بِسمِ اللهِ الرحمن الرحِيمِ و صلى الله عليك يا ولي العصر (عج) ادركنا

A Tear for the Beloved (a.t.f.s.)

PREFACE

I. General view on supplications

Supplications and ziyaaraat (salutations) are special modes of Islamic cognition. Nay, these are profound lessons in monotheism, creed, and ethics and from their characteristics are the explanation of Islamic laws and injunctions. These are not, as is generally understood, rituals or a formalities.

There are numerous incidental benefits related to invocations, some of which are as follows:

A) **Relation:** By nature, man feels lonely and desolate in this world due to its difficulties, problems and sorrows and hence, is in continuous and eternal need of his Creator. Thus, it is essential that this relation with his Creator should be true, continuous and eternal, referring to Him in a state of humility, humbleness and feeling utterly lowly while begging.

B) **Aim of supplication:** In a state of desperation, difficulty, poverty and their like, man pleads only with his Creator through invocation and supplication. This is due to his short sight, limited thoughts and ignorance of what awaits him in

the hereafter. And that he is negligent of what Allah, the Almighty, intends of him and that which He has informed His Prophet (s.a.) in the explicit verse of His book

وما خلقْت الْجِن والْإِنس إِلا لِيعبدون

"And I have not created the Jinn and the humans except that they worship Me."[1]

And like Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) said,

الدعآءُ مخ الْعِبادةِ

"Invocation (dua) is the essence of worship."[2]

Then, the creature, due to his excessive involvement in the transient world, forgets the quote of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) who said,

الدنيا مزرعةُ الآخِرة

"The world is the cultivating field of the hereafter."

Whatever one gains in this world, its fruits will be seen only in the hereafter. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) says,

1 Surah Zaariyaat (51) : Verse 56

2 Majma al-Bahrain, vol. 2, pg. 442

اَلا وِان الدنيا قَد ولت حذآءَ قَلم يبق مِنها اِلا صبابةٌ كَصبابةِ الْاِناٰءِ اصطبها صابها. اَلا و اِن الْآخِرةَ قَد اَقْبلت و لِكُلّ مِنهما بنونَ. فَكُونوا مِن اَبناٰءِ الْآخِرةِ، و لا تكُونوا مِن اَبناٰءِ الدنيا، فَاِن كُل ولدٍ سيلْحق بِاُمهِ يوم الْقِيامةِ. و اِن الْيوم عملٌ و لا حِساب و غَدا حِساب و لا عملَ.

"You should know this world is moving rapidly and nothing has remained out of it except last particles like the dregs of a vessel which has been emptied by some one. Beware, the next world is advancing, and that both of them have sons (i.e. followers). Be the sons of the next world and do not become sons of this world because on the Day of Judgement every son would cling to his mother. Today is the day of action and there is no reckoning while tomorrow is the day of reckoning but there would be no (opportunity for) action".[1]

Hence, it is obligatory on us that we prepare ourselves through reflection, deliberation and deep thought in the ways of nature before death overtakes us. And it is also necessary that we take our own account before our account is taken.

C) **Seeking Permission:** Indeed Allah the Almighty on account of His Mercy and Kindness for His weak and humble slave, has provided the method of invocation, so that it may enlighten him and guide him. Thus, whosoever intends that

[1] Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 42

his prayers should be accepted, then Allah the Almighty has promised him thus,

اُدعوني اَستجِب لَكُم

"Call Me, I will answer you."

Therefore, when a person cannot fathom the nuances and manners of this world, how is it possible that he understands the method of invocation by which His Mercy encompasses him? Without recognising the method and manners of invocation and supplication, how it is possible that its concepts are facilitated for him and provided unto him? Thus, it is essential for a person that he recognises the manner of invocations to attain its concepts. After acquiring the permission to pray, the questions that arise are as to with what we should invoke? How should we supplicate? In what way should we ask? So how should we recognise this proof who has been explained only by his Master? Therefore, it is necessary that we have a guide whom we follow. Who is this guide? What is the method that we can follow step by step? What are the obstacles in the acceptance (of supplications)? And how can we remove these obstacles?

D) **Guides towards the right path:** For the acceptance of prayers which we have already explained, the manifest proof for guidance towards Allah's right path, are the divine proofs for the creatures and those who have been termed as '*the gate of Allah through whom (Allah) is reached*', and this is the best standard. As Allah the Almighty says,

...وابتغوا اِلَيهِ الْوسِيلَةَ

"… and seek a medium to Him."[1]

They are the trusts of Allah among His creatures, and the gnostics whom the servants need, and they are the guides towards Allah, Glorified be He, the High. Therefore, the acceptance of supplication depends upon blessings and salutations upon them because they are the medium of dispelling the calamities and difficulties of this nation. They are the ones whom Allah the Almighty has attributed as the possessors of power to describe Allah the Almighty unto His Creatures, as He says in His Mighty Book,

سبحانَ اللهِ عما يصِفُونَ ِالا عِباد اللهِ الْمخلصِين

"…Purified is Allah from what they attribute except His sincere servants."[2]

Then who are these holy personalities? They are the Messenger of Allah (s.a.) and his progeny (a.s.) as he (s.a.w.a.) has willed,

ِاني تارِك فِيكُم الثقَلين، كِتاب اللهِ، و عِترتي أهلَ بيتي، ما ِانْ تمسكْتم ِبهما لَن تضِلوا بعدِي

"Surely I leave behind you two most weighty things, Allah's Book and my progeny. If you hold unto them, you will never be misguided after me."

1 Surah Maaedah (5): Verse 35
2 Surah Saaffaat (37): Verses 159

They are his holy and purified Ahle Bait (on them is all the best blessing and salutation). And in our times today, the medium and the stretched rope between the Creator and His creatures, His trust among His creatures, His proof on His earth, is the Hujjat al-Zamaan, al-Mahdi, the Promised (may Allah the Almighty hasten his holy reappearance). As the Holy Prophet (s.a.) said,

الْمهدِي مِن ولْدِي. ِاسمه ِاسمِي. يملأ الارض قِسطًا و عدلاً كما مِلئت ظُلْما و جورا

"Mahdi is from my progeny. His name is my name. He will fill the earth with justice and equity like it would be fraught with injustice and tyranny."

These are the chosen ones who taught the creatures numerous supplication for worship. Their word is lower than Allah's word and higher than that of the creature. Whoever heard their saying, said, "*Your word is light*."

None in the universe can describe Allah the Almighty but them and their word is proof upon all the creatures.

E) **Lessons in invocation:** In Islamic teachings, it has been explained that invocation alone is not enough. Yes, it is essential that it is accompanied with action, efforts and perseverance. Then, the one who seeks sustenance, it is necessary that this invocation is supplemented with efforts. Similarly, the one who is in quest for knowledge and intends to keep away ignorance, it is obligatory that his supplication should be accompanied with striving towards acquisition of

knowledge. Therefore, in our supplications you find lesson on beliefs, ethics and Islamic injunctions. Let us take *Doa-e-Jaushan Kabeer* as an instance which contains concepts on monotheism. Or *Doa-e-Makaarem al-Akhlaaq* which comprises of discussions on nobility and ethics. It is necessary that a believer adorns himself with these traits and characteristics. *Doa-e-Abu Hamza-e-Thumaali* shows the domination of divine mercy over divine wrath. *Doa-e-Nudba* explains for us the series of Allah's proofs (peace be on them all) among His creatures from Hazrat Adam (a.s.) to the Holy Prophet (s.a.) till Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) and the tortures they faced from the people. *Doa-e-Faraj* elucidates that Hazrat Saahebuz Zamaan (a.t.f.s.) is the only heir of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and will fill the earth with justice and equity like it would be fraught with injustice and oppression. By his reappearance, the statement, '*There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is Allah's Messenger and Ali is the friend of Allah*' will become widespread, thereby resulting in the prevalence of Allah's (Purified and High be He) true worship.

