his whereabouts, then who shall bring you a manifest Imām, who would inform you reports regarding the heaven and earth and His lawful and unlawful?” Then he (a.s.) said, “However, by Allāh (s.w.t.)! The interpretation of this verse (Āyah) has neither come nor shall it come later”.³

There are numerous other reports in this context such as the ones quoted in Al Gaybah of Al Nu`mānī and Ta`wīlul Āyātil Zāhirah (by Sayyid Sharafuddīn `Alī al Istarābādī). The reason for comparing him (a.t.f.s.) to water is due to it being a source of existence of everything. Rather this existence that exists or shall exist due to his glorified presence, scales greater height, complete and eternal, than bestowed by water. Rather existence of water too is due to him (a.t.f.s.).

It is related in Kamāluddīn (of Shaikh al Ṣadūq) from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) that he says regarding the words of Allāh (s.w.t.), **Know you that Allāh enlivens the earth after its death.**⁴ He (a.s.) says that, “Allāh (s.w.t.) shall enliven the earth through Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) after her death due to the disbelief of her inhabitants, while a disbeliever is (actually) dead”.

¹ Among Imām (a.s.)'s titles is also mentioned Al Muntazir or the awaiting one, since he himself awaits the command of Allāh (s.w.t.) to reappear. It is related that Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.) mentioned his son (a.t.f.s.) as, “The righteous descendant (Al Khalafil Ṣāleḥ), the establisher (Al Qā'em), the master of the age (Ṣāḥib al Zamān), the Imām awaiting the command of Allāh (Al Muntazir lī `Amrillāh)”. (Abū Ja`far al Ṭabarī, “Dalā'elul Imāmah”) (translator)

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Mulk: 30

³ Imām (a.s.) means to say that the interpretation of this verse has neither been found earlier except that it relates to Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), nor shall it be done so in future except relating to him (a.t.f.s.). (translator)

⁴ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Ḥadīd: 17

Also as per the narration of Shaikh al Tūsī, "He (s.w.t.) shall reform the earth through Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.) after its death, means after the inequity of the inhabitants of her kingdom".¹

It should not be hidden that the people shall derive benefit from this 'Divine effluent fountain' during the days of his (a.t.f.s.) reappearance, similar to a thirsty person who sees a delightful stream and he has no desire except scooping from it, and therefore he (a.t.f.s.) is named Al Mā'il Ma'in (the flowing water). Moreover, during the period of concealment (Gaybah), when the distinguished Divine favor shall be withheld from the people due to their evil deeds and actions, inevitably it shall lead to strain, hardship, and supplication and pleading to obtain grace from him (a.t.f.s.). It is similar to a thirsty person who desires to draw water from a deep well by means of ancient and tiresome means. Therefore Imām (a.t.f.s.) is also referred to Al Bi'iril Mu'atṭalah (an abandoned well).² And nothing more can be stated here due to brevity's sake.

As for Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed physical appearance, it is related that he (a.t.f.s.) resembles the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) most among people with regards to physical appearance and character, while his features are similar to his (s.a.w.a.)'s features.³ His (a.t.f.s.)'s physical appearance as summarized from various reports

¹ The entire report as related by `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās in interpretation to the above verse (Āyah) is that, "He (s.w.t.) shall reform the earth through Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.) after its death, means after the inequity of the inhabitants of her kingdom. **Indeed have We made the signs clear unto you** through Qā'em Āl Muḥammad, **that you may understand**". (Sūratul Ḥadīd: 17) (Shaikh al Ṭūsī, "Al Gaybah") (translator)

² Refer to the Qur'ānic Verse, "**So how many of towns We did destroy while they were unjust, and (their walls) have fallen down over their roofs, and (how many a) well abandoned and (even) lofty castles**". (Sūratul Ḥajj: 45) In interpretation of the above verse, Imām Ja'far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) says, "It symbolizes Āl Muḥammad (a.s.). The abandoned well, from which thirst is not quenched, refers to the concealed Imām (a.t.f.s.) from whom knowledge shall not be obtained until the time of his reappearance. While the lofty castles are elevations and symbolizes Amirul Mu'minin (a.s.) and the A'immah (a.s.) and their excellences that are widespread in the worlds and are elevated upon the earth. This refers to Allāh (s.w.t.)'s words, **that He may prevail it over all other religions**". (Sūratul Barā'ah: 33). (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

³ It is related that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), resembles me the most among men with regards to physical features and character". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni'mah") `Abdullāh bin `Abbās relates a Ḥadīth from the

is that, his color shall be white tinted with redness,¹ brownish that has turned yellow due to the effect of remaining awake at night (in worship).² His (a.t.f.s.)'s forehead shall be illuminated,³ his eye-brows joined with one another,⁴ his nose elongated and attractive,⁵ his countenance handsome, while the radiance of his countenance subdues the blackness of his beard and head,⁶ there is a mole upon his right cheek that resembles a sparkling star,⁷ there is a parting upon his head similar to Alif between two Wāw,⁸ his teeth are cleaved,⁹ sunken eyes and a mark upon his face,¹⁰ there is broadness in between his shoulders,¹¹ while his (a.t.f.s.) stomach and leg resemble his grandfather Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.).

It is also stated that Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is a peacock of the dwellers of paradise, his

Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), at the conclusion of which he (s.a.w.a.) said, "And (Allāh) shall emerge from the loins of Ḥusain (a.s.) the A'immaḥ (a.s.), who shall establish my commands and safeguard by testimony. The ninth among them shall be the establisher (Qā'em) of my Ahlulbait (a.s.) and the guided one (Al Mahdī) of my nation, he shall resemble me the most among men with regards to his physical features, his statements and his actions. He shall reappear after a lengthy period of concealment and misleading bewilderment. Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall proclaim the Command of Allāh (s.w.t.) and establish the Religion of Allāh (s.w.t.), and he shall be supported by the Victory of Allāh (s.w.t.) and shall be supported by the Angels of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall fill the earth with justice and equity as it shall be filled with oppression and inequity". (ʿAlī bin ʿĪsā al Arbilī, "Kashful Gummah fī Ma`rifatil A'immaḥ) (translator)

- 1 As related by Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) in Muntakhabul Anwāruḥ Madhīyyah of Bahā'uddīn ʿAlī al Nīlī. (translator)
- 2 As related by Imām Jafar al Ṣādiq (a.s.) in Falāḥul Sā'el Najāḥul Masā'el by Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs. (translator)
- 3 As related by the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) in Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Nu`mānī. (translator)
- 4 As related by Imām Jafar al Ṣādiq (a.s.) in Falāḥul Sā'el Najāḥul Masā'el by Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs. (translator)
- 5 As related by Imām Jafar al Ṣādiq (a.s.) in Nūruḥ Abṣār of Shaikh Muḥammad Mahdī al Māzandarānī. (translator)
- 6 As related by Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) in Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Tūsī. (translator)
- 7 As related by the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) in Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Nu`mānī. (translator)
- 8 `Arabic letters Alif and Waw, as related by Sa`ad bin `Abdullāh al Ash`arī al Qummī in Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah of Shaikh al Ṣadūq. (translator)
- 9 As related by Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) in Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah of Shaikh al Ṣadūq. (translator)
- 10 As related by Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) in Nūruḥ Abṣār of Shaikh Muḥammad Mahdī al Māzandarānī. (translator)
- 11 As related by Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) in Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Nu`mānī. (translator)

countenance is similar to a radiant moon and he is covered with a luminous garment.¹ He wears a dress of light that shines with the ray of the sanctified gleam.² He (a.t.f.s.) is similar to purple chamomile flower, with dew-drops settled upon it.³ His (a.t.f.s.)'s physique is similar to a twig of ben or similar to a stem of basil, neither towering tall nor lowering short, rather medium-height, round head, radiant forehead, shining eyes-brows, elongated nose, flat cheeks, a mole upon his right cheek similar to fragments of musk upon amber.⁴ No eyes have ever seen a more moderate physique than him (a.t.f.s.).⁵ Blessings of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon him (a.t.f.s.) and upon his Sacred Forefathers (a.s.).

¹ As related by the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) in *Kashful Gummah fī Ma`rifatil A`immah* of `Alī bin `Īsā al Arbīlī. (translator)

² As related by Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.) in *Al Gaybah* of Shaikh al Nu`mānī. (translator)

³ As reported by `Alī bin Ibrāhīm bin Mahzayār in *Al Gaybah* of Shaikh al Ṭūsī. (translator)

⁴ As related in *Al Gaybah* of Shaikh al Ṭūsī. (translator)

⁵ As related in *Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah* of Shaikh al Ṣadūq. (translator)

2. Some of the distinguished qualities of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.)

First, prevalence of the light of his (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed shadow in the spiritual world upon the light of all A'imma (a.s.). It is related in some reports relating to Mi`rāj (physical ascension of Prophet) that his light was radiating and glittering among the lights of all A'imma (a.s.), similar to the light of a glittering star in the midst of all stars. While his (a.t.f.s.)'s countenance was radiating light among them (a.s.) as if it were a sparkling star.¹

Second, his honourable genealogy. Since he (a.t.f.s.) possesses an honourable genealogy of all his chaste forefathers (a.s.), while their genealogy is the most honourable one. Moreover his genealogy from his mother's side reaches the Roman Caesars, whose genealogy in turn reaches Sham`ūn, the vicegerent of Nabī `Īsā (a.s.), who descends from numerous Prophets (a.s.) and Vicegerents (Awṣiyā').

Third, two Angels were appointed to take him (a.t.f.s.) to the heavens on the day of his birth, while Allāh (s.w.t.) addressed him, saying, "Welcome to you my Slave (designated) for defense of My Religion, and manifestation of My command and the guided one (al Mahdī) for my slaves. I have sworn that I shall reproach (the sinners) on your behalf, and on your behalf bestow (the righteous), and on your behalf forgive (the ones seeking pardon), and on your behalf chastise (the

¹ Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) relates from his blessed forefathers (a.s.) that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "When I was taken (to the heavens on the night of Mi`rāj), Allāh (s.w.t.) revealed to me” Until he (s.a.w.a.) said, I lifted my head and saw the lights of `Alī (a.s.), Fāṭemah (s.a.), Al Ḥasan (a.s.), Al Ḥusain (a.s.), `Alī ibnul Ḥusain (a.s.), Muḥammad ibn `Alī (a.s.), Ja`far ibn Muḥammad (a.s.), Mūsā ibn Ja`far (a.s.), `Alī ibn Mūsā (a.s.), Muḥammad ibn `Alī (a.s.), `Alī ibn Muḥammad (a.s.), Al Ḥasan ibn `Alī (a.s.) and Al Ḥujjah Ibnul Ḥasan al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), who was amidst them similar to a sparkling star. Seeing this, I asked, "O my Lord (s.w.t.)! Who are these?" He (s.w.t.) replied, "These are the A'imma (a.s.) and he is Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) who shall make lawful my lawful and shall make unlawful my unlawful. I shall take vengeance from my enemies through his medium and he shall be a source of solace for My friends. It is he who shall heal the hearts of your Shī`ah by (punishing) the oppressors, apostates and disbelievers. Then he shall remove the Lāt and `Uzzā (Abū Bakr and `Umar) afresh (from their graves) and burn them. On that day the trial upon the people due to them shall be severer than the trial of the she-camel (of Ṣāleḥ) and Al Sāmīrī (who tempted people to worship the calf when Nabī Mūsā went to Mount Sinai)". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah") (translator)

sinner)”.¹

Fourth, Baytul Ḥamd (The house of Praise). It is related that a house has been erected for him (a.t.f.s.) named Baytul Ḥamd. It contains a lamp that radiates from the day he (a.t.f.s.) was born until the day he shall arise with the sword, while it shall not extinguish”.¹

Fifth, merging his name and agnomen (Kunīyyah) similar to the sacred name and agnomen of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). It is related in Al Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib (by Ibn Shahr Āshub) that he (s.a.w.a.) said, “Keep my name, and however do not keep my agnomen (Kunīyyah)”.²

Sixth, unlawfulness of pronouncing his (a.t.f.s.)’s blessed name (Muḥammad), while we have discussed this earlier.

Seventh, he (a.t.f.s.) is the seal of the Vicegerents (Awṣiyā’) and Evidences (Ḥujjah of Allāh) upon the earth.

Eighth, his (a.t.f.s.)’s concealment (Gaybah) from the day of his birth, his guardianship by Rūḥul Quds and his upbringing and training in the world of light and the Divine Space, so that none of his physical components may be polluted by filthiness and sins of the creatures and the devils. Rather his seat was at the ‘Assembly on High (Mala’il A`alā)’ and among the Divine Spirits.

Ninth, lack of his (a.t.f.s.)’s companionship with the disbelievers, hypocrites and the profligates and sitting among them, and this due to dissimulation (Taḳīyyah). He (a.t.f.s.) is in concealment (Gaybah) from the day of his birth, while the wicked hand of the oppressor or disbeliever or hypocrite does not reach him, nor does he accompany anyone among them.

Tenth, there is no weight of allegiance (Bay`ah) upon his neck of anyone among the tyrants. It is related in A`alāmul Warā (of Shaikh al Ṭabarsī) from Imām Ḥasan

¹ As related by Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) as well as Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) in separate Aḥādīth. (translator)

² The Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) means to say that if you desire to name someone upon my name (Muḥammad [s.a.w.s.]), do so, however then do not bestow my agnomen (Abul Qāsim) to him, since it is not lawful to merge both in a same person. The Shī`ah and Ahlul Sunnah scholars unanimously agree that it is unlawful to combine both, the name and agnomen of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), in a person, while this merit is distinctively reserved for Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). (translator)

al `Askarī (a.s.), who said that, "There is none among us (the A`immah) except that there is (forceful) allegiance (Bay`ah) in his neck of a despot in his age except Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), in whose lead the Spirit of Allāh (Rūḥullāh) `Īsā bin Maryam (a.s.) shall pray.

Eleventh, there is a mark upon his blessed back similar to the sacred back of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) that is renowned as the Seal of Prophet hood (Khatm al Nubūwwah).¹ Perhaps it is an evidence of the conclusion of Vicegerency (in him).

Twelfth, his distinctiveness that Allāh (s.w.t.) has mentioned him (a.t.f.s.) in the Heavenly Books and the reports of Ascension (Mi`rāj of the Messenger of Allāh) with his title, rather numerous titles, without mentioning his name.

Thirteenth, manifestation of extraordinary signs and heavenly and earthly portents upon his (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance, which have not manifested for anyone among the A`immah (a.s.) before him. It is related in Al Kāfī (of Shaikh al Kulaynī) from Abī Baṣīr who says that I asked Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) regarding the words of Allāh (s.w.t.), "**Soon We will show them Our signs in the horizons (of the world), and in their own selves until it becomes manifest to them that He is the Truth**".² He (a.s.) replied, "They shall be made to see transformation in themselves and shall be made to see catabolism in the horizon. Thus they shall witness the Power of Allāh (s.w.t.) in their selves and the horizon". I asked, "**until it becomes manifest to them that He is the Truth?**" He (a.s.) replied, "The uprising of Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) is the truth from Allāh (s.w.t.) that the creatures shall inevitably see through him (a.t.f.s.)".

While these signs and portents are numerous, while some count them to be four hundred.

Fourteenth, sounding of a call from the heavens during his (a.t.f.s.)'s

¹ It is stated that there was a "seal of Prophet hood" in between the two shoulders of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). Whenever he (s.a.w.a.) revealed it, it shone, similar to the light of the sun. It was written, "Lā Ilāha illallāhu Waḥdahū lā Sharīka lahū, Tawajjah Ḥaythu Shī'it fa Anta Maṣūr (There is no other Deity except Allāh, the Alone, there is no partner for Him. Turn to wherever you wish, for you are assisted)". (Ibn Shahr Āshub al Māzandarānī, "Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib") (translator)

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Fuṣṣilāt: 53

reappearance as related in numerous reports. `Alī bin Ibrāhīm (al Qummī) relates in interpretation to the words of Allāh (s.w.t.), **“And listen for the day whereon the caller shall call from near place”**.¹ He relates that Imām Ja`far al Šādiq (a.s.) said, “A caller shall announce the name of Al Qā`em (a.t.f.s.) and that of his father (a.s.)”.

It is related in Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Nu`mānī from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) that, “A caller shall announce the name of Al Qā`em (a.t.f.s.) and those in the east and west shall hear it. There will no sleeping one except that he shall arise, no standing one except that he shall sit and no sitting one except that he shall stand upon his feet in fear of that voice. May Allāh (s.w.t.)’s Mercy be upon the one who considers that voice and responds to it. Since the first voice is that of Jibra`īl, the Trusty Spirit (Rūḥul Amīn), that would sound in the month of Ramadhān, the month of Allāh (s.w.t.), Friday night on the twenty third”. While there are numerous similar reports that cross the limits of recurrence.

Fifteenth, deceleration in the movement of the orbit and reduction in its speed during the time of his (a.t.f.s.)’s reappearance. Shaikh al Mufid relates from Abī Bašīr, who relates a lengthy report from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) discussing the biography of Al Qā`em (a.t.f.s.), until he (a.s.) says, “He (a.t.f.s.) shall dwell in that manner for seven years, every year equal to your ten years. Then **Allāh (s.w.t.) does what He wills**”². It was said to him (a.s.), “May I be ransomed upon you! Then how would the years prolong?” Imām (a.s.) replied, “Allāh (s.w.t.) shall command the orbit to tarry and slow down its movement, ultimately leading to slowdown in the days and years”. The narrator says that I asked him (a.s.), “They (the astronomers) say that if changes occur in the orbit, it shall perish”. Imām (a.s.) replied, “This is the statement of the heretics. As for the Muslims, there is no reason for them to say so, since Allāh (s.w.t.) split the moon for His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and returned back the sun for Yūsha` bin Nūn (s.a.) before him (s.a.w.a.) and even informs regarding the lengthiness of the day of Qiyāmah, saying, **There is a day with your Lord as a thousand years, of what you reckon (them)**”.³

Sixteenth, manifestation of the scripture (Qur`ān) of Amirul Mu`minīn (a.s.) that he

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūrat Qāf: 41

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūrat Āl `Imrān: 40

³ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Ḥajj: 47

(a.s.) had compiled after the death of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) without any changes or alterations. It contains all that was revealed miraculously upon the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). After its completion, Imām (a.s.) showed it to the companions (of the Messenger of Allāh), however they refused to accept it, therefore he (a.s.) concealed it. This copy remained in its state until Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) reappears. Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall command the people to read it and memorize it.¹ And this matter shall be quite severe upon them due to the difference in its arrangement with the present copy (of the Qur'ān) and what they forgot.

Seventeenth, constant shadowing of the cloud upon his (a.t.f.s.)'s sacred head, while a voice shall be sounded from it that shall be heard by the two classes (of men and genie), saying, "Verily he is Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.), he shall fill the earth with justice as it is filled with oppression and inequity". While this call shall be different from the one discussed in the fourteenth point above.

Eighteenth, presence of Angels and genie among his (a.t.f.s.)'s army to assist him.²

¹ It is related that when the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) passed away, Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) arranged the Qur'ān dictated to him by the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and brought it to the group of Muslims. However, they refused to accept it and `Umar bin al Khaṭṭāb exclaimed, "O `Alī! Take it back since we are not in need of it". Later when the rule passed on to him (`Umar), he called back Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) and requested him to bring back the Qur'ān arranged by him. Imām (a.s.) replied, "Far be it! There is no way to acquire it. Indeed I brought it to Abū Bakr to complete my proof upon you, **lest you should say on the day of Qiyāmah, verily we were of this (fact) unaware.** (Sūratul A`arāf: 172) or you may say that, you didn't bring it to us. Verily the Qur'ān with me **touches it not save the purified ones** (Sūratul Wāqī`ah: 79) and the Vicegerents (a.s.) from my progeny". `Umar asked, "Is there a fixed time to manifest it?" Imām (a.s.) replied, "Yes. When Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) from my progeny shall arise, he shall manifest it, while the people shall bear it. Then the customs (Sunnah of the Prophet) shall issue froth through him". (Shaikh al Ṭabarsī, "Al Iḥtijāj") (translator)

² It is related in a lengthy report dealing with the return (Raj`ah) and circumstances relating to Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) from Mufadhhal bin `Umar that I asked Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.), "O my Master! Would the Angels and genie manifest to the humans (on that day)?" He (a.s.) replied, "Yes, by Allāh (s.w.t.), O Mufadhhal! They shall speak to them similar to a man who speaks with his servants and family". Again I asked, "O my Master! Will they pave the way with him (a.t.f.s.)?" Imām (a.s.) replied, "Yes, by Allāh (s.w.t.), O Mufadhhal! They shall descend upon the earth, migrating in between Kūfah and Najaf. The number of his (a.t.f.s.)'s companions shall be forty six thousand Angels, six thousand genies and three hundred and

Nineteenth, unchangeability in his (a.t.f.s.) appearance and his grace even after a passage of several days and years; moreover permanence of his strength,¹ disposition and his appearance as before; until he reappears. While his (a.t.f.s.)'s present age is one thousand and ninety five years² and Allāh (s.w.t.) knows where it shall reach. When he (a.t.f.s.) shall reappear, his appearance shall be similar to a person in his thirties or forties. Previously Prophets (a.s.) and others who had lived a lengthy life, complained regarding the whiteness of their hair, as stated in the Qur'ān, **“(Sārah said) And this my husband (Ibrāhīm) an (extremely) old man”**.³ While another (Nabī Zakarīyyā) complained regarding his weakness, saying, **“Verily my bones are weakened and my hair does glisten with grey hoariness”**.⁴

Shaikh al Ṣadūq relates from Abil Ṣalt al Harawī that I questioned Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.), “What are the indications of your Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) when he reappears?” He (a.s.) replied, “His indication is that would be an old Sheikh with a youthful appearance. The one beholding him (a.t.f.s.) would conclude that he is in his forties or less than that”.

Twentieth, non-ferocity of animals towards one another and parting away of their fear of human, moreover their amiability with one another similar to the age before the murder of Hābīl. It is related from Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) that, “When our Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, the heavens shall pour down her drops (of rains) and the earth shall extract her vegetation.⁵ Enmity shall depart from the hearts of

thirteen notable men”. (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, “Biḥārul Anwār”) (translator)

- 1 Al Rayyān bin al Ṣalt relates that I questioned Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.), “Are you the Master of this matter?” He (a.s.) replied, “I am the Master of this matter, however, I am not the one who shall fill it (the earth) with justice as it shall be filled with inequity. Then how can I be so when you see weakness in my body? Verily the Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) is the one who shall arise with his lengthy age, yet his appearance shall be youthful. He shall be strong in his body to such an extent, that if he extends his hand towards a greatest tree upon the face of the earth, he shall be able to uproot it. And if he (a.t.f.s.) shall scream in between the mountains, its rocks shall crush”. (`Alī bin `Īsā al Irbilī, “Kashful Gummah fī Ma`rifatil A`immah”) (translator)
- 2 This was during the life of the Esteemed Author, while presently Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed age has reached one thousand one hundred and eighty six years, and we are in the year one thousand four hundred and forty one Hijrah at the time of this translation. (translator)
- 3 Holy Qur'ān, Sūrat Hūd: 72
- 4 Holy Qur'ān, Sūrat Maryam: 4
- 5 Imām (a.s.) means to say that when Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, the heavens shall

creatures to such an extent that the Lions and cattle shall develop reconciliation among themselves. And if a woman walks from `Irāq towards Shām, she shall not lay her foot except upon vegetation, while she will have worn her adornment upon her head. A Lion shall not disturb her and she shall not fear it”.

Twenty First, enlivening some of the dead and their presence alongside him (a.t.f.s.). Shaikh al Mufid relates¹ that, “Twenty seven men shall arise along with Al Qā’em (a.t.f.s.), fifteen belonging to the nation of Mūsā (a.s.), **those who guide (others) with truth and themselves justly adhere to it**²; seven from the people of the cave; Yūsha` bin Nūn (the Vicegerent of Nabī Mūsā); Salmān (al Fārsī); Abū Dujānah al Anṣārī; Al Miqdād (bin Al Aswad) and Malik al Ashtar. They shall all be along with him (a.t.f.s.) as his companions and chiefs”.

It is also related³ that, “The one who supplicates to Allāh (s.w.t.) with this covenant for forty mornings, he shall be included among the companions of our Qā’em (a.t.f.s.). And if he dies, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall raise him from his grave and offer him a thousand good deeds in lieu of each word and forgive a thousand of his faults”. The supplication (Du`ā’) being, “Allāhumma Rabbal Nūril `Aẓīm (O Allāh of the Most Great Light, etc.)”.⁴

Twenty Second, extraction by the earth of her treasures and provisions hidden in her.⁵

pour down rain and the earth shall extract her vegetation that were withheld before by Allāh (s.w.t.) due to abundant sins of human beings and their evil. While this rain and vegetation shall be in its purist form without any type of contamination or pollution. (translator)

¹ From Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) (translator)

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul A`arāf: 181

³ From Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) (translator)

⁴ A supplication that is renowned as Du`ā’ al `Ahad (the supplication of the covenant) and is found in most of the books of supplications including Mafātīḥul Jinān by the Esteemed Author. (translator)

⁵ Jābir bin `Abdullāh al Anṣārī relates that I heard the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) say, “Verily Ḍulqarnayn was a righteous slave (of Allāh), Allāh (s.w.t.) made him Evidence upon His creatures. He invited his nation towards Allāh (s.w.t.) and commanded them to fear Him. They struck upon a side of his head and he remained concealed from them for some time. People said that he had died or succumbed (to the injury). Then he reappeared and returned back to his nation and they struck at the other side of his head. And there is among you who is upon his custom. Verily Allāh (s.w.t.) consolidated Ḍulqarnayn in the earth (Sūratul Kahf: 84) until he reached the east and west. And verily Allāh (s.w.t.) shall realize his custom in Al Qā’em

Twenty Third, plenitude of rains and abundance of fruits and all favors (of Allāh) to such an extent that the condition of the earth shall be different to its previous state. This in interpretation to Allāh (s.w.t.)'s words, **“On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth”**.¹

Twenty Fourth, integration of people due the blessings of Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance to such an extent than when he (a.t.f.s.) shall place his blessed hand upon the heads,² their enmity and envy shall part away, that has become a secondary disposition of man from the time of the killing of Hābīl; moreover abundance of their knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge and wisdom shall flow from the hearts of believers to such an extent that a believer shall not be in need of the knowledge of his (believer) brother.³ At that moment interpretation of this verse shall be known, **“Allāh will render each free from want out of His abundance”**.⁴

Twenty Fifth, extraordinary strength in the power of sight and hearing of his

(a.t.f.s.) from my progeny. Then He (s.w.t.) shall reach him to the east of the earth and its west, until there does not remain any spring or spot in the plain or mountain where Ḍulqarnayn set his foot, except that he (a.t.f.s.) too shall set his foot upon it. Then Allāh (s.w.t.) shall bring forth the treasures of the earth and its minerals for him and aid him with awe (in the hearts of his enemies). And He (s.w.t.) shall fill the earth with justice through him, as it will be filled with inequity and oppression”. (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, “Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmūl Ni`mah”) It is also related from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) that, “Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) from among us shall be aided through awe (in the hearts of is enemies), affirmed through aid. The earth shall coil for him and reveal her treasures for him”. (ʿAlī bin ʿĪsā al Irbilī, “Kashful Gummah fī Ma`rifatil A`immah”) (translator)

¹ Holy Qurʾān, Sūrat Ibrāhīm: 48

² It is related from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.), “When our Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall place his hand upon the heads of the creatures. Ultimately their intellects shall be in harmony to one another and their dreams shall be fulfilled”. (Shaikh al Kulaynī, “Al Kāfī”) (translator)

³ Ḥumrān bin A`ayun relates from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) that, “It is as if I see your religion constantly in agitation, smeared in its blood, then it shall not be returned to you (in its former state) except through a man from among us, the Ahl al-bait (a.s.). He (a.t.f.s.) shall bestow two-fold favors to you in a year and grant you two-fold sustenance in a month. Then you shall be bestowed wisdom in his age to such an extent that a woman shall issue judgments in her house based upon the Book of Allāh (Qurʾān) and the customs (Sunnah) of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)”. (Al Nu`mānī, “Al Gaybah”) (translator)

⁴ Holy Qurʾān, Sūratul Nisā':130

companions to such an extent that they would be able to see their Imām (a.t.f.s.) and hear his voice from a distance of four farsakh.¹

Twenty Sixth, longevity in the age of his (a.t.f.s.)'s companions and aides. It is related² that, "A man in his (a.t.f.s.) kingdom shall reach an age to such an extent that a thousand male children shall be born to him and not a female child".

Twenty Seventh, warding off tribulations, disabilities and weaknesses from his (a.t.f.s.)'s companions and supporters.

Twenty Eighth, bestowal of strength of forty men to each of his (a.t.f.s.)'s companions and aides, while they hearts shall turn similar to sheets of iron to such an extent that if they wish to uproot a mountain from its place, they would be able to do so.³

Twenty Ninth, independence of creatures (of Allāh) from the light and brightness of the sun and moon due to his (a.t.f.s.)'s light. And this is the interpretation of the verse (Āyah), "**And the earth shall get radiant with the Light of its Lord**".⁴ While the Lord of the earth refers to him (a.t.f.s.).⁵

Thirteenth, his (a.t.f.s.) possessing the standard of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.).⁶

¹ Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) relates that, "Verily when our Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) arises, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall broaden the eyes and ears of our Shī`ah to such an extent, that there shall be no intermediate between them and Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.). He (a.t.f.s.) shall speak and they shall hear him and see him while he is in his (distant) place". (Shaikh al Kulaynī, "Al Kāfi") (translator)

² From Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) (translator)

³ Imām `Alī Zainul `Ābidīn (a.s.) relates that, "When our Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall ward off disabilities from our Shī`ah, make their hearts similar to sheets of iron and make the strength of a man among them similar to the strength of forty men; while they shall be rulers in the land and its prominent ones". (`Alī al Ṭabarsī, "Mishkātul Anwār fī Guraril Akhbār") (translator)

⁴ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Zumar: 69

⁵ Mufadhhal bin `Umar relates that I heard Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) say regarding the words of Allāh: **And the earth shall get radiant with the Light of its Lord** (Sūratul Zumar: 69), "Lord of the earth is the Imām of the earth". I asked, "Then what happens when he (a.t.f.s.) comes forth?" He (a.s.) replied, "Then the people will become independent from the brightness of the sun and the light of the moon, while they shall traverse under the light of the Imām". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

⁶ Abū Baṣīr relates from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall not arise until

Thirty First, his (a.t.f.s.)'s adorning the armour of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) that does not fit anyone except upon his (a.t.f.s.)'s auspicious body.¹

Thirty Second, Allāh (s.w.t.) fashioning for him (a.t.f.s.) a cloud, possessing lightning and thunder. Imām (a.s.) shall sit upon it and it shall take him through the paths of the heavens and the seven earths.²

Thirty Third, cessation of dissimulation (Taḳīyyah), fear and command from the slaves of Allāh (s.w.t.) during his (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance. Moreover, regulation of

the group (of his army-men) completes". I asked him (a.s.) what quantity would complete the group? He (a.s.) replied, "Ten thousand, with Jabra'īl on his right and Mīkā'īl on his left. Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall wave the standard and traverse along with it. Then there shall remain none in the east or the west, except that he shall curse it (the standard, due to their enmity with its bearer). And it shall be the standard of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) brought down by Jabra'īl on the day (of the battle) of Badr". Then he (a.s.) said, "O Abā Muḥammad! By Allāh (s.w.t.)! It is not made of cotton or linen or raw silk or pure silk". I asked him (a.s.) what it was made of and he (a.s.) replied, "It is made of the leaves of paradise. The Messenger of Allāh (s.w.t.) unfurled it on the day (of the battle) of Badr, then folded it and handed it over to `Alī (a.s.). It remained with him (a.s.) until the day of Baṣrah (battle of Jamal), when Amīrul Mu'mīnīn (a.s.) unfurled it and Allāh (s.w.t.) granted him (a.s.) victory. Then he (a.s.) folded it and it lies with us now, none shall unfurl it except when Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) rises. Then when he (a.t.f.s.) rises, he shall unfurl it and there shall not remain anyone in the east or the west, except that he shall curse it. Then the awe (of Imām) shall traverse at a distance of one month in front of it, one month behind it, one month on its right and one month of its left". (Shaikh al Nu`mānī, "Al Gaybah") (translator)

¹ It is related from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "It is as if I see Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) at the back of Najaf, wearing the armor of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) that shall contract (fit exactly) upon him. Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall flounce with it and rotate around. He (a.t.f.s.) shall wear a brocade dress upon the armor and mount a piebald horse, possessing a cluster in between its eyes, and then flounce with it. There shall not remain anyone in the town, except that a light from that cluster shall reach them and it shall be his (a.t.f.s.)'s indication. Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall unfurl the standard of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and when he does so, it shall illuminate all that is in between the east and the west". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

² Sallām bin Sawrah relates that Abī Ja`far (al Bāqir) said, "Ḍulqarnayn was given a choice between two clouds and he chose 'the obedient one' and preserved 'the arduous one' for your Master (a.t.f.s.)". I asked him (a.s.) what the arduous one was and he (a.s.) replied, "A cloud possessing thunder and lightning. Your Master (a.t.f.s.) shall mount it and ascend the paths, paths of the seven heavens and seven earths, five among them populous and two in ruins". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

religious and worldly matters in accordance to Divine Traditions and Heavenly Commands, without withdrawing from some of them due to fear of the enemies and opponents and without adopting unsuitable deeds that resemble the passions of the oppressors. And this is the interpretation of Allāh (s.w.t.)'s promise, **"Allāh has promised to those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will certainly appoint them successors in the earth as He appointed successors those before them, and that certainly He shall establish for them their religion (Islām) which He has chosen for them, and that certainly He will, after their fear, in exchange give them security; they shall worship Me, and associating not with Me anything".**¹

Thirty Fourth, his (a.t.f.s.) control upon the world and his dominion in the east and west, on the mainland and ocean, on the mountain and desert; while there shall remain no place except that his (a.t.f.s.)'s authority shall reach it. There are numerous reports in this matter. **"To Him submits whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly".**²

Thirty Fifth, repletion of the earth with justice and equity, while there are very few report of the Messenger of Allāh (s.w.t.) or Divine Words, whether in the Shi`ah or Ahlul Sunnah books, that do not quote this glad-tidings.

Thirty Sixth, his (a.t.f.s.) decree and judgement among people through the knowledge of Imāmah without being in need of any witness or evidence, similar to the judgement of Dāwūd (a.s.) and Sulaymān (a.s.).³

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Nūr: 55

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūrat Āl `Imrān: 83. Rifā`ah bin Mūsā relates that I heard Abā `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq) say, **"To Him submits whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly.** When Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) rises, there shall remain no place upon the earth except that the sound of the Shahādāt (witnesses) shall be heard from it that there is no other Deity except Allāh (s.w.t.) and that Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is the Messenger of Allāh". (Muḥammad bin Mas`ūd al `Ayyāshī, "Al Tafsīr") (translator)

³ Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) says that, "When Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.) shall arise, he shall judge in between the people with the judgment of Dāwūd (a.s.) without any need for evidence. Allāh (s.w.t.) shall inspire him and he shall judge through his knowledge. He shall inform the nation of what is hidden (from them) and shall recognize his friend from foe through heedful scanning. And Allāh (s.w.t.) says: **Verily in this are signs for those who scan heedfully** (Sūratul Hījr: 75)". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

Thirty Seventh, his (a.t.f.s.) bringing forth distinguished new ordinances that were not in force before him, such as killing an old adulterous man and one who refuses to pay Zakāh, while he shall give inheritance of a brother to a brother of the spiritual world. It means two men among whom the bond of brotherhood was established in the incorporeal world.¹

Shaikh al Ṭabarsī relates that he (a.t.f.s.) shall put to death the one who reaches twenty years of age and does not acquire (proper) understanding in religion.²

Thirty Eighth, manifestation of all ranks of knowledge as related by Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī in his *Al Kharā'ej wal Jarā'eḥ* from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "Knowledge comprises of twenty seven parts, while whatever the Prophets (a.s.) brought were two parts and people do not know until today except these two parts. Then when Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, he shall extract twenty five parts and disseminate them among the people and add two (previous) parts to it until he (a.t.f.s.) disseminates twenty seven parts".

Thirty Ninth, descending of swords for his (a.t.f.s.)'s companions from the heavens.³

¹ Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) relates that, "Verily Allāh (s.w.t.) established brotherhood among the spirits in the incorporeal world two thousand years before He created the physical bodies. Then when our Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, the brother, whose brotherhood was established in the incorporeal world, shall inherit; while a brother in birth shall not inherit (from his brother)". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "Man lā Yaḥdhuruhul Faqīh") (translator)

² Several Aḥādīth have been related in admonition of the youth who do not gain proper understanding in religious ordinances and injunctions and remain averse to them. Great stress has been placed upon the youth to acquire knowledge since they are the future generations and the responsibility of the community lies upon their shoulders. Then if they are ignorant and heedless, the future generations shall be similar resulting in various forms of evils creeping up in the Shī`ah world. Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) says that, "If a youth among the Shī`ah youth is brought to me who does not acquire (proper) understanding in religion, I would hurt him". (Alī al Ṭabarsī, "Mishkātul Anwār fī Guraril Akhbār") It is also related from Imām Mūsā al Kāzīm (a.s.) that, "If I find a youth among the Shī`ah youth, who does not acquire (proper) understanding (in religion), I would strike at him with a stroke of the sword". In another report it is mentioned that, "I would strike twenty lashes upon him". Then he (a.s.) said, "Gain (proper) understanding (in religion), or else you are ignorant Bedouins". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

³ Al Baṭā'enī relates from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "When Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall rise, fighting swords shall descend (from the heavens). Each of these swords shall contain names

Fortieth, animal's obedience towards his (a.t.f.s.)'s companions.¹

Forty First, flowing of two streams, one of water and another of milk, from the rock of Nabī Mūsā (a.s.) behind Kūfah, the centre of his (a.t.f.s.) dominion. It is related in Al Kharā'ej wal Jarā'eḥ (of Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī) from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) that, "When Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall rise at Makkah and desire to go towards Kūfah, a caller shall declare: None among you should carry food or drink. They shall carry the rock of Mūsā bin `Imrān (a.s.), through which twelve streams gushed out.² Then they shall not alight at any place, except that it shall be fixed, while streams shall gush out of it. Anyone who will be hungry shall be satiated and anyone who shall be thirsty shall be quenched. It (the rock) shall be their provision until they settle down at Najaf behind Kūfah. Then when they alight behind it, water and milk shall continuously gush forth from it, anyone who will be hungry shall be satiated and anyone who shall be thirsty shall be quenched".

Forty Second, descending of `Isā (a.s.), the Prophet of Allāh (s.w.t.), from the heavens to assist him (a.t.f.s.) and his offering prayers in his (a.t.f.s.)'s lead. This is related in numerous reports, rather Allāh (s.w.t.) has included this grace among his (a.t.f.s.)'s virtues and merits. It is related in Al Muḥtadhar of Ḥasan bin Sulaymān al Ḥillī in a lengthy report, that Allāh (s.w.t.) addressed His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) on the night of Ascension (Mi`rāj), saying, "I shall bestow upon you by bringing forth eleven 'Guided Ones' from his (`Alī bin Abī Ṭālib) loins. All of them shall be from your progeny through the virgin Batūl (Fāṭemah al Zahrā'). The last one (a.t.f.s.) among them shall be the one behind whom `Isā bin Maryam (a.s.) shall offer Prayers. He (a.t.f.s.) shall fill the earth with justice, as it shall be filled

of the person and that of his father". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥāruḥ Anwār") (translator)

¹ It is quoted in a lengthy Ḥadīth related from the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) that, "The sting of insects shall be removed (by Allāh) to such an extent that if a newly born boy enters his hand into the jaw of a snake, it shall not hurt him; and if a newly born girl grasps a lion, it shall not hurt her. It (the lion) shall roam amongst the camels, as if it is their (guarding) dog; while a wolf shall roam among the sheep, as if it is their (guarding) dog". (Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs, "Al Tashrīfu bil Minan fil Ta`rīfi bil Fitan") (translator)

² Refer to the Holy Qur`ān, "**And remember when Mūsā sought water for his people; said We, 'Strike you the rock with your staff! Then gushed out from there twelve springs; each people knew their (respective) drinking place; Eat you and drink you of Allāh's provision, and commit you not evil in the earth acting mischievously'**". (Sūratul Baqarah: 60) (translator)

with oppression and inequity. I shall deliver from perdition through him (a.t.f.s.) and guide from astray through him. And I shall grant sight to the blind through him (a.t.f.s.) and bestow cure to the sick through him”.

Forty Third, killing of Dajjāl, the accursed, who shall be among the punishments of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon the people of the west. `Alī bin Ibrāhīm (al Qummī) relates from Imām al Bāqir (a.s.) in interpretation to the words of Allāh, **“Say you: He has power that He may send on you a chastisement from above you”**.¹ He (a.s.) said, “It refers to the smoke, the scream and Dajjāl”. He (a.s.) added, saying, “No Prophet (a.s.) was sent, except that he warned people of the sedition of Dajjāl”.

Forty Four, unlawfulness of reciting seven Takbīr (Allāhu Akbar, Allāh is the Greatest) upon anyone’s dead-body after Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.), except him (a.t.f.s.). And it has already been quoted in the section dealing with the Martyrdom of Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.) and his testimony to his son Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.).

Forty Fifth, his glorification (Tasbīḥ) to be recited on the eighteenth (of every month) until its end. It should be noted that glorification (Tasbīḥ) by each of the A’immah (a.s.) are allotted on days of a month. The first day is allotted for the glorification (Tasbīḥ) by the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.); glorification (Tasbīḥ) on the second day by Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.); third day for the glorification (Tasbīḥ) by Al Zahrā’ (s.a.); followed by each A’immah (a.s.) until Imām al Ridhā. Glorification (Tasbīḥ) by him is allotted on the tenth and eleventh; on the twelfth and thirteenth glorification (Tasbīḥ) by Imām al Jawād (a.s.); the glorification (Tasbīḥ) by Imām al Hādī (a.s.) to be recited on the fourteenth and fifteenth; Imām al `Askarī (a.s.)’s glorification (Tasbīḥ) on the sixteenth and seventeenth; while the glorification (Tasbīḥ) of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) to be recited on the eighteenth until the end of month. The glorification (Tasbīḥ) is quoted as, “Sub-ḥānAllāhi `Adada Khalqih, Sub-ḥānAllāhi Ridhā Nafsih, Sub-ḥānAllāhi Midāda Kalimātih, Sub-ḥānAllāhi Zinata `Arshih, wal Ḥamdu lillāhi Mithl Dālik. (Glory be to Allāh by the number of His creation, Glory be to Allāh by the pleasure of His Self, Glory be to Allāh by the ink of His pen, Glory be to Allāh by the embellishment of His throne, and Praise be to Allāh similar to it)”.

Forty Sixth, termination of the dominion of the arrogant and the oppressors upon

¹ Holy Qur’ān, Sūratul An`ām: 65

his (a.t.f.s.) reappearance, his presence and the permanence of his dominion¹ or that of his children until the day of Qiyāmah, moreover the return (Raj`ah) of all the A`immah (a.s.). It is related that Imām Ja`far al Şādiq (a.s.) recited these verses abundantly, "For every people is a government that they await, and our government shall manifest in the last age".



¹ It is related that Imām Ja`far al Şādiq (a.s.) said, "Our dominion shall be the last dominion. There is no household who occupied dominion before us, except that when they see our conduct, they shall say: If we are bestowed kingdom, we shall follow their conduct. And this is the meaning of the words of Allāh (s.w.t.): **And the end is (best) for the pious ones**". (Sūratul A`arāf: 128, Sūratul Qaşaş: 83) (Shaikh al Ṭūsī, "Al Gaybah") (translator)

3. Evidences regarding his (a.s.)'s sacred presence and his concealment (Gaybah)

We content ourselves to quote here what `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī has written in his Ḥaqqul Yaqīn, and whoever is desirous of more details should refer to books such as Najmul Thāqib (of Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) etc.

He says that it should be noted that the Shī`ah and Ahlul Sunnah relate Aḥādīth regarding reappearance of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) and his rising through successively quoted reports. Among them are those quoted in Jāme`ul Uṣūl (of Ibn Athīr al Jazarī) from Ṣaḥīḥ of Al Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ of Al Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ (Sunan) of Abī Dāwūd and Ṣaḥīḥ of Al Tirmidī from Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "By the One in Whose hands is my soul! Soon the son of Maryam (`Īsā) shall descend amongst you as an equitable judge. He shall break the cross, kill the pig, abolish the Jizyah,¹ and he shall not accept any other religion except Islām. He shall gather abundant wealth, however none shall accept it".²

He (s.a.w.a.) also said, "What shall be your state when the son of Maryam (`Īsā) shall descend amongst you, while your Imām (a.s.) shall be present among you, i.e. Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.)".

It is related in Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim from Jābir (bin `Abdullāh al Anṣārī) who says that I heard the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) say, "A group among my nation shall constantly be fighting upon the truth and gaining victory until the day of Qiyāmah". Then he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Then `Īsā bin Maryam (a.s.) shall descend and their commander shall tell him to lead Prayers for them. He (a.s.) shall reply: No, verily some of you are commanders upon the others, this is an honour bestowed by Allāh (s.w.t.) upon this nation (Ummah)".

Abī Dāwūd relates in his Al Musnad and also Al Tirmidī from `Abdullāh bin Mas`ūd that the Prophet said, "If a single day remains upon the world, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall prolong that day until a man from among me", or "from among my Ahlulbait (a.s.) shall arise, his name shall be my name and he shall fill the earth with equity and

¹ Since there shall remain no one adhering to another religion except Islām, while Jizyah is an amount to be paid by non-Muslims residing under Muslim rule. (translator)

² Since people will become such self-sufficient that none shall be in need of any amount from someone else, and this due to complete justice, equity and fair distribution of wealth under Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s rule. (translator)

justice as it shall be filled with oppression and inequity”.

According to another report from him (s.a.w.a.), “The world shall not end until a man from among my Ahl al-bait (a.s.) shall rule the `Arab, his name shall be my name”.

In another Ḥadīth from Abū Hurayrah, he (s.a.w.a.) said, “If a single day remains upon the world, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall prolong that day until a man from my Ahl al-bait (a.s.) shall rule, his name shall be my name”.

It is related in Sunan of Abī Dāwūd from `Alī (a.s.) that the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, “If a single day remains from the age, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall dispatch a man from my Ahl al-bait (a.s.), who shall fill it with justice as it shall be filled with inequity”.

It is also related in Sunan of Abī Dāwūd from Umm Salmah who says that I heard the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) say, “Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is from my progeny (a.s.) from among the children of Fāṭemah (s.a.)”.

Abī Dāwūd and Al Tirmidī relate from Abī Sa`īd al Khudrī that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, “Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is from me. (He shall possess) Radiant forehead, elongated nose, he shall fill the earth with equity and justice as it shall be filled with inequity and oppression, while he shall rule for seven years”.

Abī Dāwūd and Al Tirmidī also relate from Abī Sa`īd al Khudrī, who says that we feared lest innovation (Bid`ah) may crop up after our Prophet (s.a.w.a.) therefore we asked him (s.a.w.a.) and he replied, “Verily Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is among my nation (Ummah) who shall arise and shall live for five, seven or nine (years)”. While Zayd was the one who doubted.¹ We asked him (s.a.w.a.), “And what is that?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Years. A man shall come to him (a.t.f.s.) and say: O Mahdī! Give me. Give me. Then he (a.t.f.s.) will fill in his garment with whatever he is able to carry”.

It is related in Al Sunan of Al Tirmidī from Abī Ishāq that `Alī (a.s.) looked at his son Ḥasan (a.s.)² and said, “This son of mine is a Master as named by the Prophet

¹ Zayd bin `Ammīyy, one of the narrators of the above Ḥadīth, who doubted whether the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said five, seven or nine. (translator)

² Perhaps a mistake by the narrator who mentions the name of Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.) instead of Imām al Ḥusain (a.s.), or rather is even correct, since Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.)’s lineage even reaches Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.) through his daughter Umm `Abdullāh Fāṭemah, who was the

(s.a.w.a.), and from his loins shall come forth a man who will be called by the name of your Prophet (s.a.w.a.). He (a.t.f.s.) shall resemble him (s.a.w.a.) in conduct and not resemble him in appearance. He shall fill the earth with justice”.

Al Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nu`aym (al Aṣbahānī), among the renowned Ahlul Sunnah traditionists, has gathered forty Aḥādīth from their Ṣiḥāḥ (veritable) books containing description, circumstances and name of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). Among them is the one related by `Alī bin Hilāl from his father who says that, I entered the presence of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) in his condition through which he later passed away. Fāṭemah (s.a.) was seated near his (s.a.w.a.)'s head and wept until her voice arose. The Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) lifted his head towards her (s.a.) and asked, "O my dear Fāṭemah! What makes you weep?" She (s.a.) replied, "I fear deprivation after you". Hearing this, he (s.a.w.a.) said, "O my dear! Do you not know that Allāh casted a glance at the inhabitants of the earth, a better glancing, and chose your father (s.a.w.a.) and sent him with His Message. Then He (s.w.t.) cast a glance, a better glance, and chose your husband (a.s.) and revealed to me to marry you to him. O Fāṭemah! Then we the Ahlulbait (a.s.) are bestowed seven characteristics by Allāh (s.w.t.), neither bestowed upon anyone before us, nor shall be bestowed upon anyone after us. I am the Seal of the Prophets (a.s.), and the most magnanimous upon Allāh (s.w.t.) among the Prophets (a.s.), and the most lovable among the creatures near Allāh (s.w.t.), while I am your father. And my Vicegerent (a.s.) is the best among the Vicegerents, and is the most lovable in the eyes of Allāh (s.w.t.) among them, while he is your husband. And our Martyr is the best among the Martyrs, and is the most lovable in the sight of Allāh (s.w.t.) among them; he is Ḥamzah bin `Abdul Muṭṭalib, the uncle of your father and your husband. And among us is the one who possesses two wings (Ja`far al Ṭayyār) and flies along with the Angels in Paradise wherever he desires, while he is the paternal cousin of your father and brother of your husband. And among us are the grandsons of this nation (Ummah) and they are your sons Al Ḥasan (a.s.) and Al Ḥusain (a.s.). They are the Masters of the youth of Paradise, while their father (a.s.), by the One Who sent me with the truth, is better than them both”.

Then he (s.a.w.a.) continued to say, "O Fāṭemah! By the One Who sent me with

mother of Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) as explained further by `Allāmah Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī. (translator)

the truth! The Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) of this nation shall be through them (Imām al Ḥasan and Imām al Ḥusain), when the world shall turn disorderly, sedition shall manifest, paths shall be blocked, while people shall raid one another. Then neither the elder shall have pity upon the younger nor shall the younger respect the elder. When this takes place, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall dispatch among them the one who shall conquer the fortresses of misguidance and locked hearts. He (a.t.f.s.) shall rise with the religion (Islām) in the last age, as I arose with it in the initial age. He (a.t.f.s.) shall fill the earth with justice as it shall be filled with inequity. O Fāṭemah! Do not aggrieve and do not weep, since Allāh (s.w.t.) is Most Merciful and Most Compassionate upon you than me. This is due to your status near me and your place in my heart. Allāh (s.w.t.) married you to your husband (a.s.), who is the greatest among men with regards to genealogy, the most magnanimous in status among them, the most merciful among them towards the subjects, the most just among them with regards to equality and the most discerning among them in judgement. Then I have requested my Lord (s.w.t.) that you should be the first one to join me among my Ahlulbait (a.s.)”.

‘Alī (a.s.) said that when the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) passed away, Fāṭemah (s.a.) did not survive him (s.a.w.a.) except for seventy five days until Allāh (s.w.t.) united her (s.a.) with him (s.a.w.a.).

Shaikh (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī opines that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) attributed the lineage of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) to both Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.) and Imām al Ḥusain (a.s.), since his lineage reaches the former (Imām al Ḥasan) through his mother, since the mother (Umm ‘Abdullāh Fāṭemah) of Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) was the daughter of Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.). In some reports it is mentioned that he (a.t.f.s.) is from the progeny of Imām al Ḥusain (a.s.).

Al Dārquṭnī, one of the renowned traditionists near the Ahlul Sunnah, also relates this lengthy Ḥadīth from Abī Sa‘īd al Khudrī and writes at its conclusion that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, “From among us is the Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) of this nation, while ‘Īsā (a.s.) shall pray behind him”. Then he (s.a.w.a.) placed his hand upon the shoulder of Ḥusain (a.s.) and said, “From him shall emerge the Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) of this nation”.

Abū Nu‘aym (al Aṣbahānī) also relates from Ḥuḍayfah (bin al Yamān) and Abī Umāmah al Bāhilī that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, “Verily Al Mahdī

(a.t.f.s.), his countenance is similar to a glittering star and a black mole is visible upon his right cheek". While according to the report by `Abdul Raḥmān bin `Awf, his (a.t.f.s.)'s "teeth are cleaved". Moreover according to the report by `Abdullāh bin `Umar (bin al Khaṭṭāb), "There is a cloud upon his (a.t.f.s.)'s head from which a caller shall declare: This is Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), the Caliph of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then obey him". While according to Jābir bin `Abdullāh (al Anṣārī) and Abī Sa`īd (al Khudrī), "Verily `Īsā (a.s.) shall pray behind him (a.t.f.s.)".

Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al Shafī`ī, the author of Kifāyatul Ṭālib fī Manāqibi `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib and among the Ahlul Sunnah scholars, has authored a book (Al Bayān fī Akhbār Ṣāhibil Zamān) dealing with the reappearance of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), his attributes and portents consisting of twenty five chapters. He writes, "I compiled this book from non-Shī`ah sources".

Ḥusain bin Sa`īd al Bagawī authored a book Sharḥul Sunnah which is among the renowned and reliable books in the eyes of the Ahlul Sunnah and contains permissions to their scholars, while I (the Author) too possesses an ancient copy of it. He quotes five Aḥādīth in it dealing with the attributes of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) that he relates from their Ṣiḥāḥ (authentic) books.

Ḥusain bin Mas`ūd al Farrā' quotes five Aḥādīth dealing with the reappearance of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) in his book Al Maṣābīḥ that is extant among the Ahlul Sunnah.

Some of the Shī`ah scholars quote one hundred and fifty six Aḥādīth from reliable Ahlul Sunnah books regarding Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). While there are more than one thousand Aḥādīth present in the Shī`ah books dealing with the birth of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) and his concealment (Gaybah), and that he is the twelfth Imām (a.s.) from the progeny of Imām al `Askarī (a.s.), while most of these Aḥādīth are coupled with miracles. Since they contain reports regarding twelve A`immah (a.s.) until their last one (a.t.f.s.), his hidden birth and that he (a.t.f.s.) shall possess two concealments (Gaybah), the latter larger than the former, etc. among the specialities. While all these Aḥādīth are definite facts, since books dealing with these reports were compiled years before fulfilment of these portents. Moreover if one disregards its sequence (of narration), they are absolutely and certainly beneficial from numerous angles. Moreover, awareness of a large group regarding his (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed birth and witnessing him (a.t.f.s.) by a large group of the reliable ones and his companions, from the day of his birth until our age, that are

the days of his major concealment (Gaybatul Kubrā), all of these have been quoted in the renowned Shī`ah and Ahlul Sunnah books.

While the authors of books such as Al Fuṣūlul Muḥimmah (of Ibnul Ṣabbāg al Mālikī), Maṭālibul Su`ūl (of Kamāluddīn Muḥammad bin Ṭalḥah al Shāfi`ī), Shawāhidul Nubūwwah (of `Abdul Raḥmān Jamī), Ibn Khallikān and a large group among the opponents (of the Shī`ah) have quoted reports in their books dealing with his (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed birth and all his attributes that are reported by the Shī`ah. And when the birth of his Chaste Forefathers (a.s.) are known, similarly his blessed birth is also known. While the improbability and obscurities forwarded by the opponents regarding lengthiness of his (a.t.f.s.)'s concealment (Gaybah), his concealed birth and his lengthy age, are not potent enough to nullify the absolute and proven evidences. While they are similar to the disbelievers of Quraysh who refused the resurrection (Qiyāmah) based upon their doubts regarding enlivening the bones after their decomposition,¹ along with similar occurrences in the former nations. It is related in the Shī`ah and Ahlul Sunnah Aḥādīth that whatever occurred in the former nations shall similarly occur in this nation.²

`Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī continues to say that a large group of renowned personalities were aware of his (a.t.f.s.)'s blessed birth, such as Sayyidah Ḥakīmah (bint Imām al Jawād) and the midwife, who was their slave-girl at Surr Man Ra`ā (Sāmarrā'). While a large group even had the opportunity to behold Imām (a.t.f.s.) from the day of his birth until the Martyrdom of his father (a.s.), moreover miracles manifested in Narjis at the time of his birth, all these are quite numerous to be counted or computed. I have compiled these in my Biḥārul Anwār, Jilā'ul `Uyūn and other treatises (Rasā'el).

He (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī) writes in his Ḥaqqul Yaqīn that Shaikh Muḥammad ibn Bābawayh al Ṣadūq relates through his true chain of transmitters from Aḥmad bin Ishāq al Qummī, that once I entered the presence of Abī Muḥammad Ḥasan bin `Alī al `Askarī (a.s.) with an intention to question him regarding his successor. He (a.s.) commenced his speech (without me asking him), saying, "O Aḥmad bin

¹ Refer to the Qur'anic Verse, "**Who shall enliven the bones when they are rotten?**" (Sūrat Yāsīn: 78) (translator)

² The Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "Everything that occurred in the former nations, its similarity shall occur in this nation, shoe following a shoe and feather following a feather". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah") (translator)

Ishāq! Verily Allāh (s.w.t.) did not leave the earth vacant of the Evidence of Allāh (Ḥujjatullāh) from the time He created Ādam (a.s.) and shall not leave it vacant until Qiyāmah. He (s.w.t.) wards off trials from the inhabitants of the earth through his (a.t.f.s.)'s medium, descends rains through his medium and extracts the blessings of the earth (through his medium)". I asked him (a.s.), "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Then who is the Imām and Caliph after you?" Hearing this, he (a.s.) arose in haste and entered the house. Then Imām (a.s.) came out while carrying a lad (a.t.f.s.) upon his shoulders, whose countenance was similar to a full moon and he was three years old. Then he (a.s.) told me, "O Aḥmad bin Ishāq! Were it not for your dignity near Allāh (s.w.t.) and near His Evidences (us), I would not have displayed this son of mine to you. He has been bestowed the name and agnomen (Kunīyyah) by the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), and shall fill the earth with equity and justice as it shall be filled with inequity and oppression. O Aḥmad bin Ishāq! His similitude in this nation is that of Khidhr (a.s.) and his similitude is that of Ḍulqarnayn. By Allāh (s.w.t.)! He shall be concealed in concealment (Gaybah) in which none shall be saved from perdition except those who have been established by Allāh (s.w.t.) through verbal acknowledgment of his Imāmah, and none shall find success in it except those who pray for his early reappearance".

Aḥmad bin Ishāq says that hearing this, I asked him, "O my Master! Is there an indication through which my heart may find solace?" Suddenly the lad (a.t.f.s.) started to speak in eloquent `Arabic, saying, "I am Baqīyatullāh (the remaining one with Allāh) upon His earth and the avenger from His enemies. Then do not ask for an indication after witnessing by the sight, O Aḥmad bin Ishāq". When I heard this, I left their presence in a joyous and happy state. The next day I returned back to him (Imām al `Askarī) and questioned him, "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! My joy increased when you favored me with it. Then what is the ongoing custom of Khidr and Ḍulqarnayn in him (a.t.f.s.)?" Imām (a.s.) replied, "His (a.t.f.s.)'s lengthy concealment (Gaybah), O Aḥmad"! Again I asked him (a.s.), "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will his concealment lengthen?" He (a.s.) replied, "Yes, by my Lord (s.w.t.)! (It shall lengthen) Until majority of those who acknowledge him (a.t.f.s.) shall turn away from this affair. There shall not remain firm upon it, except those from whom Allāh (s.w.t.) has taken oath regarding our Authority, inscribed faith in his heart and aided him with His spirit. O Aḥmad bin Ishāq! This affair is an affair from Allāh (s.w.t.), a secret

from the secret of Allāh (s.w.t.) and concealment from the concealment of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then accept what I bestowed you with and conceal it, then be among those who offer thanks so that you may be included among us tomorrow in the High (status)".

It is also related from Ya`qūb bin Manqūsh that once I entered the presence of Abī Muḥammad Ḥasan bin `Alī (al `Askarī) when he was seated upon a bench and on his right was a house on which a curtain was hung. I asked him (a.s.), "O my Master! Who is the Master of this affair?" He (a.s.) told me to lift the curtain off. When I lifted the curtain off, a lad came out whose stature was five spans, aged ten or eight or similar years old. He (a.t.f.s.) possessed a clear forehead, fair countenance, shining eyes, powerful hands, bent knees, mole upon his right cheek and forelocks upon his head. He (a.t.f.s.) came and sat upon the thigh of Abū Muḥammad (a.s.). Then he (a.s.) told me, "This is your Master". Then he (a.t.f.s.) sprung up and Imām (a.s.) told him, "O my son! Enter until the determined time". He (a.t.f.s.) entered the house and I waited for him. Then Imām (a.s.) told me, "O Ya`qūb! See who is there in the house?" I entered it and found no one inside.

It is related through true chain of transmitters from Muḥammad bin Mu`āwiyah, Muḥammad bin Ayyūb and Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī that Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan bin `Alī (al `Askarī) displayed him (a.t.f.s.) to us when we were present in his house, while we were forty men. Then he (a.s.) said, "This is your Imām after me and my Caliph upon you. Then obey him and do not be divided in your religion after me, lest you may perish. Then you shall not see him (a.t.f.s.) after today". They said that we left his presence and few days passed when Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī) passed away.

It is related in Ḥaqqul Yaqīn (of `Allāmah al Majlisī) that Shaikh al Ṣadūq, Shaikh al Ṭūsī, Shaikh al Ṭabarsī and others relate through their true chain of transmitters from Muḥammad bin Ibrāhīm bin Mahzayār, or some relate from `Alī bin Ibrāhīm bin Mahzayār, that I performed twenty Ḥajj Pilgrimages, all with the intention of meeting Imām (a.t.f.s.), however, it did not prove fruitful. One night when I was asleep on my bed, I heard someone telling me, "O `Alī bin Ibrāhīm! Allāh (s.w.t.) has permitted Ḥajj for you (this year)". I awoke in a joyous state and was still in Prayers, when it dawned and I recited my dawn Prayers. Then I left to search for the pilgrims and found a caravan ready to depart. I joined the first caravan that was destined to depart. Not much time passed when they left and I too left along with them, while I intended to go to Kūfah (first). When I reached Kūfah, I

dismounted, handed over my provisions to my reliable brothers and went to investigate regarding the family of Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī); however, I did not find any trace or news of them. Then I left with the first caravan that desired to go to Madīnah. When I entered therein, I dismounted, handed over my provisions to my trustworthy brothers and went in search of their news or trace. Again I found neither any trace nor any news of them. I found people going to Makkah and left with them until I reached there. Again I handed over my provisions to the reliable ones and left out to search for the family of Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī), however, I neither found any news nor any trace of anyone among them.

I spent the time in between hope and despair, pondering upon my affair and criticizing myself, while the night had enshrouded. I kept an eye upon the Ka`bah to be empty (of people), then I would perform its circumambulation (Tawāf) and ask Allāh (s.w.t.) to fulfill my desire. While I was in that state, Ka`bah became empty and I arose to perform its circumambulation (Tawāf). Suddenly I saw a youth possessing handsome countenance and pleasant scent, wearing two Yemeni clothes, one tied upon his waist and another placed upon his shoulder. While he had placed his cloak upon his shoulders. He turned to me and asked, "From where O man?" I replied that I was from Ahwāz and he asked, "Do you know Ibnul Khaṣīb therein?" I said, "May Allāh (s.w.t.)'s Mercy be upon him! He has passed away". Hearing this, he said, "May Allāh (s.w.t.)'s Mercy be upon him! He fasted during the day, awoke at night (in worship), recited the Qur`ān and loved us". Then he asked, "Do you know `Alī bin Ibrāhīm bin Mahzayār therein". I said that I was the one, hearing this, he said, "Welcome to you O Abal Ḥasan"! Then he asked, "What did you do with the sign (object) that was between you and Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī)?" I replied that I possessed it with me and he told me to remove it. Hearing this, I removed a beautiful ring engraved with "Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.)" and "`Alī (a.s.)" upon it. While according to another report, "O Allāh (s.w.t.)! O Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.)! O `Alī (a.s.)" was engraved upon it. As soon as his sight fell upon it, he wept profusely and lamented in a loud voice. He wept for a lengthy period of time, while saying, "May Allāh (s.w.t.)'s Mercy be upon you O Abā Muḥammad (a.s.)! You were a just Imām, son of the A`immah (a.s.) and father of Imām (a.t.f.s.). May Allāh (s.w.t.) dwell you in the lofty garden along with your Forefathers (a.s.)". Then he said, "O Abal Ḥasan! Return back to your residence and prepare your provisions until one third of the night passes and two thirds of

it remains. Then join us, for you shall meet your desire, Allāh (s.w.t.) willing”.

I returned back to my place and was engrossed in thoughts for a lengthy period of time until the time passed. Then I arose and started to prepare my provisions, reached my mount and sat upon it until I reached a valley. Suddenly I saw the youth who told me, “Welcome to you O Abal Ḥasan! Glad tidings to you, for you have been granted permission (to meet Imām)”. Saying this, he proceeded and I followed his steps and we passed by `Arafah and Minā and reached the lowermost peak of the mountain of Ṭā’ef. Then he said, “O Abal Ḥasan! Alight and prepare for Prayers”. Saying this, he alighted and I alighted too until he prepared for Prayers and I followed suit. Then he said, “Recite the Fajr Prayers and shorten it”. I shortened it and he recited the Salām and fell into prostration soiling his face with the earth. Then he mounted and told me to do so. I mounted and he proceeded and I followed him until we reached the high peak and he said, “Look, do you see anything?” I saw a spot covered with abundant grass and greenery. I replied, “O my Master! I see a spot covered with abundant grass and greenery”. Again he asked, “Do you see something upon its peak?” I cast a glance and saw a sand-dune, while a tent made of hair was erected upon it and it was emanating light. Again he asked me whether I saw anything and I replied that I saw such and such.

Then he said, “O son of Mahzayār! Have glad tidings for here lies aspiration for every aspiring one”. Then he told me to proceed with him and I did so until we reached the lowermost peak and he said, “Alight, for here shall ease every difficulty of yours”. Saying this, he alighted and I too followed suit, then he told me, “O son of Mahzayār! Leave the reins of your mount”. I asked, “To whom should I hand them over, when there is no one here”. Hearing this, he said, “Verily this is a Sanctuary, none enters it except a friend (of Allāh) and no one comes out of it except a friend (of Allāh)”. I left its reins and he proceeded further, while I too followed him. When we neared the tent, he overtook me and said, “Wait here until I gain permission for you”. After some time he returned back to me, saying, “Glad tidings to you, since your desire has been fulfilled”.

I entered Imām (a.t.f.s.)’s presence and found him seated upon a felt, on which a red tanned leather mat was spread, while he was reclining upon a tanned pillow. I saluted him (a.t.f.s.) and he replied to me. I looked at him (a.t.f.s.) and found his countenance similar to a radiant moon, without any scar or blister; neither towering tall nor lowering short, however (normal) lengthy stature; glittering

forehead; thin and lengthy eye-brows; dark eyes; elongated nose; flat cheeks; a mole upon his right cheek similar to fragments of musk scattered upon silver; black and amber-fragrant hair upon his head that reached until the lobe of his ears in length. His illuminated forehead radiated light similar to a glittering star. All this accompanied with extreme tranquility, poise, modesty and handsomeness. When I saw him (a.t.f.s.), my intellect was perplexed in describing his attributes and features.

Then he (a.t.f.s.) asked me, "O son of Mahzayār! In what state did you leave your brothers in `Irāq?" I replied, "In distressful livelihood, while the swords of Banī Shayṣubān (Banī `Abbās) have frequented upon them". Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) said, "May Allāh (s.w.t.) kill them! It is as if I see a group killed in their houses, while the command of their Lord has seized them day and night. You shall rule upon them as they rule upon you, and on that day they shall be disgraceful ones". Then he (a.t.f.s.) continued, "Verily my father (a.s.) took an oath from me that I should not reside upon the earth, except upon a place that is the most concealed one and farthest one, in order to conceal my affair and in protection of my whereabouts from the machinations of the people of perversion and apostasy".

He (a.t.f.s.) further said, "He (my father) told me: O my son! Verily Allāh, may His Praise be exalted, never leaves the territories of His earth and the earnest ones of His obedience and His worship, without an Evidence (Ḥujjah), with whom they scale great heights, and an Imām with whom they attain perfection and who leads them to the Path of His Custom and the method of (fulfilling) His desire. And I desire O my son, that you be among those whom Allāh (s.w.t.) regards them to propagate the truth, dismantle falsehood, exalt the religion and extinguish misguidance. And it is necessary for you O my son, to seek shelter in the concealed part of the earth and search for its farthest part, since there is a violent enemy for every Friend, among the Friends of Allāh (s.w.t.), then this should not make you dreary. Then know that the hearts of the obedient and sincere ones shall be inclined to you, similar to a bird that returns to its nest. They are a group who are virtually in dishonor and subjugation; however, they are honorable and most lovable near Allāh (s.w.t.). Evidently they seem in vary and a needy state, however, they are possessors of contentment- and self-restraint. They have educed the religion and seek its assistance in their struggle against the opponents. Then O my son, adopt patience in whatever comes forth in your affairs until you obtain (Divine) help in warding them off. Then O my son, it is as if support by the

victory from Allāh (s.w.t.) to you has ripened and facilitation of deliverance and exaltation of dignity has approached. And it is as if the yellow banners and white standards are flapping upon your shoulders in between the Ḥaṭīm and (the well of) Zamzam. And it is as if they have systematized themselves in following one another in pledging allegiance to you and displaying confidence in your love, similar to systematization of pearls in a necklace, and striking their hands (to pledge allegiance to you) beside Ḥajarul Aswad. A group shall gather at your doorstep whom Allāh (s.w.t.) has created from a pure mould and priceless earth. Their hearts are cleansed off the filth of hypocrisy and burnished off the dirt of discord; their dispositions are humbled towards the religion, their hearts are barren against (committing) tyranny, their faces are open to accepting (the truth), their visages are fresh with grace, they are devout towards the true religion and its possessors. Then when their bases are solidified and their pillars are fortified, they shall disrupt the divisions of the nations through their successive attacks, when they shall pledge allegiance to you under the shade of a tall tree, whose branches shall be large, upon the banks of the Ṭabrīyyah lake (in Palestine). At that moment the dawn of right shall shine forth and the darkness of falsehood shall depart and Allāh (s.w.t.) shall shatter tyranny through your medium and restore faith. The two sides of the world shall tremble with delight through your medium, the branches of honor shall quiver with freshness through your medium, the canons of honor and dignity shall stabilize at its original place, while those who have turned away from the religion shall return back to their original shelter”.

Then Imām (a.t.f.s.) continued, “Your gathering with me should be concealed (by you), except upon the truthful ones and sincere brothers in religion”.

Ibrāhīm bin Mahzayār then says that I stopped with him (a.t.f.s.) to question him regarding obscure issues. And when my time for departing arrived and I decided to return back, I came to bid him (a.t.f.s.) farewell and renew by pledge (towards him). I presented to him (a.t.f.s.) an amount of more than fifty thousand dirham and requested him to accept it from me. He (a.t.f.s.) smiled and said, “Use it for your expenses, since distance is difficult and the desert is large in front of you”. Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) prayed for me abundantly and I proceeded towards my homeland.

4. Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s astonishing and extra-ordinary miracles

It should be noted that the miracles manifested during the days of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.)'s minor concealment (Gaybatul Şugrā) and the frequenting of his (a.t.f.s.)'s emissaries and distinguished ones to his presence are abundant, and since it is beyond the scope of this book to quote more, we content ourselves to relate a few here in below.

First, Shaikh al Kulaynī, Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī and others relate from an inhabitant of Madā'en, that I went for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage accompanied by my friend. While we were at `Arafah, we saw a youth (a.t.f.s.) seated, who was wearing trousers and cloak, while he had worn yellow slippers in his feet. I calculated the cost of the trousers and cloak and found it to be one hundred and fifty dīnār. Moreover I witnessed no signs of (fatigue) of travel in him. Suddenly a destitute passed by and asked from us, however, we refused him. Then he passed by the youth (a.t.f.s.) and asked from him. The youth (a.t.f.s.) picked up something from the earth and gave it to him. The destitute prayed for him intensely and lengthened it. Then the youth (a.t.f.s.) arose and disappeared from our sight. We neared the destitute and asked him what the youth (a.t.f.s.) gave him. He showed us golden dentary pebbles. We weighed it and found them to be twenty Mithqāl. Seeing this, I told my friend, "Our Master (a.t.f.s.) was near us and we did not recognize". We went in his (a.t.f.s.)'s pursue and searched the entire plain of `Arafah, however we failed to find him. We asked each person who was seated around him from Makkah and Madīnah, and they replied, "He is an `Alawī youth who performs the Ḥajj Pilgrimage on foot every year".

Second, Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī relates in his Al Kharā'ej wal Jarā'eḥ from (Abil Ḥasan) al Mustariq (al Dharīr) that one day I was present near Ḥasan (or Ḥusain) bin `Abdullāh bin Ḥamdān Nāşirul Dawlah, while we were discussing regarding the existence of Imām al Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). He said that I was in contempt of it until one day I went to my paternal uncle Ḥusain and spoke to him in this matter. He told me that O son, I too was a believer in what you say, until I was given authority of Qum, while it had become painstaking for the ruler. Anyone who was sent to Qum on behalf of the ruler, the inhabitants therein fought with him. Ultimately I was handed over an army and I proceeded towards it.

When I reached the district of Tirz, I went hunting. I encountered a wildfowl and went behind it. I penetrated deeply in search of it until I reached a river and stepped into it. The more I traversed it, the river turned wider and wider. While I was in this state, a horseman arrived seated upon a grey steed. He (a.t.f.s.) had worn a green linen turban, while I could not see anything (from his face) except his eyes; moreover he had worn red footwear in his legs. He said, "O Ḥusain"! He neither addressed me as the commander, nor called me by my agnomen (Kunīyyah). I asked him what he desired and he replied, "Why do you revile my existence and why do you deny your Khums from my?" I was a hot-tempered man and did not fear anything. However, on seeing him, I shivered and was completely in awe of him. I replied, "I shall certainly do what you command me, O my Master". He (a.t.f.s.) said, "When you reach your destined destination (Qum), enter it in peace (without any battle) and gain revenue, give its one fifth part (Khums) to its worthy ones". I replied, "I heard and shall obey". Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) said, "You may leave in right guidance". He (a.t.f.s.) took the reins of his mount and left. I did not know which way he went and searched for him right and left, however his visage concealed from me. My awe of him increased and I returned back to my camp on foot and forgot the conversation that took place between us.

When I reached Qum and desired to fight them, its inhabitants came out to me and said, "We fought with whoever came to us in opposition, then if you are honest, there shall be no dispute among us. Then you may enter the town and utilize it as you desire". I stayed therein for some time and gathered immense wealth as much as I could. Some of the commanders slandered me in the presence of the ruler; ultimately he envied my high status and abundance in what I had acquired. I was deposed and returned back to Bagdād. Initially I went to the house of the ruler and greeted him and then returned back to my house. People came to visit me, among them was Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī (r.a.), who bypassed the people and sat reclining against my pillow. Seeing this, I was enraged. He continued to sit and did not leave, while people were entering and leaving, and my rage increased all the more. When all the people left and the gathering became vacant, he neared me and said, "There is a secret between us. Then should I reveal it to you?" I told him to do so and he continued, "The Master of the grey steed and the river says that we fulfilled what we had promised". Hearing this, I remembered the incident and started to tremble. Then I said, "I heard and shall obey". Saying this, I arose, held his hand and opened the door of the treasure vault. He counted its one fifth part (Khums) and even from the

amount that I had forgotten while gathering it and he reminded me regarding it. Then he left and I never ever doubted this matter and it became clear to me.

Ḥasan (or Ḥusain) bin `Abdullāh bin Ḥamdān Nāṣirul Dawlah says that from the day I heard this incident from my uncle Abī `Abdillāh (Ḥusain), my doubt ceased.

Third, Shaikh al Ṭūsī and others relate from `Alī bin Bābawayh (al Qummī), that he wrote a request in the presence of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) and handed it over to Ḥusain bin Rūḥ (r.a.). He requested Imām (a.s.) in it to pray to Allāh (s.w.t.) to grant him a son. Imām (a.s.) replied to him that Allāh (s.w.t.) would grant him two righteous sons. After some time Allāh (s.w.t.) granted him two sons through his slave-girl, one of whom he named Muḥammad (Shaikh al Ṣadūq) and the other Ḥusain. Muḥammad (Shaikh al Ṣadūq) authored numerous books, among them Man lā Yaḥduruḥul Faqīḥ; while numerous traditionists and scholars were born from the progeny of Ḥusain. Muḥammad (Shaikh al Ṣadūq) would always pride that he was born due to the prayers of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), while his teachers would extol him and say, "It is appropriate that the one born due to the prayers of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) should be similar (in grace and knowledge)".

Fourth, Shaikh al Ṭūsī relates from Rashīq that Al Mu`tadhīd (al `Abbāsī) summoned us, while we were three men, and ordered us each to mount upon horses and lead others besides them. He told us to leave with very less provisions, not carry anything more or less, except a Prayer-mat upon the saddle. Then he told us, "Go to Sāmarrā". Saying this, he described a locality and house and said, "When you reach it, you shall find a black slave at its door. Then raid the house and get me the head of anyone you find therein".

We reached Sāmarrā' and witnessed all that he (Mu`tadhīd) had described us. We found a black slave at the door weaving a waist-band. We asked him about the house and who was in it. He replied, "Its occupant". By Allāh (s.w.t.)! He did not turn to us; moreover he was less inclined to us. We stormed the house as commanded and found it to be mysterious. There was a curtain hanging opposite to the house, while I had not seen anything more eminent than it as if it was freshly hand-woven and there was no one in the house. When we lifted the curtain, we found a large room as if an ocean full of water. We saw a mat spread in the farthest part of the room and we realized that it was spread upon the water, while a man (a.t.f.s.), with the best visage, was standing upon it, praying. He (a.t.f.s.) neither turned to us nor towards anything with us. Just then Aḥmad bin `Abdullāh

(one of us) proceeded further to enter the room and fell and drowned in the water. He was in a perplexed state until I extended my hand towards him, saved him and pulled him out, while he had turned unconscious and remained in that state for some time. My second companion followed suit and faced what the first one had faced, while I remained awe-struck.

Seeing this, I called to the owner of the house (a.t.f.s.), saying, "Pardon of Allāh (s.w.t.) and you"! I did not know anything and to whom we were sent, while I was seeking pardon from Allāh (s.w.t.). He was not inclined to what we said, while my awe of him increased and we left his presence. Mu` tadhid was awaiting our arrival and had commanded his porter to let us enter his presence at any time we arrived. We reached him at night and entered his presence. He asked us what had transpired and we related to him all that we had seen. Hearing this, he asked, "Woe be upon you! Did you meet anyone before me or did anyone among you reveal to anyone a word in this matter?" We replied in the negative and he continued, "I do not belong to my grandfather"! Then he swore severely upon his faith that if he heard this incident from anyone, he would strike off our heads. Thus we did not have the courage to reveal anything, except after his death.

Fifth, Muḥammad bin Ya` qūb al Kulaynī relates from (`Alī bin Qays, who relates from) a policeman of the host, that I witnessed Nasīm¹ at Surr Man Ra`ā (Sāmarrā'), when he broke open the door of the house, the house of Imām al `Askarī (a.s.) after his Martyrdom. He (a.t.f.s.) came out carrying Ṭabarzīn (similar to an axe) in his hands and said, "What do you do at my house?" Hearing this, Nasīm said, "Ja`far al Kaḏḏāb presumed that your father (a.s.) left this world without any son, then if this house belongs to you, I shall leave it and go". Saying this, he left from there.

`Alī bin Qays says that one of the servants of the house came out to us and we inquired from him regarding the incident. He asked us who had told me and I replied that a policeman of the host had informed me. Hearing this, he said, "Hardly anything is hidden from the people".

Sixth, Ibn Bābawayh (al Qummī) and others relate that Aḥmad bin Ishāq (al Qummī), one of the agents of Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.), took along with him Sa`ad bin `Abdullāh (al Qummī), among the reliable companions, to Imām (a.s.)'s presence to question him in issues that were in his mind. Sa`ad says that we

¹ A distinguished slave of Ja`far al Kaḏḏāb (the liar) or Mu` tamad al `Abbāsī. (translator)

entered Surr Man Ra'a (Sāmarrā') and reached the door of our Master (Imām al `Askarī) and requested permission to enter. We received permission to enter, while Aḥmad bin Ishāq carried a bag upon his shoulders, covered with a Ṭabarī (from Ṭabaristān) cloak. The bag contained one hundred and sixty purses of dirham and dīnār and each of these purses were sealed by their senders.

Sa`ad says that I am incapable to compare the sacred countenance of our Master Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī), except to a full moon of the fourteenth, while we were engulfed in the radiance of his face. A lad (a.t.f.s.), worthy to be compared to Jupiter in disposition and appearance, was seated upon his right thigh. There was a parting upon his head similar to Alif between two Wāw. A golden ball, resembling a pomegranate, was placed in front of Imām (a.s.), whose engraving shone in between the rare gems studded into it. It was presented to him (a.s.) by some of the chiefs of Baṣrah. Imām (a.s.) held a pen in his hand and whenever he intended to write something upon the paper, the lad (a.t.f.s.) would hold his fingers. Imām (a.s.) would roll the golden ball to him and engross the lad (a.t.f.s.) in fetching it, so that he may not desist him from writing what he desired. We saluted him (a.s.), he replied to us and signaled us to sit down. When he (a.s.) completed writing what was in his hands, Aḥmad bin Ishāq removed the bag from the fold of his cloak and kept it in front of him. Imām al `Askarī (a.s.) cast a glance at the lad (a.t.f.s.) and said, "O my son! Break open the seals from the gifts of your adherents and your devotees". Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) said, "O my Master! Is it lawful that I extend my chaste hand towards impure gifts and unclean wealth, when it's lawful is mixed with unlawful?" Imām (al `Askarī) then said, "O son of Ishāq! Take out what lies in the bag so that he (a.t.f.s.) may distinguish between the lawful and unlawful".

When Aḥmad started to empty the first purse, the lad (a.t.f.s.) said, "This belongs to so and so, son of so and so, an inhabitant of such and such district of Qum. It contains sixty two dīnār, out of which forty five dīnār is the cost of a chamber sold by its owner that he had inherited from his father; fourteen dīnār cost of nine dresses and three dīnār from the rent of shops". Hearing this, my Master (al `Askarī) said, "You speak the truth my son. Then reveal the unlawful from it to the man". He (a.t.f.s.), "Search for a dīnār minted in Rayy, dated so and so year, whose half engrave is defaced; and a clipped coin of Āmul, weighing a quarter dīnār. The reason for both their unlawfulness is that the owner of this purse weighed one and quarter maund of yarn and gave it to his neighbor, who was a

weaver. After a passage of some time, a thief stole the yarn and the weaver informed its owner regarding it. The owner belied him and took from him one and quarter maund of yarn, finer than what he had given him (earlier) and prepared a dress from it. This dīnār and the minted coin is their cost". When the purse was opened, they found a paper in the midst of dīnār upon which name of the person was written as informed by him (a.t.f.s.) and its proportion was also the same. They also found the dīnār and minted coin with the mark as indicated by him (a.t.f.s.).