II) General view on Ziyaaraat:

The elements discussed in the previous point of supplications and invocations, are equally applicable for Ziyaaraat. In other words, whatever was said concerning supplications is relevant for ziyaaraat as well, the only difference being as follows: Supplication is our conversation with our Creator Who there is none like Him. Whatever He desires, comes into existence without any hindrance or question, as He Himself declares,

إِنما أَمره إِذَا أَراد شيئًا أَنْ يقُولَ لَه كُن فَيكُونُ

'His affair is such that when He intends something, (He) simply says to it, 'Be', and lo! it is."[1]

But ziyaaraat are our conversation with Allah's sincere creatures and His infallible proofs, who cannot be paralleled by anyone from this nation. They are those whom Allah has purified from all uncleanness and has created them pure, purified. Thus, whosoever desires to enter the gate of Allah, then they (a.s.) are the gates through whom Allah is approached. They are the medium towards Him and hence, their recognition, their love and treading on their path is obligatory. All these are summarised in one thing and that is ziyaarat. Literally, *ziyaarat* means to meet. It is our creed that their souls ascend towards the highest heavens and that they are alive, getting their sustenance (from their Lord). They look at us, hear our speech and reply to our salutations. As Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) narrates from the Holy Prophet (s.a.),

"Those who die among us, are not (actually) dead."

The belief of us Shias is against the *Wahhaabis* who think that as the Holy Prophet (s.a.) is dead, our relationship with him is like that with any other stone that can neither advance nor postpone. And also opposed to the *Ghulaat* who attribute divinity to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Allah is Higher than what the unjust believe, a big lie. We subscribe to the belief that Holy Prophet (s.a.) is the last Prophet but the most superior of them all. He is followed by his successors, the Holy Imams (a.s.). In our time today, Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), the Promised One, is his successor.

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1 Surah Yaaseen (36): Verse 82

So from among the etiquette of ziyaarat is that the one whose ziyaarat we are about to read, his recognition is a must. It is not possible for us to acquire the recognition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) or the infallible Imams (a.s.) through the faulty or inadequate faculties available to us humans. Just as an ant, in front of a huge mountain or a drop of water when compared to an ocean, are not worth a mention, we too when compared to these great personalities, are even smaller than the ant or the drop of water. Then how is it possible that we describe or recognise them? It is only Allah the Almighty Who knows them. Consequently, the only method to know them is through revelation. If we acquire any other mode of recognition, then indeed we will be among the doomed sects.

Therefore, we should acquire the beliefs from these infallible and holy Imams (a.s.) only so that we refrain from either of extremes nor we become among those who exaggerate (*ghulaat*). Hence, on divine command, we commence our ziyaarat with greetings and salutations in his presence, as a method of offering our respect and believing that, 'by his blessing are the creatures sustained and through his existence, the earth and the heavens are being firmly established.' Hence, we being among his flock and his guests, must necessarily greet him every morning with our salutations. We must offer our greetings as the Ahle Bait (a.s.) taught us and renew our allegiance with them. We should seek from Allah the Almighty with a blazing heart that He hastens his (a.t.f.s.) noble reappearance. This is what he (a.t.f.s.) has ordered us to do when he says,

و اَكْثِروا الدعاء بِتعجِيل الْفَرجِ فَاِن ذلِك فَرجكُم

'And pray most for the hastening of the reappearance, for certainly, it is your salvation.'

III) The Method of Invocation

In the previous chapter, you realised that invocation is a form of worship. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) says,

'Invocation is the essence of worship.'

Imam Reza (a.s.) informs,

اَلدعاءُ سِلاح اْلانِبياء

'Supplication is the weapon of the Prophets.'

Allamah Majlisi (a.r.) in his book, *'Mishkaatul Anwaar'*, in the chapter, *'Aadaab al-Dua'*, writes, "Know that supplication is conversation with One who fulfills needs and in Whose presence desires are presented. So, it is necessary that man understands the meaning of invocation and that he calls out from the depth of his heart. The minimum manners that he observes while seeking his needs from his fellow-creatures like helplessness and powerlessness, he should observe the same while asking for his wants from Allah the Great, the Creator, the Sustainer and the Controller of all affairs. The basic manners that one observes while intending to ask something from a fellow human are numerous, some of which are as follows:

A) He knows what he is saying. So, when he talks with a great person, then his talk is not void of what he says or with a negligent heart. Then, even if he does not punish

him, at least he won't pay heed to his pleas. Hence, it is essential that one is attentive while supplicating to Allah the Almighty. He should know what he is speaking and be aware of the words that flow from his tongue, seeking seriously and earnestly. He should not plead in a half-hearted way, as Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) says,

لا يقْبلُ اللهُ دعآءَ قلبٍ لاهٍ

"Allah does not accept the prayers of a negligent heart."[1]

B) Surely he who depends on another individual for dispelling his difficulties and calamities, it is obligatory for him that he should be in perpetual service of the latter. Similarly, it is necessary that man should pray even while bestowed with bounties and should not turn away from Allah the Almighty on account of abundance of bounties and affluence.

C) Indeed, one who is in need of his fellow creatures, offers worthwhile service to the bestower to such an extent that the latter becomes satisfied with him. Moreover, he refrains from doing all those things that the giver dislikes. The same applies with regards with Allah. Therefore, the one who worships Allah, he sees to it that his obedience is more and his invocation is nearer to acceptance (than the one who is not obedient). As the Holy Prophet (s.a.) says,

[1] Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 93, p. 314, narrating from Oddah al-Daaee of Ibn Fahd Hilli (a.r.).

الداعِي بِلا عمل كالرامِي بِلا وترٍ

"One who calls without action is like an archer without a bow."[2]

D) From the conditions of an invocation's acceptance is the complete recognition of the Lord from Whom the desires are sought. Thus, whosoever knows the greatness of the King, the vastness of His Kingdom and the abundance of His treasures, will expect more from Him. It is narrated from reliable narrators that Imam Abul Hasan Musa al-Kazim (a.s.) has said,

قالَ قوم لِلصادِق عليهِ السلام: ندعو فلا يستجاب لنا، قالَ: لِانكُم تدعونَ من لا تعرفُونه

"Some people asked Imam Sadeq (a.s.), 'we pray but (why is it that) our prayers are not accepted?' He (a.s.) replied, 'Because you invoke Whom you do not recognise."[3]

Similarly, it is narrated from the same Imam (a.s.),

فَاقْبِلْ بِقلبِيَ فظُن حاجتك بِالبابِ

[2] Ibid., p. 312, narrating from al-Da'waat of Raawandi (a.r.)
[3] Ibid., p. 368, narrating from Tauheed of Shaykh Sadooq (a.r.)

"When you supplicate, then be positive that your needs are at the door (i.e. fulfilled)."[1]

E) Another condition of acceptance of supplications is excessive seeking and asking because Allah the Almighty loves immoderation in supplication on account of His vast nobility, grace and unlimited mercy.

F) One manner of invocation is to pray secretly. For, seeking needs in solitude is dearer to the nobles. Moreover, a prayer in isolation is nearer to sincerity and distant from ostentation.

G) Observing the timings in which an invocation is supposed to be accepted. For surely, Allah the Almighty, has fixed some places and times for the acceptance of supplications. Therefore, in the invocations for the hasty reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), emphasis has been laid on special places and timings.