Thereafter he opened another purse and the lad (a.t.f.s.) said, "This belongs to so and so, son of so and so, an inhabitant of such and such district of Qum containing fifty dīnār, while it is not lawful for us to touch it". When he (a.t.f.s.) was questioned regarding it, he (a.t.f.s.) replied, "It is the cost of wheat in which the owner treated the farmer unfairly while dividing it. He took an adequate weight for himself and gave the farmer less". Hearing this, our Master (al `Askarī) said, "You speak the truth O my son"!

Then he (Imām al `Askarī) said, "O Aḥmad bin Ishāq! Take them all to return them back and tell them to return it back to its owners, for we do not need anything from it. Then give us the dress sent by the old woman". Aḥmad said that the dress was inside my bag and I had forgotten regarding it. When Aḥmad bin Ishāq left to bring the dress, our Master Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī) looked at me and said, "What brought you here O Sa`ad?" I replied, "Aḥmad bin Ishāq motivated me to meet our Master (a.s.)". He (a.s.) said, "Then what about the issues that you desired to question?" I replied that they remained in their place. Hearing this, he (a.s.) said, "Then ask the coolness of my eyes", saying this, he (a.s.) signaled towards the lad (a.t.f.s.).

Then Sa`ad put forth his questions and Imām (a.t.f.s.) furnished him with their replies, while he (a.t.f.s.) miraculously even pointed out some of those questions that he forgot to ask, until the end of a lengthy report.¹

¹ And although the questions forwarded by Sa`ad bin `Abdullāh al Qummī and their subsequent replies by Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) are very advantageous, however, all of them cannot be quoted here due to brevity's sake. However we take pleasure in quoting just one question here for the benefit of our esteemed readers. Sa`ad says that then I asked, "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Inform me the interpretation of Kāf Hā Yā `Ayn Ṣād (starting verse of Sūrat Maryam)". He (a.t.f.s.) replied that these alphabets relate to concealed reports that Allāh

Seventh, Shaikh al Kulaynī, Ibn Bābawayh (al Qummī) and others relate through their reliable chain of transmitters from Gānim al Hindī that I resided at a town in Hind (India) renowned as interior Kashmīr. My companions, numbered forty, occupied seats on the right side of its ruler, all of them well-versed in the 'Four Books', viz. Torah (Tawrah), Bible (Injīl), Psalms (Zabūr) and the Scriptures (Ṣuḥuf) of Ibrāhīm (a.s.). We would judge among the people, educate them in their religion and issue verdicts to them upon their lawful and unlawful, while the people would resort to us, as well as the ruler and those below him. One day discussion arose amongst us regarding the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and we said, "This Prophet (s.a.w.a.), who is mentioned in the books, his matter is concealed from us and it is incumbent upon us to investigate regarding him and trace him". Our view settled that I should proceed and inform them regarding him (s.a.w.a.). I left carrying large amount of wealth.

(s.w.t.) informed His slave Zakarīyyā (a.s.) and then He (s.w.t.) related it to Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.). Zakarīyyā (a.s.) requested Allāh (s.w.t.) to teach him the 'five names'. Jabra'īl descended and taught him those names. Whenever Zakarīyyā pronounced the names of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.), `Alī (a.s.), Fāṭemah (a.s.) and Ḥasan (a.s.); his grief parted away and his tribulation departed. However, whenever he pronounced the name of Ḥusain (a.s.), tears choked him and his heart turned narrow. One day he (a.s.) asked, "O my Allāh (s.w.t.)! I am relieved of my sorrows when I pronounce the four names, however, when I pronounce the name of Ḥusain (a.s.), my eyes are filled with tears and my moaning arises". Then Allāh (s.w.t.) informed him of the incident (of the Martyrdom) and said, "Kāf refers to Karbalā'; while Hā points to Halākah (suppression) of the progeny (of the Prophet); Yā refers to Yazīd, the oppressor of Ḥusain (a.s.); `Ayn point out to his (a.s.)'s `Atash (thirst) while Ṣād his (a.s.)'s Ṣabr (forbearance)". When Zakarīyyā (s.a.) heard this, he did not leave his Masjid for three days, prevented people for entering his presence and spent his time in weeping and lamenting. His (a.s.)'s elegy would be, "O my Allāh (s.w.t.)! Would You bereave the best one (Prophet) among Your creatures through his son? O my Allāh (s.w.t.)! Would You descend the calamity of this disaster upon his threshold? O my Allāh (s.w.t.)! Would You let `Alī (a.s.) and Fāṭemah (s.a.) wear the dress (of mourning) upon this affliction? O my Allāh (s.w.t.)! Would You befall the pain of this catastrophe upon them (a.s.)?" Then he (a.s.) would say, "O Allāh (s.w.t.) Grant me a son through whom I may gain coolness of my eyes in my old-age, make him my inheritor and my vicegerent and his position near me similar to Ḥusain (a.s.). Then when you grant me, test me in his love and then bereave me through him as You bereaved Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.), Your endeared one, through his son". Thus Allāh (s.w.t.) bestowed him Yaḥyā (a.s.) and bereaved him through him. While the period of pregnancy of Yaḥyā (a.s.) was six months, similar to Ḥusain (a.s.)". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah") (translator)

I travelled for twelve months until I neared Kābul (in present day Afgānistān). I encountered a Turkish group, who stopped me and plundered my wealth. I was inflicted with abundant wounds and entered Kābul. When the ruler of Kābul was informed regarding me, he sent me to Balkh. Dāwūd bin al `Abbās bin Abil Aswad was in charge therein. He summoned me when he was informed that I had left Hind (India) in search, while I had learnt the Fārsī language and debated with jurists and scholastics. I went to his assembly and found that he had gathered the jurists and wanted me to debate with them. I revealed to them that I had left my homeland in search of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) whose mention I found in the books. They asked me, "Who is he and what is his name?" I replied, "His name is Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.)". Hearing this, they said, "The one you seek is our Prophet (s.a.w.a.)". I questioned them regarding their Shari`ah and they informed me. Then I told them, "I know that Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is a Prophet, however, I do not know whether the one you described to me is the same one or no. Then inform me his whereabouts so that I may go to him and question him regarding the indications with me and the evidences. Then I shall believe in him if he is the same one whom I seek".

They replied that he (s.a.w.a.) had passed away and I asked them regarding his vicegerent and his caliph. They replied that it was Abū Bakr. I said, "Tell me his name, since this is his agnomen (Kunīyyah)". They said, "He is `Abdullāh bin `Uthmān", and then joined his lineage to Quraysh. Then I asked them to reveal the lineage of their Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and they did so. Hearing this, I said, "He is not the one whom I seek. The person whom I seek is the one whose caliph is his brother in faith, his paternal cousin in ancestry, the husband of his daughter and father of his sons. There is no progeny of this Prophet (s.a.w.a.) upon the earth except through this man (Imām `Alī), who is his caliph". Hearing this, they pounced upon me and said, "O king! He has left polytheism (shirk) towards disbelief (kufr), while his blood is lawful (to be shed)". I told them, "O people! I am a man inclined to a religion (and not a disbeliever as you claim), and I shall not part it except when I find something more powerful than it. I found the description of the man (s.a.w.a.) in the books, revealed by Allāh (s.w.t.) upon His Prophets (a.s.), while I left Hind (India) in search of him and abandoned the honor that I resided therein. Then when I investigated regarding the man whom you described, he cannot be the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) mentioned in the books. Then leave me".

Just then, the ruler summoned a man named Ḥusain bin Iskīb, one of the companions of Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.). When he arrived, the ruler told him to debate with me. Hearing this, Ḥusain replied, "May Allāh (s.w.t.) mend your affairs! You possess jurists and scholars, while they are more knowledgeable and more discreet in debating with him". He replied, "Debate with him as I tell you. Then take him in privacy and treat him with kindness". When I revealed everything to Ḥusain bin Iskīb, he told me, "The person whom you seek is the same one described by them, however, his caliph is not the one they refer to. This Prophet is Muḥammad bin `Abdullāh bin `Abdul Muṭṭalib (s.a.w.a.) and his Vicegerent is `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib bin `Abdul Muṭṭalib (a.s.), while he is the husband of Fāṭemah bint Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and the father of Ḥasan (a.s.) and Ḥusain (a.s.) the grandsons of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.)".

Abū Sa`īd Gānim says that when I heard this, I exclaimed, "Allāh (s.w.t.) is the Greatest! He is the one whom I sought". Saying this, I rushed to Dāwūd bin al `Abbās and told him, "O commander! I have found what I had searched for. Then I bear witness that there is no other Deity except Allāh (s.w.t.) and that Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is the Messenger of Allāh (s.w.t.)". Hearing this, he displayed kindness towards me and favored me. Then he told Ḥusain to train me and I accompanied him and became friendly with him, while he trained me in whatever I required such as Prayers, Fasting and other obligations. Then I told him, "I have read in our books that Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is the seal of the Prophets (a.s.) and there shall be no other Prophet following him. The matter after him (s.a.w.a.) shall pass on to his vicegerent, his inheritor and his caliph after him. Then vicegerency after vicegerency shall continue by the command of Allāh (s.w.t.) in their progeny (a.s.) until the world ceases to exist. Then who is his vicegerent and the vicegerent of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.)?" Hearing this, he said, "Ḥasan (a.s.) thereafter Ḥusain (a.s.), the sons of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.). Thereafter the matter passed on to his vicegerent until it concluded in Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.)". Then he related to me what had taken place (regarding the circumstances leading to his concealment) and I had no other task except to find him (a.t.f.s.).

Thereafter Gānim went to Qum and sat amongst our companions in the year two hundred and sixty two Hijrah. Then he accompanied them to Bagdād, while his companion in his religion from Sind (Sindh) also accompanied him. Gānim says that I was worried regarding my companion due to some of his character and

therefore left him and reached Al `Abbāsiyyah (in Sāmarrā'). I offered Prayers therein and was engrossed in thoughts regarding finding him (a.t.f.s.), when someone came up to me and asked, "Are you so and so". And he took my name in Hind (India). I replied in the affirmative and he said, "Respond to the call of your Master (a.t.f.s.)".

I followed him, while he made way for me until I reached a house and a garden. I saw him (a.t.f.s.) seated and he said in the Hindī language, "Welcome O so and so! How are you? Then in what state did you leave so and so and so and so". He (a.t.f.s.) named forty people and inquired regarding each one of them. Then he (a.t.f.s.) informed me everything that had taken place, all in the Hindī language. He (a.t.f.s.) then asked, "Do you intend to go for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage along with the people of Qum?" I replied in the affirmative and he (a.t.f.s.) continued, "Do not accompany them for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage. Return back this year and perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage next year". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) forwarded a purse to me that was kept near him and said, "Spend it on your livelihood and do not go to such and such person in Bagdād", he (a.t.f.s.) named the person and said, "And do not inform him regarding anything. Then depart from us and go to Balad".

A group later informed us that our companions (from Qum) returned back from `Aqabah.¹ Gānim left for Khurāsān and went to perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage next year. He would send us gifts from Khurāsān and resided therein until his death. May Allāh (s.w.t.)'s blessings be upon him.

Eighth, Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī relates from Ja`far bin Muḥammad bin Qawlawayh, the teacher of Shaikh al Mufid, who says that in the year three hundred and thirty seven Hijrah I entered Bagdād with an intention to perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage, while it was the year in which the Qarāmiṭah (Qarmatians) intended to reinstall Ḥajarul Aswad at its original place in the Ka`bah. They were a group of apostate Ismā`īliyyah, who desecrated the Ka`bah, robbed Ḥajarul Aswad and took it to Kūfah and installed it therein. Thereafter they decided to return it back to its original place that year, while it was the beginning of the period of the major concealment (Gaybatul Kubrā). My only worry at that moment was to see who would install it back in the Ka`bah, since I had read in the books the

¹ The group from Qum left for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage, however they returned back without performing it. Therefore Imām (a.t.f.s.) had stopped Gānim from accompanying them. (translator)

incident of taking it and it being installed back at its place by the Evidence (Ḥujjah) in the age. Before the Proclamation of Prophet hood (Bi`that), when Ka`bah was damaged by flood, the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) placed it in its place. Similarly during the period of Ḥajjāj, Imām Zainul `Ābidīn (a.s.) placed it in its place and it got settled.¹ Suddenly I got inflicted with an illness and I feared my life, while I could not fulfil what I intended. I appointed a man renowned as Ibn Hishām and handed him over a sealed letter in which I questioned my age and that whether this illness would lead to my death or no. I told him, "My only worry is to deliver this letter to the one who installs the Ḥajarul Aswad at its place and obtain its reply. Then I appoint you for this task".

Ibn Hishām says that when I reached Makkah, it was decided to install the stone. I handed some amount to an attendant of the Ka`bah to allot me a place from where I could clearly see the installer of the stone and to save me from the crowd of people. Whenever anyone tried to install it, Ḥajarul Aswad agitated and did not settle in its place. Just then, a youth (a.t.f.s.) possessing a tawny complexion and handsome countenance arrived there, lifted it up and placed it at its spot, while Ḥajarul Aswad settled there as if it was never removed. Seeing this, people's voices arose and the youth (a.t.f.s.) proceeded towards the door to leave. I ran from my place to follow him (a.t.f.s.) and pushed the people to my right and left, while they assumed that I had lost my mind. People looked at me with wide eyes; however, my eyes did not lose him (a.t.f.s.) until he came out from the midst of the people. I was following him (a.t.f.s.) in haste, while he was paving the way slowly, yet I could not reach him.

When he (a.t.f.s.) reached a spot where none could see him except me, he stopped, turned to me and said, "Hand me what you possess". Hearing this, I handed him (a.t.f.s.) over the letter and he said, without looking into it, "Tell him

¹ It is related that when the Ka`bah was damaged due to the attack upon `Abdullāh bin Zubayr (at the orders of Yazīd), Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf undertook its repair. And when the Ka`bah was completed, they decided to install Ḥajarul Aswad (the black stone) in it. However, when any scholar among their scholars, or a judge among their judges, or an abstemious one among their abstemious ones, tried to install it, it trembled and agitated, and did not settle in its place. Just then, `Alī ibnul Ḥusain (Zainul `Ābidīn) arrived there, took it from their hands, pronounced the name of Allāh (s.w.t.) and then placed it, ultimately it settled. People pronounced Takbīr (Allāhu Akbar, Allāh is the Greatest), while Farazdaq compiled verses regarding it. (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

that there is no need for you to worry regarding this illness, while the matter (death), from which there is no escape, shall come to you after thirty years". At that time I was struck with severe terror and could not move. Then he (a.t.f.s.) left me and proceeded further.

Abul Qāsim (Ja`far bin Muḥammad bin Qawlawayh) understood these words of Imām (a.t.f.s.) and then fell ill in the year three hundred and sixty seven Hijrah. Abul Qāsim started to settle his matters, prepared his journey to the grave and wrote down his testimony, while making great efforts in it. He was questioned, "Why such fear? We desire from Allāh (s.w.t.) to grant you security, then you should not be fearful". He replied, "This is the year that I feared". Ultimately he passed away through that illness.

Ninth, Ibn Bābawayh (al Qummī) relates from Aḥmad bin Fāris al Adīb that I entered Hamadān and found all of them to be Ahlul Sunnah except a locality of people called Banī Rāshid, all of whom had accepted the Shī`ah faith and followed the Imāmiyyah creed. I inquired from them the reason for accepting the Shi`ah faith, when an old man, who displayed righteousness and good appearance told me that the reason was that once their grandfather, to whom they were attributed, left for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage. He said that when I completed the Ḥajj Pilgrimage, we passed by stations in the desert. I alighted from my mount and started to walk. I walked for a long distance until I was exhausted and sleep overtook me. I said to myself, "I shall take a small nap and shall wake up when the last part of the caravan arrives". However, I did not wake up, except by the heat of the sun and did not find anyone. I turned fearful and neither could see the way nor any trace. I placed my trust in Allāh (s.w.t.) and told myself, "I shall move in the straight direction".

I walked a small distance, until I reached a green and blooming land that seemed as if rain has just fallen upon it, while its earth smelt the most pure. When I looked at its expanse, I saw a castle radiating light similar to an unsheathed sword. Seeing this, I told myself, "If only I knew regarding this castle, while I neither saw nor heard anything regarding it?" I proceeded towards it and when I reached its door, I found two fair attendants. I saluted them and they replied with a beautiful salutation. Then they told me, "Sit down, for Allāh (s.w.t.) desires fairness for you". One of them arose, entered the castle, did not remain therein for a longer time and came out. Then he told me to arise and enter therein. I entered the castle and did not find a better structure than its structure and anything more

radiant than it. The attendant proceeded towards the curtain upon the door, lifted it up and said, "Enter".

I entered therein and found a youth (a.t.f.s.) seated in the middle of the room, while a long sword was hanging from the roof upon his head, whose point almost touched his head. The youth (a.t.f.s.) was emitting light similar to a moon that glitters in the darkness. I saluted him (a.t.f.s.) and he replied to the salutation with a most amiable and good utterance. Then he (a.t.f.s.) asked me, "Do you know who I am?" I replied in the negative and he (a.t.f.s.) replied, "I am Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.). I am the one who shall arise with this sword during the last age". Saying this, he pointed towards it (the sword) and continued, "Then I shall fill the earth with equity and justice as it shall be filled with inequity and oppression". Hearing this, I fell upon my face and smeared myself with the earth. Seeing this, he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Do not do so. Lift your head, while are so and so from a mountainous town called Hamadan". I replied, "You speak the truth O my Master and My Lord"! Then he (a.t.f.s.) asked, "Do you desire to return back to your family?" I replied, "Yes O my Master! And I shall give them glad tidings of what Allāh (s.w.t.) bestowed upon me".

He (a.t.f.s.) signalled to his attendant who held my hand and handed me a purse. He left and walked with me a few steps and my sight fell upon shelters, trees and minarets of a Masjid. He asked me, "Do you recognize this town?" I replied, "This place resembles Assadābād, a place close to our town". He said, "This is Assadābād. Then proceed towards it with right guidance". I turned to him, but found no one, thus I entered Assadābād. The purse that Imām (a.s.) had presented me contained forty or fifty dīnār. I entered Hamadān, gathered by relatives and gave them glad tidings of what Allāh (s.w.t.) gladdened me with. We lived in fairness until those dīnār remained with us.

Tenth, Al Mas`ūdī, Shaikh al Ṭūsī and others relate from Abī Nu`aym Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al Anṣārī that the group of Al Mufawwidhah and Al Muqaṣṣirah¹

¹ Al Mufawwidhah refers to those who believe that Allāh (s.w.t.) completely delegated all the affairs to the A'imma (a.s.) and everything was done by them independently from Allāh (s.w.t.). The word Fawwadhah means to delegate or assign, while those who hold this view are termed as Al Mufawwidhah or believers in total delegation. On the other hand Al Muqaṣṣirah refers to those who doubt and reject the merits and excellences of the A'imma (a.s.) after it has been made evident to them. While Qaṣṣara means to fall short, neglect and

dispatched Kāmīl bin Ibrāhīm al Madanī to Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī) to debate with him regarding their belief. Kāmīl says that I told myself, "I shall question him that it is my belief that none shall enter paradise except the one whose faith is similar to my faith and the one who acknowledges my word". When I entered his (a.s.)'s presence, I saw that he was wearing a white and delicate cloth and I said to myself, "The Friend of Allāh (s.w.t.) and His Evidence (Ḥujjah) wears a delicate dress, while he advises us to be equitable towards the brothers (in faith) and stops us from wearing that what he has worn". Imām (a.s.) smiled and told me, "O Kāmīl"! Saying this, he uncovered his arm and there was a black sack-cloth, harsh for his skin. Then he (a.s.) said, "This (the black sack-cloth) is for the sake of Allāh (s.w.t.) and this (delicate white cloth) is for you".

Hearing this, I was abashed and sat down at the door of a room, while a curtain was hanging upon it. Suddenly the wind blew, lifted one end of the curtain and I saw a boy (a.t.f.s.), who was similar to the disc of a moon and was around four years old. The boy (a.t.f.s.) addressed me, saying, "O Kāmīl bin Ibrāhīm"! And I trembled hearing it. Suddenly Allāh (s.w.t.) inspired me and I said, "Here I am O my Master"! Then he (a.t.f.s.) said, "You have come to the Friend of Allāh (s.w.t.), His Evidence (Ḥujjah) and His door to question him (a.s.), that none shall enter paradise except the one whose faith is similar to your faith and the one who acknowledges your word?" I replied in the affirmative and he (a.t.f.s.) continued, "In that case by Allāh (s.w.t.), very few shall enter paradise. By Allāh (s.w.t.)! Verily even the group who are called Al Ḥaqqīyyah shall enter paradise". I questioned him (a.t.f.s.), saying, "O my Master! Who are they?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "A group, who in their love for `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.) swear upon his right, although they do not recognize his right or his excellence". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) became silent for some time and then said, "And you have come to ask regarding the words of Al Mufawwidhah, they speak a lie. Rather our hearts are the reservoirs of Allāh (s.w.t.), then we will only what Allāh wills. And this is the meaning of His (s.w.t.)'s words: **And you will not, save what wills Allah, the Lord of the worlds**".¹

Then the curtain came down to its initial state and I did not have the courage to lift it off. Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī) looked at me smiling and said, "O Kāmīl bin

abandon. Both of these groups are condemned and considered misguided in Shī`ahism. (translator)

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Dahr: 30

Ibrāhīm! Why are you still sitting, when the Evidence (Ḥujjah) after me informed you regarding your need?" Hearing this, I arose and left, while I never met him (a.t.f.s.) after that". Abū Nu`aym (Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al Anṣārī) says that I met Kāmil and inquired from him regarding the Ḥadīth and he related it to me.

Eleventh, the traditionist and jurist `Imāduddīn Abū Ja`far bin Muḥammad bin `Alī bin Muḥammad al Ṭūsī al Mash-hadī, the contemporary of Ibn Shahr Āshub, relates in his book Al Thāqīb minal Manāqīb, from Ja`far bin Aḥmad that Abū Ja`far Muḥammad bin `Uthmān (al `Amrī) called me and handed me two dresses with distinguished marks and a purse containing some dirham. Then he told me, "It is the hour of the need that you should go to Wāsiṭ now and hand over what I gave you to the first person you meet when you alight from the boat upon the bank of Wāsiṭ". Ja`far says that when I heard this, I was deeply aggrieved and wondered to myself, "A person similar to me should be dispatched for this task and carry this insignificant thing?"

He says that I left for Wāsiṭ and sat upon a boat. I questioned the first person I met regarding Ḥasan bin Muḥammad bin Qaṭāt al Ṣaydalānī, the agent for endowments (Waqf) at Wāsiṭ. He replied, "I am the one, then who are you?" I replied, "Abū Ja`far al `Amrī sends you salutations and gave me these dresses and a purse to be handed over to you". Hearing this, he said, "All praise be to Allāh (s.w.t.)! For verily Muḥammad bin `Abdullāh al Ḥā`erī has died and I came out to arrange for his shroud (Kafan)". Then he unfastened the dresses and found all that he needed with regards to ink, cloth and camphor. While the purse contained cost for the carriers (of bier) and diggers (of grave). He (Ja`far bin Aḥmad) says that we attended his funeral and I returned back.

Twelfth, it is related from Ḥusain bin `Alī bin Muḥammad al Qummī, renowned as Abī `Alī al Bagdādī that I was at Bukhārā, when Ibn Jāshir handed me ten golden coins and ordered me to give it to Shaikh Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Ruḥ al Nawbakhtī at Bagdād. I carried them with me, however, when I reached the wilderness of Amuwiyah, I lost one of them. I was unaware of this until I reached Bagdād and removed the coins to hand it over to him and found that one of them was missing. Therefore I bought another coin in place of it of the same weight and added it to the nine. Then I entered the presence of Shaikh Abul Qāsim and placed the coins in front of him. Seeing this, he said, "Take back the coin that you purchased, for it (the lost one) has reached us and it is here". Saying this, he removed the coin

lost by me at Amuwiyah, I looked at it and found it to be the same.

Thirteenth, Ḥusain bin `Alī (bin Muḥammad al Qummī, renowned as Abī `Alī al Bagdādī), relates that a woman inquired from me regarding the agent of our Master (a.t.f.s.). Some of the people of Qum informed her that he was Abul Qāsim (Ḥusain) bin Rūḥ and indicated him to her. She entered his presence while I was near him, and asked, "O Sheikh! What do I possess?" He replied, "Throw whatever you possess into the Tigris River (Dijlah)". She went, threw them into the River and returned back to him, while I was yet present there. Abul Qāsim then told his maid, "Bring for me the container". She brought the container for him and he asked the woman, "Is this the container that you possessed and threw into the Tigris?" She replied in the affirmative and he continued, "Should I inform you what it contains or you shall inform me". She told him to say.

Shaikh Abul Qāsim said, "This container contains a pair of golden bangles, a large earring studded with gems, two small earrings studded with gems and two rings, one of Turquoise (Fīrūzaj) and another of agate (`Aqīq)". It was exactly what he said, while nothing was left from it. Then he opened the container and showed it to me. The woman looked at it and said, "This is exactly what I had brought with me and threw into the Tigris". A wave of delight passed through me and the woman upon beholding the true evidence.

After relating this incident to me, Ḥusain said, "I shall bear witness in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.) on the day of Qiyāmah upon whatever I related, while I neither added anything extra to me, nor deleted anything from it". Then he swore upon the Twelve A`immah (a.s.) that he spoke the truth, neither adding anything extra to me, nor deleting anything from it

Fourteenth, `Alī bin Sinān al Muṣūlī relates from his father that when Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī) passed away, a delegation arrived from Qum and the mountainous region, deputed to carry wealth with them, as they normally carried it to him (a.s.), while they were not aware of his (a.s.)'s death. When they reached Surr Man Ra`ā (Sāmarrā') they inquired regarding him (a.s.) and were informed that he (a.s.) had passed away. They inquired regarding his (a.s.)'s heir and were directed to Ja`far, his brother. When they inquired regarding him, they were told that he had left for sightseeing, mounting a boat in the Tigris River, drinking wine, while singers accompanied him. Hearing this, the group counselled with one another and said, "These are not the attributes of an Imām". Some of them said,

“Let us go back and return the wealth to their owners”. However, Abul `Abbās Muḥammad bin Ja`far al Ḥimyarī al Qummī said, “Wait until we go to this man (Ja`far) and confirm the validity of his matter”.

They proceeded, entered his presence, saluted him and said, “O our Master! We are from among the inhabitants of Qum. Among us are a group of Shi`ah and others, while we would always carry wealth to our Master Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī)”. Ja`far asked them for the wealth and they said that it was in their possession, to which he told them to bring it for him. They replied, “There is a unique method for this wealth”. When Ja`far asked what it was, they replied, “This wealth would be gathered by the common Shi`ah who would place a dīnār or two dīnār in a purse and seal it. And whenever we would bring the wealth to the presence of our Master Abī Muḥammad (al `Askarī), he would inform us that the total amount was such and such, such and such dīnār from so and so person, etc. Until he (a.s.) would inform us names of all the people and also the engraving upon the seals”.

When Ja`far heard this, he said, “You speak a lie and attribute things to my brother (Imām al `Askarī) that he did not utter, while this is knowledge of the unseen”. When the people heard these words from Ja`far, they started to stare at one another. Then Ja`far told them again to bring him the wealth, to which they replied, “We are nothing but hired people and shall not hand over the wealth except after witnessing indications similar to what we witnessed from our Master al Ḥasan (al `Askarī). Then if you are an Imām, then indicate to us regarding it (the wealth), or else we shall return it back to its owners and let them decide regarding it”.

Thereafter Ja`far bin `Alī went to the ruler at Surr Man Ra`ā (Sāmarrā') and informed him. He called those people and when they came, he told them, “Hand over this wealth to Ja`far”. They replied, “May Allāh (s.w.t.) mend (the affairs for) the caliph! We are but hired ones for the wealth and not its owners, while it belongs to a group of people. They ordered us not to hand it over except after witnessing indications and evidences as was the usual practise with Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī)”. Hearing this, the ruler asked, “And what was the evidence revealed by Abū Muḥammad (al `Askarī)?” They replied, “He (a.s.) would indicate to us the dīnār as well as their owners and the wealth and their quantity. Then when he (a.s.) would indicate this to us, we would hand him over the wealth.

We visited him (a.s.) several times and this was our indication with him (a.s.). Then if this man is the possessor of the affair (Imāmah), he should indicate to us similar to what his brother (Imām al `Askarī) indicated to us, or else we would return it back to its owners, who dispatched us with it". Hearing this, Ja`far said, "O commander! These people are liars and belie my brother (a.s.), while this is knowledge of the unseen". The ruler replied, "These people are nothing but messengers, **and nothing is upon the Messenger except the clear conveyance (of the message)**".¹ Hearing this, Ja`far was dumbfounded and did not reply anything. Then the people said, "The commander should favour us and send someone to escort us until we leave this town". He sent a chief with them who escorted them out of the town.

When they stepped out of the town, a handsome youth, who seemed to be a slave, followed them and called out, "O so and so! O so and so, son of so and so! Hasten to the call of your Master (a.t.f.s.)". They asked him whether he was their master and he replied, "Allāh (s.w.t.)'s refuge! However, I am an attendant of your Master (a.t.f.s.). Then proceed to him". They said that we walked along with him until we entered the house of Ḥasan bin `Alī (al `Askarī). We saw his (a.s.)'s son Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), our Master, seated upon a cot. He (a.t.f.s.) looked similar to a disc of the moon and had worn a green dress. We saluted him (a.t.f.s.) and he replied to us and then said, "The total amount of wealth is such and such, such and such dīnār sent by so and so person". He (a.t.f.s.) did not stop until he had described everything and even our clothes, our mounts and even the livestock that we possessed. Hearing this, we fell down in prostration (Sajdah) to Allāh (s.w.t.) and kissed the earth near him (a.t.f.s.). Then we asked him (a.t.f.s.) whatever we desired and he replied to us. We handed him (a.t.f.s.) over the wealth and he ordered us not to bring anymore wealth to Surr Man Ra'ā (Sāmarrā'). He (a.t.f.s.) indicated a man at Bagdād to us and commanded us to carry the wealth to him, while his (a.t.f.s.)'s written pronouncements (Tawqī`āt) would emerge through his medium.

We left his (a.t.f.s.)'s presence, while he (a.t.f.s.) handed over some camphor and shroud (kafan) to Abul `Abbās Muḥammad bin Ja`far al Ḥimyarī al Qummī and told him, "May Allāh (s.w.t.) increase your reward in yourself"! When Abul `Abbās reached `Aqabat Hamdān, he got afflicted with fever and passed away, Allāh

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Nūr: 54

(s.w.t.)'s Mercy be upon him. Thereafter the wealth was taken to Bagdād and handed over to his (a.t.f.s.)'s assigned representatives, while his (a.t.f.s.)'s written pronouncements (Tawqī`āt) would emerge through their medium.

Fifteenth, it is related from Abī Muḥammad Ḥasan bin Wajnā' that I was in the state of prostration under the spout (of the Ka`bah) during my fifty fourth Ḥajj Pilgrimage after the `Ishā'. I was lamenting in supplications (Du`ā') when someone shook me, saying, "Arise O Ḥasan bin Wajnā'!" Hearing this, I trembled. I arose and found a slave-girl possessing pale complexion and thin stature standing, I presume she was forty years old or more. I followed her and did not ask her anything until we reached the house of Khadījah (s.a.). It contained a room, whose door was in the middle of the wall, while there was a teak-wood ladder leading towards it. The maid went up and a call came out to me to climb. I climbed it and stood at the door, when Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) told me, "O Ḥasan! Did you think that you were concealed from me? By Allāh (s.w.t.)! There was no time during the Ḥajj Pilgrimage, except that I was along with you". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) described the circumstances to me and I fell down upon my face. I felt a hand touching me and I arose. He (a.t.f.s.) told me, "O Ḥasan! Stay at the house of Ja`far bin Muḥammad (al Ṣādiq) at Madīnah, and do not worry regarding your food, drink and clothes". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) handed me a book contained Du`ā' al Faraj and salutations upon him (a.t.f.s.) and said, "Supplicate with it and send salutations upon me in this way. Then do not hand it over to anyone, except those among my friends, and Allāh (s.w.t.) shall grant you prosperity". Then I asked him (a.t.f.s.), "O my Master! Would I not see you hereafter?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "O Ḥasan! If Allāh (s.w.t.) wills".

He (Ḥasan bin Wajnā') says that thereafter I returned back from my Ḥajj Pilgrimage and settled at the house of (Imām) Ja`far (a.s.). I would not leave it or return back except under three circumstances, to renew ablutions (Wudhū`), to sleep and during the time of breaking fast. And whenever I returned to my house at the time of breaking the fast, I would find the jar filled with water, while a loaf of bread, along with whatever I desired during that day, would be placed upon it. I would eat it and that would be sufficient for me. A dress for winter would come for me during the winter season and a summer dress during the summers. I would bring water during the day, scatter it in the house and leave the jar empty. Sometimes food would come for me, while I would not be inclined to it, then I would give them away as alms so that those along with me may not become

aware.

The Author (Shaikh `Abbās al Qummī) further says that our Master (Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) writes in his Najmul Thāqib that one of the titles of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is Mubdiyul Āyāt, i.e. the one who manifests the Signs of Allāh (s.w.t.) or the place of manifestation of the Signs of Allāh (s.w.t.). Since, when Allāh (s.w.t.) set the Caliphate upon the earth, dispatched Messengers (a.s.) and Prophets (a.s.) along with Signs, Clear Proofs and Evident Miracles to guide the creation and counsel them; and raise the truthful statement and vanish the false statement; He (s.w.t.) did not confer dignity and honour upon anyone similar to what He (s.w.t.) bestowed upon Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). Moreover, no Signs and Miracles manifested from them (a.s.) similar to what manifested through his (a.t.f.s.)'s auspicious hands. He (s.w.t.) offered him (a.t.f.s.) a lengthy life and He knows its termination. When he (a.t.f.s.) reappears, his physical appearance would be similar to a man in his thirties; a white cloud would be sheltering his blessed head, while a caller would be announcing from it in an eloquent language, saying, "This is Al Mahdī of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.)"! Additionally, he (a.t.f.s.) would place his hand upon the head of his Shī`ah, ultimately their intellects would perfect; his (a.t.f.s.) army would contain manifest Angels, while people would be able to see them similar to the age of Nabī Idrīs (a.s.); genie (Jinn) would also be among his army; his (a.t.f.s.) troops would not possess any drink or food, except a stone (of Nabī Mūsā) that they would carry and obtain sustenance through it; the earth would shine forth by the blessings of his (a.t.f.s.)'s sacred light, until people would become independent of the light of the sun or moon; evil and injury would depart from the beasts and insects, while fear and enmity among them would part away; the earth would reveal her (hidden) treasures; movement of the earth's orbit would become slow; his (a.t.f.s.)'s army would be able to walk upon the water; a rock shall indicate a disbeliever hiding behind it, while they shall be recognized by the mark upon their forehead; a group of dead shall reappear along with him (a.t.f.s.) after regaining life and fight alongside him (a.t.f.s.). These and other manifest signs, apart from the miracles that would appear before his (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance, all these cannot be computed. Numerous among them are found in the books relating to the concealment (Gaybah), while all these are indications of his (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance, moreover these entire combined together equal to one tenth of what manifested for the other Evidences (of Allāh).

5. Incidents relating to those who met Imām (a.t.f.s.) during his major concealment (Gaybah al Kubrā)

Meeting Imām (a.t.f.s.) may be possible when one recognizes him (a.t.f.s.) on seeing him or knowing that it was him after his departure. This is possible through incisive indications and also when one witnesses a miracle from him (a.t.f.s.), awake or in a dream, or when one witnesses an indication among the indications evidencing his noble existence. Our Master (Mīrzā Ḥusain) al Nūrī quotes a hundred incidents in his book *Al Najmul Thāqib* in this matter, while we content to quote twenty three incidents in this auspicious book from it. Moreover we have quoted two incidents in our book *Mafātihul Jinān*, one relating to Al Ḥāj `Alī al Bagdādī and second to Ḥāj Sayyid Aḥmad al Rashtī.

First, the learned scholar `Alī bin `Īsā al Irbilī writes in his *Kashful Gummah* that a group among my trustworthy brothers related to me that a person named Ismā`īl bin al Ḥasan al Hirqalī resided in one of the villages of Ḥillah named Hirqal. He died in my age; however I did not see him. His son Shamsuddīn related to me that my father told me that during his youth, a wound came up upon his left thigh, equal in size to a closed fist of a man. It would rip open in each spring, while blood and pus would flow out of it. Its pain kept him away from several tasks, while he resided at Hirqal. One day he left for Ḥillah, entered the presence of Sayyid Radhīyuddīn Ibn Ṭāwūs and complained to him regarding his malady. He told the Sayyid that he desired to treat it, while he called for the physicians of Ḥillah and showed them the wound. After examining it they said, "This wound has come up upon the Median cubital vein, while its treatment involves danger. Then if we cut it, we fear that the vein would also get cut and he would die". Hearing this, Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs told him, "I shall be proceeding to Bagdād and perhaps the physicians therein might be more intelligent and more expert than them, then accompany me".

He accompanied Sayyid and when the physicians were called to examine, they remarked similar to the previous ones and his heart sank. Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs told him, "Verily the Sharī`ah has permitted you to offer Prayers in these (soiled) clothes, then you should make efforts in caution. Do not be seduced by yourself, since Allāh (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) has forbidden it". Hearing this, my father told him, "If the matter is such and when I have already reached Bagdād, I shall proceed for the visitation to the Sacred Mausoleum at Surr Man

Ra'ā (Sāmarrā') and only then return back to my family". Sayyid replied that it was a better decision. He left back his clothes and other provisions with him and proceeded towards it.

My father says that I entered the Sacred Mausoleum and visited A'immah (a.s.), then alighted the cellar (Sardāb) and implored Allāh (s.w.t.) and the A'immah (a.t.f.s.). I remained in the cellar for a part of the night and resided at the Mausoleum until Thursday. Then I went to the Tigris River (Dijlah), took a bath, wore clean clothes and filled a pitcher that I carried along with me. I proceeded towards the Mausoleum, when I saw four men coming in from the gate of the (city) wall. I presumed them to be among a group of noblemen who resided around the Mausoleum and often came out to graze their cattle. Therefore I faced them and saw two youth, one of them had recent hair upon his beard, while all of them carried swords. The other (third) one was an old man with a pure appearance and carried a lance. The last one (a.t.f.s.) was carrying a sword, had worn a colourful cassock and had passed an end of his turban below his palate upon his shoulder. The two youth stood on the left side of the road, while the person (a.t.f.s.) wearing a cassock stood facing me.

Shamsuddin continues to say that they saluted my father and he replied to them. Then the person (a.t.f.s.) wearing a cassock asked him, "You desire to go to your family tomorrow?" He replied in the affirmative and he said, "Proceed further so that I may see what pains you". My father said that when I heard this, I detested their touch and said to myself, "These Bedouins do not take care of purification, while I have just stepped out of the river and my shirt is yet wet". I proceeded further towards him and he signalled to me and pulled me towards him. He (a.t.f.s.) constantly touched my side from my shoulder until he reached the wound. Then he (a.t.f.s.) pressed it with his hands and I was pained, then he sat aright upon his saddle as before.

The old man then addressed me, saying, "Have you prospered O Ismā'īl?" I was surprised how he knew my name and replied, "We have attained prosperity and you too, Allāh (s.w.t.) willing". Then the old man told me, "He is that Imām (a.t.f.s.)". Hearing this, I hastened towards him (a.t.f.s.), embraced him and kissed his thigh. Then he (a.t.f.s.) started to leave and I followed him, clinging on to him and he said, "Return back". I replied that I would not separate from him (a.t.f.s.) ever after and he said, "Interest lies in your returning back". I repeated to him (a.t.f.s.) what I said earlier and the old man told me, "Are you not ashamed O

Ismā`il! Imām (a.s.) orders you to return back twice and you disobey him?" This statement made me standstill and I stood back. He (a.t.f.s.) took some steps further, then turned to me and said, "When you reach Bagdād, Abū Ja`far al Muntanşir shall certainly call you. Then when you go to him and he gives you something, do not accept it from him. Then tell our son Radhī (Radhīyuddīn Ibn Ṭāwūs) to write down a letter to `Alī bin `Iwadh for you, since we have instructed him to grant you what you desire".

Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) left along with his companions and I continued watching them until they disappeared from my sight, while I regretted his separation. I sat down upon the earth for some time, and then I arose and left towards the Mausoleum. The chiefs gathered around me and said, "We see your face turned pale, is something bothering you?" I replied in the negative and they again asked, "Did someone trouble you?" I replied, "No, it is not as you say. However, I ask you whether you recognize the horsemen who were near you?" They replied, "They are among the notables, the owners of cattle". I replied, "No, rather he was the Imām (a.t.f.s.)". They asked, "Was the old man the Imām or the one wearing a cassock?" I replied that he was the one wearing a cassock. They asked me whether I showed him the wound that inflicted me and I replied, "He (a.t.f.s.) held it with his blessed hands and it pained. Thereafter I uncovered my thigh and did not find any trace of the wound. A doubt crept up into my mind due to the awe and I uncovered my other thigh, while there was no trace of it". Hearing this, people pounced upon me and tore my shirt to pieces as blessings. The chiefs entered me into a room and kept the people away from me.

When a man, who was a manager in between the two rivers (Euphrates and Tigris) at the Mausoleum, heard the clamour, he inquired about it and was informed regarding me. He came to the room and asked my name and when I left Bagdād. I informed him that I left in the beginning of the week, hearing this he went away. I spent the night at the Mausoleum, recited the Fajr Prayers and stepped out, while the people followed me until I went far away from the Mausoleum. Then they parted away and I reached Awānā and resided therein. I arose early in the morning and intended to go to Bagdād, when I witnessed a crowd of people gathered at the bridge of Al `Atīqah. They questioned everyone entering therein, they names, lineages and where they came from. They asked me my name and where I came from. I informed them and they pounced upon me, tore my clothes (to seek blessings) and I turned weary. The manager in between the two rivers

had written a letter to the inhabitants at Bagdād and informed them regarding me. They carried me to Bagdād, while people crowded me and would have killed me due to the large multitude.