H) Yet another condition and manner for supplication is a feeling of humility and pleading in supplication as is narrated from Imam Sadeq (a.s.),

اِذَا رق احدكُم فَليدع، فَاِن القَلب لا يرق حتى يخلِص

"Whenever you feel compassionate, then pray. Because a heart does not become compassionate but that it becomes sincere."[2]

1 Ibid., p. 305, narrating from Eddah al-Daaee of Ibn Fahd Hilli

It is also a sign of the invocation's acceptance.

I) Surely one who seeks an obligation from a great person, will first try to appease his servants and those around him, so that his desire is achieved quickly. Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says,

اِن احدكُم اِذَا مرض دعا الطبيب و اعطاه، و اِذَا كانت له حاجةٌ رشا البواب و اعطاه، و لو ان احدكُم اِذَا قَدحه امر قَزع اِلى اللهِ تعالى و تطهر و تصدقَ قَلت او كثُرت، فَدخلَ المسجِد فَصلّى ركعتين فَحمِد اللهَ ...

"Whenever any of you becomes ill, he calls a doctor and pays him. Whenever you have work with a king, you bribe the door-keeper and pay him. Similarly, when any matter disturbs you, fear Allah the Almighty, and purify yourself with a charity, less or more. Thereafter, enter the mosque and pray two rakat namaaz….."[3]

J) One who has some need, he will place the need of others in front of the nobles as a medium for his own need. It is narrated from reliable chain of narrators that Imam Sadeq (a.s.) said,

2 Ibid., p. 345, narrating from Makaarem al-Akhlaaq of Shaykh Tabarsi (a.r.).

3 Ibid., vol. 91, p. 351, narrating from al-Mutahajjid wa al-Makaarim

مَن قَدم أربعين رجلاً مِن إخوانِه فَدعا لَهم، ثُم دعا لِنفْسِه، أُستجِيب لَه فِيهم و فِى نفْسِه

"Whoever gives precedence to forty people from among his brothers, prays for them and then prays for himself, his prayers for himself as well for others are accepted."[1]

From the above tradition, we learn that whenever we intend to get our needs fulfilled infront of Allah the Almighty, it is necessary that we pray for our master Saahebuz Zamaan (a.t.f.s.) before asking for our desires. This is because certainly he (a.t.f.s.) is the master of bounties and the guide, the leader for the believers.

K) Among the manner of prayers is the glorification of Allah the Almighty, and praising Him with greatness, generosity and nobility while supplicating. Hence, it is recommended that one should remember the bounties of Allah on himself as well as on others and then thank Him for the same. Of course, the greatest bounty is the love and mastership for the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and his infallible progeny (a.s.), specially their representative in our times today, Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). We must indeed remember Allah the Almighty and thank Him for conferring this great bounty upon us.

L) Among the important stipulation of an invocation is to send *salawaat* on the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and his

[1] Ibid., vol. 93, p. 383, narrating from al-Khesaal

progeny. For, one who has some desire with a king, he will get some gifts for his confidantes and close ones so that they may intercede on his behalf and get his need fulfilled at the earliest. Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says,

كَانَ الدعآءُ محجوبا حتى يصلى على محمدٍ و آل محمدٍ

"An invocation remains veiled unless one sends blessings on Muhammad and Ale Muhammad."[2]

Reminders:

Significantly, we must remember:

1) It is obligatory on us that we do not despair if the prayers are not accepted quickly and our supplication for the quick reappearance of our master (a.t.f.s.) is not secured. For, such hopelessness and despair in a definite occurrence is tantamount to the denial of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.). This concept has been sweetly elucidated in the following tradition from Imam Sadeq (a.s.) when he says,

كَانَ بين قَول اللهِ عزوجل : "قَد أُجِيبت دعوتكُما" و بين أخذِ فِرعونَ أربعين عاما

[2] Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 491, 493, Kitaab al-Dua, The Chapter of Salaat on Prophet Muhammad (s.a.) and his purified progeny

*"Between the saying of Allah the Almighty, **'The prayers of you two (Moosa and Haroon) have been accepted'**[1] and the drowning of Firaon, there was a gap of forty years."*[2]

And Imam Reza (a.s.) states,

اِن المؤمِن يسألُ اللهَ عز و جل حاجةٌ فَيؤخر عنه تعجِيلُ اِجابتِه حبا لِصوته واستِماعِ نحِيبه.

"Surely when a believer asks Allah - Mighty and Glorified be He – a need, the acceptance of his supplication is delayed, due to the love of his voice and the hearing of his lamentation."[3]

2) It is not permissible for anybody to despair and become despondent form the acceptance and non-security of his supplications, like saying, 'My sins are plenty and hence my prayers will not be accepted.' Then look at Firaon. Allah the Almighty gave him respite for such a long period of time due to His Kindness and Mercy that he may repent, truly and sincerely, and return to his Lord. (Only when he failed to do so), did Allah the Almighty accept the prayers of His Prophet (s.a.) against Firaon.

1 Surah Yunus (10): Verse 89
2 Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 489, Kitaab al-Dua, The Chapter of Slow Acceptance of Prayers
3 Ibid., p. 488

IV) Awaiting

A) The meaning of Awaiting: It is an innate behaviour from which emanates the preparation for whom we are Awaiting. Thus, as the intensity of the Awaiting increases, the measure of preparation also is on the rise. For example, when we wait for a difficult examination that we fear, we will ready ourselves for discussions and debates in better ways and means for we do not know as to what question will be asked and in what manner. Therefore, this Awaiting should be done in an even better manner because we are waiting for none other than our master, Saahebuz Zamaan (a.t.f.s.). It is obligatory on us that we acquaint ourselves with the characteristics of our master, the Awaited One, from the transmitted traditions related from his infallible ancestors. Consequently, we will be certain that our Imam (a.s.) is the twelfth Imam, he is still alive from the day of his birth and will continue to live till he reappears. He will infuse a new life into the Shariah of the seal of the Prophets, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.), through the establishment of justice and destruction of evil. It is quite possible that this affair is brought to its completion in this very year or perhaps, may be postponed to another year. It all depends on the deeds of the Shias, as he (a.t.f.s.) has expressed his desire in one *tauqee'*,

و لو أن أشياعنا وفقهم اللهُ لِطاعتِه، على اجتِماعٍ مِن القُلُوبِ فِى الوفَآءِ بِالعهدِ عليهم، لما تأخر عنهم اليمن بِلِقآئنا،

ولتعجلت لهم السعادةُ بمشاهدتنا، على حق المعرفةِ و صدقِها مِنهم بِنا، فَما يحبِسنا عنهم اِلا ما يتصِلُ بِنا مِما نكْرهه.

"And had our Shias – may Allah grant them grace for His obedience – been united with their hearts in the fulfilment of the covenant imposed on them, they would not have been deprived of the blessing of our meeting. And indeed, they would have the good fortune of seeing us with true recognition and their verification concerning us. Then nothing conceals us from them except (those news) that reach unto us and which we dislike and don't expect from them."[1]

In another tauqee' to Shaykh Mufeed (a.r.), he (a.t.f.s.) wrote,

فَليعمَلْ كُل امرءٍ منكُم بشما يقْرب بِه مِن محبتِنا، و يتجنب ما يدنيهِ مِن كِراهتِنا و سخطِنا، فَإن أمرنا بغتةٌ فَجأةٌ حِين لا تنفَعه توبةٌ ولا ينجِيهِ مِن عِقَابِنا ندم على حوبةٍ

"Then each one of you should act in a way that brings you closer to our love and refrain from all those actions that bring you nearer to our dislike and anger. For surely, our affair (reappearance) will be sudden and unexpected, when repentance will be of no benefit nor

[1] Al-Ehtejaaj, Shaykh Tabarsi (a.r.), vol. 2, p. 599, the *tauqee'* to Shaykh Mufeed (a.r.).

will regret over misdeeds save him from our chastisement."[2]

The Essentials of Physical Awaiting: Bodily Awaiting is an extension of awaiting from the heart. The one who waits perennially strives to keep away from sins and disobedience (of Allah). Hence, apart from always endeavoring to create a safe environment for his soul, he also tries ways and means to improve the others. Abu Baseer narrates from Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.),

من سر أنْ يكُونَ مِن أصحابِ القَآئِم فَلْينتظِر و ليعملْ بِالورع و محاسِن الأخلاق، و هو منتظِر، فَإنْ مات و قَام القَآئِم بعده كَانَ لَه مِن الأجرِ مِثْلُ أجرِ من أدركَه، فَجِدوا وانتظِروا هنيئًا لَكُم أيتها العِصابةُ المرحومةُ.