The vizier, who was from Qum, called Sayyid Radhīyuddin Ibn Tāwūs and requested him to confirm the veracity of this incident. Sayyid left, while a group of people were along with him and we met at the gate of Al Nūbiyy. His companions turned back the people from me and when he saw me, he asked, "Are you the one regarding whom they speak?" I replied in the affirmative and he stepped down from his mount, uncovered my thigh and did not find any trace of the wound. Seeing this, he turned unconscious for some time. When he regained consciousness, he held my hand and entered me into the presence of the vizier, while he was weeping and saying, "O my Master! He is my brother and the nearest one to my heart". The vizier questioned me regarding the incident and I narrated it to him. Then he called for the physicians who had previously examined the wound and had opined that there was no cure for it except to cut it, and if the vein would be cut, I would die. Then the vizier asked them, "In case he was operated and survived, how much time would the wound take to heal?" They replied, "Two months, while a white hole would be formed in its place and no hair would grow there".

Again the vizier asked them when they had examined me and they replied that it was ten days back. Thereafter he uncovered the thigh that was pained and found it similar to the other one, while in reality there was no trace of any wound. Seeing this, one of the (Christian) physicians shouted, "This is a miracle of Al Masīḥ (ʿĪsā)!" The vizier replied, "Since this is not your work (of healing), we know who has done it".

Thereafter he was taken to the presence of Mustanṣir who questioned him regarding the incident and he related what took place. Mustanṣir forwarded one thousand dinar to him and said, "Take this and spend it on you". He replied, "I do not have the courage to even take one out of them". When the ruler asked him whom he feared, he replied, "The one (a.t.f.s.) who did this to me (granted me cure) told me not to take anything from Abū Ja`far (Mustanṣir)". Hearing this, Mustanṣir wept and turned disturbed. Ultimately he left his presence without taking anything.

The poorest among the slaves of Allāh (s.w.t.) towards His Mercy, `Alī bin `Īsā (al

Irbilī) says, that one day I narrated this incident to a group that was near me, while his son Shamsuddīn Muḥammad was also present, while I did not recognize him. When I completed the incident, he said, "I am his son from his loins". Hearing this, I fell into astonishment due to this coincidence and asked him, "Did you see his thigh when it was afflicted with the wound?" He replied, "No, since I was a yet child during that period, however, I saw it when it was cured, while there was no trace upon it, and hair were present upon it. He would daily visit Sāmarrā' and return back to Bagdād. He visited Sāmarrā' forty times that year, with a desire that the time that elapsed (of seeing Imām) would return back or he would obtain the fortune of what had taken place, the one who granted him cure and fulfilled his desire. Thus he passed away in regret and distress, may Allāh's blessings be upon him".

Second, the virtuous pious scholar Sayyid Muḥammad bin `Abbās, a resident of Jab Shīth (or Jashīth), a village of Jabal `Āmil (in south Lebanon) and among the paternal cousins of the noble master and the honourable proficient scholar Sayyid Ṣadruddīn al `Āmelī al Iṣfahānī, the son in law of Shaikh Ja`far al Najafī (Kāshiful Giṭā'), related this incident. He left his hometown in fear due to excessive aggression of oppressors upon him, along with severe indigence and fewer provisions to such an extent that when he left his hometown, he did not possess anything more, except food that would suffice him for only one day. Moreover he was a modest person and did not ask from anyone. He travelled the earth for some time and witnessed numerous wondrous acts until he reached Najaful Ashraf. He took residence in some of the upper rooms of the sacred courtyard of the Mausoleum of Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.). He lived in severe indigence, while none knew his state except a few people. He passed away in Najaful Ashraf after a passage of five years on his departure from his hometown.

He would visit me sometimes, while he was very modest and abash and attended the mourning ceremonies held by me. Sometimes he would borrow books of supplications from me due to his constrained subsistence, while mostly he did not possess any sustenance with him except a few dates. He was regular in reciting the narrated supplications for increase in sustenance to such an extent, that he did not forsake any reported recitations and narrated supplications.

Once he became engaged in writing a request in the presence of Imām Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) for forty days. He would note down his request and leave the

town every day before sun-rise from the small gate that led to the river. Then he would walk a few farsakh or more on the right side so that none could see him. He would then cover his request in a ball of earth, entrust it to one of the emissaries of Imām (a.t.f.s.) and throw it into the river. He continued this task until thirty eight or thirty nine days passed. After completing his daily task and returning back, he says that I was in extreme restlessness and sunken state and walked with my head bowed down, until I turned around and saw a man (a.t.f.s.) as if coming to me from behind me, while he was wearing an attire of the Arabs. He (a.t.f.s.) saluted me and I replied to him in brief, while I did not turn to him due to my restlessness. He (a.t.f.s.) walked along with me a few steps, while I was in my (distressed) mood. He (a.t.f.s.) asked me in the dialect of my hometown, "Sayyid Muḥammad! What is your desire? Thirty eight or thirty nine days have passed while you depart before sunrise to such and such place and throw your request into the water. You presume that your Imām (a.t.f.s.) is unaware of your need?"

He says that hearing this, I was astonished, since I had neither informed anyone regarding my engagement, nor had anyone seen me. Moreover, there was none in the Sacred Mausoleum from among the inhabitants of Jabal `Āmil that I did not know, in addition he had worn a hem and headband that was not customary in our town. Suddenly I realized that I had attained the extreme desire and achieved the grand blessing, while he was the Evidence (a.t.f.s.) upon the creatures, the Imām of the age (a.t.f.s.)! I had heard before that Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s hand was delicate and soft in its extremity, since people's hands did not touch his blessed hand. Thus I told to myself, "I should shake hands with him (a.t.f.s.) (to confirm the truth). Then if his hands are similar to what I had heard, then I would be certain of his (a.t.f.s.)'s presence". I extended my hand towards him (a.t.f.s.) and he too did so. I shook hands with him (a.t.f.s.) and found his hands to be gentle as I had heard. Thus I became certain of the prosperity and achievement (of his audience). I lifted my head and faced him (a.t.f.s.), then desired to kiss his blessed hands, however, I found no one present.

Third, the above mentioned (Sayyid Muḥammad bin `Abbās al `Āmelī) relates that I went to the Sacred Mausoleum of Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.) for visitation, while I was in a state of distress and pain in spite of its copious blessings and cheap prices. When I decided to return back along with other pilgrims, I did not possess anything with me except a loaf of bread to suffice me for a day. I lagged behind

them, stayed for a day until Zawāl and visited my Master (a.s.). I performed the Prayers and then wondered that if I did not join them (the pilgrims), I would not get any other companionship in the near future; and if stayed back, winter would come and I could die of extreme cold. I left the Sacred Mausoleum with a restless heart and wondered to myself, "I should walk on their path, then if I perish due to hunger, I would be relieved; or else I would join them".

I left the sacred town asking for the path and started to walk until sunset. I did not find anyone and realized that I had lost my way. I found myself in a horrifying desert and did not see anything in it except colocynth. I was on the verge of perishing due to hunger and thirst and started to break colocynth after colocynth with an intention to find a watermelon among them. I broke around five hundred colocynth, however did not succeed. I searched for water and grass until night shrouded me and lost hope of finding them. I was sure of perdition, submitted to death and wept upon my state. Suddenly I saw a mound and when I climbed it, I found a stream of water upon it. I was surprised; however I thanked Allāh (s.w.t.) and drank the water. I said to myself that I should perform ablutions (Wudhū') and offer Prayers; perhaps death would come upon me while in the state of performing it. I started to pray and when I completed the last part of the 'Ishā' Prayers, the night darkened further, while the wilderness was filled with the sound of lions, etc. Among them I recognized the sounds of lions and wolves and even saw some of their eyes shining similar to lamps. Seeing this, my fear turned twofold, moreover I submitted myself to death. Sleep overtook me due to extreme fatigue and I did not arise except when the voices stopped and the earth shone with the rays of the sun, while I was extremely exhausted.

Suddenly I saw a horseman (a.t.f.s.) coming towards me and I wondered that he would certainly kill me. Since he would be in need of my provisions and not finding it, he would be enraged and kill me, or at least injure me. When he (a.t.f.s.) neared me, he saluted and I returned back his salutation, while I found myself at peace due to him. He (a.t.f.s.) asked me what happened and I pointed out to him my fatigue. Seeing this, he asked, "There are three watermelons near you, then why don't you eat them?" I replied, "Do not joke with me and leave me to my state". Again he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Look behind you". When I turned around, I saw a tree of watermelon on which three huge melons were hanging. Then he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Satisfy your hunger through one of them and carry the other two along with you and walk straight. Then eat half (second) watermelon during the early day and

the other half at Zawāl. However retain the third melon, for it shall benefit you. At sunset, you shall reach a black tent, while its occupants shall join you with the caravan". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) disappeared from my sight.

I arose and pulled out the watermelons. I broke the first one and it was extremely sweet and delicious to such an extent that I had not eaten its similarity earlier. I ate it, carried the other two along with and stuck to the path. I continued walking until the sun arose. When one hour passed after sunrise, I broke the second watermelon and ate half of it. At Zawāl I ate the second half and followed the path. Nearing sunset, I saw the tent, while its occupants saw me too. They came to me and arrested me with extreme violence and severity. They dragged me to the tent presuming that I was a spy. I did not know any other language except Arabic, while they did not understand my tongue. They took me to their leader and he asked me with severity and rage, "From where have you come? Tell me the truth, or else I shall kill you". I related to him all that I had gone through and he said, "O liar Sayyid! None can cross the path alive that you describe, except that he perishes or the lions devour him. Moreover, how could you pave such a lengthy path in the time related by you? Distance from this place until the Sacred Mausoleum is three days. Then tell me the truth, or else I shall kill you". Saying this, he brandished his sword in front of my face. Suddenly the watermelon appeared from below my cloak and they asked me regarding it. I related the entire incident to them and those present said, "There is no trace or any watermelon in this desert, especially this type of watermelon whose similarity we have never ever seen".

Then they turned to themselves and started speaking to one another, as if they acknowledged the truthfulness of my statement, while this was a miracle from the Imām (a thousand benedictions, praises and salutations upon him). They proceeded towards me, kissed my hands and sat me in the middle of their gathering. They honoured me extremely, took my dress as blessings and gave me an elegant new dress to wear. They kept me as a guest for two days and nights, and on the third day they presented me ten tūmān and three people among them accompanied me until I joined the caravan.

Fourth, the learned scholar `Alī bin `Īsā al Irbilī, the author of Kashful Gummah, writes that Sayyid Bāqī bin `Aṭwah al Ḥusainī informed me that my father `Aṭwah was afflicted with a disease, while he followed the Zaydī school of thought. He would rebuke his son's inclination towards the Imāmiyyah faith and would say, "I

shall neither believe you nor acknowledge your belief until your Master, i.e. Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), arrives and cures me of this disease". He always repeated these words. One day while we were seated at the time of the end of `Ishā', our father started to scream and called us. We rushed to him and he shouted, "Catch up your Master (a.t.f.s.) since he just left my presence". We left and searched, however we found none. Therefore we returned back to him and asked him. He replied saying that a man came in and addressed me by my name. I asked him (a.t.f.s.) who he was and he replied, "I am the Master (a.t.f.s.) of your sons. I came to relieve you from what you are afflicted". Saying this, he extended his hand and pressed the spot of my hernia. Then he left and I examined my disease, however I did not find any trace of it. His son (Sayyid Bāqī) told me that he survived in a good shape. The incident gained renown and I (Shaikh `Alī bin `Īsā al Irbilī) questioned his other sons too and they informed me similarly, hearing which I was overjoyed.

After quoting the above incident and the one relating to Ismā`īl al Hirqalī, the author (Shaikh `Alī bin `Īsā al Irbilī) writes that there are numerous similar reports in this context, while a group of people met him (a.t.f.s.) on their road to Ḥijāz, etc., ultimately he (a.t.f.s.) relieved them and reached them to their goals. But for brevity's sake, I would have quoted more; however, his (a.t.f.s.)'s miracles that manifested during my age are sufficient.

Fifth, in interpretation of Du`ā' `Abarāt, `Allāmah (Ḥasan bin Yūsuf bin Muṭahhar) al Ḥillī writes in his book Minhājul Ṣalāḥ that it is a supplication related from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) through Sayyid Radhīyuddīn Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al Āwī. A renowned incident has been written down in the handwriting of some learned personalities in the margin of the book. Fakhruddīn Muḥammad, the son of `Allāmah al Ḥillī, relates from his father (`Allāmah al Ḥillī), from his grandfather the jurist Yūsuf, from the above mentioned Sayyid Radhīyuddīn that he was imprisoned by one of the commanders of Sulṭān Jarmāgūn for a lengthy period of time with severity and constriction. Once he saw Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) in his dream. He wept and said, "O my Master! Kindly intercede for me to be relieved from these people". Imām (a.t.f.s.) replied, "Recite Du`ā' al `Abarāt". He asked what it was and Imām (a.t.f.s.) replied, "It is present in your (book) Miṣbāḥ". He said, "O my Master! It is not mentioned in my (book) Miṣbāḥ". Again Imām (a.t.f.s.) replied, "Search and you shall find it (therein)".

He arose from his sleep, recited the Fajr Prayers and opened the book Miṣbāḥ. He found a paper among its pages on which this supplication (Du`ā') was written down, thus he recited it forty times. Incidentally a commander had two wives, one of whom was intelligent and wise and her husband trusted her. When the commander came to her, she asked, "Did you arrest one of the children of Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.)?" The commander asked why she questioned him and she replied, "I saw a person in a dream, as if sun was shining upon his cheeks. He held my neck in between two of his fingers and said: I see that your husband has arrested one of my sons and constricted food and water upon him. I asked him who he was and he replied that he was `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.). Then he told me: Tell him that if he did not release him (my son), I shall certainly ruin his house". The dream spread around and reached the ears of the Sulṭān (Jarmāgūn). He said, "I have no knowledge of it". Saying this, he asked his guards, "Who is imprisoned with you?" They replied that one of them was an `Alawī Sheikh whom they had imprisoned under his command. The Sulṭān said, "Then release him and present him a horse, which he could ride upon. Then escort him the way until he reaches his home".

The honourable Sayyid `Alī Ibn Ṭāwūs writes in the end of his book Muhajul Da`wāt wa Manhajul `Ibādāt that among them is what is related to me by my friend and my brother, Muḥammad bin Muḥammad Qādhī al `Āwī, may Allāh (s.w.t.) multiply his felicity and make his conclusion honorable. He related an amazing narrative and a strange reason (for it), that an incident took place and he found this supplication (Du`ā') in the pages (of his book) that he had not placed among them. He copied down the supplication (Du`ā') and when he completed it, the original paper that he had found, disappeared.

Sixth, `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī relates an incident from his father in his Biḥārul Anwār. I have seen it written in the handwriting of his father Mawlā Muḥammad Taqī (al Majlisī) behind the supplication (Du`ā'), renowned as Al Ḥirz al Yamānī, with abundant interpretation and permissions. He (Mullā Muḥammad Taqī al Majlisī) writes: In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. And all Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds, and benedictions upon the most honorable among the Messengers Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his chaste progeny (a.s.). Now then! Requested from me the highbred Sayyid, the noble literati, the quintessence of the eminent Sādāt and the respectable Nuqabā', Amīr Muḥammad Hāshim, may Allāh perpetuate his patronage by the eminence of Muḥammad

(s.a.w.a.) and his chaste progeny (a.s.), to grant him permission (Ijāzah) to relate Al Ḥirz al Yamānī, attributed to the commander of the faithful (Imām `Alī), Imām of the pious and the best among the creatures after the Master of the Prophets, Allāh's salutations and His benediction be upon them both until Paradise remains a sanctuary for the virtuous ones. I permit him to relate this supplication (Du`ā') through me and through my chain of transmitters reaching the devout and abstinent master Amīr Ishāq al Istarābādī, who lies buried near the Master of the youth of Paradise (Imām al Ḥusain), from my Master and the Master of the two worlds, the Caliph of Allāh (s.w.t.), the Master of the Age (Imām al Mahdī). Allāh's salutations and His benediction upon him and his chaste forefathers (a.s.)!

The above mentioned Sayyid (Amīr Ishāq al Istarābādī) says that I separated from the caravan on the way to Makkah and lost hope of survival. I lay down upon my back, similar to the one in his last moments, and started to recite the two witnesses. Suddenly I saw my Master and the Master of the Lords, the Caliph of Allāh upon all the people (Imām al Mahdī), standing at my head. He addressed me, saying, "Arise O Ishāq"! I arose, while I was thirsty. He (a.t.f.s.) quenched my thirst and mounted me along with him. I started to recite the above amulet (Ḥirz) and he (a.t.f.s.) rectified the errors in it until I completed it. I found myself at Abṭaḥ, alighted his mount and he (a.t.f.s.) disappeared from my sight. I reached the caravan after nine days. Word spread among the people of Makkah that I had reached there miraculously in the wink of an eye and therefore I concealed myself after completing the rites of the Ḥajj Pilgrimage.

This Sayyid (Amīr Ishāq al Istarābādī) performed the Ḥajj Pilgrimage forty times on foot, while I met him at Iṣfahān when he had arrived from Karbalā' for the visitation to Imām `Alī bin Mūsā al Ridhā (a.s.). He owed his wife her dower (Mahr) of seven tūmān and saw in his dream that his death had neared. He says that I resided in Karbalā' for fifty years with an intention that death should come to me therein and I be buried there, while I feared that death would come to me somewhere else apart from it. Some of our believer brothers came to know of his debt and repaid it, while they dispatched one of our brothers along with him. The person said that when Sayyid reached Karbalā' and his debt was paid off, he fell ill on the ninth day and was buried in his house.

I witnessed numerous similar wondrous acts from him during his stay at Iṣfahān, while I obtained numerous permissions (Ijāzāt) to narrate this supplication

(Du`ā'), while I limited it (its circulation). I desire that one should not forget me in prayers and I request not to recite it except for the sake of Allāh (s.w.t.). Also it should not be recited against ones enemy, who is a believer (mu`min), even though he is a dissolute person and has oppressed him. Moreover, it should not be recited with an intention of seeking worldly matters, rather it is appropriate to recite it to gain proximity to Allāh (s.w.t.) and ward off evil of the human and genie devils from him and all the believers if he has not attained proximity (to Allāh). However it is most appropriate to leave all intentions except proximity to Allāh (s.w.t.). Written by the humble-most among the fostered ones of the blessings of his Ever-Affluent Lord, who is adorned by his annihilated blessings, Muḥammad Taqī bin al Majlisī al Iṣfahānī, who praises Allāh (s.w.t.) and invokes (His) benedictions upon the Master of the Prophets (s.a.w.a.) and his eminent and chosen vicegerents (a.s.).

This incident has also been quoted by the seal of scholars and traditionists, Shaikh Abul Ḥasan (al Futūnī), the student of `Allāmah al Majlisī, in the last volume of his book Dhiyā'ul `Ālamīn, as related from his teacher (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī) from his father (Muḥammad Taqī al Majlisī). He quotes regarding the Sayyid (Radhīyuddīn)'s entry into Makkah and then says that the father (Muḥammad Taqī al Majlisī) of my teacher said that I took a copy (of the supplication), rectified by the Imām (a.t.f.s.) from him and he granted me permission to relate it from the Imām (a.t.f.s.). He also granted permission to his son (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī), my teacher, to relate it; while this supplication (Du`ā') is highly esteemed among the permissions granted to me by my teacher (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī). I have been reciting it since forty years and have witnessed abundant goodness through it. Thereafter he (Abul Ḥasan al Futūnī) mentions the dream of Sayyid (Amīr Ishāq al Istarābādī) when he was told to hasten to Karbalā' since his end had drawn near. While this supplication (Du`ā') is present in the nineteenth volume of Biḥārul Anwār (of Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī) in a similar context as mentioned above.

Seventh, Sayyid Radhīyuddīn Ibn Ṭāwūs quotes in his book Farajul Mahmūm and also `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī in his Biḥārul Anwār from the book Dalā'elul Imāmah of Abī Ja`far Muḥammad bin Jarīr al Ṭabarī that Abū Ja`far Muḥammad bin Hārūn bin Mūsā al Tal`ukbarī informed me that Abul Ḥusain bin Abil Bagl al Kātib told me, that during the period when I was in charge of working for Abī Manṣūr bin al Ṣāliḥān, an incident took place between us that made forced

me to conceal myself from him. He summoned me and threatened me, while I remained concealed due to fear. One Friday night I left for Maqābir Quraysh (at Kāzmīyyah) and decided to spend the night there in supplications and asking (from Allāh). The night was windy and rainy and I requested the caretaker Abū Ja`far to close the door and attempt to vacate a spot where I could spend time in supplicating and asking (from Allāh) alone, moreover to be safe from people entering therein, while I was not safe from him (Abī Mansūr bin al Ṣāliḥān) and feared encountering him.

Abū Ja`far did as requested and closed the doors. At midnight, the wind and rain stopped people from coming there and I remained engrossed in supplicating, reciting salutations (of A`immah) and praying. Whilst I was in this state, I heard footsteps near the tomb of our Master Mūsā al Kāẓim (a.s.). I saw a personality (a.t.f.s.) reciting salutations. First he saluted Ādam (a.s.), followed by the Ulil `Azm Prophets.¹ Thereafter he saluted the A`immah (a.s.), one after the other, until he reached Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) but did not mention him. I was surprised at it and said to myself, "Perhaps he has forgotten, or does not know, or it is the belief of this man". After completing the salutations, he (a.t.f.s.) offered two units (Rak`ah) of Prayers and proceeded towards me near the tomb of Abū Ja`far (al Jawād). Then he (a.t.f.s.) visited him similarly, recited salutations and offered two units (Rak`ah) of Prayers.

I feared him (a.t.f.s.) since I did not recognize him and found him to be in his complete youth, while he had worn a white dress. A turban was wound upon his (a.t.f.s.) forelocks and a cloak was hanging from upon his shoulders. Suddenly, he (a.t.f.s.) addressed me, saying, "O Abal Ḥusain bin Abil Bagl! Why don't you recite Du`ā' al Faraj?" I asked, "And what is it O my Master?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "Recite two units (Rak`ah) of Prayers and then say: Yā Man Aẓ-haral Jamīla wa Sataral Qabīḥ, Yā Man lam Yu`ākhiḍ bil Jarīrah, wa lam Yahtikil Sitra. Yā `Azīmal Manni, Yā Karīmal Ṣafḥi, Yā Ḥasanal Tajāwuzi, Yā Wāsi`al Magfirati, Yā Bāsiṭal Yadayni bil Raḥmah. Yā Muntahā kulli Najwā, wa Yā Gāyata kulli Shakwā, Yā `Awna kulli Musta`inin, Yā Muḩtadī'an bil Ni`mi Qabla Istiḩqāqihā (O You Who reveals beauty and conceals ugly, and does not take into account the crimes and does not tear the veil [of sins from his slaves]. O bestower of great favour, O Merciful forgiver, O good overlooking one [of faults], O Great Forgiver, O extensive Forgiving one,

¹ Viz. Nūḩ (a.s.), Ibrāhīm (a.s.), Mūsā (a.s.), `Īsā (a.s.) and Muḩammad (s.a.w.a.) (translator)

O the One extending his hands with mercy, O termination of every whisperings, O aspiration of every complaint, O Aide of those seeking aid, O Initiator of blessings [upon His creatures] before their deserving it.). Then repeat ten times each: Yā Rabbāh (O Lord), Yā Sayyidāh (O Master), Yā Mawlāh (O Protector), Yā Gāyṭhāh (O Succor), Yā Muntahā Ragbatāh (O peak of aspirations) Then say: As`aluka bi Ḥaqqi Hāḍihil Asmā`i wa bi Ḥaqqi Muḥammadin wa Ālihil Ṭayyibīn al Ṭāhirīna `Alayhimul Salāmu, illā mā Kashafta karbī, wa Naffasta hammī, wa Farrajta gammī, wa Aṣṣlaḥta Ḥālī (I ask You by the right of these names and the right of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his chaste and pure progeny, except that You ward off my agony, remove my grief, grant relief to my sorrow and reform my condition). Then supplicate whatever you wish and ask your needs. Then place your right cheek upon the earth and repeat hundred times, Yā Muḥammadu Yā `Alī, Yā `Alīyyu Yā Muḥammad. Ikfiyānī fa Innakumā Kāfiyāya, wa Inṣuranī fa Innakumā Nāṣirāya (O Muḥammad, O `Alī, O `Alī, O Muḥammad. Suffice me since you both are my sufficient ones and help me since both of you are my helpers). Thereafter place your left cheek upon the earth and repeat a hundred times Adriknī (reach me [for aid]) and recite it abundantly. Then say Al Gawth, Al Gawth, Al Gawth (relief) until your breath breaks. Then raise your head, for verily Allāh (s.w.t.) shall fulfill your desires through His munificence, Allāh willing”.

I became engrossed in Prayers and supplication (Du`ā) and he (a.t.f.s.) left. When I completed reciting it, I came out to inquire regarding the person from Abū Ja`far as to how he entered therein. I saw that the doors were closed and bolted as earlier. I was astonished and wondered that perhaps there might be a door here regarding which I am not aware. I rushed to Abū Ja`far (the caretaker), while he came out to meet me from the room where oil was kept. I questioned him regarding the person (a.t.f.s.) and his entry. He replied, “The doors are bolted as you see, while I did not open them”. When I related to him the entire incident, he said, “He is our Master Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), while I have seen him several times during such nights when the Mausoleum is vacant of people”. Hearing this, I regretted on what I had lost. I left from there when it neared dawn and proceeded to Karkh at a spot where I had resided in concealment.

It was yet forenoon, when the companions of (Abī Manṣūr) Ibn al Ṣāliḥān wished to meet me and inquired from my friends regarding me. They brought security from the vizier and carried a paper in his handwriting that contained all goodness. I entered his presence along with a group of my reliable friends. Seeing me, he

arose and treated me in a manner that I had not expected from him. Then he said, "You reached such a state that you complained regarding me in the presence of Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)?" I replied that I was supplicating and asking (from Allāh). Then he said, "Woe be upon you! Yesterday, Friday night, I saw my Master Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) in a dream. He (a.t.f.s.) ordered me all goodness (towards you) and threatened me, while I feared it and said: Lā Ilāha illallāh (There is no other Deity except Allāh). I bear witness that they are the Truth and the pinnacle of truthfulness". I said, "Yesterday I saw our Master (a.t.f.s.) while awake and he told me such and such". Saying this, I explained whatever took place at the Sacred Mausoleum and he fell into astonishment. Ultimately enormous good things manifested from him (Abī Manṣūr bin al Ṣāliḥān) and I received extremity (of presents) that I had not presumed from him and all this through the blessings of our Master Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.).

We (the Author) say that there are some supplications named as Al Faraj, the first one as quoted in the above incident, while the second one is quoted in the book Al Ja`fariyyāt (of Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Al Ash`ath al Kūfī) that once Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.) came to the presence of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and complained regarding his need. He (s.a.w.a.) replied, "Shouldn't I teach you the words presented to me by Jabra'īl. They are nineteen letters, four out of them written upon the forehead of Jabra'īl, four upon the forehead of Mīkā'īl, four written upon the forehead of Isrāfīl, four written around the Divine Chair (Kursī), and three written around the Divine Throne (Arsh). No agonized one, or aggrieved one, or depressed one, or dejected one, or the one who fears a king or Shayṭān recites it, except that Allāh (s.w.t.) shall be sufficient for him. It is: Yā `Imāda man lā `Imāda lahū, wa Yā Sanada man lā Sanada lahū, wa Yā Ḍukhra man lā Ḍukhra lahū, wa Yā Ḥirz man lā Ḥirza lahū, wa Yā Fakhra man lā Fakhra lahū, wa Yā Ruknā man lā Rukna lahū, Yā `Azīmal Rajā'ī, Yā `Izzal Dhu`afā'ī, Yā Munqīḍal Garqā, Yā Munjiyal Halkā, Yā Muḥsinu, Yā Mun`imu, Yā Mufdhilu, As`alullāhal laḍī lā Ilāha illa Antal laḍī Sajada Laka Sawādul Layli, wa Dhaw`ul Nahāri, wa Shu`ā`ul Shamsi, wa Dawīyyul Mā'ī, wa Ḥāfiḍul Shajar. Yā Allāhu, Yā Raḥmānu, Yā Ḍal Jalāli wal Ikrām. (O Pillar [of support] of the one who has no pillar, and O Support of the one who has no support, and O Reserve of the one who has no reserve, and O Shield of the one who has no shield, and O Pride of the one who has no pride, and O Basis of the one who has no basis, O Great One from Whom can be expected, O Honour of the weaklings, O Saviour of the drowning one, O Retreat of the perished one.

O Favouring One, O Benefactor, O Bestower of grace, I ask Allāh besides Whom there is no other Deity, for Whom prostrate darkness of the night, and the light of the day, and the radiance of the sun, and the roaring of water, and the rustle of the tree. O Allāh, O Beneficent, O Possessor of Glory and Grace.)". Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) named this as Du`ā' al Faraj.

The third one is related by Shaikh Ibrāhīm al Kaf`amī in his Jannatul Amānūl Wāqīyyah that once a man came to the presence of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and said, "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! I was a wealthy man, however I turned indigent; I was healthy, however I became sick; I was acceptable in the eyes of people, however I turned abhorred and disgraceful in their hearts; while I was delightful, however sorrows have surrounded me; the earth has turned narrow for me as it was expanse for me, I wander all throughout the day in search of sustenance, however I do not find anything that can satiate me, as if my name has been erased from the register of sustenance". Hearing this, the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, "Perhaps you make use of the inheritance of sorrows". The man questioned him (s.a.w.a.) what the inheritance of sorrows were and he (s.a.w.a.) replied, "Perhaps you tie the turban while sitting, or you wear your trousers while standing, or you cut your nails with your teeth, or you wipe your face with the end of your shirt, or you urinate in stagnant water, or you sleep face downwards (upon your stomach)". He replied that he did not do any of these acts.

Then the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) told him, "In that case fear Allāh (s.w.t.), cleanse your conscience and supplicate through this supplication, while it is a supplication of relief (Du`ā' al Faraj). Ilāhī Ṭumūḥul Āmālī qad Khābat illā Ladayka, wa Ma`ākiful Himami qad Taqaṭṭa`at illā `Alayka, Wa Maḍāhibul `Uqūli qad Samat illā Ladayka. Fa Ilaykal Rajā'u wa Ilaykal Multaja'. Yā Akrama Maqṣūdīn wa Yā Ajwada Mas'ūl. Harabtu Ilayka bi Nafsī, Ya Malja'al Hāribīn bil Athqālil Ḍunūbi Aḥmilahā `alā Ḍahrī, wa mā Ajidu lī Ilayka Shāfi`an Siwā Ma`rifatī, bi Annaka Aqrabu man Rajāhul Ṭālibūna, wa laja'a Ilayhil Mudhṭarrūna, wa Ammala mā Ladayhil Rāgībūn. Yā Man Fattaqal `Uqūla bi Ma`rifatihī wa Aṭlaqa Alsuna bi Ḥamdihī, wa Ja`ala mā Imtanna bihī `alā `Ibādihī Kifā'an li Ta'diyati Haqqih. Ṣalli `alā Muḥammadīn wa Ālihī, wa lā Taj`al lil Humūmi `alā `Aqlī Sabīlā, wa lil Bāṭili `alā `Amālī Dalīlā, fa Iftaḥ lī bi Khayril Dunyā wal Ākhirah, Yā Walīyyal Khayr".

The fourth supplication is the one related by the profound learned personality Sayyid `Alī Khān al Madanī in his Al Kalimul Ṭayyib from his grandfather. While it is, "Allāhumma Yā Wadūdu Yā Wadūdu, Yā Ḍal `Arshil Majīdī, Yā Fa`a`ālan lima

Yurīd, As`aluka bi Nūri Wajhikallaḍī Mala`a Arkāna `Arshika, wa bi Quḍratikallatī Qaddarta bihā `alā Jamī`i Khalqika, wa bi Raḥmatikallatī Wasi`at kulla Shay`a. Lā Ilāha illā Anta, Yā Mubdi`u, Yā Mu`id. Lā Ilāha illā Anta Yā Ilāhal Bashari, Yā `Aẓīmal Khaṭari, Minkal Ṭalabu wa Ilaykal Harabu Waqa`a bil Faraj, (repeat thrice): Yā Mugīthu Agithnī”.

While the fifth Du`ā` al Faraj is the one related in Mafātiḥul Najāh of Muḥaqqiq (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Sabzewārī, while its opening words are, “Allāhumma Innī As`aluka Yā Allāhu Yā Allāhu Yā Allāh, Yā Mān `Alā fa Qahara...”, until the end of a lengthy supplication.

Eighth, the honorable and abstinent Sheikh Warrām bin Abī Firās writes in the last volume of his book Tanbīhul Khawāṭir that the eminent Sayyid Sharīf Abul Ḥasan `Alī bin Ibrāhīm al `Uraydhī al `Alawī al Ḥusainī related to me from `Alī bin Nimā, who says that Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan bin `Alī bin Ḥamzah al Aqsāsī related to me at the house of Sharīf `Alī bin Ja`far bin `Alī al Madā`inī al `Alawī, that there was a bleacher in Kūfah, who was renowned for abstinence, was involved in wayfaring, distanced himself for worship and tracked the path of the righteous ones. One day coincidentally I was in the presence of my father, when this Sheikh was also present, while my father was speaking to him. He said that one night I was at Masjid Ju`fā, that is an ancient Masjid (in Kūfah). It was half past night, while I was alone seeking solitude and worship. Suddenly three men approached me, entered the Masjid and when they reached the middle part, one (a.t.f.s.) among them sat down. Then he (a.t.f.s.) touched the earth with his right and left hand, when suddenly water manifested and gushed forth, while he performed ablutions (Wudhū') from it. Thereafter he (a.t.f.s.) signaled to the two men to renew their ablutions (Wudhū') too. They did as directed and he (a.t.f.s.) proceeded further and led them in Prayers, while I too performed Prayers in his lead.

Then he (a.t.f.s.) recited the salutations (Salām) and concluded the Prayers, while I was bedazzled by his presence and considered his deed to be great with regards to the water spring. I questioned the person, who was along with them and was seated on my right side, regarding the personality (a.t.f.s.). He replied, “He is the Master of the Age (Ṣāḥib al Amr), the son of Ḥasan (al `Askarī)”. Hearing this, I neared him (a.t.f.s.), kissed his hands and asked him, “O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! What is your opinion regarding Sharīf `Umar bin Ḥamzah, is he upon the truth?” Imām (a.t.f.s.) replied, “No, perhaps he might be guided, and he

shall not die unless he sees me”.

We considered the above statement to be strange, when a lengthy period of time passed by and Sharīf `Umar passed away, while it was not known that he met him (a.t.f.s.). When I (Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan bin `Alī bin Ḥamzah al Aqṣāsī) met the abstinent Sheikh, I recalled the incident to him and asked him similar to an objecting person, “Did you not say that this Sharīf `Umar would not die until he sees Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.)?” Hearing this, he replied, “Then how do you know that he did not see him (a.t.f.s.)?” After that, I met Sharīf Abil Manāqib, the son of Sharīf `Umar bin Ḥamzah and discussed with him regarding his father. He said that at the conclusion of one night we were in the presence of our father, while he was ill and later succumbed to it. His strength had parted away, while I feared for his approaching death. The doors were bolted, when suddenly a person (a.t.f.s.) entered therein. Seeing him, we were awe-struck, bedazzled by his entry and did not have the courage to question him. He (a.t.f.s.) sat beside my father; spoke to him for a lengthy period of time, while my father wept and then he arose (and left). When he (a.t.f.s.) disappeared from our sight, my father came back to his senses and told us to make him sit. When we sat him, he opened his eyes and asked, “Where is the person who was near me?” We replied that he left in the manner that he arrived. Hearing this, he told us to search for him. We went to search for him (a.t.f.s.) and found the doors to be bolted, while we found no trace of him. We returned back to our father, informed him that we did not find him and questioned him regarding him. He replied, “He is Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.)”. Then he returned back to his severe state of illness and became unconscious.

The Author of Najmul Thāqib (Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) says that Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan bin `Alī bin Ḥamzah al Aqṣāsī, renowned as `Izzuddīn, was among the most eminent Sādāt, among the notables and scholars of Kūfah and an expert poet. Nāṣir Billāh al `Abbāsī had appointed him Naqīb al Sādāt. He is the one who composed verses when he accompanied Mustanṣir Billāh al `Abbāsī to the visitation to the Mausoleum of Salmān. Mustanṣir told him, “The extremist Shi`ah lie when they say that `Alī (a.s.) came from Madīnah to Madā’in in one night to bathe Salmān and returned back to Madīnah the same night (miraculously)”. Hearing this, he composed these verses in reply to him, “You deny the night when the Vicegerent (Imām `Alī), travelled to the land of Al Madā’en when he was summoned; he gave the ritual bath to Salmān and returned, to Yathrib (Madīnah) before the advent of dawn; you say this is from the narrations of the exaggerators,

and what is the sin of the exaggerators if they did not mention any lie; then Āṣif (bin Barkhīyā) before the blinking of an eye, can bring the throne of Balqīs from Sabā' tearing aside all barriers; so you do not exaggerate for Āṣif (bin Barkhīyā) but if I consider this for Ḥaydar then it is exaggeration how strange; if Aḥmad (s.a.w.a.) is the best among the Messengers (a.s.), then he (Imām `Alī) is certainly the best among the Vicegerents else all traditions are vain".

While Masjid Ju`fā is among the renowned blessed Masājid wherein Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) offered four units (Rak`ah) of Prayers, then recited Tasbīḥ al Zahrā' (s.a.) and supplicated to Allāh (s.w.t.) with a lengthy Munājāt that is quoted in the books of Mazār (supplications), while I too have quoted it in my book Al Ṣaḥīfatul Thānīyyah al `Alawīyyah. However, presently there is no trace of this Masjid.

Ninth, `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī relates in his Biḥārul Anwār from the book Al Sulṭānil Mufarrij `an Ahlil Īmān by the perfect scholar Sayyid `Alī bin `Abdul Ḥamīd al Nīlī al Najafī, who writes in context of those who saw Imām al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.). He writes that among those incidents that are renowned, propagated and filled the regions, and witnessed by the notable ones, is the incident of Abū Rājeḥ al Ḥammāmī at Ḥillah. While it is narrated by a group of ideal notables and the truthful learned personalities, among them the abstinent, devout and researcher Sheikh Shamsuddīn Muḥammad bin Qārūn, may Allāh (s.w.t.) keep him alive. It is said that there was a ruler at Ḥillah called Marjān al Ṣagīr who was once informed that the above referred Abū Rājeḥ would abuse the companions (of the Messenger of Allāh). He summoned him and ordered him to be beaten. He was beaten severely and fatally upon his entire body, also his face, until his teeth fell off. They pulled out his tongue and pierced an iron needle into it. His nose was punctured, a net of hair was placed in it and a rope was hastened into it. He was then handed over to a group of his companions, who were ordered to drag him into the streets of Ḥillah. He was beaten from all sides, until he fell upon the earth and neared perdition. When the ruler was informed regarding this, he ordered his death. Some of those present told him, "He is an old man, while he has faced whatever is sufficient for him and is dead. Then leave him, for he shall certainly succumb to his injuries and do not involve yourself in his murder". They pressed him with similar words until he ordered his release. His face and tongue were swollen and his relatives moved him in a dying state, while no one was in doubt that he would die that very night.

The next day, people went to visit him and found him standing in Prayers in a perfect condition. His teeth that had fallen off returned back as usual, his wounds had healed, while there was no trace of them, moreover his facial fractures had disappeared. People were astonished and questioned him regarding his state. He replied that when I neared death, while I did not even possess a tongue to beseech Allāh (s.w.t.), I called out to Him (s.w.t.) with my heart and called my Master Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) for help. When the night turned dark, suddenly the room dazzled with a light. I found my Master Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), who passed his blessed hand upon my face and said, "Leave and seek sustenance for your children, since Allāh (s.w.t.) has granted you cure". Ultimately I was transformed as you now see me.

Sheikh Shamsuddīn Muḥammad bin Qārūn says that I swear by Allāh (s.w.t.) that this Abū Rājeḥ was very weak, his body was feeble, his color was pale, his face was disfigured and his beard was grey. I always entered the public bath where he worked and witnessed him in this condition and state. Later I was one of those who entered the public bath and saw that his strength had increased; his stature had straightened up, his beard lengthened, while his face had turned red, as if he was a youth of twenty years. He continuously remained in this condition until his death. When this news spread around, the ruler summoned him and he went to him. He had seen him the other day in a bad state, while that day he saw him in an opposite (best) state as we have described. He did not find trace of any injury, while his teeth had reappeared. Seeing this, the ruler was afflicted with a severe awe. It was his practice that whenever he went to the spot of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) at Ḥillah, he would sit with his back towards the Qiblah. However, after this incident, he started to sit with his face towards it, while he displayed kindness towards the inhabitants of Ḥillah, abstained from troubling them and favored them. However, this did not serve him any benefit and he did not survive longer and died.

Tenth, it is written in Biḥārul Anwār (of Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī) that a group of the inhabitants of Najaful Ashraf informed me that a man from Kāshān (in Īrān) came to Al Garīyy (Najaful Ashraf) while proceeding for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage. Suddenly he got inflicted with a severe disease, while his legs stiffened and he could not walk. His companions proceeded for the Ḥajj Pilgrimage and left him with a man among the righteous personalities, who resided in one of the rooms of a Madrasah, adjacent to the Sacred Mausoleum (of Amīrul Mu'minīn). The man

would daily bolt the door upon him and proceed to the desert for a walk and search for gems. One day the sick man told him, "Verily my heart has constrained and I feel lonely in this place. Then take me along with you, leave me at a place and go to wherever your wish". The person says that the man agreed, carried me and took me to Maqām Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), which was at the outskirts of Najaful Ashraf. He sat me therein, washed his shirt in the pond and kept it to dry upon a tree that was therein. Then he left for the desert, while I remained alone and sad, thinking upon what befell me.

Suddenly I saw a youth (a.t.f.s.) possessing a handsome countenance and tanned complexion enter the courtyard. He (a.t.f.s.) saluted me, went towards the spot and recited some units (Rak`ah) of Prayers near the Prayer-Niche (Mihrāb) with complete sincerity and submission, likeness of which I had never ever seen before. When he (a.t.f.s.) completed his Prayers, he stepped out, came towards me and questioned me regarding my state. I replied, saying, "I have been engulfed in an affliction by which I am constrained. Allāh (s.w.t.) does not grant me cure that I may be safe from it, nor does He give take me away that I may be relieved". Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Do not aggrieve, for Allāh (s.w.t.) shall grant you both". When he (a.t.f.s.) left, I saw that the shirt had fallen down upon the earth. I arose, took it, washed it with my hands and kept it to dry in its former placer. Suddenly I became aware of my condition and said to myself, "Previously I could neither stand, nor move. Then how come I could do so now?" I looked at my state and found no signs of any illness that was present in me before. I realized that the person was none other than Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.). I ran out and cast a glance towards the desert, however, I found none and regretted severely. When my companion arrived, he questioned me regarding my condition and was surprised upon it. I informed him of what had occurred and he too regretted upon what he missed, as also me, and I proceeded with him to the room. This person remained in this healthy state until the pilgrims and his companions returned back. He saw them and remained with them for some days, until he fell sick again and passed away. He was buried in the Sacred courtyard (of the Mausoleum of Amīrul Mu'minīn), while the veracity of Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s words manifested that both his desires would be fulfilled.

We (the Author) say, that it should be borne in mind that there are specific shrines renowned as Maqām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.), such as the ones at (the cemetery of) Wādīyul Salām (at Najaful Ashraf), at Masjid al Sahlah (at Kūfah), at Ḥillah and

Masjid Jamkarān that is situated at the outskirts of Qum al Muqaddasah. While the reason for these shrines turning into blessed and sacred spots is manifestation of miracles in them, or people's meeting Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) therein. Consequently they turned into spots of the Angel's frequent descent and less descent of the Shayāṭīn. This is one of the reasons for fulfillment of desires and acceptance of worship (at these sacred spots). It is related in some reports that Allāh (s.w.t.) possesses some spots that He (s.w.t.) loves to be worshipped therein, while the presence of such places and shrines, such as a Masjid, Mausoleums of the A'immah (a.s.), tombs of their children and that of the virtuous and righteous personalities around the globe, is among the Divine concealed favors for His slaves who are coerced, sick, oppressed, terrified, indebted, destitute and their similarities who are afflicted with grief and sorrow that constrain the hearts and distract the thoughts. Ultimately they may visit these shrines and weep and beseech in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.) to ward off from them whatever they are engulfed in, grant cure for their diseases and dispel their enemies, all this by the blessings of the one (Imām al Mahdī) to whom the shrine is attributed to.

It happens frequently that desires are immediately and jointly fulfilled (at these shrines), for example a sick one visits it and returns cured, or a troubled one visits it and returns back with serenity of self, or an oppressed one visits it and returns back in a fortunate state. And it is not concealed that the more a person respects and honors these shrines, the more blessings manifest for him, and perhaps these are the places regarding which Allāh (s.w.t.) says, **"In houses which Allāh has permitted to be exalted and His Name be mentioned therein, therein declare glory unto Him in the mornings and the evenings"**.¹

Eleventh, it is stated in the honorable book (Biḥārul Anwār of Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī) that I have been informed by some of the trustworthy personalities, who are reliable in my eyes, that during the period when Baḥrayn was under the rule of the Europeans, a man among the Muslims was appointed as its governor, who could redevelop it and reform the state of its inhabitants. This governor was among the enemies of the Ahlalbait (a.s.) and his Shī`ah, while he had a vizier who was a greater enemy than him. The vizier manifested his enmity towards the inhabitants of Baḥrayn due to their love of Ahlalbait (a.s.) and spared no efforts in their perdition and injury by whatever possible deceit.

¹ Holy Qur'ān, Sūratul Nūr: 36

One day the vizier came to the governor carrying a pomegranate and handed it over to him. These words were found engraved upon it, "Lā Ilāha Illallāh, Muḥammadun Rasūlullāh, Abū Bakrin wa `Umar wa `Uthmān wa `Alī Khulafā'u Rasūlillāh (There is no other Deity except Allāh; Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh; Abū Bakr and `Umar and `Uthmān and `Alī are the caliphs of the Messenger of Allāh)". The governor took the pomegranate, glanced upon the writing in original upon it and considered it not to be a work of any person. Seeing this, he was astonished and told the vizier, "This is a manifest sign and a solid proof in refutation of the belief of the Rāfidhah. Then what is your opinion regarding the inhabitants of Baḥrayn?" The vizier replied, "May Allāh (s.w.t.) amend for you! This group of bigots deny the evidences, while you should summon them and show them this pomegranate. Then if they acknowledge and accept our belief, you shall receive abundant rewards for it. However, if they refuse and desire to stay upon their misguidance, then give them three choices. Either they should pay the Jizyah¹ with disgrace; or bring reply to this manifest sign, for which they have no other alternative; or then kill their men, arrest their women and children and confiscate their wealth as booty".²

The governor liked his opinion and summoned the scholars, righteous learned men, notables and the chiefs among the inhabitants of Baḥrayn. When they

¹ He meant to say that the Shī`ah should pay the Jizyah tax to the ruler since they were apostates and disbelievers, Allāh (s.w.t.) forbid. (translator)

² This has been the age-old practice of the enemies of Ahl al-bait (a.s.). When they find that the original Islām, preached and practiced by them (a.s.) cannot be effaced, they try all possible means to oppress and subdue their followers and adherents. History is witness to this fact that the Shī`ah have faced innumerable sufferings and tortures at the hands of these despots, to the extent that even while residing in a Shī`ah majority country or town, they are subjected to injustice and mental and physical harm. Many a blood have been shed while labelling them as "infidels", sanctity of their women have been dishonoured, their children orphaned and taken as prisoners, their wealth and property, even to the extent of their Masājid and Ḥusainīyah, have been plundered in name of "booty". Their only fault is that they adhere and act upon the teachings of Ahl al-bait (a.s.), follow their injunctions, disassociate themselves from their enemies and preserve their remembrance and memory. Yet their existence today around the globe in large numbers in every town and city is nothing but Divine Miracle. Since Allāh (s.w.t.) has promised in the Qur`ān, "**Intend they to put out the Light of Allāh with their mouths, but Allāh will perfect His Light, though averse may be the disbelievers**". (Sūratul Ṣaff: 8) (translator)

arrived, he showed them the pomegranate and informed them regarding what they saw. He told them that if they did not bring a convincing reply, they would be killed, their women and children would be arrested and their wealth plundered; or else they should pay the Jizyah tax with disgrace, similar to the disbelievers. Hearing this, they turned confused, they could not reply anything, while their colors turned pale and their limbs trembled. Then their elders addressed the governor, saying, "Give us respite for three days O commander, so that we may bring you a reply that would please you, or else you may judge however you wish". He agreed and they left his presence in a frightened, shocked and perplexed state.

They organized a gathering, discussed among one another and unanimously agreed that they should select ten persons from among the devout ones of Baḥrayn and their abstinent ones. They did so and then chose three (most devout) among them. Then they addressed the first one among them, saying, "Step into the desert tonight, worship Allāh (s.w.t.) and call the Imām of our age (a.t.f.s.) and the Evidence of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon us for help. Perhaps he (a.t.f.s.) might show you a way out of the calamity of this mob". The person left and spent the entire night in worship with total submission, beseeching, weeping and praying to Him (s.w.t.) and calling Imām (a.t.f.s.) until morning, however, he saw nothing therefore he returned back and informed them. The next night they dispatched the second man, who returned back, similar to the first one, without any news; multiplying their worry and grief.

Then they called the third person, who was a pious and learned personality named Muḥammad bin `Īsā. He left on the third night, bare-feet and bare-head, to the desert. It was a dark night, he prayed, wept and beseeched Allāh (s.w.t.) to rescue the believers and ward off this trial from upon them. He also called Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) for help. At the end of the night, he saw a person (a.t.f.s.) who addressed him, saying, "O Muḥammad bin `Īsā! Why do I see you in this state and why have you come out into this desert?" He replied, "O man! Leave me. For I have left for a great task and an enormous affair. I shall not relate it to anyone except my Imām (a.s.) and not complain to anyone except the one who would be able to ward it off from me". The person (a.t.f.s.) said, "O Muḥammad bin `Īsā! I am Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.). Then tell me your desire". He replied, "Then if you are the Imām (a.t.f.s.), you should know my affair and not be in need for me to reveal it to you".

The person (a.t.f.s.) replied, "You left when the matter of the pomegranate

overtook you, what was inscribed upon it and what the governor promised you". The person said that when I heard this, I proceeded to him (a.t.f.s.) and said, "Yes O my Master! You are very well aware of what afflicts us, while you are our Imām, our refuge and are capable of warding it off from upon us". He (a.t.f.s.) continued, saying, "O Muḥammad bin `Īsā! The vizier possesses a pomegranate tree in his house. He created a mould from mud in the form of a pomegranate, then divided it into two parts and wrote the text on both the sides. When the tree bore fruits, he fastened it upon a pomegranate when it was small, then the text got inscribed upon it (when it grew bigger) and it turned out similarly. When you go to the governor tomorrow tell him that you have brought a reply, however, you shall not reveal it except in the house of the vizier. Then when you enter his house, look towards your right and you shall find a room. Again tell the governor that you shall not reply to him except in that very room. The vizier shall refuse; however, you emphasize upon it and do not agree except until he climbs up to it. Then when he climbs it, climb along with him and do not leave him alone lest he enters the room before you. When you enter therein, you shall find a loophole in which a white bag shall be hidden. Hasten to it and take it. You shall find the mould in it that he has created with deceit. Then show it to the governor and place the pomegranate in it so that the fact is revealed. Then O Muḥammad bin `Īsā! Tell the governor that there is another miracle, that there is nothing in the pomegranate except ash and smoke. And if he wished to confirm it, he should order the vizier to break it. And when he breaks it, ash and smoke shall come upon his face and beard". When Muḥammad bin `Īsā heard this from the Imām (a.t.f.s.), he was greatly overjoyed. He kissed the earth near him (a.t.f.s.) and left for his people with the glad news and happiness.

When it dawned, they went to the governor, Muḥammad bin `Īsā did exactly what the Imām (a.t.f.s.) had ordered him to do and all that he had informed him, manifested. Seeing this, the governor turned to Muḥammad bin `Īsā and asked him who informed him this. He replied, "The Imām of our age (a.t.f.s.) and Allāh (s.w.t.)'s Evidence (Ḥujjah) upon us". The governor again asked him who his Imām was and he informed him the names of the A'immah (a.s.), one after the other, until he reached Ṣāhib al Amr (a.t.f.s.). Hearing this, the governor said, "Extend your hand, since I bear witness that there is no other Deity except Allāh (s.w.t.); and that verily Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is His slave and His Messenger; and that verily the immediate caliph after him (s.a.w.a.) is Amīr al Mu'minīn `Alī (a.s.)".

Then he acknowledged the A'immah (a.s.) until the last (a.t.f.s.) and his faith excelled. Thereafter he ordered the vizier to be put to death and sought apology from the inhabitants of Baḥrayn and favored them and treated them with goodness. This incident is renowned among the inhabitants of Baḥrayn, while the grave of Muḥammad bin `Īsā is near them, visited by the people.¹

Twelfth, the learned expert scholar Mīrzā `Abdullāh al Iṣfahānī (al Afandī), the student of `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī, writes in the second section in the first part of the conclusion of his book Riyādḥul `Ulamā', that Shaikh Abul Qāsim bin Muḥammad bin Abil Qāsim, the perfect learned scholar renowned as Al Ḥāsimī, who is among the eminent teachers of our masters (traditionists) and apparently is among the ancient masters, says that Amīr Sayyid Ḥusain al `Āmelī, renowned as Al Mujtahid, and a contemporary of Shāh `Abbās al Ṣafawī, quotes the below incident at the end of his treatise based upon the circumstances of the opponents in the world and the hereafter and the debates held between the Shī`ah and the Ahlul Sunnah.

He writes that the second incident is among the astonishing ones that took place at the town of Hamedān between a Shī`ah Ithnā `Asharī man and an Ahlul Sunnah man. I found this incident in an ancient book written around three hundred years back. It was written in that book that this incident took place between one of the scholars of the Shī`ah Ithnā `Ashariyyah named Abul Qāsim bin Muḥammad bin Abil Qāsim al Ḥāsimī and one of the Ahlul Sunnah scholars named Rafī`uddīn Ḥusain. There was an ancient friendship and companionship between them, partnership in properties and they even accompanied one another in events and travels, while both of them did not conceal their beliefs from one another. Abul Qāsim would address Rafī`uddīn as Al Nāṣībī, while Rafī`uddīn would address him as Al Rāfidhī in humor. During the days of their companionship, no debates took place among them, except one coincidentally in a Masjid of Hamedān named Masjid al `Atīq.

During the course of their conversation, Rafī`uddīn Ḥusain gave excellence to Abū Bakr and `Umar upon Amīrul Mu'minīn `Alī (a.s.), while Abul Qāsim refuted him and gave excellence to Imām `Alī (a.s.) upon them both. Abul Qāsim furnished

¹ His grave is presently located at the town of Damistān, around fourteen kilometers south west Manāmah (Manama), the capital of Baḥrayn. A Masjid has been constructed upon his grave that is renowned as Masjid Abū Rummānah. (translator)

evidences upon his claim through exalted verses (Āyāt from the Qurʾān) and Aḥādīth (of the Messenger of Allāh), moreover he even mentioned some wondrous acts and miracles manifested through him (a.s.). However, Rafīʿuddīn countered the claim and put forward evidence in excellence of Abū Bakr upon ʿAlī (a.s.) due to his companionship (with the Prophet) at the cave (on the night of migration) and his (s.a.w.a.)'s address to him as Al Ṣiddīq al Akbar (the most truthful one) among the Muhājirīn (emigrants) and Anṣār (helpers). Moreover, he even claimed that Abū Bakr occupied a distinguished place among the Muhājirīn (emigrants) and Anṣār (helpers) due to his marriage kinship¹, caliphate and Imāmah. He even said that two Aḥādīth from the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in praise of Abū Bakr pointed out to his excellence. First that he (s.a.w.a.) addressed Abū Bakr saying, "You are in a same standing to me as a shirt". And second he (s.a.w.a.) said, "Take as examples after me, Abī Bakr and ʿUmar".²

Upon hearing this statement from Rafīʿuddīn, Abul Qāsim said, "On what basis and through what reason do you exalt Abū Bakr upon the Master of the Vicegerents (Sayyidul Waṣīyyīn), the support of the friends (of Allāh), the standard bearer, the Imām of the human and genie and the distributor of the paradise and hell; while you are very well aware that he (a.s.) is the Ṣiddīq al Akbar (the most truthful one), the bright distinguisher (between right and wrong), the brother of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), the husband of Al Batūl (s.a.); while you are even aware that during the migration (Hijrah) of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) (from Madīnah) to the cave from the oppression and evil of the disbelievers, he (a.s.) slept upon his bed and accompanied him (s.a.w.a.) in adversities and indigence. Moreover the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) shut the doors of all his companions (leading to the Masjid) except his (a.s.) door, he (s.a.w.a.) held ʿAlī (a.s.) upon his shoulders to break the idols during the initial days of Islām, while Allāh (s.w.t.) married ʿAlī (a.s.) to Fāṭemah (s.a.) at the Highest of Places, while he (a.s.) fought against ʿAmrū bin ʿAbd Wudd, his victory of Khaybar, while he did not associate anyone with Allāh (s.w.t.) even for a wink of any eye, all these in opposition to the three (Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān). The Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) compared ʿAlī (a.s.) to four Prophets (a.s.) saying, 'One who

¹ Since he was the father in law of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) (translator)

² The entire Ḥadīth being, "Take as examples the two after me from my companions, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. And act upon the guidance of ʿAmmār, and hold fast to the advice of Ibn Masʿūd". (Al Tirmidhī, "Al Ṣaḥīḥ") (translator)

wishes to see Ādam (a.s.) in his knowledge, Nūḥ (a.s.) in his comprehension, Mūsā (a.s.) in his resolution and `Īsā in his abstinence, should look at `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.).¹ Therefore, in presence of these manifest and wonderful excellences and perfections, apart from his proximity to the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) and the sun re-appearing from him (a.s.), how can it be intelligent and lawful to exalt Abū Bakr upon `Alī (a.s.)?”

When Rafī`uddīn heard these words from Abul Qāsim that exalted `Alī (a.s.) upon Abū Bakr, his distinguished basis (of argument) against Abul Qāsim crumbled down. After some more words, Rafī`uddīn told him, “Anyone who enters the Masjid and judges between your belief and mine, we shall obey him”. And since the belief of the inhabitants of Hamedān were known to Abul Qāsim, he was afraid of this stipulation that took place between him and Rafī`uddīn, however since debating and argumentation had lengthened between them, Abul Qāsim accepted the stipulation and agreed with aversion.

After the acceptance of stipulation, immediately a youth (a.t.f.s.) entered the Masjid, whose personality evidenced extreme honor and superiority, while it was seen through his state that he had come from a journey. He (a.t.f.s.) entered the Masjid, circumambulated therein and when he came to them after completing it, Rafī`uddīn arose in great perplexity and haste. After saluting him (a.t.f.s.), Rafī`uddīn related the happenings that occurred between him and Abul Qāsim and urged him strongly to reveal his belief. He swore firmly and even gave him swear to reveal his belief upon the reality. Immediately the youth (a.t.f.s.) composed these verses, “When did I say that my master is superior to those two, if I say so then in fact I am degrading him by comparing him to them; can’t you see that it is an insult to the sharpness of the sword, if you say that this sword is sharper than a stick”. When the youth completed reciting these two lines of verses, both Abul Qāsim and Rafī`uddīn were dumb-founded by his eloquence and lucidity. When they tried to investigate further regarding the youth (a.t.f.s.), he disappeared from their sight, while no trace was found of him. When Rafī`uddīn witnessed this extra-ordinary and wondrous act, he abandoned his false belief and acknowledged the true Ithnā `Asharī belief. Here ends the incident as quoted in

¹ This Ḥadīth has been narrated with slight textual variations in books, such as, “One who wishes to see Ādam (a.s.) in his knowledge, Nūḥ (a.s.) in his piety, Ibrāhīm (a.s.) in his forbearance, Mūsā (a.s.) in his awe and `Īsā in his worship, should look at `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.)”. (‘Allāmah al Ḥillī, “Kashful Yaqīn fī Fadhā’ili Amīrul Mu’minīn”). (translator)

the treatise (of Amīr Sayyid Ḥusain al `Āmeli), while the treatise itself ends with it.

After quoting this incident, the author (Mīrzā `Abdullāh al Afandī) of Riyādhul `Ulamā' opines that the youth was none other than Imām al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), while the above two verses are quoted in the books of scholars with some alterations and additions as, "They tell me that I should prove the excellence of `Alī upon others, then I do not say that the gold is exalted than dust; then if I consider Imām (`Alī) to be superior to them, if I say so then in fact I am degrading him by comparing him to them; can't you see that it is an insult to the sharpness of the sword, if you say that this sword is sharper than a stick".

It is quoted in Riyādhul `Ulamā' that the above two lines of verses (of Imām) form the basis of the above verses.

Thirteenth, the honorable traditionist (Muḥammad bin Ḥasan) al Ḥurr al `Āmeli writes in his Ithbātul Hudāh, that when I was a child of around ten years old, I was inflicted with a severe ailment. My family and relatives gathered near me, wept and prepared to mourn upon me, while they believed that I would pass away that night. While I was half-asleep, suddenly I saw the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Twelve A'immah (a.s.). I saluted them (a.s.) and shook hands with them (a.s.), one after the other. There took place conversation between me and Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.), that I do not recall except that he (a.s.) prayed for me. Then I saluted Imām Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) and shook hands with him, I wept and said, "O my Master! I fear that I shall succumb to this ailment, while my goal of (gaining) knowledge and action (upon it) shall not be accomplished". He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "Do not fear for you shall not succumb to this ailment, rather Allāh (s.w.t.) shall grant you cure, while you shall live a lengthy life". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) handed me a glass that was in his hands and I drank from it. I came back to my senses, while the ailment had totally vanished away. My family and relatives were astonished and I did not reveal to them what I had seen, except after a passage of a few days.

Fourteenth, the traditionist Sayyid Ne`matullāh al Jazā'erī writes in his Al Anwārul Nu`māniyyah that the most reliable with regards to knowledge and deeds among my masters related to me that this person, viz. Mawlā Aḥmad al Ardebīlī had a student from among the inhabitants of Tafrish (in Markazī province of Īrān) whose name was Mīr `Allām, while he occupied an eminent status with regards to grace

and devoutness. This student says that I resided in a room in the surrounding of the Sacred Dome (of the Mausoleum of Amīrul Mu'minīn). By chance one night I completed my studies when a large part of the night had passed away. I stepped out of the room and started to glance at the courtyard of the Sacred Mausoleum, while it was a very dark night. Suddenly I saw a man approaching the Sacred Mausoleum and I wondered to myself that perhaps he is a thief who has come with an intention of stealing things such as lamps. I came down, neared him and saw him; however, he did not see me. He proceeded towards the door and stood there. Suddenly I saw that the lock fell down, while the door opened for him, second, third, so on and so forth. He proceeded towards the tomb and saluted Imām (a.s.), while the reply sounded from it.

I recognized his (my teacher Al Ardebīlī's) voice while he was speaking with the Imām (a.s.) regarding an academic issue. Thereafter he left the town and proceeded towards Masjid al Kūfah, while I followed him and he could not see him. He proceeded to the Prayer-niche (Miḥrāb) and spoke to another person regarding the same issue. Then he returned back and I too followed him. When we reached the gate of the town, it dawned and I revealed myself to him. Then I questioned him, "O our Master! I was along with you from the beginning until the end, then inform me who was the first person with whom you spoke in the Mausoleum; while who was the other person who spoke to you in Masjid al Kūfah?" Hearing this, he took promises from me that I should not reveal his secret to anyone, except after his death. I agreed and he said, "O my son! Sometimes some issues become obscure for me. During some nights I frequent the tomb of Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.), put forth my questions and obtain replies to them. Tonight he (a.s.) sent me to our Master Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), saying, "Verily tonight our son Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) is present at Masjid al Kūfah. Then go to him and put forth your question to him regarding this issue". While the person (in the Prayer-niche) was Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.).

Fifteenth, Mullā Muḥammad Taqī al Majlisī writes in his Rawdhatul Muttaqīn fī Sharḥ Man lā Yaḥduruhul Faqīh in context to the circumstances of Mutawakkil bin `Umayr, the narrator of Al Şāḥifatul Kāmilah al Sajjādiyyah, that during the initial days of my adolescence, I sought the pleasure of Allāh (s.w.t.) and strived towards it, while I had not obtained tranquility in His remembrance. One day while I was half-asleep, I saw Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) standing in the old Masjid of Işfahān near the gate of Al Ṭanabī, that is presently my Madrasah. I saluted him

(a.t.f.s.) and desired to kiss his feet; however, he did not allow me to do so and held me. I kissed his (a.t.f.s.)'s hands and questioned him some issues that were complex for me, among them, that I was suspicious in my Prayers and would say that I did not perform them in a manner that was expected from me. Therefore I remained engrossed in lapsed Prayers and could not perform the nightly Prayers (Ṣalātul Layl). I questioned our teacher Shaikh al Bahā'ī regarding this and he told me to perform the Prayers of Zuhr, `Aṣr and Magrib with an intention of Ṣalātul Layl, while I was following his instructions. I questioned Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) whether I should recite the Ṣalātul Layl? Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) replied, "Recite it, however do not perform in the manner that you have been doing". I put forward some other questions regarding issues that I do not presently remember.

Then I told him (a.t.f.s.), "O my Master! It is not possible to reach your sacred presence every time, then give me a book that I should act upon it". He (a.t.f.s.) said, "I have handed over a book for you to Maulānā Muḥammad al Tāj". While I recognized him in my dream and he (a.t.f.s.) continued, "Go and take it from him". I came out of the Masjid from the gate that was facing him (a.t.f.s.) towards Dār al Baṭṭikh, an alley of Iṣfahān. I reached the person and when his sight fell upon me, he said, "Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) has sent you to me?" I replied in the affirmative and he removed an old book from his pocket and handed it over to me. When I opened it, I realized that it was a book of supplications (Ad`iyyah), therefore I kissed it and placed it upon my eyes. Then I left him and proceeded towards Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), when I awoke and did not find the book along with me. I started to weep, wail and beseech for losing the book until Fajr came forth. When I completed my Fajr Prayers and the Prayers after it, a thought passed my mind that Maulānā Muḥammad (referred to by Imām) was Shaikh al Bahā'ī, while he (a.t.f.s.) referred to him as Al Tāj (the crown) due to his renown among the scholars. Therefore I went to the Madrasah that was beside Masjid al Jāme` and found him engrossed in collating Al Ṣāḥifatul Sajjādīyyah, while Sayyid Amīr Ḍulfiqār (al Jarfādqānī) al Gulpāygānī was dictating it to him. I sat down for some time until he completed it, and I presume that he was comparing the chain of authorities (of the narrators) of Al Ṣāḥifatul Sajjādīyyah, however, I did not understand their words due to the grief that I was engulfed in and wept. Then I went to him and related to him the dream, while I was weeping due to loss of the book. Hearing this, he said, "Have glad tidings of Divine knowledge, definite perception and all that you had been pursuing". Most of my gathering with Shaikh

was regarding Sufism (Taṣawwuf), while he was inclined towards it.

My heart did not find contentment by his reply and I left his presence weeping and thinking, until a thought passed my mind that I should go to the place that I had seen in my dream. When I reached the alley of Dār al Baṭṭikh, I met a righteous man named Āgā Ḥasan, who was entitled Tājā. I proceeded to him and saluted to him. When he saw me, he said, "O so and so! I possess endowed books with me, however, whoever among the students takes it, does not honor the stipulations of endowment (Waqf).¹ However you shall act upon it". Then he said, "Take a look at these books and take whatever to require". I accompanied him to the place and the first book that he handed me was the same one I had seen in the dream. Seeing it, I burst into tears, lamented and said, "This is sufficient for me". I do not remember whether I related my dream to him or no.

Then I came to Shaikh al Bahā'ī and started to collate it (Al Ṣaḥīfatul Sajjādiyyah) with his copy, which was duplicated by the grandfather of his father from the transcript of Shahīd al Awwal, while Shahīd al Awwal had duplicated it from the transcript of `Amīdul Ru'asā' (Hibatullāh bin Ḥāmid bin Aḥmad al Ḥillī) and Ibnul Sukūn (`Alī bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al Ḥillī al Naḥwī) and collated it with the transcript of Ibn Idrīs (Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Idrīs al Ḥillī) through intermediary or without it. The copy that was presented to me by Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) was in the handwriting of Shahīd al Awwal, while it was exactly the same (near Shaikh al Bahā'ī) even to the extent of the transcription written upon its margins. When I completed collating it, people started to copy it from me. Ultimately the complete Ṣaḥīfatul Sajjādiyyah spread in all towns, similar to the radiant sun, and in every house, especially in Iṣfahān, since people had possessed different versions of it, and all this through the grace of the gift of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.). Most of them turned righteous and people of supplications, the prayers of majority among them were fulfilled, and this is among the effects of the miracle of Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.), while I cannot compute the knowledge bestowed upon me by Allāh (s.w.t.) through the blessings of Al Ṣaḥīfatul Sajjādiyyah.²

We (Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) say that in his Biḥārul Anwār, `Allāmah (Muḥammad

¹ He meant to say that after reading them, either they did not return them back or returned them back in a bad condition, not taking care of them, which are among the stipulations of endowment (Waqf). (translator)

² It is also worth mentioning that Mullā Muḥammad Taqī al Majlisī later even authored an interpretation (Sharḥ) upon Al Ṣaḥīfatul Sajjādiyyah in the `Arabic language. (translator)

Bāqir) al Majlisī quotes a brief permission (Ijāzah) from his father (Muḥammad Taqī al Majlisī) and says, "I relate the Ṣaḥīfatul Kāmilah, entitled Zabūr (Psalms) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.) and Injīl (Bible) of Ahlal-bait (a.s.), and the entire supplications, along with numerous chain of transmitters in different ways. Among them the one presented by our Master Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) and the Caliph of the Beneficent (Allāh) in a lengthy dream".

Sixteenth, `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī writes in his Biḥārul Anwār that a group informed me from the complete learned authority Sayyid Mīrzā Muḥammad al Istarābādī, may Allāh (s.w.t.) illuminate his grave, that one night I was circumambulating around Baytullāh al Ḥarām (Ka`bah) when a youth (a.t.f.s.) possessing a handsome countenance arrived and started to circumambulate it. When he (a.t.f.s.) neared me, he handed me a bouquet of red roses, while it was not its season. I took it from him (a.t.f.s.), smelt it and asked, "From where did you get it, O my Master?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "From the ruins". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) disappeared from my sight and I did not see him.

We (Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) say that the complete honorable Shaikh `Alī, son of the outstanding scholar Shaikh Muḥammad, son of the eminent researcher Shaikh Ḥasan, son of the Divine scholar Shahīd al Thānī (Zainuddīn al `Āmelī), writes in his book Al Durrul Manthūr in context to the life of his most glorious father (Shaikh Muḥammad bin Ḥasan bin Zainuddīn), who lived in the vicinity of Makkah in life and death. He says that I was informed by his wife, the daughter of Sayyid Muḥammad bin Abil Ḥasan and mother of his son, that when he passed away, we could hear someone reciting the Qur`ān near him that entire night. It is also renowned that once while he was circumambulating (the Ka`bah) a man (a.t.f.s.) came to him and handed him a winter rose that was neither available in that town nor was it the season for it. When he questioned him (a.t.f.s.) from where he brought it, he replied, "From the ruins". When he tried to find him after that question, he could not do so.

It should not be hidden that the above mentioned honorable Master Mīrzā Muḥammad al Istarābādī is the author of the renowned book on Al Rijāl (Manhajul Maqāl fī Taḥqīq Aḥwālil Rijāl) and Āyātul Aḥkām. He also resided in the vicinity of Makkah al Mu`azzamah and was the teacher of the above mentioned Shaikh Muḥammad (bin Ḥasan bin Zainuddīn), who mentioned him with reverence and honor in his book Sharḥ al Istibṣār. Both of them (Mīrzā Muḥammad al Istarābādī

and Shaikh Muḥammad bin Ḥasan bin Zainuddīn) were eminent personalities and possessors of an exalted status. It is possible that the above incident manifested for both of them, while it is also probable that it might be an error on part of the narrator due to the similarity in their names and place. While the second probability is more possible.

Seventeenth, the profound scholar Sayyid `Alī Khān al Ḥuwayzāwī writes (in his book *Khayrul Maqāl*), that a believer from our town named Shaikh Qāsim, who performed numerous Ḥajj Pilgrimages, informed me that one day I was tired of walking and lay down under a tree to sleep. My sleep lengthened, while most of the pilgrims left me. When I awoke, I became aware that I had slept for a longer time, while the pilgrims had gone quite far from me. I started to walk and did not know where to go. I walked in one path while calling out in a loud voice, "Yā Abā Ṣāleḥ"! While I meant Imām Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.) as related by Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs in his book *Al Amān min Akḥṭāril Asfāri wal Azmān* to call him (a.t.f.s.) when one loses way.¹ I was yet calling out, when I saw a person (a.t.f.s.) seated upon a camel, who was dressed as a Bedouin. When he (a.t.f.s.) saw me, he asked, "Have you separated from the pilgrims?" I replied in the affirmative and he said, "Mount behind me so that I may reach you to them". I mounted behind him (a.t.f.s.) and within no time we reached the pilgrims. When we reached close to them, he (a.t.f.s.) dismounted me and said, "Proceed towards your affair". I told him (a.t.f.s.), "Severe thirst has hurt me". Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) removed a pitcher filled with water from underneath his belt and made me drink it. By Allāh (s.w.t.)! It was the most delicious and most pleasant water I had ever drunk. Then I proceeded further and united with the pilgrims. When I turned towards him (a.t.f.s.), I could not find him, while I never saw him among the pilgrims before that or after, until we returned back.

Eighteenth, I have been informed by the honorable scholar, the noble pontiff, the epitome of excellences and eminences, and the unblemished and devout master, Shaikh `Alī al Rashtī. He was a scholar, beneficent, pious, abstinent, bearer of different knowledge, insightful and among the students of the master refuge, the grand sheikh (Murtadhā al Anṣārī). When he (Shaikh al Anṣārī) received numerous complaints from the inhabitants of the border areas of Fārs and those who ruled

¹ Abū Baṣīr relates from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "When you lose your way, call out: O Ṣāleḥ (or O Abā Ṣāleḥ)! Lead us to the path, may Allāh (s.w.t.) have Mercy upon you". (Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs, "*Al Amān min Akḥṭāril Asfāri wal Azmān*") (translator)

upon it, regarding non-existence of a complete active scholar and insightful wise person among them, he dispatched Mullā `Alī al Rashtī to them. He resided among them with felicity and died a praiseworthy death, may Allāh (s.w.t.)'s Mercy be upon him. I accompanied him in journeys numerous times and did not find any similarity of him in character and grace, except a few.

He relates that once I returned from the visitation to Abī `Abdillāh al Ḥusain (a.s.) and was proceeding towards Najaful Ashraf from the path of the Euphrates (Furāt). When we mounted a small boat that was in between Karbalā' and Ṭuwayrij, I found the inhabitants of Ḥillah in seated it, while from Ṭuwayrij, the paths to Ḥillah and Najaf separated. I saw that those people were engaged in fun and frolic; however, one person did not join them. Traces of tranquility and dignity were visible in him and he was neither joking nor laughing. I saw that they were attributing defects in his beliefs and insulting him, however, in spite of this, he accompanied them in eating and drinking. I was surprised due to this until we reached a spot where the water was less (in the river), while the owner of the boat dismounted us. We started to walk on the bank of the river when I got a chance to walk along with him. I asked him the reason of his aloofness from his companions and their ridicule and insult towards him. He replied, "They are my relatives from the Ahlul Sunnah, while my father was from among them, however, my mother belonged to the believers (Shī`ah). Initially I too shared their faith, however, Allāh (s.w.t.) graced me with the Shī`ah faith through the blessings of the Ḥujjah Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)".

I asked him the circumstances relating to his acceptance of the Shī`ah faith and he replied that my name is Yāqūt and I sell oil near the bridge of Ḥillah. One year I left Ḥillah to buy oil from the nomads. I went far from it until I accomplished my intention of buying oil, fastened it upon my donkey and returned back accompanied by a group of inhabitants of Ḥillah. We alighted at a place and went to sleep. When I arose, I did not find anyone among them, while all of them had departed. Our path was a wild desert, full of predators, while there was no structure round it, except at a distance of numerous Farsakh. I arose, placed the luggage upon my donkey and started to walk in their pursuit. I lost the track and was in a perplexed and fearful state from the predators and thirst that day. I started to beseech the caliphs and masters, asked for their assistance and made them my intercessors in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.). I pleaded much, however, nothing manifested from them. Suddenly I remembered the words of my mother

when she would say, "Verily we have an Imām (a.t.f.s.) who is alive and entitled Abā Ṣāleḥ. He (a.t.f.s.) guides the lost ones, aides the aggrieved ones and assists the weak ones". I swore to Allāh (s.w.t.) that if I call out to him (a.t.f.s.) and he responds to my call, I would accept the belief of my mother.

I called him (a.t.f.s.) and beseeched him, when suddenly I saw a person (a.t.f.s.) beside me, who was walking along with me and had worn a green turban (ʿAmāmah), saying this he pointed towards the vegetation near the edge of the river and said, that its greenery was similar to the greenery of that vegetation. Then he (a.t.f.s.) guided me to the path, ordered me to accept the belief of my mother and told me some words that I forgot. Then he (a.t.f.s.) said, "Shortly you shall reach a village whose inhabitants are all Shī`ah". I asked him (a.t.f.s.), "O my Master! Will you not accompany me to this village?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "No, since a thousand people from around the towns beseech me and I desire to reply to them". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) disappeared. I walked a little distance until I reached a village that was at a very far distance, while the group (of pilgrims) arrived there one day after me.

When I entered Ḥillah, I went to meet the master of jurists Sayyid Maḥdī al Qazwīnī and related the incident to him. He taught me the features of my religion and I asked him for a deed that would offer me another chance to meet Imām (a.t.f.s.). He replied, "Visit Abā `Abdillāh al Ḥusain (a.s.) forty Friday nights". I would visit him (a.s.) every Friday night from Ḥillah until one Friday remained. I left Ḥillah on Thursday and when I reached the gate of the town, I saw a group of oppressors who were asking those entering Karbalā' for passes. I neither possessed the pass, nor any amount to buy it. I stood in a perplexed state, while people had crowded near the gate. I tried to conceal myself and pass them; however, it did not prove fruitful. Suddenly I saw Imām Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.) in the town, who had worn a dress of a non-`Arab student and had tied a white turban upon his head. As soon as my sight fell upon him (a.t.f.s.), I beseeched him (a.t.f.s.) for help. He (a.t.f.s.) stepped outside, took me along with him and entered me through the gate, while no one could see me. When I entered the town, I lost him (a.t.f.s.) among the crowd of people and remained in a perplexed state of losing him.

Nineteenth, the honorable scholar Mullā Zainul `Ābidīn al Salmāsī, the caretaker of the tasks of `Allāmah (Muḥammad Maḥdī) Baḥrul `Ulūm during this stay at Makkah, says that in spite of residing at an alien land, distanced from family and brothers, `Allāmah Baḥrul `Ulūm remained strong-hearted with regards to

liberality and generosity and unconcerned to abundant expenses. It happened one day that not a single dirham was left and I informed him regarding this, abundant expenses and scarcity of wealth, however, he did not reply anything. It was his daily habit that he would circumambulate the Ka`bah after dawn and then return back to the house and sit below a distinguished canopy. A hookah would be brought for him, he would partake it and then move towards another canopy. His students from various schools of thought would gather around him and he would teach each one of them according to their beliefs. When he returned from the circumambulation that day, I complained to him regarding fewer resources the previous day and brought the hookah for him as usual.

Suddenly someone knocked at the door, hearing this, he was deeply perplexed and told me, "Take this hookah away from this place". Saying this, he hastened without signs of tranquility and opened the door. An eminent personality (a.t.f.s.) in the dress of a Bedouin entered therein and sat beneath the canopy. Sayyid sat near its door with utmost humility and submissiveness, and signaled me not to bring the hookah close to him. They sat speaking for some time, then he (a.t.f.s.) arose, while Sayyid too arose in haste and opened the door for him. Then he kissed his (a.t.f.s.)'s hands, sat him upon his camel that he sat near him and went his way. Sayyid returned back with a pale countenance and handing me over a draft, said, "This is a promissory note upon a money-changer, who sits upon the mount Şafā. Then go to him and take from him whatever has been transferred to him.

I took it and came to the person. As soon as he saw it, he kissed it and said, "I need laborers". I went out and brought four laborers, while he removed dirham in currency called French Riyāl, each one of it five times more than non-`Arab Qirān. The laborers could not lift them up, therefore they placed it upon their backs and we brought them to the house. After some days I returned back to the money-changer to question him regarding the matter and who had sent the promissory note. When I reached there, I found neither a money-changer, nor a shop. I asked some people who were present there and they replied, "We have never seen a money-changer at this spot, while such and such person usually sits here". Hearing this, I realized that this was among the mysteries of Allāh (s.w.t.) and favors of his Friend (a.t.f.s.).

This incident is related to me by the master scholar, the efficient jurist, the eminent

researcher and the possessor of lucid compilations and pre-eminent traits, Shaikh Muḥammad Ḥusain al Kāẓmī, the one residing in the vicinity of Najaful Ashraf, that he heard from the reliable personalities from the above mentioned person (Mullā Zainul `Ābidīn al Salmāsī).

Twentieth, the master refuge, the reliable scholar, the expert researcher and the prudent expert, Sayyid `Alī, the grandson of Sayyid (Muḥammad Mahdī) Baḥrul `Ulūm, the author of *Al Burhān al Qāṭe` fī Sharḥil Mukhtaṣar al Nāfe`*, relates from the abstinent, pious, chaste, devout, pure, Sayyid Murtadhā (al Ṭabātabā`ī), the son in law of Sayyid (Muḥammad Mahdī Baḥrul `Ulūm) through his niece (sister's daughter). He accompanied Sayyid Baḥrul `Ulūm in his travels and was diligent in serving him in open and concealment. He says that I accompanied him (Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī Baḥrul `Ulūm) at Surr Man Ra`ā (Sāmarrā') during one of his journey for visitation (Ziyarāh) to it. Sayyid slept alone in a room, while my room was adjacent him. I was very diligent in serving him during day and night, while mostly people would gather near him at night and stay until most part of it passed away.

One night he sat as usual, while people gathered around him. I saw him that night as if he abhorred the gathering and loved to be left alone, while he spoke to everyone among them that pointed out that he wanted them to leave his presence soon. Ultimately people left and none remained with him, except me. He ordered me to leave too. I left to my room, wondering upon his state that night, while I could not sleep. I waited for some time and left in concealment to check upon him and found that his door was closed. I peeped through a crevice in the door and saw a light burning on its own, while there was no one inside. I entered the room and realized through its condition that Sayyid had not slept that night. Therefore I walked with light steps to get his news and find his trace. When I entered the sacred courtyard, I saw that the doors of the Mausoleum of Imāmayn al `Askariyayn (a.s.) were bolted. I searched outside it, but did not find any trace of him.

Thereafter I entered the last courtyard where the cellar (Sardāb) was located and found its door open. I started to alight it with light steps so that no sense or movement may be heard from me. Suddenly I heard murmur from the kiosk of the cellar, as if someone was speaking to another. I could not understand the words, until three or four steps were left, while my creeping was more hidden than the creeping of ants in the dark night upon the solid stones. Suddenly I heard the

voice of Sayyid calling out to me, saying, "What happened O Sayyid Murtadhā? And why did you leave your home?" Hearing this, I froze in fright and silence, similar to a dry wood. I decided to return back before relying to him, however, I wondered to myself that how could my state be concealed from the one who perceived my presence without any senses. Therefore I replied to him apologetically and remorsefully and while doing so I came down the steps from where I could see the kiosk. I saw Sayyid standing alone, facing the Qiblah, while there was no trace of anyone else there apart from him. Therefore I realized that he was speaking to the one (Imām al Mahdī) who is concealed from the sight of human-beings, Allāh (s.w.t.)'s salutations be upon him.