"Whoever desires to be among the companions of the Qaem (a.s.), then he should await, act with piety and good ethics while he is in a state of Awaiting. So if he dies and the Qaem rises after him (i.e. his death), his reward will be like the one who has found the time of the Qaem. Then strive and await, congratulations to you, O nation on whom is mercy."[3]

[2] Ibid., p. 498

[3] Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 140, narrating from al-Ghaibah of No'mani (a.r.).

Here, we would like to mention a few traits that ought to be present in the one who awaits:

a) He should be aggrieved and distressed on account of his separation from his Imam (a.t.f.s.).

b) He should cry, make others cry or atleast appear to cry for his (a.t.f.s.) separation.

c) He should always remember his Imam (a.t.f.s.).

d) He should distance himself from the materialists and sinners.

e) He should pray to Allah the Almighty for the safety of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and his early reappearance, mostly in those times when supplications are accepted.

f) As the duration of occultation increases, his craving for his Imam (a.t.f.s.) should increase by the day.

g) Encouraging and exhorting the believers to pray for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.).

h) To be prepared every moment and every second for his reappearance.

B) **The Excellence of Awaiting:** The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said,

اَفْضلُ الْعِبادةِ اِنتِظار الْفَرجِ.

"The best worship is to await the reappearance."[1]

Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said,

اَلْمنتظِرُ لِاَمرِنا كَالْمتشحطِ بِدمِه فِی سبِيل اللهِ

"The one who awaits our affair is like the one who is soaked in his blood in the way of Allah."[2]

And in yet another tradition, Imam Sadeq (a.s.) gives glad tidings,

من مات مِنكُم و هو منتظِر لِهذَا الْأمرِ كَمن هو مع الْقَآئِمِ فِي فُسطَاطِه

"One who dies among you while he is awaiting for this affair (i.e. reappearance of al-Mahdi), is like the one who is with the Qaem in his tent."

The narrator says that Imam Sadeq (a.s.) was quite for a moment and then said,

لا بلْ كَمن قَارع بِسيفِه

"Nay! He is like the one who has fought alongside the Qaem with his sword."

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1 Ibid., vol. 52, p. 125, narrating from Kamaal al-Deen of Shaykh Saduq (a.r.).

2 Ibid., vol. 10, p. 104, narrating from Khesaal of Shaykh Saduq (a.r.)

Then he (a.s.) said,

لا واللهِ اِلا كَمن استشهد مع رسول اللهِ صلى اللهُ عليهِ و آلِه.

"Nay! By Allah! He is like the one who has attained martyrdom in front of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)."[1]

C) **Necessity of Awaiting:** It is narrated in 'Kamaal al-Deen' from Abdul Azeem al-Hasani (a.r.) that he said, "I went to Imam Muhammad Taqi (a.s.) to ask him about the Qaem, whether he is Mahdi or other than him? Before I could ask, he (a.s.) told me,

يا اَبا الْقَاسِمِ اِن الْقَآئِم مِنا هو الْمهدِى الذِي يجِب اَنْ ينتظَر فَي غَيبتِه، و يطَاع فِى ظُهورِه، و هو الثالِثُ مِن ولَدِى

'O Abal Qasim! Surely the Qaem from us, he is the Mahdi. It is necessary to wait (for his reappearance) during his occultation, to obey him when he reappears and he is my third descendant.'"[2]

From whatever was discussed, we gather that all the Prophets (a.s.) and successors (a.s.) from Hazrat Adam (a.s.) to the last among them (s.a.w.a.) waited for the reappearance of Hazrat Saahebuz Zamaan (a.t.f.s.). Lastly, the Holy Quran orders,

فَانتظِروا اِني معكُم من الْمنتظِرين

1 Ibid., vol. 52, p. 126, narrating from Mahaasen of Barqi (a.r.)
2 Kamaal al-Deen, vol.2, p.377, ch.36.

"Then wait all of you, for surely I am with you among those who wait."[3]

3 Surah Yunus (10): Verse 102.

V) Reason for Praying for Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)

In the previous chapter 'Awaiting', we came to know that waiting for Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is very important since all the Prophets (a.s.), successors (a.s.) and righteous ones are waiting for this great occasion to avenge their blood. And indeed Allah, Purified and High be He, has promised since the day He created mankind that He will avenge the blood of the oppressed, those who have been rendered weak and the blood that has been shed unjustly, particularly that of the leader of martyrs, Imam Husain (a.s.),through the son of Holy Prophet (s.a.), Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). And this is a promise which is bound to be fulfilled and is in conformity with His justice. The best method to hasten this divine promise for the manifestation of justice is to pray for the reappearance, for surely, he himself has ordered us to do the same, when he says,

و اكثِروا الدعآءَ بِتعجِيل الفَرج، فَإن ذلك فَرجكُم

"And pray more for the reappearance, for certainly in it is your salvation."[1]

Therefore, among the important duties of the Shias is that they should pray for his reappearance. Apart from the fact that it is beneficial for them, it also helps in fulfilling some of the obligatory rights that the Ahle Bait (a.s.) enjoy upon us. Hence, we see in the various books of supplications that each of the infallible Imams (a.s.) had different prayers for different places and occasions, particularly Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). So, it is

[1] Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 92, narrating from al-Ehtejaaj of Tabarsi.

essential that we particularise the condition and place of supplication that we may tread the path of our leaders (a.s.). This concept is supported by the tradition on the authority of Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.) when he says,

لو أدركتُه لخدمته أيام حياتي

"If I find his time, I will serve him for my entire life."[2]

VI) The Benefits of Praying for Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)

Praying for Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) comprises of advantages for both this world as well as the hereafter. Here, we shall mention a few of them, albeit briefly.

A) Worldly benefits in praying for Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) are as follows:

1) Longevity as it (supplication) is a form of maintaining relations with Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.a.), for Imam-e-Baqer (a.s.) says,

صِلةُ الأرحامِ تزكى الأعمالَ و تنمى الأموالَ، و تدفَع البلْوى و تيسر الحِساب، و تنسِى فِي الأجل

[2] Ibid., vol. 51, p. 148, narrating from al-Ghaibah of No'mani

"Maintaining (or patching) relations purifies actions, multiplies wealth, dispels calamities, simplifies accounting and postpones death."[1]

2) Repels difficulties and increases sustenance.

3) Acceptance of other invocations.

4) Readies oneself for seeing Imam's (a.s.) whether in sleep or awakening.

5) Augmentation of bounties.

6) Guarantees divine help for the one who prays and domination over his enemies. The evidence for this belief is the saying of Allah the Almighty,

إن تنصروا الله ينصركُم

"If you help (the cause of) Allah, He will help you."[2]

7) Returning to this world at the time of his reappearance as we recite during the recitation of Doa-e-Ahd.

8) Ensures steadfastness on faith and safety from the mischief and destruction of the last era.

9) Keeps away divine punishment and chastisement.