Twenty First, the active scholar, the complete learned personality and paradigm of the righteous ones, Sayyid Muḥammad al Mūsawī al Najafī, renowned as al Hindī, who was among the pious scholars and the Prayer-leader at the Sacred Mausoleum of Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.), relates from the trustworthy scholar Shaikh Bāqir bin Hādī al Kāẓmī, the one residing in the vicinity of Najaful Asharf, who relates from a truthful person who was a massager at a public bath. He said that he had an old father, while he did not fall short in serving him to such an extent, that whenever he went to answer the call of nature, he would carry a pitcher for him and wait until he completed and then would take it back from him. He never abandoned serving him, except on Wednesday nights when he would go to visit Masjid al Sahlah. Later he even abandoned visiting it and I asked him the reason for doing so.

He replied that I visited Masjid al Sahlah for forty nights and when it was the last night I could not leave except near Magrib. I started to walk alone and night came up. I walked until one third of the path was left and it was a moonlit night. Suddenly I saw a nomad (a.t.f.s.), seated upon a horse, coming towards me. I thought to myself that perhaps he would plunder my clothes. When he (a.t.f.s.) neared me, he spoke to me in a nomadic `Arabic dialect and questioned me regarding my intention. I informed him (a.t.f.s.) that I intended going to Masjid al Sahlah and he asked whether I possessed anything to eat. I replied in the negative and he (a.t.f.s.) told me to search my pocket. I replied that there was nothing in it and he (a.t.f.s.) repeated his words scolding. I entered my hand into my pocket and found raisins that I had bought for my child, however, I had forgotten regarding it and it remained in my pocket. The nomad (a.t.f.s.) then told me, "I recommend you towards Al `Awd (the old)! I recommend you towards Al `Awd

(the old)! I recommend you towards Al `Awd (the old)!"! While Al `Awd in their dialect refers to an old father. Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) disappeared from my sight and I realized that he was none other than Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) and that he was not pleased that I should leave my father on Wednesday nights also, and therefore I abandoned going there.

This incident is also related to me by one of the renowned scholars of Najaful Ashraf.

We (the Author) say that there are numerous verses (Āyāt of the Qur`ān) and Aḥādīth in reverence of parents and honoring them, while I find it appropriate to quote a few herein below.

Shaikh al Kulaynī relates from Manṣūr bin Ḥāzīm that I asked Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq), "Which deed is the best?" He (a.s.) replied, "Prayers at its initial time, kindness towards parents and struggle (Jihād) in the path of Allāh (s.w.t.)".

It is also related from Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that once a man came to the presence of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and asked, "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! I am actively inclined towards Jihād". He (s.a.w.a.) replied, "Then fight in the path of Allāh (s.w.t.), then if you are killed in it, you shall remain alive near Allāh, gaining sustenance.¹ And if you die, your recompense shall remain near Allāh (s.w.t.), while if you return back, you shall return with your sins similar to the day when you were born". Then he said, "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! However, I possess old parents. They are affable towards me and dislike my departure". Hearing this, the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) replied, "In that case remain with your parents. For, by the One in Whose hands is my life! Your affability towards them for one day and night is better than a Jihād for one year".

Shaikh al Kulaynī also relates from Zakarīyyā bin Ibrāhīm, who says that previously I was a Christian. I accepted Islām, performed the Ḥajj Pilgrimage and went to the presence of Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq) and told him, "I was a Christian and later accepted Islām. However, my parents are still Christians, while my family and my mother are blind. Then should I remain with them and eat in their vessel?" He (a.s.) asked, "Do their consume the flesh of swine?" I replied, "No, they do not even touch it". Then he (a.s.) said, "In that case there is no problem. Then take

¹ Refer to the Qur`ānic Verse, "**Reckon not those who are slain in the way of Allāh to be dead; no, alive they are with their Lord being sustained**". (Holy Qur`ān, Sūrat Āl `Imrān: 169) (translator)

care of your mother and display kindness towards her”.

When I went to Kūfah, I displayed kindness towards my mother, while I would feed her, wash her clothes and head and serve her. Seeing this, she asked me, “O my son! You would not treat me similarly when you were upon my religion. Then what do I find in you from the day you migrated and entered Islām?” I replied, “A man (Imām al Ṣādiq) from among the progeny of our Prophet (s.a.w.a.) commanded me to do so”. She asked me whether he (a.s.) was a Prophet and I replied, “No, rather he is the son of a Prophet (s.a.w.a.)”. Then she said, “O my son! Verily he is a Prophet, since these are the recommendations of the Prophets (a.s.)”. I replied, “O mother! There shall not be any other Prophet after our Prophet (s.a.w.a.). However, he (a.s.) is his son”. Hearing this, she said, “O my son! Your religion is the best religion. Then reveal it to me”. I revealed it to her and she accepted Islām. I taught her and she performed the Ṣuhr, `Aṣr, Magrib and `Ishā’ Prayers. Thereafter she fell ill that night and said, “O my son! Repeat to me what you taught me”. I repeated it and she acknowledged it and passed away. When it dawned, Muslims came to administer her bath, while I recited prayers upon her and buried her.

`Ammār bin Ḥayyān relates that I informed Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq) regarding the kindness of my son Ismā`īl towards me. Hearing this, he (a.s.) said that, I loved him, however my love from him has increased (twofold now). One day a foster-sister of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) came to his presence. When his (s.a.w.a.)’s sight fell upon her, he was overjoyed, spread his quilt for her and sat her upon it. Then he (s.a.w.a.) started to speak to her and laughed along with her. After some time she arose and left and her brother came, however, he (s.a.w.a.) did not treat him as he treated her. He (s.a.w.a.) was questioned, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! You treated his sister opposite to how you treated him, while he is a man?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Since she was more kind towards her parents than him”.

It is related from Ibrāhīm bin Shu`ayb that once I told Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq), “My father has reached a very old age and has weakened. We carry him if he needs to answer the call of nature”. Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) replied, “Then continue doing so as much as you can and feed him with your hands, for it shall be your paradise for you tomorrow”.

Shaikh al Ṣadūq relates from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, “If one wishes that

Allāh (s.w.t.) may lessen the pangs of death upon him then he should be reachable to (the needs of) his relatives and be kind towards his parents; then if he shall do so, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall ease the pangs of death upon him and he shall never ever be inflicted with destitution in his life”.

Twenty two, the learned scholar Shaikh Bāqir al Najafī, son of the devout scholar Shaikh Hādī al Kāzmī, renowned as Āl Ṭālib, relates that there was a believer man at Najaful Ashraf, belonging to a renowned family of Āl al Raḥīm, while he was called Shaikh Ḥusain al Raḥīm. Moreover, the learned scholar, a complete devout person and the lantern of the pious ones, Shaikh Ṭāhā, who was among the relatives of the eminent scholar and the devout abstinent Shaikh Ḥusain Najaf, the present Prayer-Leader at Masjid al Hindī, acknowledged among the Shi`ah and Ahlul Sunnah and renowned among them with regards to Prayers and piety, also informed me that Shaikh Ḥusain possessed a sane intellect and a good character, however he was afflicted with a disease of coughing and blood would come out of his chest mixed with phlegm. And due to this reason, he was extremely indigent and needy to such an extent that he could not even possess his daily bread. Most of the time he would go to wilderness to the Bedouins, who resided in the vicinity of Najaful Ashraf, to obtain his daily bread, even if it was barley, while this too would not be sufficient for him. Moreover, even in this state, his heart was inclined to marry a girl from the inhabitants of Najaful Ashraf. He proposed her hand from her relatives, however, they did not reply to him due to his scarcity. Ultimately he was in great grief and sorrow due to his affliction. When his disease and indigence increased, and he lost hope of marrying the girl, he decided to undertake a task that was renowned among the inhabitants of Najaful Ashraf, that whenever anyone was afflicted with a matter, he would devote himself to visit Masjid al Kūfah forty Wednesday nights, perhaps he would get an opportunity to see Ṣāhib al Amr (a.t.f.s.), without recognizing him, and he (a.t.f.s.) would fulfill his desire.

Shaikh Bāqir (al Najafī) says that Shaikh Ḥusain says that I devoted myself for going to Masjid al Kūfah forty Wednesday nights. When it was the last time, the night was cold and dark. A strong wind blew along with little rain, while I was seated upon a platform that was near the door inside the Masjid. The platform was on the eastern side, opposite to the first door and on the left side while entering the Masjid. I could not enter the Masjid due to bloody cough and could not also spit inside it, while I did not possess anything to save me from the cold. My heart constrained, my grief increased, while the world turned narrow in my

eyes. I thought to myself that all the nights had passed, while this was the last one, neither did I see anyone, nor did anything manifest for me. I bore great exhaustion and endured hardships and fear for forty nights, coming from Najaful Ashraf to Masjid al Kūfah, while I was disheartened by all this.

I was engrossed in these thoughts, while there was no one in the Masjid, I lit fire to heat tea upon it, which I had brought from Najaful Ashraf. I could not leave it since I was habitual to it, while it was quite less. Suddenly I saw a person (a.t.f.s.) come to me from the first door. When I saw him (a.t.f.s.) from far, I was annoyed and told myself, "This nomad from the neighborhood of the Masjid seems to come to me to drink tea, while I shall remain without it in this dark night". Ultimately my grief turned two-fold. While I was engrossed in these thoughts, he (a.t.f.s.) already reached me, saluted me, addressing me by my name and sat facing me. I was surprised how he knew my name and assumed him to be among those whom I went to visit for my bread in the vicinity of Najaful Ashraf. I questioned him, "From which `Arab tribe do you belong?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "From among some `Arabs". I started to name the `Arabian tribes that resided in the vicinity of Najaful Ashraf and he (a.t.f.s.) replied in the negative. Whenever I named any tribe, he (a.t.f.s.) would said, "No, I do not belong to it". Hearing this, I was enraged and said, "Yes, you are from among the mocking Tartars". While these words do not mean anything. Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) smiled and said, "It does not concern you from where I belong. Then tell me what brought you here?" I replied, "It is not your business to question me". Again he (a.t.f.s.) said, "What is the harm if you tell me?"

Hearing this, I was astonished by his (a.t.f.s.)'s good character and charming words, while my heart inclined to him and the more I spoke to him, my love for him increased. I prepared tobacco for him (a.t.f.s.) and offered it to him. He (a.t.f.s.) said, "You may partake it, while I do not have it". Then I filled a cup with tea and offered it to him (a.t.f.s.). He (a.t.f.s.) drank little from it and forwarded the remaining to me, saying, "You may drink it". I drank from it and did not realize that he (a.t.f.s.) had not drunk the entire cup. However, my love for him (a.t.f.s.) increased gradually. Then I told him, "O my brother! Allāh (s.w.t.) has sent you to me at this night to be affable towards me. Will you not come to me to the Mausoleum of Muslim (bin `Aqīl) where we may sit and talk?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "I shall accompany you, then relate to me your matter".

I replied, "I shall relate to you the facts. I am in extreme diligence and need from the time I gained intelligence. Moreover, I am afflicted with cough; I spit out blood from my chest since years and do not know its treatment. Apart from this, I do not have a wife, while my heart is inclined towards a girl from my alley at Najaful Ashraf, however, I cannot obtain her due to scarcity of needs. These Mullās tempted me to address my needs to Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) and stay for forty Wednesday nights at Masjid al Kūfah. Ultimately I might see him (a.t.f.s.) and he would fulfill my desires. Tonight is the last one, while I have not witnessed anything in it after bearing untold hardships in these nights. This is the reason for me to come here and this is my need". Hearing this, he (a.t.f.s.) said, while I was heedless and disinclined, "As for your chest, it is cured; and as for the girl you shall soon get her. However, your indigence shall remain forever until you die". However, I was disinclined towards his (a.t.f.s.)'s words.

Then I asked him (a.t.f.s.), "Shall you not come to the Mausoleum of Muslim (bin `Aqīl)?" He (a.t.f.s.) told me to arise. I did so and he (a.t.f.s.) walked in front of me. When we stepped into the Masjid, he (a.t.f.s.) asked, "Will you not recite Prayers in honor of the Masjid?" I replied in the affirmative and he (a.t.f.s.) stood near the erected pole of the Masjid, while I stood at a little distance behind him. I pronounced Takbīratul Aḥrām and started to recite Sūratul Fātiḥah. While I was reciting, he (a.t.f.s.) started to recite Sūratul Fātiḥah in such lucidity, the similarity of which I had never ever heard. Hearing this, I wondered to myself, "Perhaps he is Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)". I recollected some of his words that evidenced it. When this thought passed my mind, I looked at him (a.t.f.s.), while he was yet in Prayers, I found that a grand light had engulfed him that stopped me from beholding his honorable self, in spite of this he (a.t.f.s.) remained engrossed in Prayers. I heard his (a.t.f.s.)'s recitation, while my limbs trembled and I could not break my Prayers in his awe. I completed my Prayers anyhow, while the light arose towards the heavens from the earth. I started to weep and wail, while I apologized to him (a.t.f.s.) for the disrespect that I displayed towards him at the door of the Masjid. Then I addressed him (a.t.f.s.), saying, "You are a fulfiller of promises, while you promised to accompany me to the Mausoleum of Muslim (bin `Aqīl)".

While I was speaking to the light, it proceeded towards the Mausoleum of Muslim (bin `Aqīl) and I followed it. It entered the Mausoleum and settled near the dome. It remained in this condition, while I continued weeping and wailing until it dawned and it ascended (towards the heavens). At dawn, I wondered upon his (a.t.f.s.)'s

words, "As for your chest, it is cured" and realized that my chest was fine and there was no sign of cough ever after. Not a week passed when Allāh (s.w.t.) eased for me and I obtained the girl from where I did not expect. However, my indigence continued as he (a.t.f.s.) had informed, Allāh (s.w.t.)'s benedictions and salutations upon him and his chaste forefathers.

Twenty third, the master of the jurists, refuge of the scholars and Divine scholar Sayyid Mahdī al Qazwīnī, the resident of Ḥillah, informed me orally, that I left Ḥillah on the fourteenth of the month of Sha`bān with an intention to visit Imām al Ḥusain (a.s.) on the night of the fifteenth. When I reached the bank of Al Hindīyyah and passed by its western side, I found a group of pilgrims from Ḥillah and its surroundings, while others arriving from Najaful Ashraf and its vicinities. All of them were suspended in the houses of the clan of Banī Ṭurf, among the clans of Al Hindīyyah,¹ and could not go to Karbalā'. The reason being that people belonging to the clan of Banī `Inzah had occupied the roads and had blocked the path of the pedestrians. They would not allow anyone to arrive from Karbalā', while none could pass from there except that they plundered him.

I took residence at the house of an `Arab, recited the Ḍuhr and `Aṣr Prayers, and sat waiting to see the outcome of the pilgrims. The skies had clouded, while scanty rain was pouring down. While we were sitting, I saw the pilgrims come out from the houses and proceed towards Karbalā'. I told some of those along with me, "Go out and ask what happened". He went out, returned back to me and said, "The people of the clan of Banī Ṭurf have come out with firearms and gathered to reach the pilgrims to Karbalā' even if it means battle with Banī `Inzah". Hearing this, I told those who were along with me, "This statement cannot be true, since the Banī Ṭurf lack the capability to confront Banī `Inzah in the wilderness. I presume that it is a trick (by the Banī Ṭurf) to oust the pilgrims from their houses, since they are overburdened by their residence with them and their accommodation". While we were yet discussing it, the pilgrims returned back and what I had predicted came out true. The pilgrims did not enter the houses; rather they sat in their shades, while the skies were clouded. Seeing this, I felt extreme pity for them, while a great debacle afflicted me. I turned to Allāh (s.w.t.) by calling Him, beseeched the

¹ A stream from the river Euphrates, that separates from beneath Musayyab and flows towards Kūfah. A town named Mu`tabarah lies upon its bank that is called Al Ṭuwayrij and is situated on the way to Ḥillah when one desires to go to Karbalā'. (Author)

Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny (a.s.) and requested for the release of the pilgrims from what they were afflicted.

While I was in this state, suddenly a horseman (a.t.f.s.) arrived seated upon an attractive horse whose similarity I had never seen. He (a.t.f.s.) held a tall lance in his hand and had folded his sleeves. He (a.t.f.s.) arrived, trotting his horse with it and stopped near the house where I was seated, while it was a house made of hair with raised sides. He (a.t.f.s.) saluted us and we replied to it. Then he (a.t.f.s.) addressed me, saying, "O our Master", while he addressed me by my name. Then he (a.t.f.s.) continued, "I have been sent by the one who bestows salutations upon you, while they are Kanj Muḥammad Āgā and Şafar Āgā, among the military commanders of the `Uthmāniyyah rulers. They have sent message that the pilgrims may come forth, since we have expelled the Banī `Inzah from the path, while we are waiting at the passageway, along with our troops, at the mound in Al Sulaymāniyyah". Hearing this, I asked him (a.t.f.s.), "Shall you accompany us until the mound at Al Sulaymāniyyah?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied in the affirmative.

Hearing this, I immediately stepped out, while around two and a half hours were left of the day, and I ordered to bring our horses. Seeing this, our nomad host clung to me and said, "O my Master! Do not put yourself and the pilgrims at risk. Stop here for the night until the matter comes to light". I replied, "There is no way except that we mount and leave to get an opportunity for the distinguished visitation (on the night of the fifteenth of Sha`bān)". When the pilgrims saw that we had mounted, they followed our track, some upon horse back and some walking on foot. We proceeded, while the horseman (a.t.f.s.) was along with us, as if he was a ferocious lion while we were behind him, until we reached the mound of Al Sulaymāniyyah. He (a.t.f.s.) climbed it and we followed suit. Then he (a.t.f.s.) alighted and we ascended the mound. We looked for him (a.t.f.s.), however, there was no sight or trace of him, as if he had ascended to the heavens or entered the earth. There was also no sign of any commander or troops. When I saw this, I addressed those along with me, saying, "Does any doubt remain that the personality was none other than Şāhib al Amr (a.t.f.s.)?" They replied, "No, by Allāh (s.w.t.)". I constantly looked at him while he (a.t.f.s.) was along with us and thought that I had seen him before, however I could not recollect where. However, when he (a.t.f.s.) departed from us, I recollected that he was the same person who had visited me at Ḥillah and informed me regarding the happenings at Al Sulaymāniyyah.

And as for the Banī `Inzah, we neither found any trace of them in their houses, nor did we find anyone to inquire from them. We saw an extreme sand-storm that arose in the middle of the desert. We entered Karbalā', trotting our horses and reached the gate of the town. We found troops standing near the wall of the town who called out to us, saying, "From where do you come and how did you reach here?" Then they looked towards the group of pilgrims and said, "Glory be to Allāh (Sub-ḥānAllāh)! The desert has become replete with pilgrims. Then where are the people of `Inzah?" I replied, "Sit in the town and obtain your sustenance, while Makkah has a Lord to take care of it". These words were uttered by `Abdul Muṭṭalib to Abrahah, the ruler of Yaman (Yemen), when he came to take back his camels that were looted by his troops. Abrahah asked him, "Why did you not ask me for the deliverance of the Ka`bah that I may return back?" `Abdul Muṭṭalib replied, "I am the lord of my camels, while Makkah has a Lord to take care of it".

Finally we entered the town and I found Kanj Muḥammad Āgā seated upon a plank near the gate. I saluted him and he arose to greet me. Then I told him, "It is enough for you to pride that you are mentioned upon the tongues". He asked me what I meant and I related to him the entire incident. Hearing this, he said, "O my Master! How would I know that you are visiting here so I may send you a messenger? I and my troops are besieged in the town since fifteen days and cannot leave the town due to fear of the Banī `Inzah". Then he asked, "What happened to the Banī `Inzah?" I replied, "I have no idea except that I saw an extreme sand-storm that arose in the middle of the desert".

Then I removed the watch and saw that one and a half hour was left of the day, while our entire journey completed in an hour, however, the distance from the houses of Banī Ṭurf to Karbalā' was three hours! We resided that night at Karbalā' and when it dawned, we inquired regarding the Banī `Inzah. One of the peasants working at the gardens of Karbalā' informed us that when the Banī `Inzah were seated in their houses, a horseman (a.t.f.s.) suddenly manifested to them seated upon a beautiful horse and carrying a lengthy lance. Then he (a.t.f.s.) shouted to them in a loud voice, "O people of `Inzah! A violent death has come forth. While the troops of the `Uthmāniyyah empire are proceeding towards you along with their horses and men, and here they are coming just behind me. Then leave, for I do not presume that you shall be saved from them". Allāh (s.w.t.) entered a great fright and disgrace into their hearts to such an extent that a man forsook some of the provisions of his house in haste to leave. Within an hour all of them

took to flight and ran towards the desert". Hearing this, I told him to describe the person (a.t.f.s.) to me. He did so and I realized that he was exactly the same horseman (a.t.f.s.) who had come to us. And all praise be to Allāh (s.w.t.), the Lord of the worlds. And salutations be upon Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his chaste progeny (a.s.). Written by the humble-most, Mīrzā Ṣāleḥ al Ḥusainī (al Qazwīnī).

The Author (Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) says that I heard this incident orally from him (Sayyid Maḥdī al Ḥusainī al Qazwīnī), may Allāh (s.w.t.) elevate his position, while this miracle cannot be improbable since he inherited (good) deeds and knowledge from his honorable paternal uncle Sayyid Bāqir al Qazwīnī, the distinguished one of the grand master and the lofty mountain (of knowledge) Sayyid (Muḥammad Maḥdī) Baḥrul `Ulūm. His paternal uncle trained him, brought him up and taught him the esoteric (knowledge) and mysteries until he scaled such heights where ideologies do not hover around it. Moreover he reached such excellences and merits that did not combine in (most) righteous scholars, except him. Among his excellences is that when he migrated to Ḥillah and settled therein, he took to guiding people, demonstrating the truth and refuting falsehood; around a hundred thousand nomads in Ḥillah and its vicinities became sincere Shī`ah Imāmīyyah, displaying love towards the friends of Allāh (s.w.t.) and bearing animosity with the enemies of Allāh (s.w.t.), and all this through the blessings of his propagation.

He (Sayyid Maḥdī al Qazwīnī), may Allāh (s.w.t.) sanctify his grave, related to me that when he entered Ḥillah, there were no signs of Imāmīyyah and their effects among those who claimed to be Shī`ah therein, except that they transferred their dead-ones to be buried at Najaful Ashraf. They did not know anything regarding their (Imāmīyyah) ordinances even to the extent of disassociating themselves from the enemies of Allāh (s.w.t.). They turned into devout, righteous and pious people, through the blessings of his guidance, while this is a great virtue in itself that he distinctively achieved among formers and latters. Moreover he even attained spiritual perfections such as forbearance, piety, bearing strain of (excessive) worship, tranquility of soul and regular engrossment in the remembrance of Allāh (s.w.t.). He never asked for anything that he needed in his house from his family members or children, such as lunch, dinner, tea, hookah, etc. at its time. Nor did he ever command his servants and maids to bring it for him. And were it not for their care and their adherence, he would have to spend his nights and days without consuming anything (due to modesty and humility), all this in spite of possessing influence, wealth and evident authority. He would agree to an invitation and attend

banquets and receptions; however, he would carry books along with him, sit in a corner and become engrossed in writing. He would be uninformed regarding the presence of people therein and not accompany them in their discussion, except when they questioned him regarding a religious issue, ultimately he would reply to them.

It was his daily habit during the month of Ramadhān, that he would recite the Magrib Prayers at the Masjid, while people would gather and pray in his lead. Then he would recite the recommended prayers related to the month of Ramadhān that were a thousand units (Rak`ah) divided in the entire month, and then come to his house and break his fast. Then he would return back to the Masjid, recite the `Ishā' Prayers leading the people, followed by the supererogatory prayers (Nawāfil). Again he would return back to his home along with a great crowd of people. When all the people would gather and settle down (in his house), one of the reciters would start to recite verses (Āyāt) of the Qur`ān in a melodious voice, in admonition (against the wrath of Allāh), exhortation (to perform good deeds) and counseling, in such a manner that could melt a solid rock and soften ruthless hearts. Thereafter another person would start to recite a sermon (Khuṭbah) from among the counsels of Nahjul Balāghah, followed by recitation of the calamities that befell Imām al Ḥusain (a.s.). Lastly, a person from among the pious ones, would recite supplications (Ad`iyyah) relating to the month of Ramadhān, while others would follow him, until the time of Saḥar. Then people would scatter away and return back to their homes.

Apart from this, he was particular in observing and complying with (certain) times, supererogatory (Nawāfil Prayers), customs and recitations. He was a sign (to be imitated) in his age in spite of being aged, while we accompanied him both ways during his travel to the Ḥajj Pilgrimage and recited Prayers along with him in Masjid al Gadīr wa Ju`fah. He passed away on the twelfth of the month of Rabi`ul Ūlā in the year one thousand three hundred Hijrah, before entering Samāwah, at a distance of around five farsakh from it. He was buried at Najaful Ashraf beside his eminent paternal uncle (Sayyid Mahdī al Qazwīnī), while a large dome has been erected upon his tomb. At the moment of his death, such strength of faith, tranquility, devotion and truthfulness of belief manifested in him, which put everyone in astonishment. Such wondrous acts manifested through him at that time in the presence of his supporters and opponents, which cannot be quoted here. Moreover, he authored numerous lucid works in jurisprudence and its

principles (Fiqh wa Uṣūl), Unity (Tawḥīd) of Allāh, scholasticism (Kalām) etc., among them a book dealing with proofs evidencing that the delivered sect (Firqaḥ al Nājiyyah) is the Imāmiyyah sect and is the best one authored in this context.¹
A great bliss (Ṭūbā) shall be theirs and a beautiful place of return.²



¹ It is named Al Ṣawārimul Mādhīyyah li Radd al Firqatil Hāwīyyah wa Taḥqīq al Firqatil Nājiyyah. (translator)

² Holy Qurʾān, Suratul Ra`ad: 29 (translator)

6. Some of the responsibilities of the believers towards the Imām (a.t.f.s.)

In this section we shall deal with the responsibilities of the believers towards Imām al `Aṣr (a.t.f.s.), etiquettes of servitude and customs of obedience to be adhered by those who have submitted themselves to his command and obedience. Moreover, they consider themselves as slaves of obedience to him (a.t.f.s.) and procurers of his favours, apart from considering him as their Imām and a medium for achieving Divine Graces and infinite blessings of the world and the hereafter. Some of these responsibilities are stated below.

First, it is upon the slave and the one awaiting the auspicious arrival of Al Ḥujjah ibnul Ḥasan (a.t.f.s.) that he should be aggrieved and sorrowful for him during the days of his concealment (Gaybah) due to the below reasons.

His (a.t.f.s.)'s concealment from us, since we cannot have access to him and cannot illuminate our eyes by glancing at his luminous beauty. Thus it is related in `Uyūn Akhbār al Ridhā (of Shaikh al Ṣadūq) from Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.) in a Ḥadīth relating to Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.), that, "How many eager believer women and how many believer men are regretful, perplexed and aggrieved in their bereavement of Al Mā'il Ma`īn (the flowing water)".¹

We also find these words in Du`ā' al Nudbāh, "It is hard upon me that I can see the creation, however, I can neither see you nor hear your whisper or confidential discourse. It is hard upon me that tribulations surround you, not me, and neither

¹ The entire Ḥadīth as related by Ḥasan bin Maḥbūb is that Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.) said, "There is no escape from the deafening maiming commotion in which every companion and friend shall fallout. This shall take place during the bereavement of the third one (a.t.f.s.) among my children by the Shī`ah. The heavens shall weep upon him and the inhabitants of the earth, every eager man and woman, and everything shall be aggrieved, regretful". Then he (a.s.) said, "May my father and mother be ransom upon the one named after my grandfather (s.a.w.a.), my look alike and the look alike of Mūsā bin `Imrān (a.s.). He shall possess illuminating dresses that shall glow with the rays of Divine Radiance. How many eager believer women and how many believer men are regretful, perplexed and aggrieved in their bereavement of Al Mā'il Ma`īn (the flowing water). It is as if I see them despair (of not finding him), when a voice shall sound, which shall be heard from far, as it is heard from near, that he shall be a (means of Divine) Mercy for the believers and a (means of Divine) wrath for the disbelievers". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "`Uyūn Akhbār al Ridhā (a.s.)") (translator)

my wailing nor complaining can serve you any benefit. May my self be ransomed upon you, the concealed one who never forsakes us (in spite of being hidden from sight). May my self be ransomed upon you, the distant one who never remains distant from us. May my self be ransomed upon you, the aspiring desire aspired by believer men and women who mention and miss you. May my self be ransomed upon you, the pioneer of dignity who cannot be competed..... It is hard upon me that I weep upon you, however people have forsaken you”, until the end of the supplication that is an example of a discourse by the one who has taken a sip from the glass of his (a.t.f.s.)’s love.

The second reason for our grief is that we see his (a.t.f.s.)’s inability to enforce Divine ordinance, rights and limits. Moreover he (a.t.f.s.) sees his rights in the hands of other than him. Thus Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) once told `Abdullāh bin Ḍubayān (or Dīnār), “O `Abdallāh! There is no `Īd for the Muslims, whether Al Adh-ḥā or Al Fiṭr, except that it renews grief for Āl Muḥammad (a.s.)”. He asked him (a.s.) why and he replied, “Since they see their rights in the hands of other than them”.

The third reason for our sorrow is that we see emergence of thieves of the religion and bandits of the path of the creed from ambush, their diffusion of doubts and suspicions in the minds of the commoners, rather the distinguished ones among the people. Ultimately people abandon the religion in multitude, while the genuine scholars are incapable of revealing their knowledge. While whatever the truthful ones (a.s.) have predicted, shall take place, that safeguarding one’s faith by a believer shall be difficult than catching hold of a burning charcoal in his hands.¹

Shaikh al Nu`mānī relates from `Amīrah bint Nufayl that I heard Ḥusain bin `Alī (a.s.) say, “The matter (Imām al Mahdī) that you await shall not appear until some of you disassociate from others, and some of you spit upon the faces of others, and some of you shall bear witness of disbelief upon others, and some of you shall curse others”. I asked, “Is there no goodness in that age?” He (a.s.) replied, “All goodness lies in it. When our Qa’em (a.t.f.s.) arises, he shall elevate all of them

¹ In a lengthy Ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) addressed to `Abdullāh bin Mas`ūd, he (s.a.w.a.) describes the portents of the last age and says, “O son of Mas`ūd! A time would come upon the people in which the one safeguarding his faith will be similar to a one grasping a burning charcoal upon his palm”. (Ḥasan bin Fadhl al Ṭabarsī, “Makārimul Akhlāq”) (translator)

(goodness)".

Shaikh al Nu`mānī also relates a Ḥadīth from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) in similar context. He (a.s.) relates from Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.) that he told Mālik bin Dhamrah, "O Mālik bin Dhamrah! What shall be your condition when the Shi`ah shall be divided like this". Saying this, he (a.s.) overlapped his fingers and entered some of them into others. Hearing this, I asked, "O Amīral Mu`minīn (a.s.)! Will no goodness remain then?" He (a.s.) replied, "All goodness shall lie in it. O Mālik! When our Qa'em (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, seventy men shall rise up who shall belie Allāh (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.). Then he (a.t.f.s.) shall kill them and Allāh (s.w.t.) shall unite them (the believers) upon one affair (make them harmonious to one another)".

It is related that Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) said, "Purify, O Shi`ah of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.), similar to the purification of eyes by kohl. Verily the possessor of the eye knows when the kohl comes to his eyes; however, he does not know when it shall come out of it. Similarly a man shall dawn upon the Sharī`ah of our affair (Imāmah), and shall abandon it in the evening. And a man shall be upon the Sharī`ah of our affair (Imāmah) in the evening and abandon it at dawn".

Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) says, "By Allāh (s.w.t.)! You shall be shattered similar to the shattering of a glass. And verily if a glass is broken, it can return back to its original state (through melting and remaking). And by Allāh (s.w.t.)! You shall be shattered similar to the shattering of a ceramic. And if a ceramic is shattered, it cannot be returned back to its original shape. By Allāh (s.w.t.)! You shall be sieved. And by Allāh (s.w.t.)! You shall be separated. And by Allāh (s.w.t.)! You shall be purified until none remains among you, except a few". Saying this, he (a.s.) overturned his hand.

There are numerous reports in this context, among them a one quoted by Shaikh al Ṣadūq in his Kamāluddīn from Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.) that, "It is as if I see you wandering around, similar to the wandering of a camel in search of a pasture, however it shall not find it, O group of Shi`ah"!

It is related that Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) told `Abdul Raḥmān bin Sayābah, "What shall be your state when you shall be left without a guiding Imām or a standard (to guide you)? Some of you shall disassociate from others. During that time you shall be separated and purified and sieved".

It is related from Sadīr al Ṣayrafī that once I entered the presence of our Master Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) along with Mufadhhal bin `Umar, Dāwūd bin Kathīr al Raqqī, Abū Baṣīr and Abān bin Taglib. We found him (a.s.) seated upon the earth, while he had worn a ringed sackcloth from Khaybar that did not possess a pocket and its sleeves were short. He (a.s.) was weeping similar to a woman who has lost her son. Grief was visible upon his cheeks; transformation was spread upon his face, while tears were filled in his eyes. He (a.s.) was saying, "My Master! Your concealment has denied me my peace, constrained my sleep, and stripped me of the repose of my heart. My Master! Your concealment has stretched my calamities to eternal afflictions, and bereavement (of my companions) one after the other annihilating the group and number (of my friends). I do not feel that the tears of my eyes shall dry up or moaning of my heart shall cease, due to circulation of calamities and bygone tribulations; except that it has become an example in my eyes due to the greatest catastrophe, the severest and most terrible permanence, and disasters combined with your anger and falls kneaded with your rage".

Sadīr says that when we heard these words, our intellects parted away with severe grief and our hearts cleaved with anxiety due to these frightful statements and extreme tragedies. We suspected that perhaps he (a.s.) might have been poisoned due to bitter distress or he has faced a misfortune of the age. Therefore we said, "May Allāh (s.w.t.) not make your eyes weep, O son of the best among creatures! What calamity has given way to your flowing tears and what situation has compelled you to this mourning?" Hearing this, he (a.s.) sighed, a sigh that inflated his blessed chest and his fright turned two-fold. Then he (a.s.) said, "Woe be upon you! I glanced at the book of Al Jafr today morning. It is a book dealing with the knowledge of death, future occurrences, calamities and knowledge of the past and future until the day of Qiyāmah. Allāh (s.w.t.) distinguished Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and the A'imma (a.s.) after him with it (al Jafr). I saw written in it regarding the birth of our Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), his concealment, his (period of) slackness and his lengthy age. Moreover, the believers' tribulations during that period, birth of doubts in their hearts due to the lengthiness of his concealment, while the defection of the majority of them from their religion and their throwing off the noose of Islām from their necks, regarding which Allāh (s.w.t.) says, **"And every man's destiny We have caused to cling to his neck"**.¹ While it means (our)

¹ Holy Qur'ān, Sūrat Banī Isrā'īl: 13

Authority. Ultimately I was overtaken by pity and engulfed by sorrows”.

This honourable report is sufficient to point out that the dissension among the Shi`ah, their tribulations during the days of concealment and formation of doubts in their hearts, formed a reason Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.)’s weeping, his lamentation and his sleeplessness, years before the occurrence of the concealment. Then it is worthy for a believer trapped in this catastrophe and submerged in this flooding ocean, to be constantly engrossed in weeping, lamenting, wailing, sorrow, grief and beseeching in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.).

Second, among the responsibilities of the slaves during the days of concealment (Gaybah) is awaiting Faraj Āl Muḥammad (a.t.f.s.) at every instant and moment. Moreover, expecting the manifestation of the supreme kingdom and phenomenal sovereignty of Mahdī Āl Muḥammad (a.t.f.s.), filling the earth with justice and equity and dominance of the upright religion. While Allāh (s.w.t.) has informed His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) regarding this and promised him, rather He has informed all the Prophets (a.s.) and nations regarding this. He has given glad tidings to them of the arrival of a day wherein none shall be worshipped except Allāh (s.w.t.), nothing with regards to religion shall remain hidden due to fear of enemies, while tribulations shall be warded off from the believers. And we read this in the salutation (Ziyārah) of Mahdī Āl Muḥammad (a.t.f.s.), “Peace be upon Al Mahdī, regarding whom Allāh has promised the nations that He shall unite the words through him, He shall agonize the disorderly through him, fill the earth with justice and equity through him and execute the promise to the believers through him”.

We have been informed regarding this Faraj in the seventieth year of Hijrah as related by Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī in his *Al Kharā’ej wal Jarā’eḥ*. He relates from Abī Ishāq al Sabī`ī, from `Amrū bin Ḥamiq, among the four secret-bearers of Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.). He says that I entered the presence of Imām `Alī (a.s.) when he was struck by the sword at Kūfah. I told him (a.s.), “There is no need for you to worry, since it is just a cut”. Hearing this, he (a.s.) said, “By my life! I shall depart from you”. Then he (a.s.) said, “There is tribulation until seventieth (year)”. He (a.s.) repeated this thrice. I asked him (a.s.), “Is there prosperity after tribulation?” He (a.s.) could not reply to me and fell unconscious.¹ Then I asked

¹ The report further says that seeing this, Umm Kulthūm (s.a.) wept and when he (a.s.) regained consciousness, he said, “Do not pain me O Umm Kulthūm (through your weeping), for if you see what I see, you shall not weep. Verily the Angels of the seventh heaven, standing one

him (a.s.), "O Amīral Mu'minīn (a.s.)! You said that there is tribulation until seventieth (year), then is there prosperity after seventy?" He (a.s.) replied, "Yes, indeed there is prosperity after tribulation. **Effaces out Allāh whatever He pleases and confirms He (similarly); and with Him is the Mother (basic source) of the Book**".¹

Shaikh al Ṭūsī relates in his Al Gaybah and Shaikh al Kulaynī in his Al Kāfī from Abū Ḥamzah al Thumālī, that I asked Abū Ja`far (al Bāqir), "Verily `Alī (a.s.) would say that there is tribulation until seventieth (year) and would even say that there is prosperity after seventy, however, seventy (years) have passed and we do not find any prosperity?" He (a.s.) replied, "O Thābit (Abū Ḥamzah)! Verily Allāh (s.w.t.) destined this matter in the seventieth (year). However, when Ḥusain (a.s.) was martyred, the rage of Allāh (s.w.t.) increased upon the inhabitants of the earth and He (s.w.t.) delayed it until one hundred and fortieth year (of Hijrah). Then we (a.s.) informed you, while you disclosed it (to others) and lifted off the veil of secrecy, then Allāh (s.w.t.) delayed it and did not reserve a time for it after that. **Effaces out Allāh whatever He pleases and confirms He (similarly); and with Him is the Mother (basic source) of the Book**".² Abū Ḥamzah (al Thumālī) says that (later) I informed this to Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq) and he replied, "It is so".³

Shaikh al Nu`mānī relates in his Al Gaybah from Al `Alā' bin Sayābah that Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) said, "One among you who dies awaiting this matter, except that he is similar to a one who is in the tent of Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.)".

Abū Baṣīr relates from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that one day he (a.s.) said, "Should I not inform you regarding an act, while Allāh (s.w.t.) does not accept the deeds from the slaves, except through it?" I replied in the affirmative and he (a.s.) said, "Witness that indeed there is no other Deity Except Allāh'; and indeed Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) is His slave and Messenger; and acknowledgement of what Allāh (s.w.t.) had commanded; and our Love; and disassociation from our

behind the other, and the Prophets (a.s.) call out to me, saying, 'Proceed further O `Alī. For what awaits you is better than what you are in'". (translator)

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Ra`ad: 39

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Ra`ad: 39

³ After quoting this Ḥadīth, it is related in the same book that someone among the A'imma (a.s.) said, "The ones who fixes the time (of his reappearance), lies". (Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī, "Al Kharā'ej wal Jarā'eḥ") (translator)

enemies, the distinguished A'immah (a.s.); and submission to them (a.s.); and devotedness; and diligence; and repose; and awaiting Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.)". Then he (a.s.) continued, "Verily we possess a sovereignty that Allāh (s.w.t.) shall establish whenever He likes". Again he (a.s.) said, "One who likes to be included among the companions of Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), should await and perform deeds accompanied by devotedness and high moral standards, while he (in reality) is the awaiting one. Then if he dies and Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) arises after that, he shall obtain reward similar to the one who accompanies him (a.t.f.s.). Then struggle and wait. Congratulations to you O blessed group (of Shī'ah)!"

Shaikh al Ṣadūq writes in his Kamāluddīn from Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq) that, "Verily in them lie devoutness, modesty, uprightness and waiting Al Faraj patiently".¹

It is related from Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.) that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "The best deed for my nation (Ummah) is waiting for Al Faraj (a.t.f.s.) from Allāh (s.w.t.)".

Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) said, "The one who waits for our Amr (a.t.f.s.) is similar to the one smeared in his blood in the path of Allāh (s.w.t.)".

Shaikh al Ṭabarsī writes in his Al Ihtijāj that a written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged from Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) through the medium of Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī, at the conclusion of which it is stated, "Then pray abundantly for the hastening of Al Faraj (a.t.f.s.) for certainly in it lies relief (Faraj) for you".

Shaikh al Ṭūsī relates in his Al Gaybah from Mufadhdhal (bin `Umar al Ju`fī) that a discussion arose amongst us regarding Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) and those among our companions who die waiting for him. Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) said, "When he (a.t.f.s.) shall arise, a believer shall be approached in his grave and said, 'O so and so! Your master has risen. Then if you wish to join him (a.t.f.s.), do so; and if you wish to live in dignity from your Lord (s.w.t.), do so".

Shaikh al Barqī writes in his Al Maḥāsin from Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that he told one

¹ While discussing regarding the A'immah (a.s.) and their Authority, Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) said, "Verily in them lies devotedness, modesty, truthfulness, uprightness and diligence, returning back trust to the good and immoral (irrespectively), lengthiness of prostrations and standing (in Prayers) at night, and abstaining from forbidden, and waiting for Al Faraj (a.t.f.s.) patiently, good companionship and good neighborliness". (Shaikh al Ṣadūq, "Kamāluddīn wa Tamāmul Ni`mah") (translator)

of his companions, "If anyone amongst you dies waiting this matter (Imām al Mahdī), it is as if he remained along with Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) in his tent". While in another Ḥadīth it is mentioned, "It is as if he remained along with the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)". Yet another Ḥadīth mentions, "It is as if he fell a Martyr along with the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)".

Muḥammad bin Fudhayl relates that I questioned Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.) something regarding Al Faraj (a.t.f.s.). He (a.s.) replied, "Isn't waiting for Al Faraj (a.t.f.s.) among Faraj (relief itself)? Allāh (s.w.t.) says, **wait then, and verily I too with you be of those who wait**".¹

It is also related from him (Imām al Ridhā) that, "What best is patience and waiting for Al Faraj (a.t.f.s.). Did you not heard the words of Allāh, **and watch you, verily I too with you am watching**² and **wait then, and verily I too with you be of those who wait**.³ Then upon you is patience, since relief (Faraj) comes upon despair. Indeed those before you were more patient than you".

Third, among other responsibilities is praying for his (a.t.f.s.)'s protection from the evil of the devils among the genie and men; as well as (praying for) hastening his (a.t.f.s.)'s victory and dominance upon the disbelievers, infidels and hypocrites. While this is among the forms of displaying ones love (towards him) and abundance of yearning (to meet him). There are numerous Ad`iyyah (supplications) in his regards, among them the one related by Yūnus bin `Abdul Raḥmān that Imām al Ridhā (a.s.) would command to pray for Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) in these words, "Allāhumma idfa` `an Walīyyika wa Khalīfatika wa Ḥujjatika `alā khalqika". While we have quoted this supplication in our Mafātīḥul Jinān in the section dealing with the salutations (Ziyārah) of Şāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.).

Among them is the Şalawāt (invoking blessings) attributed to Abul Ḥasan al Dharrāb al Işfahānī and we have quoted it too in our Mafātīḥul Jinān in the end of the section dealing with the recommended acts of Friday. Moreover this honourable supplication, "Allāhumma Kun li Walīyyika Al Ḥujjat ibnul Ḥasan Şalawātuka `Alayhi wa `alā Ābā`ihi fi ḥāḍihil Sā`ah wa fi kulli Sā`ah, Walīyyan wa Ḥāfiẓan wa Qā`edan wa Nāşiran wa Dalīlan wa `Aynan, ḥattā Tuskinahu Ardhaka Ṭaw`ān wa Tumatti`ahu fihā Ṭawīlā (O Allāh, be, for Your Evidence, Al Ḥujjat, the

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul A`arāf: 71

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūrat Hūd: 93

³ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul A`arāf: 71

son of Al Ḥasan, Your blessings upon him and his forefathers, in this hour and in every hour, a friend, a protector, a leader, a helper, a guide and a guard, until You reside him in Your earth willingly and cause him to live in it for a lengthy period of time)". It is recommended to repeat this supplication frequently on the night of the twenty third of the month of Ramadhān in all circumstances, standing and sitting. Moreover, one should recite it every month for any reason and any time whatsoever. One should recite it after extolling Allāh (s.w.t.), praising Him and invoking blessings upon Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny (a.s.).

There are still other supplications that cannot be quoted here (due to brevity's sake); those desirous should refer to the book *Al Najmul Thāqib* (by Mīrẓā Ḥusain al Nūrī).

Fourth, distributing alms on his (a.t.f.s.)'s behalf for his safety, any time and any amount whatsoever. Moreover arranging every means and causes that relate to his health and well-being, and warding off tribulations from him, such as supplications, invocations, alms and beseeching in absence of a person most honourable and most admirable than the personality of Imām al `Āṣr, may our souls be ransomed upon him. Rather, his (a.t.f.s.) self should be more honourable and lovable in our eyes than our own selves. While its opposition reveals weakness and insufficiency in religion and defect in belief. It is found in a Ḥadīth related through reliable chain of transmitters, that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "A slave is not said to believe until I am more beloved in his eyes than his own self, my relatives more beloved in his eyes than his own relatives and my progeny more beloved in his eyes than his own progeny". Then how can this not be, since indeed existence, life, religion, intellect, health, well-being, and all apparent and obscure blessings of every creation is due to the blessings of his (s.a.w.a.)'s sacred existence and the existence of his vicegerents (a.s.).

Moreover, since Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) is the law of the age, the pivot of time, a landmark for the sun and the moon, a master of this universe, a reason for the calmness of the earth, and the rotation of the orbit, and the organization of worldly affairs, one existing in the hearts of the righteous ones and concealed from the eyes of others. Then certainly it is necessary for all those selfish people, who are only concerned regarding their own selves and struggle for its safety, protection and well-being, that they should ponder well that apart from his sanctified existence no other existence is worthy, and no healthiness and well-being is

worthy. Subsequently, their sincere aim and their first priority should be to devote themselves to all the determined and mentioned means and causes that enter the realm of health and well-being, warding off tribulations and fulfilment of desires, such as supplications, invocations, alms and beseeching (Allāh) for the well-being of his self (a.t.f.s.) and protection of his sanctified existence.

Fifth, another responsibility is performing the Ḥajj Pilgrimage on Imām (a.t.f.s.)'s behalf or appointing someone else to do so, as is prevalent among the Shi`ah since ancient times and his (a.t.f.s.) acknowledgment by them through it.

In this context Quṭubuddīn al Rāwandī quotes in his *Al Kharā'ej wal Jarā'eḥ* that Abā Muḥammad al Da`lajī, who was among our righteous companions and had heard Aḥādīth, possessed two sons, one Abul Ḥasan who was upon the right path and bathed the dead ones. The second one followed the path of the (misguided) youth in performing unlawful. Once Abū Muḥammad was given some amount to perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage on behalf of Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), while this was a practice among the Shi`ah at that time. He in turn gave some amount to this immoral son and himself left for the Pilgrimage. When returning back, he relates that while I was standing at `Arafah, I saw a handsome youth (a.t.f.s.), possessing a tawny complexion, standing beside me. He (a.t.f.s.) was engrossed in supplication, prayer, invocation and good deeds. When it was time to depart, he came to me and said, "O Sheikh! Are you not ashamed?" I asked, "Of what O my Master?" He (a.t.f.s.) replied, "You received amount from a known person to you to perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage, while you gave out to it to an immoral who consumes intoxicants? Very soon this eye of yours shall be blinded". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) pointed towards my eye. Until now I am in dread and fear. It is said that forty days did not complete from this, when an ulcer appeared in his eye and its sight departed.

Sixth, arising in honour when one hears his (a.t.f.s.)'s auspicious name, especially Al Qā'em. While this has been the practice of all groups of Imāmiyyah, may Allāh (s.w.t.) increase their numbers, in all countries, `Arab, Non-`Arab, Turk, Hind, Daylam, etc. This evidences the existence of a reference and basis for this act. And although no reference has been seen for it, however it has been heard from some expert scholars that they have seen a report evidencing it. Moreover, some of the scholars even mention that the proficient honourable scholar, Sayyid `Abdullāh, the grandson of Muḥaddith (Ne`matullāh) al Jazā'erī, was questioned regarding this issue and he replied through some of his books that the name of Al

Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) was once taken in the presence of Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) and he arose in honour and reverence of this name.

We (the Author) say that the above is quoted by our master (Mīrzā Ḥusain al Nūrī) in his *Al Najmul Thāqib*. However, the scholar, honourable traditionist, the expert proficient one and profound noble Master, Sayyid Ḥasan al Mūsawī al Kāzmī (al Ṣadr) writes in his *Takmilah Amalul Āmil*, whose summary is that one of the Imāmiyyah scholars named `Abdul Ridhā bin Muḥammad, from the progeny of Al Mutawakkil, authored a book named *Ta`jīj Nīrānil Aḥzān fi Wafāt Sūltān Khurāsān*, dealing with the Martyrdom of Imām al Ridhā (a.s.). Among the distinctiveness of this book is that once Di`bil al Khuzāī recited verses in the presence of Imām al Ridhā (a.s.) and when he reached these words, "The rising of the Imām (a.t.f.s.) is an inevitable rising, he will rise in the name of Allāh with the blessings", Imām al Ridhā (a.s.) stood upon his feet, bowed down his head towards the earth, then he placed his blessed hand upon his head and said, "O Allāh! Hasten his relief and his uprising, and aide us through his medium, a mighty aide".

Seventh, yet another responsibility for the believers during the days of concealment (Gaybah) is that they should implore Allāh (s.w.t.) and ask Him to safeguard their faith from doubts created by the devils and the heretics among the Muslims, moreover, reciting narrated supplications in this matter. Among them is the supplication (Du`ā') related by Shaikh al Nu`mānī and Shaikh al Kulaynī, through their various chain of transmitters reaching Zurārah (bin A`ayun). He says that I heard Abī `Abdillāh (al Ṣādiq) say, "Verily there is concealment (Gaybah) for the youth (a.t.f.s.) before he arises". I asked, "And why is that, may I be ransom upon you?" He (a.s.) replied, "He shall fear (for his life)", saying this he (a.s.) pointed towards his stomach and his neck. Then he (a.s.) continued, "He (a.t.f.s.) is the waiting one regarding whose birth people shall doubt. Some among them shall claim that his father (a.s.) died without any descendant, while some shall say that he was conceived (by his mother), yet others shall say that he was born two years before the death of his father (a.s.). He (a.t.f.s.) is the waiting one, except that Allāh (s.w.t.) loves to test the Shī`ah (through his concealment), at that time the false ones shall fall in doubt".

Zurārah says that when I heard this, I asked, "May I be ransom upon you! If I witness that age, what deed should I perform?" Imām (a.s.) replied, "O Zurārah! If you witness that age, recite this supplication, Allāhumma `Arrifnī Nafsaka, fa

Innaka in lam Tu`arrifnī Nafsaka, lam A`arif Nabīyyaka; Allāhumma `Arrifnī Rasūlaka, fa Innaka in lam Tu`arrifnī Rasūlaka, lam A`arif Ḥujjataka; Allāhumma `Arrifnī Ḥujjataka, fa Innaka in lam Tu`arrifnī Ḥujjataka, Dhalaltu `an Dīnī (O Allāh! Make me recognize You, for if You do not make me recognize You, I shall not be able to recognize Your Prophet; O Allāh! Make me recognize Your Messenger (s.a.w.a.), for if You do not make me recognize Your Messenger (s.a.w.a.), I shall not be able to recognize Your Evidence (Ḥujjah); O Allāh! Make me recognize Your Evidence (Ḥujjah), for if You do not make me recognize Your Evidence (Ḥujjah), I shall stray off my Religion)“.

Moreover, another lengthy supplication (Du`ā') is quoted, the opening words are similar to above, followed by, "Allāhumma lā Tumitnī Mītan Jāhiliyyah, wa lā Tuzig Qalbī Ba`ada id Hadaytanī (O Allāh! Do not cause me to die the death of ignorance, and do not suffer our hearts to perverse after You have guided us etc.)". We have quoted this supplication in our Annexure (Mulḥiqāt) to Mafātīḥul Jinān.

After quoting the narrated supplications (Ad`īyyah) to be recited after the `Aṣr Prayers on Friday, Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs writes in his book Jamālul Usbū` that another supplication (Du`ā') has been mentioned to be recited for him (a.t.f.s.), whose starting words resemble the previously quoted supplication. He writes, "However, if you have a valid reason of not performing all the supplications to be recited after the `Aṣr Prayers on Friday that we have mentioned, then you should not neglect this supplication for him (a.t.f.s.), since we have personally recognized it to be among the Graces of Allāh (s.w.t.) that He has distinguished us with, then have confidence in it“.

We (the Author) say that similar words of Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs are quoted regarding the Ṣalawāt (invoking blessings) related by Abul Ḥasan (al Ridhā) to (Abul Ḥasan) al Dharrāb al Iṣfahānī. It is evident from this blessed statement that Sayyid (Ibn Ṭāwūs) personally witnessed some wondrous act from Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), while this is not unexpected from him.

There is yet another supplication (Du`ā') related by Shaikh al Ṣadūq from `Abdullāh bin Sinān. He says that Abū `Abdullāh (al Ṣādiq) said, "You shall be struck with doubt. Ultimately you shall be left without any manifest knowledge and without any guiding Imām. None shall be safeguard from it, except the one who recites Du`ā' al Garīq (supplication of the sunken one)". I asked, "What is Du`ā' "

al Garīq?" He (a.s.) replied, "Yā Allāhu, Yā Raḥmānu, Yā Raḥīmu, Yā Muqallibal Qulūbi, Thabbit Qalbī `alā Dīnika (O Allāh, O Beneficent, O Merciful, O Turner of hearts, Make my heart firm upon Your Religion)". I said, "Yā Allāhu, Yā Raḥmānu, Yā Raḥīmu, Yā Muqallibal Qulūbi wal Aḥṣār, Thabbit Qalbī `alā Dīnika (O Allāh, O Beneficent, O Merciful, O Turner of hearts and sight, Make my heart firm upon Your Religion)". Hearing this, he (a.s.) said, "Certainly Allāh (s.w.t.) is the turner of hearts and sight, however, say as I told you, Yā Muqallibal Qulūbi, Thabbit Qalbī `alā Dīnika (O Turner of hearts, Make my heart firm upon Your Religion)".

Eighth, seeking help and imploring Imām (a.t.f.s.) in the wake of severities, frights, tribulations, illnesses, occurrence of suspicions and seditions from different quarters, and requesting him (a.t.f.s.) to solve difficulties and suspicions and warding off afflictions. Since he (a.t.f.s.) is aware of the circumstances of the creation and capable to fulfil their desires universally, due to Divine Might and Divinely granted knowledge. He is not, rather never, heedless in matters of his subjects, while he (a.t.f.s.) says in one of his written pronouncements (Tawqī`) sent for Shaikh al Mufid, "We are completely aware of your circumstances, while nothing is hidden from us (in this matter), moreover our knowledge of your humiliation (at the hands of the oppressors)".

Shaikh al Ṭūsī relates in his Al Gaybah through reliable chain of authorities reaching Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ (al Nawbakhtī), the third emissary (of Imām al Mahdī). He says that once our companions disagreed with regards to absolute free will (Tafwīdh)¹ and other issues. I left to meet Abī Ṭāhir bin Bilāl, during his days of

¹ The Shī`ah scholars reject both, the belief of Al Jabr or absolute determinism and Al Tafwidh or absolute free will, however, they believe in a matter in between as per the hadith related by Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.), "There is no absolute determinism or absolute free will, rather matter in between". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") It means that man has a free will in the matter of his actions although his free will is by Divine Decree. Because Allāh (s.w.t.) is the ultimate and independent cause of all causes it is correct to relate all that exists to Allāh (monotheism in acts). Similarly, because He (s.w.t.) has granted man free will in his actions, it is also correct to relate the actions of man to his own choice. For instance, Allāh (s.w.t.) states in the Qur`ān that He is a Sustainer of all that is in the earth (Sūrat Hūd: 6) and at the same time He (s.w.t.) holds man responsible for the sustenance of his family (Sūratul Baqarah: 233). Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) said: "Whatever you could blame man for it is his action, and whatever you could not blame him for it, is the act of Allāh (s.w.t.). Allāh (s.w.t.) blames man for drinking alcohol, committing adultery etc. Thus, these are the acts of man. However, He

righteousness,¹ and informed him of the differences. He told me to give him some respite and I left him for some days. Then I returned back to him again and he related a Ḥadīth to me through his chain of transmitters, reaching Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "When Allāh (s.w.t.) desires something, He presents it to the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), thereafter Amīr al Mu`minīn (a.s.), then (A`immah) one after the other, until it concludes with Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) and finally it comes down to the world (to bring it into effect). Then if the Angels desire to inform Allāh (s.w.t.) regarding any matter, they present it to Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), then it is presented one after the other (to the A`immah) until it is presented to the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and finally presented to the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then nothing descends from Allāh (s.w.t.), except through them (the Prophet and A`immah [a.s.]) and nothing ascends to Allāh (s.w.t.), except through them (the Prophet and A`immah [a.s.]), while they are not independent of Allāh (s.w.t.) even for a blink of an eye".

Sayyid Ḥusain al Muftī al Karakī, the grandson of Muḥaqqiq al Thānī (Nūruddīn `Alī al Karakī), relates from the book *Al Barāhīn* from `Alī bin Abī Ḥamzah, that Imām al Kāẓim (a.s.) said, "There is no Angel whom Allāh (s.w.t.) descends with a matter, except that he starts it with the Imām (a.s.), thus it is presented to him. And indeed the place of frequenting of Angels from Allāh (s.w.t.) is the Master of

does not blame man why he is sick or why his skin colour is black or fair. Thus, these are the acts of Allāh (s.w.t.)". (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") Imām was even questioned regarding the meaning of 'a matter in between'. His reply was, "The example of it is that if you see a man committing a sin and you advise him to refrain from it, yet he does not pay any heed to your advice. Surely, just because he didn't listen to you, it cannot be said that you forced him to sin." (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") Imām `Alī al Hādī (a.s) quotes from Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s) that, "People with regards to 'destiny' are of three categories: The first is the one who assumes that Allāh (s.w.t.) has given full authority to him. This (person) has weakened Allāh (s.w.t.) in His kingdom, thus, he is perished. The second is the one who assumes that Allāh (s.w.t.) has forced people to sin and He (s.w.t.) has held them responsible over things that they have no power. This (person) is unfair to Him in His judgment, thus he is perished. The third is the one who assumes that Allāh (s.w.t.) has held people responsible for what they do and does not hold ^{them} responsible for what they have no power. Then when he does something good, he praises Allāh (s.w.t.) and when he does something evil, he seeks His forgiveness. This (person) is a mature Muslim". (translator)

¹ Since later he deviated from the truth due to his extremist views. (Sayyid Abul Qāsim al Mūsawī al Khūfī, "Mu`jam Rijālil Ḥadīth") (translator)

this matter (Şāhib al Amr)".

In the report of Abul Wafā' al Shīrāzī it is stated that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) told him, "Whenever the knife reaches you here", saying this, he (s.a.w.a.) pointed towards his blessed neck, and said, "Then say: O Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)! Aid me! O Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)! Help me! Since he is an aide for the ones seeking aid and their refuge and shelter".¹

It is related from Shaikh al Kashshī, while Shaikh (Muḥammad bin Ḥasan) al Şaffār too writes in his Başā'erul Darajāt from Rumaylah, that during the period of Amīrul

¹ We quote the entire Ḥadīth for the benefit of our esteemed readers. Abul Qāsim `Ubaydullāh bin `Abdul Jawād al Dārmī al Kātibī al Nuşaybī says that I found written behind some of the books of Abī `Alī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Junayd, in his own handwriting after his death that Abul Wafā' al Shīrāzī informed me that I was imprisoned in the prison of Abū Ilyās at Kirmān in strained circumstances. I abundantly complained in the Audience of Allāh (s.w.t.) and sought aid from our Masters (a.s.). When I slept, I saw the Messenger of Allāh (s.w.t.) in the dream and he told me, "Do not seek my intercession (Shafā`ah) or that of my two sons (Ḥasan and Ḥusain) in worldly matters. While this Abul Ḥasan (Imām `Alī) shall seek revenge for you from my enemies". I asked him (s.a.w.a.), "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! How can he seek my revenge from my enemies, when a rope was fastened in his neck and he did not attain victory? His right was usurped, then how can he do so (seek revenge for me)?" Hearing this, the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) looked at me surprisingly and said, "That was due to the oath that I had taken from him, while he fulfilled it. And as for Ḥasan (a.s.) hereof and as for Ḥusain (a.s.) hereof. As for `Alī ibnul Ḥusain (Zainul `Ābidīn), (seek his intercession) for relief from the (oppressive) rulers and disgrace for the devils. And as for Muḥammad bin `Alī (al Bāqir) and Ja`far bin Muḥammad (al Şādiq), (seek their intercession) for the hereafter and whatever you desire regarding obedience to Allāh (s.w.t.) and His pleasure. As for Abū Ibrāhīm Mūsā (al Kāzim), request him for healthiness from Allāh (s.w.t.). As for Abul Ḥasan (`Alī) al Ridhā, seek his protection during your journey and in wilderness and in the sea. And as for Abū Ja`far (Muḥammad) al Jawād, seek his intercession for descending of sustenance from Allāh (s.w.t.). And as for `Alī bin Muḥammad (al Hādī), (seek his intercession) for the Supererogatory (Nawāfil) Prayers, goodness towards (believer) brothers and whatever you desire regarding obedience to Allāh (s.w.t.). And as for Al Ḥasan (al `Askarī), (seek his intercession) for the hereafter. And as for Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.), whenever a slaughtering sword reaches you, seek his aid". It is also mentioned that he (s.a.w.a.) said, "Then say: O Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)! Aid me! O Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)! Help me! Since he is an aide for the ones seeking aid and their refuge and shelter". Hearing this, I shouted in my dream, "O Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)! Aid me! O Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)! Help me!" When I awoke, the guards took away my chain (and released me). (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

Mu'minīn (a.s.) I was afflicted with a severe illness. One Friday I felt that it had decreased and told myself, "I shall not face any injury if I took a bath and performed Prayers behind Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.)". I did so and came to the Masjid. When Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) mounted the pulpit (Minbar), it (the illness) returned back to me. When Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) left and entered a palace, I too followed him. Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) turned to me and asked, "O Rumaylah! What happened to you that I find you in a disturbed state?" I related to him (a.s.) what afflicted me and what made me inclined to pray behind him.¹ Hearing this, he (a.s.) said, "O Rumaylah! There is no believer (man and woman) who falls ill, except that we fall ill due to his illness; and he does not fall into grief, except that we aggrieve due to his grief; and he does not beseech (Allāh), except that we say 'Āmīn (so be it)' for him; and he does not remain silent, except that we pray for him". I asked him (a.s.), "O Amīr al Mu'minīn (a.s.)! May I be ransom upon you! Is this for the one who is along with you in this palace, then what for the one who is the other parts of the earth?" He (a.s.) replied, "O Rumaylah! No believer is hidden from us, either in the east of the earth or its west".

Shaikh al Ṣadūq, Shaikh (Muḥammad bin Ḥasan) al Ṣaffār, Shaikh al Mufid, etc. relate through their abundant chain of transmitters from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) and Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "Allāh (s.w.t.) does not leave the earth, except that there is a scholar in it, who knows the surplus and shortage. Then if the believers add anything surplus, it is returned back; and if they decrease anything, it is completed for them. And if it was not so, matters would become obscure for the believers". In another Ḥadīth it is mentioned that, "And if it was not so, truth would not be differentiated from falsehood".

It is related in Tuḥfatul Zā'ir of `Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī and Mafātīḥul Najāh of (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Sabzewārī that if anyone has any need, he should write it down upon a paper and place it into the Sepulchre (Dharīḥ) of any one among the A'imma (a.s.); or seal it, wrap it in clean earth and throw it into a river, a deep well or a stream, so that it reaches the hands of Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) and he may personally take steps to fulfil the needs. The text of the statement is, "Bismillāhil Raḥmānil Raḥīm. Katabtu Yā Mawlāya, Ṣalawātullāhi `Alayka, Musta`inan, wa Shakawtu mā nazala bī Mustajīran Billāhi `Azza wa Jall,

¹ In another report it is mentioned that Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) himself informed him of his affliction and what brought him there. (Ḥasan bin Abil Ḥasan al Daylamī, "Irshādul Qulūb") (translator)

Thumma Bika min Amrin qad Dahamanī wa Ashgala Qalbī wa Aṭāla Fikrī wa Salabanī Ba`adh Lubbī wa Gayyara Khaṭīra Ni`matillāhi `indī, Aslamani `inda Takhayyuli Wurūdihi Khalīlu, wa Tabarra` minnī `inda Tarā`ī Iqbālihi ilayyal Ḥamīmu, wa `Ajazat `an Difā`ihi Ḥīlatī, wa Khānanī fi Taḥammulihi Ṣabrī wa Quwwatī. Fa laja`tu fihi `Ilayka, wa Tawakkaltu fil Mas`alati Lillāhi Jall Thanā`uhū `Alayhi wa `Alayka fi Difā`ihi `annī, `ilman bi Makānika Minallāhi Rabbil `Ālamīn, Walīyyil Tadbīr, wa Malikul Umūr, Wāthiqan Bika fil Musāra`āti fil Shafā`ati Ilayhi Jall Thanā`uhū fi amrī Mutayaqqinan li Ijābatihī Tabāraka wa Ta`ālā Iyyāka bi I`aṭā`ī Su`ālī, wa Anta Yā Mawlāya Jadīrun bi Taḥqīqi Ḥannī, wa Taṣḍīqi Amalī Fika fi Amri Kaḍā wa Kaḍā (in place of Kaḍā wa Kadā desires should be mentioned) fīmā lā Ṭāqata lī bi Ḥamlihi wa lā Ṣabra lī `alayhi, wa in Kuntu Mustahiqqan lahū wa li Adh`āfihi bi Qabīhi Af`ālī, wa Tahriṭī fi Wājibātillati Lillāhi `Azza wa Jall, fa Agithnī Yā Mawlāya Ṣalawātullāhi `Alayka `indal Lahfi, wa Qaddimil Mas`alati Lillāhi `Azza wa Jalla fi amrī Qabla Ḥulūlil Talafi wa Shamātatil A`adā'. Fa Bika Basaṭatil Ni`matu `alayya wa Is'alillaha Jalla Jalāluhū lī Naṣīran `Azīzan fa Faṭḥan Qarīban fihi Bulūgul Āmālī wa Khayrul Mabādī wa Khawātimul A`amālī wal Amnu minal Makhāwifī Kullihā fi kullī Ḥāl, Innahū Jalla Thānā`uhū lima Yashā'u Fa`a`āl, wa Huwa Ḥasbī wa Ni`mal Wakīlu fil Mabda'ī wal Māl".

Then he should come to a stream or river and hand it to the trust of any one of the emissaries (of Imām al Mahdī), whether `Uthmān bin Sa`īd al `Amrī, or his son Muḥammad bin `Uthmān (al `Amrī), or Al Ḥusain bin Rūḥ (al Nawbakhtī) or `Alī bin Muḥammad al Samurī. Then he should call out to anyone among them and say, "Yā Fulān ibna Fulān (mention the name of anyone among them and their father)! Salāmun `Alayka. Ash-hadu Anna Wafātaka fi Sabīlillāhi wa Annaka Ḥayyun `Indallāhi Marzūq. Wa qad Khaṭabtuka fi Ḥayātika allatī Laka `Indallāhi `Azza wa `Jall. Wa Ḥāḍihī Ruq`atī wa Ḥajātī ilā Mawlānā Ṣallallāhu `Alayhi wa Ālihī, fa Sallamhā Ilayhi, fa Antal Thiqtatul Amīn. (O so and so, son of so and so! Peace be upon you! I bear witness that your death was in the path of Allāh and you are alive with your Lord being sustained. I am addressing you in your life which you led with Allāh, that this is my note and my desire to our Master, peace upon him and his progeny. So hand it over to him for indeed you are reliable, trustworthy)". Then he should throw it into a river, well or stream, so that his need is fulfilled.

It can be concluded from the above honourable report that the above mentioned four emissaries (r.a.) were a medium between Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) and the

people during the days of the minor concealment (Gaybatul Şugrā), with regards to presenting ones needs and letters, obtaining replies and informing him (a.t.f.s.). Similarly they are authorized to do so during the days of the major concealment (Gaybatul Kubrā). Then they are along with him (a.t.f.s.) and they consider this honourable position to be a matter of pride for them. Then one should know that the napery of his (a.t.f.s.)'s favours, his generosity, his munificence, his grace and his blessings, is scattered in every part of the earth. The door of his (a.t.f.s.)'s mercy is always open, while the path leading to him is evident for the despairing one, distressed one, misguided one, baffled one, ignorant one and disturbed one, who approaches him with truthfulness, steadfastness, exigency and chastity accompanied with sincerity. Then if he is ignorant, he turns knowledgeable; and if he is misguided, he is guided to the right path; and if he is ill, he is cured; while all this is evident through ancient narratives and incidents.

Therefore summarily, indeed Şāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) is very much present amongst the creation and looks at their deeds and their circumstances; moreover he is capable to ward off tribulations from them. He (a.t.f.s.) is aware of their secrets and mysteries. He (a.t.f.s.) is neither deposed off the Caliphate due to his concealment and his veiling from the people; nor is he abstained from Divine Leadership or not in a position to display Divine capability. If he (a.t.f.s.) wishes, he solves the difficulties of the grievous hearts without any strain or influence. And if he (a.t.f.s.) wishes, he guides a distressed heart towards a book or a scholar that may possess cure for his ailment; moreover he (a.t.f.s.) inspires him with a supplication (Du`ā) or guides him to a medicine in a dream. It is not seen or heard from any distressed one or needy one, who beseeches him (a.t.f.s.), invokes him and complains to him regarding a matter, accompanied with true love and acknowledgement of his Imāmah, that their needs are not fulfilled. However, in case a supplication is not accepted, it is due to the reason that a person assumes that he is distressed, while in reality he is not so; or he believes that he is misguided and perplexed however, he has already been guided to the right path; or an ignorant person, who lacks knowledge in the practical ordinances, has already been advised to refer to a scholar regarding it. As is found in his (a.t.f.s.)'s written pronouncement (Tawqī`) with regards to religious issues put forward by Işhāq bin Ya`qūb, "As for the occurring events, refer to the narrators of our Aḥādīth regarding them. For they are my evidence (Ḥujjah) upon you, while I am the Evidence (Ḥujjah) of Allāh (s.w.t.)".

Ultimately, if it is possible for an ignorant one to reach a scholar, even though by means of migration or journey or referring to his book in religious ordinances, then he shall not be called a distressed one. Similarly a scholar, who is able to solve difficulties and ward off doubts from himself, by referring to a phenomenon, text of a book, customs (of the Prophet and Aimmah) and consensus (Ijmā`), then he shall not be called incapable. Similarly a person who spends in his expenditure and his livelihood, trespassing prescribed Divine limits and stipulated standards of the Sharī`at, while he does not suffice in the standards praised by the Sharī`ah and is not contented by what is in his hands, rather he asks for more than the subsistence of his livelihood, he shall not be termed a distressed one. Similar is the case that a man believes that he is distressed and incapable; however, if he ponders with righteousness, he shall conclude that the fact is opposite to what he presumes.

Another reason (for unfulfillment) of desires is that even though a person may be honest in his claim of exigency, perhaps this may be in his own interest or interest of complete (worldly) orderliness, moreover, no (such certain) promise has been given with regards to fulfilment of prayers of every distressed one. Indeed, none is capable to fulfilling needs except Allāh (s.w.t.) and His Caliphs (a.s.), while this too does not evident (sure) response to every distressed one. While numerous types of distressed ones, incapable ones, devout ones and lovers, during their presence among the pilgrims at Makkah, or Madīnah, or Kūfah, ask for the fulfilment of their needs, yet their desires are not fulfilled and they are not responded. It is not the case that all incapable ones shall be responded and their desires shall be fulfilled at all times and all places. Since this shall lead to disorder in worldly orderliness and deprivation of the grand and abundant reward and recompense reserved for (forbearing) ones in tribulation and grief. If they see the reward reserved for them on the day of Qiyāmah, they would wish that their flesh would be cut asunder by scissors in the world, so as to obtain abundant reward and recompense. However, Allāh (s.w.t.) does not do so with His creation along with His complete competence, His absolute abundance and His all-inclusive knowledge of iotas and components of the creation.

7. Portents of his (a.t.f.s.)'s reappearance

In this section, we content ourselves to quote in brief whatever has been recorded by the eminent master, jurist and lofty traditionist, Sayyid Ismā`il al `Uqaylī al Nūrī, may Allāh enlighten his grave, in his book Kifāyatul Muwaḥḥidīn.

He writes that there are two types of portents, certain ones and uncertain ones. The certain ones, whose occurrence is sure, in a nutshell are as below, while the sequence is based on citation (and not on basis of their occurrence).

First, appearance of Al Dajjāl. This accursed one shall claim Divinity; fill the earth with sedition, while blood shall be shed due to his ill-omened presence. It is evident from reports that one of his eyes shall be effaced, while his left eye that shall be in the middle of his forehead and shall shine similar to a star. His eyes shall seem filled with blood; he shall possess a huge physique and a strange and weird form, while he shall be an expert in sorcery. On his side shall be a black mountain, while people shall presume it to be a mountain of bread. While behind him shall be a white mountain, while people shall presume through his sorcery that it is a mountain of flowing water. He shall call out, "My friend! **I am your Lord, the Most High**".¹ Those who gather around him shall include the devils and their followers among the oppressors, hypocrites, sorcerers, priests, heathens and illegitimate children. The devils shall surround him and be engrossed in numerous types of instruments of fun, play and music, such as lute, oboe and tambourine. They shall be singing and playing with them to engross the hearts of their obedient ones in it. The stupid ones among the men and women shall dance and follow him by hearing to these songs, melodies and voices, similar to the inebriate ones.

It is mentioned in a report by Abī Umāmah that the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) said, "Every believer who looks at Dajjāl should spit upon his face and recite Sūratul Ḥamd so that the sorcery of the accursed one may become invalid".

When the accursed one shall appear, he shall fill the earth with sedition, while battle shall occur between him and the army of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). Then the accursed one shall be killed at the hands of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) or that of `Īsā bin Maryam (a.s.).

Second, sounding of a screech from the heavens. Numerous reports have been related regarding its certainty. It is related from Mufadhhal bin `Umar (al Ju`fī)

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Nāzi`āt: 24

from Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall enter Makkah and appear from beside the House (Ka`bah). Then when the sun shall rise and shine forth, a caller shall call to the creation from the eye of the sun in lucid `Arabic that shall be heard by all those are in the heavens and the earth, "O creatures! This is the Mahdī of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.)". Then the voice shall address him with the name of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), and his agnomen (Kunīyyah) and then relate his genealogy from his father Ḥasan (al `Askari), the eleventh (Imām), until Ḥusain bin `Alī (a.s.). Then it shall proclaim, "Swear allegiance (Bay`ah) to him so that you may be guided, and do not oppose his orders, lest you be misguided".

The first ones to acknowledge him (a.t.f.s.) shall be the Angels, followed by the genie and then the chiefs (among men). They shall say, "We heard and we obey". There shall not remain anyone possessing the faculty of hearing among the creation, except that they shall hear it. The creation among the Bedouins, inhabitants of the towns, the mainland and oceans shall acknowledge it. They shall speak to one another and inquire from one another regarding what they heard with their ears. Then when the sun shall be ready for setting, another caller (Shayṭān) shall screech from its west, "O creatures! Your lord has risen at the Wādī Yābis at the land of Falastīn (Palestine), while he is `Uthmān bin `Anbasah al Amawī (al Sufyānī), from the progeny of Yazīd bin Mu`āwiyah bin Abū Sufyān. Then pledge allegiance (Bay`ah) to him so that you may be guided, and do not oppose his orders, lest you be misguided". Hearing this, the Angels, the genie and the chiefs (among men) shall respond to it, belie it and say, "We heard and we disobey". There shall not remain any doubtful one, sceptic one, hypocrite or disbeliever, except that he shall be misguided by this last screech.

Another call shall be sounded from the heavens before the advent of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) that shall be on the twenty third night of the month of Ramadhān. It shall be heard by all the inhabitants of the earth, from its east to its west. Jibra'īl shall call out in a loud voice, "Truth is along with `Alī (a.s.) and his adherents (Shī`ah)". Then Shayṭān shall call at mid-day that shall be heard by everyone in between the earth and heavens. He shall say, "Truth is along with `Uthmān (bin `Anbasah) and his adherents (Shī`ah)".

Third, appearance of Al Sufyānī from Wādī Yābis, which would be devoid of water or vegetation and located in between Makkah and Shām. He is a man possessing

an ugly countenance, his face shall have signs of small-pox, he shall be broad shouldered, massive bodied and blue eyed. His name shall be `Uthmān bin `Anbasah (bin Abū Sufyān), from the progeny of Yazīd bin Mu`āwiyah. This accursed one shall rule upon five major countries, Dimashq (Damascus), Ḥims (in Syria), Falastīn (Palestine), Al Urdun (Jordan) and Qinnasirīn (in Syria). He shall dispatch huge armies to his surroundings and other regions. A large part of his army shall arrive at Kūfah and Bagdād and kill, plunder and shed excess blood therein. They shall kill the men at Kūfah and Najaful Ashraf. Then he will dispatch another part of his army to Shām and another part to Madīnah. When they reach Madīnah, they shall kill and ruin numerous houses for three days. Then they shall proceed towards Makkah, however, they shall not be able to reach there.

As for the part that reached Shām, the army of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) shall gain victory upon them on the way, kill all of them and take all their provisions as booty (Ganīmah). Sedition by the accursed one shall increase all around the towns, especially for the lovers and adherents (Shī`ah) of `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.). A called shall declare, "One who brings a head of a person among the lovers of `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.), for him are thousand dirham". People shall slander one another for the greed of the world to such an extent that a neighbour shall inform regarding his neighbour, saying, "He is a lover of `Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (a.s.)".

When the army that proceeded towards Makkah shall reach Al Baydā', in between Makkah and Madīnah, Allāh (s.w.t.) shall dispatch an Angel therein, who shall screech, saying, "O earth! Swallow these accursed ones". The earth shall swallow them and whatever they possess with regards to weapons and steeds, while they shall number approximately three hundred thousand men. None shall remain alive among them except two men, who shall be brothers from the clan of Al Juhnīyyah. The Angels shall overturn their heads behind and then tell one of them named Al Bashīr, "Go to Makkah and give glad tidings to Ṣāhib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.) regarding the killing of Sufyānī's army". Then they shall tell the second one named al Naḍīr, "Go to Shām and inform Sufyānī regarding perdition of his army and warn him". They shall proceed, one to Makkah and another to Shām. When Sufyānī shall receive this news, he shall turn to Kūfah and spread abundant ruination therein. When Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) shall reach Kūfah, the accursed one shall flee to Shām from there. Imām (a.t.f.s.) shall dispatch an army in his pursuit, while they shall kill him upon the rock of Baytul Muqaddas. They shall cut off his ill-omened head and his noxious soul shall proceed to the pit of hell.

Fourth, sinking of Sufyānī's army at Al Baydā, while this has already discussed above.

Fifth, murder of Al Nafs al Zakīyyah (the pure spirited one),¹ who shall be from the progeny of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.). He shall be killed in between Al Rukn wal Maqām.²

Sixth, uprising of Sayyid al Ḥasanī. He shall be a handsome youth who shall rise up from the direction of Daylam and Qazwīn (in Īrān). He shall declare in a loud voice, "Hasten to assist Āl Muḥammad (a.s.), for they shall assist you". Apparently this youth shall be from among the progeny of Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.), he shall neither invite towards falsehood, nor call people to himself, rather he shall be from among the sincere adherents (Shī`ah) of the twelve A'immah (a.s.). He shall obey the true Sharī`ah and shall not claim representation (of Imām) or put forth himself

¹ His name is mentioned as Muḥammad bin al Ḥasan from the progeny of Imām al Ḥasan (a.s.) and he shall be among the companions of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). Abū Baṣīr relates from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.) in a lengthy report that Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.) shall tell his companions, "O people! The inhabitants of Makkah do not desire me; however, I shall dispatch to them a one who will remonstrate to them similar to how I would remonstrate to them". Saying this, he (a.t.f.s.) shall call a person among his companions and tell him, "Proceed towards the people of Makkah and address them, saying, O people of Makkah! I am a messenger of so and so (Imām meant himself) towards you. He (a.t.f.s.) tells you that, we are the Ahl al-bait (a.s.) of mercy, and the ore of Messenger ship and Caliphate, we are the progeny of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and offspring of the Prophet hood. Indeed we have been oppressed, wronged and coerced. Our rights have been usurped since the death of our Prophet (s.a.w.a.) until today. We shall assist you, then assist us". When the youth shall address them in similar words, they will pounce upon him and slaughter him in between Al Rukn and Al Maqām, while he shall be Al Nafs al Zakīyyah. (Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī, "Biḥārul Anwār") (translator)

² Al Rukn literally means a corner, while Ka`bah being square shaped possesses four corners, Al Rukn al Sharqī (the eastern corner) or Al Rukn al Aswad (corner where the black stone is affixed); Al Rukn al `Irāqī, the corner that points towards `Irāq, also known as Al Rukn al Shimālī (the northern corner); Al Rukn al Garbī (the western corner) or Al Rukn al Shāmī, the corner that points towards Shām; and Al Rukn al Yamānī, a corner that points towards Yaman (Yemen) also called Al Rukn al Junūbī (the southern corner). This corner also contains an indication where the wall of the Ka`bah split for Fāṭemah bint Asad during the birth of Amīr al Mu'minīn (a.s.). According to Aḥādīth, Al Rukn refers to Rukn al Aswad or Rukn al Yamānī, and Al Maqām refers to Maqām Ibrāhīm (a.s.). While Al Nafs al Zakīyyah shall be martyred in between them. (translator)

as Al Mahdī, rather he shall be a leader obeyed by people. He shall arise when the world shall be replete with disbelief and oppression, while people shall be constrained and harmed by the oppressors and profligates. Some of the believers shall be ready to ward off oppression of the tyrants, while Sayyid al Ḥasanī shall invite to defend the religion of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.), and people shall choose him. A great treasure shall be at his disposal at Ṭalqān. What a treasure! A treasure not containing gold or silver, however, men similar to iron-hearted men, seated upon steeds and carrying bayonets in their hands. When his companions shall increase, he shall rule upon them similar to a just ruler, while he shall subdue the people of oppression and despotism and clean the earth off the pollution of oppressors and infidels.