[1] Ibid., vol. 74, p. 111, narrating from al-Kaafi of Kulayni.
[2] Surah Muhammad (47): Verse 7

10) Preparation and continuous asking of the believers for the reappearance of our master Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) from Allah the All-Powerful, the Obliger, is definitely a cause for the nearness of his reappearance and the quickness of his advent, as has come down in traditions.

B) **Benefits in the Hereafter:** Allama Sayed Muhammad Taqi al-Isfahaani (a.r.) in the fifth chapter of his book, 'Mikyaal al-Makaarim', has discussed numerous advantages for praying for Imam-e-Asr (a.s.). Here, we shall discuss a few of them, while keeping brevity in consideration:

1) Success in achieving the intercession of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his holy progeny (a.s.) on the Day of Judgement, and this is due to invoking the early reappearance of his son, Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

2) The intercession of Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) himself on the Day of Judgement.

3) Rewarding the labour of prophethood of Allah's messenger (s.a.w.a.) and arriving with his love.

4) Forgiveness of sins.

5) Reward for avenging the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.), the martyr, the oppressed.

6) Guidance through the light of the Holy Quran.

7) Becoming the most beloved creature of Allah, the High.

8) Intercession of seventy thousand sinners.

9) Contentment of heart on the Day of Judgement.

10) Equal to the reward of twenty Hajj and Umrah.

11) Fulfillment of a thousand desires on the Day of Judgement.

12) Angels pray for the forgiveness of the one who prays for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.).

13) Instills fear in the accursed Shaitan and breaks his heart.

14) Obtaining one-third reward of all the creatures.

15) Glad-tidings and leniency at the time of death, Barzakh and resurrection.

16) Reward of the one who is martyred under the standard of Hazrat Qaem (a.t.f.s.).

17) Any gathering in which reappearance of Hazrat Qaem (a.t.f.s.) is invoked is attended by the noble angels.

18) According to reliable traditions and authentic narration, supplicating for him in his occultation is much better than praying for him after his reappearance.[1]

VII) Special Timings of Supplications for Reappearance:

[1] Mikyaal al-Makaarem, vol. 1, p. 298-515

Although invoking the reappearance of Imam-e-Asr (may Allah hasten his reappearance) is a desired action at all times, yet there are some special timings and occasions that are immensely emphasised in the traditions. The author of *'Mikyaal al-Makaarem'*[2] has particularised the sixth chapter of his book on this very issue, the summary of which shall be presented hereunder. We shall also mention the supplication that has to be recited on these special occasions.

1) **The Day of Arafah (9th Zilhajj):** The invocation of Imam-e-Sajjad (a.s.) in Sahifa-e-Sajjadiyyah and that of Imam-e-Sadiq (a.s.) can be seen in this context.

2) **The Day of Eid al-Fitr:** The concerned supplications for this occasion can be seen in the book of *'Iqbaal al-A'maal'* (of Sayed Ibn Tawoos (a.r.)), when a person sets out to perform the prayers of Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Azhaa. It is also recommended to recite Doa al-Nudba on both the above instances and includes the supplications that are to be recited when one intends to perform Namaz-e-Eid. Imam-e-Baqer (a.s.) said to Abdullah Ibn Deenar,

يا عبد اللهِ ما مِن عِيدٍ لِلْمسلِمين أضحى و لا فِطْرٍ إلا و هو يتجدد فِيهِ لِآل محمدٍ صلى اللهُ عليهِ و آلِه حزنٌ

"O Abdallah! There is no Eid of the Muslims, whether Fitr or Azhaa, but that it increases the grief of Aal-e-Muhammad (s.a.w.a.)."

[2] Ibid., vol. 2, p. 1-51

The narrator says, 'I enquired, Why is it so?' Imam (a.s.) replied,

لِأنهم يرونَ حقهم فِي يدِ غَيرِهِم

'Because they (Aal-e-Muhammad) see their right in the hands of others."[1]

3) **The Day of Azha:** Whatever we have mentioned for Eid al-Fitr, applies on this day too.

4) **The Day of Earth's Expansion (Dahvul Arz):** It is the 25th of Zeeqa'dah (when Allah expanded the earth). Praying for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) and asking for his advent has been tremendously emphasised for this day, as can be seen in *Iqbaal al-A'maal* and *Zaad al-Ma'ad* (of Allama Majlisi (a.r.)). Some of the points in this context really make the hearts tremble, and hence, we shall mention a few of them over here as encouragement:

    a) It (25th Zeeqa'dah) is the day when the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s) has been promised. When a believer sees that this day of the year has arrived but his master has not come, he becomes sorrowful and his grief is aggravated, Thus, his intellect and belief exhort him to pray even more for the reappearance.

    b) On this day, divine mercy is spread and invocations are accepted. So, the believer for whom his Imam (a.t.f.s.) is dearer than his own self, his family, his children and his relatives, will pray from the depth of his heart for the removal of the difficulties of his master (a.t.f.s.).

    c) This day is of bounty conferred by Allah on His creation because He expanded the earth so that he may live in it and reside therein. Moreover, he can derive pleasures from the various kinds of bounties that grow from the earth, descend on it and inhabit it. When he realises that all these gifts bestowed on him are due to the blessing of his master (a.t.f.s.), he feels it as his duty to thank him through supplications in his favour. For sure, he is the medium of these bounties that cannot be overlooked.

    d) Traditions have underlined the significance of being engrossed in the remembrance of Allah, Mighty and Glorified be He, on this day. There is no doubt that praying for the reappearance of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the best form of Allah's remembrance.

5) **The Day of Aashoora:** The authors of *Iqbaal al-A'maal, al-Mazaar* and *Zaad al-Ma'ad* have narrated a tradition from Imam al-Sadeq (a.s.) on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Sinaan (Allah's mercy be on him), which commences with the following sentence,

اللّهم عذبِ الْفَجرةَ الذِين شافوا رسولك

[1] Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 91, p. 135, narrating from Elal al-Sharaae'.

"O Allah! Chastise the transgressors who bore enmity against Your messenger.."[1]

The secret behind this invocation is the enormous calamity and torture that was afflicted on our master, Imam Husain (a.s.) on this day at Karbala. Allah the Almighty has promised that He will take revenge from those who oppressed him (a.s.) through our master, Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), as spoken in the traditions. Thus, when a believer remembers on this day the calamities afflicted on the oppressed Imam (a.s.) and that Allah the Almighty has pre-destined somebody to avenge Imam Husain (a.s.)'s blood, his belief and love exhort him to invoke and ask for the reappearance of this avenger from the King of the Heavens. Hence, such a demand has been recommended in this supplication. Moreover, the one who prays for this day will find an occasion whose reward cannot be measured by anyone except Allah the High and that is, seeking the revenge of the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.), the leader of the martyrs.

6) **The Night of 15th Sha'baan:** Since this night heralds the birth of our Master, Saahebuz Zamaan (a.t.f.s.), it is appropriate that the believers be busy in praying for him. It has come in traditions that supplications are accepted in this night.

7) **The Day of 15th Sha'baan:** One should prepare even more for supplications on this day than whatever has been discussed till now because doing so would imply following the footsteps of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). For, when he

[1] Ibid., vol. 101, p. 305

(a.t.f.s.) was born, he prayed for his reappearance while he was in prostration, invoking,

اَللّٰهم أنجِز لِي وعدِي و أتمِم لِي أمرِى و ثَبِّت وطأتِي واملأ الأرض بِي عدلاً و قِسطًا.

"O Allah! Fulfil my promise for me, make my footsteps steadfast, and fill the earth with justice and equity through me."[2]

8) **The Month of Ramazan:** This month is the best for praying for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), especially its nights, because it is the month of invocations. Hence, traditions have ordered for the same and thus, the significance of reciting Doa-e-Iftetaah have been underlined in the nights of this month. Do not neglect this supplication for indeed, it is a noble and comprehensive prayer, encompassing the needs of both this world as well as the hereafter. Seqah al-Islam Muhammad Ibn Yaqub al-Kulayni (a.r.) has narrated on the authority of the infallible Imams (a.s.), "The following supplication should be recited on the eve of the 23rd Ramazan, in prostration, standing or sitting, in any position possible. Moreover, it should be recited in all months, in any possible manner whatsoever and whenever you get the time. After praising Allah, Blessed and High, and salutations on the Holy Prophet (s.a.) , say,

[2] Ibid., vol. 51, p. 13.

اللهم كُن لوليّك الحجةِ ابن الحسن صلواتك عليهِ و على آبائه فِي هذِهِ الساعةِ و فِي كُلّ ساعةٍ وليا و حافِظًا و قَاعِدا و ناصِرا و دليلاً و عينا حتى تسكِنه أرضك طوعا و تمتّعه فِيها طويلاً. [1]

9) **The Sixth Night of the Month of Ramazan:** This supplication can be found in '*Al-Iqbaal*', narrating from the book of Muhammad Ibn Abi Qurrah, and it is as follows: '*Allahumma laka al-hamd wa ilaik al-mushtakaa…*'till the end.

10) **The Twelfth Night of the Month of Ramazan:** The significance of this supplication too can be found in the aforementioned book.

11) **The Eighteenth Day and the Nighteenth Night of the Month of Ramazan:** The importance of this invocation can be understood from the various invocations that have come down and narrated in '*Al-Iqbaal*'. Of course, help is sought from Allah in all conditions.

12) **The Twenty First Day of the Month of Ramazan:** Particularly after the morning obligatory prayers.

13) **After Remembering the Difficulties of Imam Husain (a.s.):** Surely this is one way of helping him (a.s.), This is

[1] Al-Kaafi, vol. 4, p. 162, 'The Chapter of Invocations in the Last Ten Days of the Month of Ramazan.'

supported by the narration of some of the righteous people who saw Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) in dream while he was saying,

'Surely I will pray for the believer who remembers the difficulties of my ancestor, Imam Husain (a.s.), and follows it with supplicating for my reappearance and assisting me (in my task).'[2]

14) **After reciting the ziyaarat of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.):** This has been emphasised by the great Shaheed-e-Awwal, Muhammad Ibn Makki (a.r.), in his '*al-Duroos*'.[3]

15) **At the time of crying due to Allah's fear:** Surely, this is the best of times, when a person is proximate to Allah the Almighty and prayers are accepted. Thus, it is proper for a believer that he should remember his Imam (a.t.f.s) by praying for him, thereby fulfilling one of his (a.t.f.s.) rights that is obligatory on him (the believer). Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Husain al-Saduq (a.r.) relates from his chain that Mansoor Ibn Yunus Bazraj asked Imam al-Sadeq (a.s.) concerning a person who attempts to cry in his obligatory prayers till he actually starts crying. Imam (a.s.) replied,

قُرةَ عين واللهِ

'By Allah, it is the coolness of the eyes (i.e. it is loved by Allah).'

[2] Mikyaal al-Makaarem, vol. 2, p. 46.
[3] Al-Duroos, vol. 2, p. 16, Kitaab al-Mazaar.

And then he (a.s.) said,

اِذَا كَانَ ذٰلِك فَاذْكُرنِي عِندَه

'When you reach to this state, then remind him about me."[1]

I say, 'One should not fear about this command because the person concerned is the believer's Imam, and possesses some right on him. Hence, it is proper for every believing man and woman to act on the same, relating to the Imam of his time, for he will discharge his duty towards his master with his body as well as his tongue.'

16) **At the time of renewal of every bounty and dissipation of calamities:** Surely, Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is the medium of every bounty and through him, calamities are dispelled. We have already mentioned that praying for his reappearance is a method of expressing our gratitude to him for he is the medium of all the bounties that are conferred on us. We should also not forget to send salutations on the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny (a.s.) on receipt of every bounty because surely they are the authorities on the divine bounties, as has come in Ziyaarah al-Jaame'ah and reliable & consecutive traditions.

17) **At the time of sorrow and grief:** As said before, it is found in the traditions that Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) prays for the one who supplicates for him. Thus, his (a.t.f.s.) prayer

[1] Wasaael al-Shiah, vol.7, p. 247, tradition no. 9240. Published by Moassasa-e-Aal al-Bait (a.s.).

becomes the cause of dissipation of sorrows of the believer. It has come in numerous traditions that our Imam (a.t.f.s.) is aggrieved at the grief of his Shias and undoubtedly, he prays for them in their moments of sorrows, as has already been indicated in traditions. So, it is naught but becoming for the Shias that they follow in the footsteps of their master by supplicating for the removal of his sorrows, difficulties and grief, for his grief is also the cause of the grief of his Shias, as can be found in some traditions. Hence the significance of praying for him (a.t.f.s.) on such occasions.

18) **In Trials and Tribulations:** It is most appropriate to supplicate for the reappearance of Imam-e-Asr (a.s.) at such moments for the following reasons:

(a) It is the cause of his prayers (in our favour) as already mentioned.

(b) It is the cause of the supplications of the angels because they pray for the one who prays for an absent believer and their prayers are accepted, Inshallah.

(c) His (a.t.f.s.) command,

و اَكْثِروا الدعآءَ بِتعجِيل الْفَرجِ، فَإِن ذَلِك فَرجكُم.

'And pray more for the hastening of the reappearance. For surely, in it is your salvation."

(d) Supplication is a medium to reach unto him (a.t.f.s.) and he, in turn, is the medium of safety from difficulties, trials and tribulations.

19) **After the Prayers of *tasbeeh*:** That is, the prayers of Ja'far Ibn Abi Taalib (r.a.), particularly when you perform it on Friday. There is an invocation narrated by Imam Kazim (a.s.) for this occasion in *Jamaal al-Usboo'* and other books of supplications. May Allah the Almighty give us and other believers the grace for its recitation.

20) **Prior to praying for yourself and your family:** Authentic traditions have declared that true belief demands that one should pray for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) before he prays for himself and his family. The concept of a quote from the Holy Prophet (s.a.) is as follows:

> *"Surely a person will not be a believer till he considers Allah's messenger (s.a.w.a.) dearer than his own life, and the progeny of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) more beloved than his own family, and finally, anything regarded by the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) as significant is more precious for him than what he considers as important."*[1]

There is no doubt that praying for the early reappearance of Hazrat Vali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) is among the most important affairs, through which hearts will gain peace and satisfaction. Hence, it is proper for a believer that before he starts praying for himself and his family, he should pray for the reappearance, thereby observing the due right of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

21) **The Day of Ghadeer:** It is the day when Allah the Almighty chose Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and the infallible Imams

[1] Al-Amaali of Shaykh Saduq (a.r.), p. 274, Majlis 54; Ehqaaq al-Haq, vol. 9, p. 392, 393.

(a.s.) as masters over believers and the caliphs of the Seal of the Prophets (s.a.). It is this very mastership that has been inherited by Imam-e-Zamana, Hazrat Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) from his honourable forefathers (a.s.). On this day, when the believer sees that the usurpers are dominant, the oppressors overwhelming and the protector of religion concealed, his believe and love force him to pray for his (a.t.f.s.) early reappearance and his easy emergence. For certainly, it is the day of the covenant's renewal, the given oath, and praying for the reappearance of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.).