When he shall enter Kūfah along with his companions, he shall receive news that Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) has appeared and has come to Kūfah from Madīnah. Sayyid al Ḥasanī shall arrive in the presence of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.), along with his companions, and ask from him the evidences of Imāmah and legacies of the Prophets (a.s.). Imām al Ṣādiq (a.s.) says that, "He will not mean anything else (not doubt Imām), except to reveal the grace of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) for his companions so that they may pledge allegiance (Bay`ah) to him". Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) shall reveal the indications of Imāmah and legacies of the Prophets (a.s.) to him, while Sayyid al Ḥasanī and his companions shall pledge allegiance (Bay`ah) to him, except a few, numbering four thousand men belonging to the sect of Al Zaydiyyah. They shall be hanging Qur`ān in their necks and shall attribute sorcery to whatever Imām (a.t.f.s.) would reveal to them with regards to evidences and miracles and shall not be affected by his counsels. They shall be given respite for three days and then Imām (a.t.f.s.) shall order them to be beheaded upon their refusal to accept the truth. Their similarity is that of the Khawārij who were in the army of Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.) (unwillingly and half-heartedly) on the day of Ṣiffin.

Seventh, appearance of a hand from the heavens. According to another report appearance of a face, a chest and a hand near the eye of the sun.

Eighth, solar eclipse in the middle of the month of Ramadhān and lunar eclipse at its conclusion.

Ninth, manifestations of signs and indications in the month of Rajab. Shaikh al Sadūq relates from Imām al Ridhā (a.s.) that he said in a lengthy report, "There is no escape from the deafening maiming commotion in which every companion

and friend shall fallout. This shall take place when the Shi`ah shall be deprived of the third one (a.t.f.s.) among my children. The heavens shall weep upon him (in his bereavement) and the inhabitants of the earth. How many eager believer women and how many believer men are regretful, perplexed and aggrieved in their bereavement of Al Mā'il Ma`īn (the flowing water). It is as if I see them despair (of not finding him), when a voice shall sound, which shall be heard from far, as it is heard from near, that he (a.t.f.s.) is a (means of Divine) Mercy for the believers and a (means of Divine) wrath for the disbelievers". The narrator says that I asked him (a.s.), "What shall be the voice?" He (a.s.) replied, "Three voices shall sound from the heavens in the month of Rajab. The first one: **Beware verily the curse of Allāh is on the oppressors.**¹ The second one: **Draws near the (hour of reckoning which is) ever drawing nigh**² While the third one shall come when a body shall appear near the mass of the sun: This is Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.), who has returned back to destroy the oppressors".

Tenth, differences among the Banī `Abbās and extinction of their rule. It is related in reports that they shall differ and be destroyed from the side of Khurāsān before the advent of Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.).

As for the uncertain portents that may or may not occur are numerous, some of them have already taken place, while some have yet to occur. While we quote them herein below collectively.

First, ruination of the wall of Masjid al Kūfah.

Second, deluge from the banks of the Euphrates (Furāt) and its flooding the alleys of Kūfah.

Third, populousness of Kūfah after its ruination.

Fourth, appearance of water in the river of Najaful Ashraf (after its dryness).

Fifth, flowing of the river from the banks of the Euphrates (Furāt) into Garīyy or Najaful Ashraf.

Sixth, appearance of a tailed star close to the star of Capricorn.

Seventh, occurrence of severe drought before his (a.t.f.s.) advent.

¹ Holy Qur'ān, Sūrat Hūd: 18

² Holy Qur'ān, Sūratul Najm: 57

Eighth, occurrence of severe earthquakes and manifestation of plagues in most of the towns.

Ninth, excessive murders that shall not cease.

Tenth, adornment of Qur'ān, ornamentation of Masājid and lengthening of minarets.

Eleventh, demolition of Masjid Burāthā (at Bagdād).

Twelfth, appearance of a fire in between the heavens and earth from the east that shall continue for three or seven days. People shall be fearful and perplexed due to it.

Thirteenth, appearance of sever redness in the heavens that shall spread and fill it up.

Fourteenth, abundance of murders and bloodshed at Kūfah due to appearance of various standards.

Fifteenth, transformation of a group of people into a form of monkeys and pigs.

Sixteenth, rising of black standards from Khurāsān.

Seventeenth, downpour of heavy and severe rains in the months of Jamādiyul Thānī and Rajab, similarity of which has not been seen before.

Eighteenth, freedom of `Arabs from fetters, meaning they would be able to go wherever they desire and do whatever they desire.

Nineteenth, getting out of dignity by the non-`Arab rulers.

Twentieth, rising of a star from the east that shall shine similar to the moon, while its appearance shall be similar to a new moon. There shall be two bulges on its sides that would seem that they would meet. It shall have a radiant light that shall amaze the eyes upon seeing it.

Twenty First, replete of the world with oppression, disbelief, debauchery and disobedience, perhaps what is meant by these portents is prevalence of disbelief, debauchery, immoralities and oppression in the world and its diffusion in all the towns. People's inclination towards the actions and habits of the disbelievers and polytheists; and imitation of their deeds, dwellings, housing and clothing. Weakness and liberality in matters of Religion and features of the Sharī`ah; and non-adherence to etiquettes and customs (of Religion). All these are prevalent in

our present age and it is observed that people's imitation of the disbelievers has been increasing day after day with regards to all worldly matters, rather their adaption of the principles of disbelief and acting upon it in daily appearances. While it is observed that people believe and rely on their words and their actions, moreover they completely trust them in all matters. While this imitation to the disbelievers is also applied to Islāmic beliefs that are ultimately abandoned. Moreover they even train their children with it, as is prevalent today. They do not establish Islāmic etiquettes and principles in the minds (of their children) from the very beginning, ultimately when they reach adolescence, most of them are soiled with polluted belief and non-devotedness towards Islām, while this condition prevails along with when they grow older. This is also the case of the ones with whom such people associate and those who obey them among their spouses and children. Rather, if one ponders carefully, one can conclude that disbelief has taken control of the entire world, except a minority few among the slaves of Allāh (s.w.t.), while a majority among them too are weak in faith and flawed in religion. This is because most of the inhabited towns have fallen at the disposal of the disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites; while most of their inhabitants are infidels, hypocrites and polytheists, except some few rare.

As for the possessors of faith, i.e. Shī`ah Ithnā `Ashariyyah, their disunity and disbanding has reached such heights that the righteous among them are quite few and rare due to their differences in the principle religious and doctrine beliefs. While even this rare minority among the possessors of faith, whether among the commoners or elites, most of them do not recognize Islām, except in name that is not compliant with its actual name. This is due to their performance of abominable deeds and heinous unlawful acts among various types of disobedience and prohibition, such as consuming unlawful, oppression and infringing one another in religious and worldly matters. Ultimately there is nothing left of Islām and those who truly impersonate it, except a few, and they too are subdued in their affairs and distressed, while their presence has no effect on the promotion of the Sharī`ah. Goodness has turned into evil, while evil has turned into goodness in the eyes of the people. Nothing is left of Islām except in name and custom, as if the path of Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.) and the course of the Chaste A`immah (a.s.) have been abandoned. Very soon, Allāh's refuge, the Sharī`ah shall be winded off completely, while people shall hear and witness increase (in evil) day after day, all that we have quoted above. And whatever the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) had

said, shall be manifest in this age, "Indeed Islām commenced in alienation and shall return back to alienation".

And it is near that the entire world shall be replete with oppression and inequity, rather presently it is a substance of oppression and inequity in reality. And it is up to those few among the believer creatures of Allāh (s.w.t.) to beseech Allāh (s.w.t.) day and night to remain steadfast (upon the truth) and lament and pray that Allāh (s.w.t.) may hasten the Faraj (a.t.f.s.) of Āl Muḥammad (a.s.).

It is found in some sermons of Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) that he said, "When the (church) bell rings, and the attacker shall squeeze, and the buffalo shall speak, then when this happens there are wonders, and what wonders! The fire of Buṣrā (in Syria) shall be kindled, the standards of `Uthmānīyyah shall appear at the black valley (probably in Sudan), and Baṣrah shall fall into tumult, some of them shall subdue others, and every nation shall strive (attack) upon one another". Until he (a.s.) said, "Hercules at Constantine shall comply to Baṭāriqah (one of the commanders of Sufyānī's army), then expect the reappearance of the speaker of Mūsā (a.s.) with the tree at the mount of Ṭūr (Sinai)".

In some of his (a.s.)'s words, he refers to the uprising of Al Qā'em (a.t.f.s.), saying, "When people shall kill the Prayers, waste the trusts, consider lies to be lawful, consume usury, accept bribes, solidify buildings, sell the Religion for the world, employ the foolish ones (for important tasks), seek counsel from women, sever relations, obey (unlawful) passions, and disregard shedding of blood. Forbearance shall be considered a weakness, oppression shall be considered as matter of pride, the princes shall be immoral, viziers shall be tyrants, sergeants shall be treacherous, the reciters (of the Qur'ān) shall be profligates. False witnesses shall appear; immorality, slander, offense and despotism shall be practiced publicly; Qur'ān shall be decorated; Masājid shall be ornamented; minarets shall be lengthened; evil ones shall be honoured; ranks (for Prayers) shall be crowded, while opinions shall be contradicted; oaths shall be broken and the promised time shall near. Women shall accompany their husbands in business transactions in greed of the world. Voices of the immoral ones shall rise and be heard (and obeyed). Leader of the nation shall be among their most despicable ones, a debauchee shall be dealt with dissimulation in fear of his evil, a liar shall be verified, a deceiver shall be considered reliable, singing girls and musical instruments shall be adopted. The latter ones of this nation shall curse their former ones, women shall mount saddles, women shall imitate men and men shall imitate

women. A witness shall bear witness without being asked for, while another shall bear (false) witness for his friend without knowing his truthfulness, understanding of other than the religion shall be acquired, deeds of the world shall be given preference upon the hereafter, skins of a lamb (goodness) shall be worn upon the hearts of wolves (evil), while their hearts shall be more fusty than the carrion and more bitter than aloe. Then when this happens, hasten, hasten, to the best place at that moment, Baytul Muqaddas. An age shall come upon men when everyone among them shall hope that they were among its residents”.

We (the Author) say that it is appropriate that at this place we quote a summary of what our master Thiḡatul Islām (Mīrzā Ḥusain) al Nūrī writes in his Kalimatul Ṭayyibah after furnishing evidence that the Shī`ah Ithnā `Ashariyyah are the sect that shall attain salvation among the seventy three sects. He writes that success of this group in this age is extremely feeble and weak due to various reasons. Most important is abundant frequentation of the disbelievers to the sacred land of Īrān, abundant intermingling and affection of the Muslims towards them and their inundation of towns and villages with instruments, clothing and furnishings that were imported from the people of disbelief and polytheism. Ultimately there is nothing left from the necessities of life and comforts of livelihood, except that they possess name, custom and sign in it. The outcome of this act and effect of this behaviour give rise to numerous disadvantages and harm, one of them is departing of enmity from the hearts towards the disbelievers and apostates, which is among the principles of religion and parts of faith (Tabarra’). Moreover, emergence of their love in opposition to the love of Allāh (a.s.) and His friends, similar to the opposition between fire and water. While this intermingling and sociability with them has become a means of pride and esteem. When Allāh (s.w.t.) says, **“You shall find not a people who believe in Allāh and the hereafter befriending those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger, be they even their own fathers, or their sons, or their own brothers, or their kinsmen”**.¹ This is the case with relatives, then what can be said about strangers when their love shall not have luck in faith. He (s.w.t.) even says, **“O you who believe! Take you not My foe and your foe for friends”**.²

It is related in Man lā Yaḡdhuruḡul Faḡīh (of Shaikh al Ṣadūḡ) from Imām Ja`far

¹ Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Mujādilah: 22

² Holy Qur`ān, Sūratul Mumtaḡinah: 1

al Ṣādiq (a.s.) that, "Allāh (s.w.t.) revealed to one of His Prophet (a.s.), among the Prophets (a.s.), saying, tell the believers: Do not wear the dresses of My enemies, and do not eat the food of My enemies, and do not follow the footsteps of My enemies, lest you become My enemies similar to them".

This Ḥadīth has been quoted in the book Al Ja`farīyyāt (of Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Al Ash`ath al Kūfī) from Amīrul Mu`minīn (a.s.) and these words are added at its conclusion, "And do not make your form similar to the form of My enemies".

It is related in Al Amālī of Shaikh al Ṣadūq that Imām Ja`far al Ṣādiq (a.s.) said, "One who loves a disbeliever, abhors Allāh (s.w.t.); and the one who abhors a disbeliever, loves Allāh (s.w.t.)". Then he (a.s.) said, "A friend of the enemy of Allāh is (in fact) an enemy of Allāh (s.w.t.)".

It is related in the book Ṣifāt al Shī`ah (of Shaikh al Ṣadūq) from Imām `Alī al Ridhā (a.s.), "Indeed the tribulation of the one who (claims to) loves us, the Ahl al-bait (a.s.), is severer upon our Shī`ah than Dajjāl". The narrator asked him, "O son of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Why so?" He (a.s.) replied, "Due to his love towards our enemies and enmity towards our friends. Then when this happens, truth shall intermingle with falsehood and command would become doubtful, ultimately a believer could not be distinguished from the hypocrite".

He (Imām al Ridhā) also said regarding the ones who believed in Divine Jabr, comparison and extremists, as written in Al Khiṣāl (of Shaikh al Mufīd), "The one who loves them, abhors us; and the one who abhors us, loves them. And the one who holds friendship with them, bears enmity with us; and one who bears enmity with them, holds friendship with us. The one who establishes relation with them, severs with us; and the one who severs relation with them, establishes with us. The one who is harsh towards them, is good towards us; while the one who is good towards them, is harsh towards us. The one who honours them, insults us; and the one who insults them, honours us. The one who accepts them, refuses us; and the one who refuses them, accepts us. The one who does goodness towards them, harms us; and the one who harms them, does goodness towards us. The one who verifies them, belies us; and the one who belies them, verifies us. The one who bestows upon them, refuses to us; and the one who refuses to them, bestows upon us. O son of Khālid! The one who is among our Shī`ah, does not take from them a friend or a helper".

The second disadvantage in intermingling with the disbelievers is that it gives rise to abhorrence towards religion and behaviour of Muslims, enmity towards the ones adhering to our religion, the scholars, righteous ones, those abiding by the etiquettes of the Divine Sharī`ah and those who disapprove imitation to this dissolute group, through their hearts and tongues. Since it is man's innate nature that he dislikes the one who opposes his path, his method and his conduct, that he has chosen to acquire pleasure and benefit through it. Especially if the opponent is also a prohibitor (of his path, method and conduct) and is deterrent as much as possible in this path. Moreover this repulsion and enmity has reached such heights, that the possessors of knowledge and religion are dealt with similar to dealing with a Jew. Ultimately hearts feel disgusted and faces are frowned upon looking at them and if possible they would be harmed. Rather disgust and deterrence is revealed to every wearer of the turban (`Amamah), since his existence vexes their livelihood, their fun and frolic and their jubilation. Then they (the knowledgeable and religious ones) are scorned, mocked, criticized and slandered more than anyone else. Rather they mimic the gestures and calmness of the scholarly people during their imparting knowledge and their worship, and make it one of the reasons for invoking laughter in their gatherings of fun and frolic, and embellishing their assemblies of jubilation through it. Sometimes they even compose verses and poetry to mock them, similar to the disbelievers, who mocked upon seeing the believers, with actions such as mockery; ridicule with signals, with tongues, eyes and eyebrows, humiliation and disgrace. While Allāh (s.w.t.) has related all these things regarding them and promised them punishment in the world and the hereafter for it. Moreover, this enmity and repulsion severely contradicts the obligation of their honour and respect. Love for the sake of Allāh (s.w.t.) and enmity for the sake of Allāh (s.w.t.) is related in numerous reports as a means of centralization of faith. Thus it is related that, "The strongest rope of faith is love for the sake of Allāh (s.w.t.) and enmity for the sake of Allāh (s.w.t.), and that you befriend the friends of Allāh (s.w.t.) and disassociate your selves from the enemies of Allāh (s.w.t.)".¹

It is related in Nahjul Balāghah that Amīrul Mu'minīn (a.s.) said, "If we love what Allāh and (s.w.t.) His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) hate, and deem as great what Allāh (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) hold as insignificant, that by itself will be

¹ As related by the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). (translator)

enough to isolate us from Allāh (s.w.t.) and a transgression against His Commands”.

Anyways, the condition of the nation of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) of the last days has reached such a point that maximum among their masses are ignorant with regards to necessities in religious issues. While due to their frequenting gatherings of heretics, Christians and atheists, their affability towards them and listening to their words of disbelief and immorality, they have fallen prey to doubts and abandoned the religion in multitude, while they do not know this reality, rather they know, however they do not take heed. The leaders and notables (among them) take pride in presence of the masses in committing major sins, such as eating during the month of Ramadhān (at the hour of fasting). They ridicule and mock the religious people and attribute foolishness and profligacy to them, while including them among those who tread the path of ignorant and torpid ones and calling them out of date. Among their behaviour is repeatedly objecting to Allāh (s.w.t.) and continuous praising and extolling the European wise ones, their skills, abundance of their intelligence, their knowledge and embellishment of their gatherings. Moreover, they presume their skills and their deeds, which is a complement to natural and mathematical sciences, to be beyond human strength, while comparing them to the miracles of Prophets (a.s.) and the Vicegerents (a.s.) and their extraordinary feats.

Apart from this, they flee the gatherings of scholars and grumble upon statements relating to religion and mention of Qiyāmah. And even if they are present with uncertainty of mind in such gatherings, they feel sleepy, while their minds are engrossed in thinking about something else. They presume that assisting the destitute and religious persons is vain and useless. They admire themselves and consider their reverence to be obligatory upon others, while showing off their riches and unclean wealth, acquired through unlawful means and dipped in the blood of orphans and widows, while spending it upon unlawful things and immense disobedience. Even then, they accuse pious scholars of misappropriating people’s wealth and say that they are followers of every wobbler rich man and are disgraceful beggars. They utilize utensils made of gold and silver; wear silken and golden clothes; shave their beards while resembling the appearance of Banī Marwān and Banī Umayyah. Their beloved statement and their favourable language are French and English; while books of misguidance and disbelief have become their friends and boon companions in place of the Book of Allāh (s.w.t.)

and the compilations of A'immah (a.s.). While on the contrary, we see Jews residing in Christian neighbourhood for years, yet they do not abandon their customs, etiquettes and rituals. However, we find Muslims absolutely forsaking their religion when they travel to non-Muslim countries within a few months. No disobedience remains, except that its abhorrence has departed from the eyes of people; rather it is widespread amongst them. And no obedience or worship remains, except that corruption and defect have entered it in different ways, while nothing is left from them except in name and ritual. Moreover, righteous people are incapable of inviting (others) towards goodness and forbidding (others) from evil; while they are despaired of its effectiveness (upon others). They weep in loneliness upon the weakness of faith, alienation of Islām and circulation of unlawful.

And praise be to Allāh (s.w.t.) that whatever the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) predicted regarding occurrences of these corruptions in his nation (Ummah) has come true.

The honourable Sheikh `Alī bin Ibrāhīm al Qummī relates in his Al Tafsīr from (`Abdullāh) Ibn `Abbās that we performed the farewell Pilgrimage (Ḥajj) along with the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.). He (s.a.w.a.) took hold of the loop of the door of the Ka`bah, then turned his face towards us and said, "Shouldn't I inform you regarding the portents of Qiyāmah?" The nearest to him (s.a.w.a.) that day was Salmān, hearing this, he said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)". He (s.a.w.a.) said, "Indeed among the portents of Qiyāmah are forfeiture of Prayers, obedience to (unlawful) passions, inclination towards misguidances, respect of wealthy people (for the sake of their wealth) and sale of religion for the sake of the world. At that moment, the heart of a believer shall melt in its cavern as salt melts in water, when he sees (prevalence of) unlawful while he would not be able to change it". Salmān asked, "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?" He (s.a.w.a.) replied, "Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When the princes shall be immoral, viziers shall be tyrants, sergeants shall be treacherous and trustees shall be traitors".

Salmān asked, "O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?" He (s.a.w.a.) replied, "Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! Verily when forbidden shall be considered goodness and goodness shall be considered forbidden; a traitor shall be trusted, a trustworthy shall be considered a traitor; a

liar shall be believed and a truthful one shall be belied”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When sovereignty shall be for the women, counsels shall be sought from maids, children shall sit upon the pulpits, lies shall reach extremity, Zakāh shall be considered a loss, loot shall be considered booty (of war), man shall persecute his parents and do goodness to his friend and a tailed star shall appear”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! At that time women shall accompany their husbands in business transactions, rain shall fall in mid-summer, distinguished people shall always be enraged and an insolvent person shall be disgraced. At that time the markets shall be close to one another, one shall say (falsely), ‘I have not sold anything’, while another shall say, ‘I have not made any profit’. Then you shall not see except damnation from Allāh (s.w.t.)”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! At that time a group shall rule upon them, such that if they speak (for their rights), they shall kill them; and if they remain silent, they shall consider usurping their rights to be lawful. They shall take possession of their wealth, trample their sanctity, shed their blood and fill their hearts with terror. You shall not find them except fearful, horrified, shocked and awful”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! At that time something (culture and tradition) shall be brought for them from the east and something from the west and my nation (Ummah) shall be dyed in it. Then woe be upon the weak ones among my nation (Ummah) from them and woe of Allāh (s.w.t.) for them. They shall neither have mercy upon the young ones, nor respect the elders, and shall not forbear upon the sinners. Their bodies are bodies of human; however, their hearts are hearts of Shayṭān”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! At that time men shall gain (sexual) satisfaction from men, and women from women. Vigilant care shall be taken of young boys (in obsession for them) similar to vigilant

care of a girl in her family-house. Men shall imitate women and women shall imitate men, while women shall mount saddles. Curse of Allāh (s.w.t.) be upon such women among my nation (Ummah)”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! At that time Masājid shall be ornamented similar to synagogues and churches, Qur’ān shall be decorated, minarets shall be lengthened, ranks (for Prayers) shall be crowded accompanied with loathsome hearts (towards on another) and conflicting tongues (statements and opinions)”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When the males among my nation (Ummah) shall adorn themselves with gold, they shall wear dresses of silk and brocade and shall use leopard-skins as inner garments”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When usury shall manifest, dealings in transactions with sampling and bribery shall increase, religion shall be disgraced and the world shall be raised (higher than religion)”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When divorce shall increase, while Divine limitations shall not be established, **Never shall they harm Allāh one whit**”.¹

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When singing girls and musical instruments shall appear, while they shall be ruled upon by the most evil among my nation (Ummah)”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When the wealthy among my nation (Ummah) shall perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage for excursion, the median ones among them shall perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage for business, while the poor ones among them shall perform the Ḥajj Pilgrimage for

¹ Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat Āl `Imrān: 176

pretension and repute. At that time a group of people shall study the Qur'ān for the sake of other than Allāh (s.w.t.) and recite it accompanied with flute. A group shall appear who shall gain understanding of religion for the sake of other than Allāh (s.w.t.), illegitimate children shall increase, Qur'ān shall be recited as songs and people shall flock towards the world”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! When sanctities shall be violated, sins shall be acquired, the most evil ones shall gain control upon the most righteous ones, lies shall be spoken openly, obstinacy shall appear, indigence shall be concealed, people shall flaunt their dresses, rain shall fall without its season, (games of) cards and musicians shall be hailed, enjoining (others to) good (Amr bil Ma`rūf) and forbidding (others from) evil (Nahī `anil Munkar) shall be denied. This shall happen to such an extent in that age, that a believer shall be considered more disgraceful than a maid. Their reciters (of Qur'ān) and worshippers shall rebuke one another, while they are addressed as filthy and unclean ones in the Kingdom of the Heavens”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān! At that time the wealthy shall not bestow upon the destitute. A destitute shall ask from Friday to Friday (a week), while none shall enter their hands into their pockets (to give them)”.

Salmān asked, “O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.)! Will it certainly occur?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “Yes, by Him (s.w.t.) in Whose Hands is my life O Salmān”!¹

Summarily, zeal for religion and spirit for the faith have ceased from the hearts to

¹ The last part of the Ḥadīth says, “O Salmān! At that time Al Ruwaybidhah (a foolish person who is unable to take responsibility or is incapable to resolve important and great matters) shall speak”. I asked, “And what is Al Ruwaybidhah, O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.), may my parents be ransom upon you?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied, “The one who did not speak, shall speak in general matters. Then they shall not abide except for a short period of time until the earth shall give a cry, while every community shall presume that it (the earth) cried in their surroundings. Then they shall reside until Allāh (s.w.t.) desires and then they shall tremble in their places of residence and the earth shall vomit for them parts of its liver, i.e. silver and gold”. He (s.a.w.a.) pointed towards the pillars and said, “Similar to this (in size). On that day neither gold nor silver shall benefit and this is meaning of His (s.w.t.)’s words, **Indeed have (already) come the signs of it** (Sūrat Muḥammad [s.a.w.s.]: 18)”. (translator)

such an extent, that even if religion is completely injured by an infidel, a Muslim is not disturbed; similar to the disturbance he faces at the hands of another Muslim with regards to partial harm upon his wealth.¹ He is not interested even if people abandon religion, ranks after ranks.



¹ It means that even if Religion is completely harmed at the hands of a disbeliever, a Muslim shall not be interested or concerned, however, if a little harm is inflicted upon his wealth by another Muslim, he shall be enraged and distressed. This due to absence of zeal and ardent towards ones' Religion. (translator)

8. The four emissaries (Nuwwāb al Arba`ah) of Imām (a.t.f.s.)

We suffice ourselves to quote herein whatever is quoted in the book Kifāyatul Muwaḥḥidīn (of Sayyid Ismā`il al `Uqaylī al Nūrī).

First, `Uthmān bin Sa`īd al `Amrī. Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) trusted him abundantly, while he was also reliable in the eyes of Imām `Alī al Naqī (a.s.) and Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.) and was their agent during their lifetime. He belonged to the clan of Banī Asad and was attributed to his grandfather Ja`far al `Amrī. He was referred to as Al Sammān (a trader in ghee), since he adopted this as a profession in dissimulation (Taḳīyyah) from the enemies of Allāh (s.w.t.) and to conceal his position of his embassy of Imām (a.t.f.s.). The Shī`ah would hand him over the wealth due to be given to Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.), while he would place it among his own wealth and bring it for him (a.s.).

It is related in a report by Aḥmad bin Ishāq al Qummī, who was himself among the most honourable Shī`ah scholars, that one day I entered the presence of Abil Ḥasan `Alī bin Muḥammad al Hādī (a.s.) and told him, "O my Master! Sometimes I am present and sometimes on a journey. While whenever I am present, it is not possible for me to reach your presence every time. Then tell me whose words we should accept and whose command we should follow?" Hearing this, he (a.s.) replied, "This is Abu `Amrū, a reliable trustworthy one. He does not say anything to you, except what I tell him; and he does not reach anything (orders) to you, except what I order him". Then when Abul Ḥasan (al Hādī) passed away, I came to his son Abū Muḥammad al Ḥasan al Askarī (a.s.) one day and asked him similar to what I had asked his father (a.s.). He (a.s.) replied to me, saying, "This is Abu `Amrū, a reliable trustworthy one. A trustworthy one of the past ones (a.s.) and my trustworthy one in life and death. He does not say anything to you, except what I tell him; and does not reach anything (orders) to you, except what I order him".

`Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī relates in his Biḥārul Anwār from a group of trustworthy masters of Āḥādīth that a group of inhabitants of Yaman (Yemen) came to the presence of Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.) carrying religious dues along with them. Imām (a.s.) turned to `Uthmān bin Sa`īd and said, "Execute (this task) O `Uthmān, since you are an agent and an honest trustworthy one upon the wealth of Allāh (s.w.t.). Then receive the wealth from these people from Yaman

(Yemen)". Seeing this, the inhabitants of Yaman (Yemen) said, "O our Master! By Allāh (s.w.t.)! Indeed `Uthmān is among your righteous Shī`ah. You have increased our knowledge with regards to his status in your servitude. He is your agent and your trustworthy one upon the wealth of Allāh (s.w.t.)". Imām (a.s.) replied, "Yes. Then bear witness that `Uthmān bin Sa`īd al `Amrī is my agent, while his son Muḥammad is the agent of my son, your Mahdī (a.t.f.s.)".

He (`Allāmah al Majlisī) also relates in his Biḥārul Anwār through his chain of transmitters that when Ḥasan bin `Alī (al `Askarī) passed away, `Uthmān bin Sa`īd was present in his bathing and apparently took charge of all his final rites, such as shrouding, embalment and his burial; while this cannot be denied or discharged except by discharging facts in its phenomena. The written pronouncements (Tawqī) of Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) emerged through the medium of `Uthmān bin Sa`īd and his son Abū Ja`far Muḥammad bin `Uthmān with regards to commandments, forbidden and replies put forth by the Shī`ah, if they required to ask something from him (a.t.f.s.). It (Tawqī) would be in the same handwriting that emerged during the lifetime of Imām Ḥasan (al `Askarī). While this case was similar with the remaining emissaries and agents.

Second, Muḥammad bin `Uthmān bin Sa`īd al `Amrī. Imām Ḥasan al `Askarī (a.s.) considered him and his father to be trustworthy ones and even informed his Shī`ah that he was the agent of his son Al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.). When his father `Uthmān bin Sa`īd passed away, a written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged from Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) condoling him upon the death of his father and deputing him as a representative after him and an appointed one by him (a.t.f.s.). As per the report of Shaikh al Ṣadūq and others, the text of the Tawqī` is mentioned as, "**Verily we are Allāh's and verily unto Him shall be our return.** We submit to His command and are contented with His decree and His deed. You father lived with auspiciousness and died praiseworthy. May Allāh (s.w.t.) have Mercy upon him and unite him with his friends and masters (a.s.). He was constantly struggling in their affairs and striving in what would bring him closer to Allāh (s.w.t.) and them (a.s.). May Allāh (s.w.t.) brighten his face and forgive his errors. May Allāh increase recompense for you and offer you a best consolation (due to his bereavement). You are afflicted, while we too are afflicted; his bereavement has alienated you, while we too are alienated. May Allāh (s.w.t.) please him in his place of return. Among his complete felicities is that Allāh (s.w.t.) granted him a son similar to you, who would be his representative after him, occupy his seat upon his order

and invoke Mercy for him. And I say that all Praise be to Allāh (s.w.t.) that the hearts (of the Shi`ah) are pleased by your status and what Allāh (s.w.t.) has apportioned in you and near you. May Allāh (s.w.t.) aid you, strengthen you, support you and grant you success. Allāh (s.w.t.) was a Friend, a Protector, a Patron, Sufficient and a Supporter for you". While this blessed pronouncement is a good evidence for their eminence and their lofty status.

`Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī relates in his Biḥārul Anwār from Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Ṭūsī, who relates from the group of companions, that a written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged from Imām al Mahdī (a.t.f.s.) for Muḥammad bin `Uthmān bin Sa`īd al `Amrī after the death of his father `Uthmān bin Sa`īd, "And a son, may Allāh (s.w.t.) shelter him, was always our trustworthy one during the lifetime of his father, may Allāh (s.w.t.) be pleased with him and make him pleased with Him and brighten his face. Whatever he carries forth is from us and whatever he prohibits is from us, while the son orders whatever are our orders and should be acted upon (by our Shi`ah). May Allāh (s.w.t.) befriend him".

In another report of Shaikh al Kulaynī, a written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged in the handwriting of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.), "As for Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī and previously his father, he is my trustworthy one, while his writing is my writing".

Numerous miracles and wondrous acts of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) manifested through his medium for the Shi`ah. He was a refuge and shelter for the Shi`ah during the days of the concealment (Gaybah) and was the vicegerent of Al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.). His daughter Umm Kulthūm relates that, "Abī Ja`far Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī possessed a book in Jurisprudence (Fiqh) that he authored after studying under Abī Muḥammad al Ḥasan (al `Askarī) and Ṣāḥib al Zamān (a.t.f.s.)". Then she continued, "It (the book) passed on to Abil Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ (al Nawbakhtī)".

Shaikh al Ṣadūq relates through his chain of transmitters from Muḥammad bin `Uthmān bin Sa`īd, that, "By Allāh (s.w.t.)! Indeed Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.) is present every year during the season (of Ḥajj). He (a.t.f.s.) looks at the people and recognizes them; while they too see him (a.t.f.s.), however they do not recognize him".

It is related in another report that once he was questioned, "Did you see Ṣāḥib al Amr (a.t.f.s.)?" He replied, "Yes. My last pledge with him (a.t.f.s.) was near the

Sanctified House of Allāh (Ka`bah), while he was saying, 'O Allāh (s.w.t.)! Accomplish for me what You have promised me'. I saw him (a.t.f.s.) clutching the mantle of the Ka`bah and saying, 'O Allāh (s.w.t.)! Seek my revenge from my enemies'".

Third, Ḥusain bin Rūḥ al Nawbakhtī. During the days of embassy of Muḥammad bin `Uthmān, he was in charge of some affairs on his behalf. Muḥammad bin `Uthmān relied upon some of his trustworthy brother believers, while Ḥusain bin Rūḥ was among them. People saw that Muḥammad bin `Uthmān relied more upon others than Ḥusain and Rūḥ, thus they believed the matter of agency and embassy would pass on to Ja`far bin Aḥmad (bin Mattīl) for his abundant distinction near Muḥammad bin `Uthmān. Moreover, every meal for Muḥammad bin `Uthmān would come from the house of Ja`far bin Aḥmad.

`Allāmah (Muḥammad Bāqir) al Majlisī relates in his Biḥārul Anwār from Al Gaybah of Shaikh al Ṭūsī, who relates from Ja`far bin Aḥmad that when the last moments of Abū Ja`far Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī arrived, I was seated near his head, questioning him and speaking to him, while Abul Qāsim bin Rūḥ was seated near his feet. Then he turned to me and said, "I have been ordered to appoint Abul Qāsim bin Rūḥ as my vicegerent". Hearing this, I arose from near his head, took the hand of Abul Qāsim, and sat him in my place, while I sat near his feet".

It is related in a reliable report that Abū Ja`far Muḥammad bin `Uthmān al `Amrī gathered the Shī`ah notables and their leaders, then he addressed them, saying, "If death comes to me, then the matter rests with Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ al Nawbakhtī. I have been commanded to appoint him in my place after me. Then refer to him and rely upon him in your affairs".

It is also related in another reliable report, as also Biḥārul Anwār (of Muḥammad Bāqir al Majlisī), that a group of eminent Shī`ah personalities entered the presence of Muḥammad bin `Uthmān and said, "If death comes upon you, who shall come in your place?" He replied, "This is Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ bin Abī Baḥr al Nawbakhtī, my successor and an emissary between you and Šāhib al Amr (a.t.f.s.), his agent and a reliable trusty. Then refer to him in your affairs and rely upon him in your vital tasks. I have been advised for it and have conveyed it".

A written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged from Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) for Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ al Nawbakhtī that is quoted in Biḥārul Anwār (of Muḥammad

Bāqir al Majlisī) from a group of righteous and trustworthy ones, "We recognize him, may Allāh (s.w.t.) make him recognize all goodness and His pleasure and delight him with success. His letter has reached us and he is our trustworthy in whatever he occupies, since he occupies such a position and status near us that would delight him. May Allāh (s.w.t.) increase His favours upon him, He is a Guardian, All Powerful. And all Praise be to Allāh (s.w.t.), there is no associate for Him; and Allāh's blessings upon His Messenger Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny (a.s.), and greeting with a salutation worthy of the respect (due to him)".

It is written in his biography that he lived in severe dissimulation (Taḳīyyah) at Bagdād. While he treated the opponents from the four schools of thought with goodness to such an extent, that each one of them attributed him to them and prided that he was one of them.

Fourth, Abul Ḥasan `Alī bin Muḥammad al Samurī. When the death of Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ neared, he declared Abul Ḥasan as his successor upon the orders of Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.). He (a.t.f.s.) would dispatch wondrous acts, miracles and replies to the queries of the Shī`ah through his medium, while they would hand over their religious dues to him as per his command. When his end drew near, the Shī`ah gathered around him and told him to appoint someone who would succeed him in the embassy. He replied, "There is an affair for Allāh (s.w.t.) that He shall deliver". He meant to say that the major concealment (Gaybah al Kubrā) shall certainly occur.

As per the report of Shaikh al Ṣadūq, when the end of Abul Ḥasan al Samurī drew near, the Shī`ah gathered around him and asked, "Who shall be the agent (of Imām) after you and who shall succeed you?" He replied, "I have not been commanded to appoint anyone after me in this matter".

Shaikh al Ṭūsī relates in his Al Gaybah and also Shaikh al Ṣadūq bin his Kamāluddīn, that when the death of Shaikh Abul Ḥasan `Alī bin Muḥammad al Samurī drew near, a written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged (from Imām al Mahdī) in these words, "In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. O `Alī bin Muḥammad al Samurī! May Allāh (s.w.t.) increase the recompense of your (believer) brothers in you (your death) for you shall pass away in six days. Then complete your affairs and do not appoint anyone to succeed you after your death, for the complete concealment has occurred. There is no reappearance except after permission of Allāh (s.w.t.), and that too after a lengthy period of time, harshness

of hearts and replete of the earth with inequity. A group shall emerge among my Shi`ah who shall claim to witness me (while recognizing me). Beware! The one who claims to witness me before the uprising of Al Sufyānī and the screech (from the heavens), is a liar, fabricator. **And there is no might and no power except with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great”.**

The reporter says that we copied down the above written pronouncement (Tawqī) and left his (‘Alī bin Muḥammad al Samurī)’s presence. On the sixth day, we returned back to him, we saw him in his last moments. He was questioned, “Who is your successor after you?” He replied, “There is an affair for Allāh (s.w.t.) that He shall deliver”. Saying this, he passed away, while these were the last words heard from him. May Allāh (s.w.t.) be pleased with him and make him pleased with Him.

It is related in the book Kamāluddīn (of Shaikh al Ṣadūq) that Abul Ḥasan al Samurī passed away in the year three hundred and twenty nine Hijrah, accordingly, the period of the minor concealment (Gaybah al Ṣugrā) stretched to around seventy four years, wherein agents, emissaries and representatives were officiated by him (a.t.f.s.). Around forty eight years passed during the embassy of ‘Uthmān bin Sa`īd al ‘Amrī and his son Muḥammad bin ‘Uthmān; and around twenty six years during the embassy of Shaikh Abul Qāsim Ḥusain bin Rūḥ and Shaikh Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī bin Muḥammad al Samurī. Thereafter the embassy terminated and the major concealment (Gaybah al Kubrā) commenced. Then the one who claims special embassy and representation (for Imām) or claims to witness Imām (a.t.f.s.) along with the above claim, lies and fabricates upon him (a.t.f.s.).

The sources of reference with regards to religion and the Shari`ah are the scholars, jurists and theologians through the command of Imām (a.t.f.s.). Their representation is evidenced upon the basis of generality as found in the honourable written pronouncement (Tawqī) emerged for Ishāq bin Ya`qūb, among the eminent and righteous Shi`ah. He sent some religious issues to Imām al Ḥujjah (a.t.f.s.) through the medium of Muḥammad bin ‘Uthmān bin Sa`īd al ‘Amrī and obtained reply from him (a.t.f.s.). Among his words are, “And as for the occurrences that take place, refer regarding them to the narrators of our Aḥādīth. For they are my evidence (Ḥujjah) upon you, while I am the evidence of Allāh (Ḥujjatullāh) upon them”.

In another report from Imām Muḥammad al Bāqir (a.s.), he says, “Look among

you for the one who relates our Aḥādīth, considers our lawful and unlawful and recognizes our ordinances. Then be contented to make him a judge, for indeed I have appointed him a judge upon you. Then if he issues judgement based upon our judgement and it is not accepted from him, then it is as if the judgement of Allāh (s.w.t.) has been disparaged and refutation upon us. Then one who refutes us actually refutes Allāh (s.w.t.) and he is on the verge of associating someone (shirk) with Allāh (s.w.t.)”.

In another narration¹ it is mentioned that, “Executing affairs (in religion) is in the hands of scholars of Allāh (s.w.t.) who are trustees upon His lawful and unlawful”.

One can conclude from the above commandments of the two Imāms (a.s.) that persons under obligation should refer to the scholars and the guardians of the knowledge, reports and relics of the Chaste A’immah (a.s.). They are cognizant of the ordinances that are issued forth by them (a.s.) through their own opinion, deduction, intelligence and contemplation. It is upon the one under obligation to accept the issues relating to lawful and unlawful through them and refer to them in order to solve their mutual conflicts. Whatever they say forms an evidence upon them, since they combine in themselves the stipulations of issuing verdicts through the power of deduction, justice, maturity, intellect and all stipulations of discretion, moreover, they possess general representation (of Imām). Therefore it is necessary for people under obligation to refer to them in the absence of appointment of a special representation during the period of the major concealment (Gaybah al Kubrā), rather a straightforward order in termination of special representation and embassy.

Here ends whatever was destined to be quoted in this honourable book, on the night of the twenty third of the auspicious month of Ramadhān, in the year one thousand three hundred and fifty Hijrah, beside the Mausoleum of Radhawīyyah, a thousand salutations and benedictions upon its dweller (Imām al Ridhā). This at the hands of the humble-most and guilty one, `Abbās bin Muḥammad Ridhā al Qummī. An assured hope and truthful desire remains that the believer brothers and the Shī`ah of Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.) would not forget this guilty sinner in seeking good desires and requesting forgiveness. And all Praise is due to Allāh (s.w.t.) in the beginning and the end, and the Benedictions of Allāh (s.w.t.) upon Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his pure and chaste progeny (a.s.).

¹ From Amīrul Mu’minīn (a.s.) (translator)

All Praise be to Allāh (s.w.t.) that the English translation and Annotations of this felicitous book Muntahal Āmāl fī Tawārīkh al Nabī (s.a.w.a.) wal Āl (a.s.) by the seal of traditionists Shaikh `Abbās al Qummī in two volumes, completes on Thursday, the auspicious day of the ninth of Rabī`ul Ulā, 1441 Hijrah, corresponding to seventh November, 2019 AD, at the hands of the humble-most adherer of the threshold of Muḥammad (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahlalbait (a.s.), A`ejāz `Alī Turāb Ḥusain (Al Ḥusainī).