22) **All possible times, day and night:** The evidence of this statement lies in the tradition related by Faiz bin al-Mukhtar from Imam Ja'far al-Sadeq (a.s.) when he (a.s.) was asked concerning the ziyaarat of Imam Husain (a.s.), 'Is there any particular time for this visitation, which we can call as the best time?' Imam (a.s.) retorted,

زوروه صلى الله عليه في كل وقت وفي كل حين، فإن زيارته عليه السلام خير موضوع فمن اكثر منها فقد استكثر من الخير، و من قلل قلل له، و تحروا بزيارتكم الاوقات الشريفة فإن الأعمال الصالحة فيها مضاعفة و هي أوقات مهبط الملآئكة لزيارته.

"Visit him at all times and whenever possible. Indeed, his visitation is the best thing. Whoever visits him more, has indeed performed abundant goodness and whoever does less, he will get lesser reward. Make yourself free

for his ziyaarat. For, the good deeds are multiplied during this act and this is the time when the angels descend for his visitation."[1]

23) **When you attend the gatherings of the opponents and the usurpers of the Imams' (a.s.) rights:** Whenever we attend such gatherings, it is obligatory on us to pray for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). Yunus Ibn Zibyaan says that I asked Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.), 'May I be sacrificed for you, what should I say when I attend the gatherings of the Bani Abbas[2]?' He (a.s.) replied,

إذا حضرتهم و ذكرتنا فقُل : اللّهم أرنا الرخآء والسرور فإنك تأتي على كُل ما تريد.

"When you are with them and remember us, then say, 'O Allah! Provide us comfort and joy, for surely, whatever You desire, occurs'."[3]

It is clear that the last sentence of this comprehensive but brief supplication is actually invoking for the reappearance and the manifestation of the rightful government, when he (a.s.) says,

'For surely, whatever You desire, occurs.'

1 Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101, p. 98, narrating from Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat of Ibn Qoolwayh (a.r.).
2 To imply Bani Abbas, the narrator has used code words.
3 Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101, p. 151, narrating from Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat.

Moreover, it is also evident that this prayer, in these words, is for dissimulation (*taqaiyyah*) and there is no particularity for it. The only benefit that one can draw from this is the supplication for reappearance, its exhortation and one's readiness, while attending such unfriendly congregations, to pray for an early reappearance, which Allah, Mighty and Glorified, has promised on account of His obligation and nobility. Certainly, the reappearance is near.

24) **Invoke Constantly For Forty Days:** Any worship that is performed for forty days successively, has special effects and particular advantages. Therefore, we find numerous traditions from the infallible Imams (a.s.) in this regard, underlying its significance, generally and specifically. As for the general, there is a famous tradition that has come down in various authentic books and is as follows:

"One who purifies himself for forty days for Allah, fountains of wisdom will flow from his heart to his tongue."

Numerous quotes from Imams (a.s.) with similar meanings have been related. Now, for some instances of the special traditions. Allama Majlisi (a.r.) writes in Behaar al-Anwaar, narrating from the Tafseer of al-Ayyaashi that Fazl Ibn Abi Qurrah reports, 'I heard Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.) say,

أوحى اللهُ إلى إبراهيم أنه سيولد لك، فقالَ لِسارةَ، فقالت: عَ إلد و أنا عجوز؟ فأوحى اللهُ إليهِ أنها ستلِد و يعذب أولادها أربعمِائةَ سنةٍ بِردِّها الكلام على

"Allah revealed to (Prophet) Ibraheem (a.s.) that soon a child will be born to him. He passed on the good news to his wife, Sarah, who exclaimed in disbelief, 'What! Will I give birth now when I am old?' On this, Allah again revealed to Ibraheem (a.s.) that she will indeed give birth. But, her progeny will be chastised for four hundred years because she refuted My statement.'

Imam (a.s.) continues,

فَلَما طَالَ على بَنى اِسرائيلَ الْعذَاب ضجوا و بكَوا اِلَى اللهِ أربعِين صباحا فَأوحى اللهُ اِلى موسى و هارونَ يخلصهم مِن فِرعونَ فَحط عنهم سبعِين و مائَةَ سنةٍ. قَالَ: و قَالَ أبو عبدِ اللهِ علَيهِ السلام: هكَذَا أنتم فَعلْتم لَفَرج اللهُ عنا، فَأما اِذَا لَم تكُونوا فَإن الامر ينتهي اِلى منتهاه.

'When the punishment continued incessantly on the Bani Israel, they wailed and cried to Allah for forty days. Thus Allah revealed to Moosa (a.s.) and Haroon (a.s.) to save them from the clutches of the tyrant Firaon. Consequently, the chastisement of one hundred and seventy years was deducted from their decreed punishment. The same applies for you too. If you do as the Bani Israel did (i.e. supplicate unceasingly), then Allah will bring our salvation near. But if you do not do as they did, then the affair will come to pass as destined."[1]

The author of *Mikyaal al-Makaarim* says that this tradition indirectly exhorts the recitation of Doa-e-Ahd, taught by Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.) for forty mornings successively and that one should not be negligent of it.

25) **The Month of Muharram:** Whenever a believer sees the atrocities afflicted on the chosen Imams (a.s.) by their enemies, his faith in them, his love for them and his grief for them, exhort him to avenge their blood and the oppression committed against them. This is not possible in these times at all except by praying for the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance), as is evident.

VIII) Places Emphasised for Supplicating for Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.):

Just as emphasis has been laid on the times of supplication for Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), similarly some places have also been underlined, where additional importance has been laid on praying for his reappearance. These are either in following in his (a.t.f.s.) footsteps or due to some traditions that have come down in this regard or some wisdom comprehended only by the people of understanding. Anyhow, some of these places are as follows:

1) **Masjid al-Haraam:** It is evident that Allah's House is the place of acceptance of all prayers. Thus, whoever is aware

[1] Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 4, p. 118, vol. 52, p. 131, narrating from Tafseer al-Ayyaashi.

of its importance and greatness in front of Allah, Blessed and High, and in the eyes of the Imams (a.s.), prays for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) in this house. Shaykh Saduq (a.r.) relates in *Kamaa al-Deen* that Muhammad Ibn Moosa Ibn Mutawakkil narrates from Abdullah Ibn Ja'far al-Himyari (may Allah have mercy on him) who says, "I asked Muhammad Ibn Usman al-Amri (the second deputy, may Allah have mercy on him), 'Did you see Saahebul Amr (a.t.f.s.)?' He answered, "Yes. My last meeting with him (a.t.f.s.) in the House of Allah while he was saying,

"اللّهم أنجِزلي ما وعدتِني"

'O Allah! Fulfil for what you have promised me.'"[1]

In another tradition from the same chain, Muhammad Ibn Usman al-Amri (a.r.) says, 'I saw him holding the curtain of Ka'bah at the *Mustajaar* while he was saying,

"اللّهم انتقِم لِي مِن أعدآئي"

'O Allah! (Help me to) take my revenge from my enemies.'"[2]

2) **At Arafaat:** According to the supplication of Imam Sadeq (a.s.) for this place on the day when the pilgrims stay in Arafaat, Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) does come over here,

[1] Kamaal al-Deen, vol. 2, p. 440, chapter 43.
[2] Ibid.

and the same can also be found in the supplication available in *Zaad al-Ma'ad*.

3) **The Cellar (Sardaab):** The place from where Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) disappeared, in the city of Saamarra, Iraq. For the significance of invoking in this place, one can refer to the various books of ziyaaraat.

4) **Spots dedicated to Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.):** These are the blessed places which he has blessed by his visitation like Masjid-e-Kufa, Masjid-e-Sahlah, Masjid-e-Sa'sa'a, Masjid-e-Jamkaraan, etc. For, the sign of those who love is that when they see those spots that have been visited by their beloved, they remember his ethics, feel pained by his separation and pray for him. Nay, they acquaint themselves with places where he had stopped, and his halts, just as a sign of their love for him. Hence, it is proper for a sincere believer, that when he enters the Blessed Cellar or sees any of the aforementioned spots, he should remember the attributes of his master, the attributes of beauty, majesty and perfection. He should also think about his (a.t.f.s.) enemies and deviated ones, as to why they detest him (a.t.f.s.). He feels extremely pained when he sees all these things and prays from the depth of his heart to the Almighty to hasten the reappearance of his master and fulfil his desires by repelling the enemies and helping his associates. This is in addition to the fact that the aforementioned noble spots are the places of his worship and prayers. Therefore, it is appropriate that the believer treads in the footsteps of his master. Certainly, the supplication for his reappearance and removal of his

difficulties is indeed the best worship and the most important invocation.

5) **The Shrine of Imam Husain (a.s.):** When a believer realizes the atrocities faced by Imam Husain (a.s.), the leader of the martyrs, and the calamities afflicted on him (a.s.) and his family, he is filled with grief and sorrow. He is also aware that it is Mahdi, the Promised One, who will avenge the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.). Thus, his wisdom exhorts him and his love for the Ahle Bait (a.s.) impels him to pray for the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.), the supplication of a lover inclined to his beloved. The evidence of this lies in the tradition of Abu Hamza Thumali in the 79th Chapter of *Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat*, narrating from Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.). While discussing the places of these ziyaaraat, after praying for Imam Husain (a.s.), Imam-e-Sadeq (a.s.) says,

و تصلي على الأئمةِ كُلهم كما صليت على الحسن و الحسين عليهما السلام و تقُولُ: اللّهم أتمِم بِهم كَلِماتِك و أنجِز بِهم وعدك، ...

"And you send blessings on all the Imams (a.s.) as you send salutations on Husain (a.s.). Then say, 'O Allah! Complete Your words through them, fulfil Your promise through them.."[1]

In another instance, he (a.s.) says,

[1] Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101, p. 180.

ثُم تضع خدك عليهِ و تقُولُ: اللّهم رب الحسين اشفِ صدر الحسين، اللّهم رب الحسين اطلُب بِدمِ الحسين

"Then place your head on the grave of Imam Husain (a.s.) and invoke, 'O Allah, Lord of Husain, pacify the heart of Husain (a.s.). O Allah, Lord of Husain, avenge the blood of Husain.'[2]

The reason is quite apparent since it is Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) who will avenge the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.) and pacify his heart by taking revenge from his enemies and murderers.

6) **The Shrine of Imam Reza (a.s.):** In *Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat*, after salutations on each of the Imams (a.s.), you say,

اللهم صل على حجتِك و وليك القَآئِمِ فِي خلقِك صلاةً تامةً نامِيةً بارِقِيةً تعجلُ بِها فَرجه و تنصره بِها...

"O Allah! Send salutations on Your proof and Your slave, the Qaem among your creatures, a complete, eternal salutation. Through it, You hasten his reappearance and help him…"[3]

7) **The Shrines of Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) and Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) in Saamarra:** Praying for the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the best thing to take us closer to them (a.s.), to please them and to gain

[2] Ibid., p. 185
[3] Ibid., vol. 102, p. 46.

proximity towards them. For details, one can refer to the chapter of ziyaaraat of all the Imams (a.s.) in *Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat*. It can be said that certainly this prayer (for the reappearance) is among the most important duties of the creatures in every place which has some particularity and respect. Allah, High is His Honour, says,

بيوتٍ أَذِنَ اللهُ أن ترفَع ويذكَر فِيها اسمه

"..houses which Allah has permitted to be raised and in which His Name is remembered."[1]

Indeed, this supplication (for reappearance) is the best of remembrances, the most beloved for the people of vision and the most important for those who take lessons. Hence, it is necessary that it should be given priority during the nights as well as the days.

IX) Recognition:[2]

Birth: Hazrat Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) was born in the night of 15th Sha'baan, 255 A.H. at dawn. Notwithstanding the claims of the deniers who refute his existence, Allah the Almighty, manifested him when the Umayyide and Abbaside Caliphs were determined to kill him in order to extinguish Allah's light. But none of them succeeded in challenging Allah the Lord of the servants in His Command. Is it possible for them to change what Allah has ordained? Thus, on this auspicious day, Imam Hasan al-Askari

1 Surah Noor (24): Verse 36

2 Taken from the book 'Saheefah al-Mahdi' of Jawaad Qayyoomi.

(a.s.) saw the birth of his son, the awaited one, since ages and through him, divine promise was fulfilled.

Imamat: He was hidden from his enemies and none could see him except a few trusted Shias till the year 260 A.H., when Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) was martyred and Imamat was transferred to him (a.t.f.s.). Although he was hidden from the people, there were few specially appointed representatives who could see him and acted as agents between him and the Shias for the solution of their problems. They were the medium for him and his followers. These special deputies (*Nawwaab-e-Arba')* were four in number and their names were as follows: a) Usman Ibn Saeed Amri b) Muhammad Ibn Usman Ibn Saeed Amri c) Husain Ibn Rauh Nawbakhti and d) Ali Ibn Muhammad Seymouri.

The Major Occultation: The four special deputies acted as agents till the year 329 A.H., the year that marked the commencement of the Major Occultation (*Ghaibat-e-Kubra*). It was a period that had been prophesied by the past Prophets (a.s.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.). Also, it marked the beginning of a severe test for the Muslims, till the realisation of divine promise through his reappearance.

In the year 329 A.H., the door of special deputyship was closed. Whoever claims this esteemed position after this year, then surely he is a liar and a cheat. In the traditions of the infallible Imams (a.s.), the benefit drawn from an occult Imam is likened to the advantage taken from a sun when it goes behind the clouds. The sun continues to be a source of life and its continuity despite its apparent concealment.

During the major occultation, numerous people had the fortune to attend to his presence and got the opportunity to visit him but none claimed special representation. These were the ones who saw the *sun* with the belief of their hearts.

There were some non-Shias too who had the good fortune of his visitation. They were Sunnis and some of them were even sinners and transgressors. But when they repented sincerely for Allah's sake, his love entered their hearts.

Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.) also sent signed letters (*tauqee'aat*) to some Shia scholars for the solution of problems and new matters.

The Shias, during this period of the major occultation, are facing the most severe test which is without precedence. In the traditions, it has been likened to the time of Hazrat Nuh (a.s.) due to the scarcity of his helpers and friends. O Allah! Hasten his reappearance and make easy his emergence.

Conclusion: Finally, we pray to the Almighty Allah to accept this humble offering from our side. We know that our contribution is of hardly any significance as far as efforts are concerned. Nevertheless, we hope for His Mercy and seek His Forgiveness. Finally, we say,

يا أيها العزيز مسنا وأهلنا الضر وجئنا بضاعةٍ مزجاةٍ فأوفِ لنا
الكيلَ وتصدق علينآ إن الله يجزي المتصدقين

"O Master! Surely harm has afflicted us and our families. And we have come with only a handful of provisions. But you give us full measure in return. Surely, Allah rewards those who give charity."[1]

The ink has dried but the tears continue to flow as the pain of separation from the beloved continues to pinch the heart. Yet, the eternal medicine called hope, provides us some relief, and assures, 'Be patient, he will come.' But the moot question is 'When?' As the days and nights are passed in heartrending invocations and supplications, eyes are gradually losing their sight, backs are slowly developing a curve and bones are creaking, hairs are turning silver and death seems a looming fact, the only shriek that disturbs the stillness of the night, says,

متى ترانا و نراك و قد نشرت لواء النصر

"O Master! When will you see us and we see you, while you are raising the flag of victory."

O Allah! Please accept from us.

[1] Surah Yusuf (12): Verse 88

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