

(A Refuge of Mankind (Imam Mahdi

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Because of you we are relieved of our sorrows and our difficulties are solved." (Ziaarat-e-Jamia)

"If we had not protected you, you would have been surrounded by calamities and your enemies would have destroyed you." (Tawqee of Imam Mahdi in Ihtejaj by Allama Tabarsi)

Man is composed of negative as well as positive qualities. Sometimes he becomes so brave as to conquer the greatest wars easily. He conquers the forests and the deserts, alone. He travels in the depth of the sea and journeys in the heights of the atmosphere. Sometimes he becomes so much docile that he fears the darkness and his own shadow. Mental tension is such a thing that consumes and kills the bravest of men. The condition of the man is worth seeing when he is surrounded by the calamities but does not have any protector. And if there is someone to relieve the pain and remove the difficulties then the greatest problem is solved easily and the incurable disease is cured.

The heart is laid to rest, the intentions firm up and the thinking and the consciousness come under control. Allah, the Almighty has bestowed upon us various bounties. But the greatest bounty of Allah upon us is that by which we can make the Purified Ahle Bait. (a.s.) as the channel for our invocations. We can invoke through their names. That is the reason why the lover of Ahle Bait (a.s.) does not despair even in the worst calamities. The more the adverse conditions increase, the more one achieves nearness to the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

One of the titles of Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.s.) is "Al-Ghaus" "Ghaus-ul-Fuqara"). It means the one who responds to the pleadings of the wretched people for refuge. It is a manifest reality that all our Imams (a.s.) have the best of qualities and not one of them lacks in any of the good qualities. Yet, some of the Imams are associated with a particular quality. This is because that a particular quality is more evident in them. For eg. the seventh Imam is known as Musa al Kazim (a.s.). The title Al-Kazim (which literally means one who swallows anger), is especially reserved for him because he exhibited extraordinary patience and controlled his anger in hopeless situations. Although every Imam was 'Kazim' (i.e. every Imam controlled his anger). The title of 'Al-Ghaus' or 'Ghaus-ul-Fuqara' which is specially attributed to Imam-e-Zaman (a.s.) suggests that the qualities associated with these titles will be more apparent and manifested in him.

Another thing which could be deduced from this discussion is that our Imams (a.s.) are a

mirror that reflect the divine qualities.

The term 'Al-Ghaus' is not limited and it is unconditional. Hence it means that Imam-e-Zaman (a.s.) will listen to the entreaties of each and everyone of those who call him. Anyone from any part of the world can seek his help and he surely responds. Now Imam (a.s.) is not called upon by one person at a time. At any given moment hundreds or even lakhs of people call him in their myriad languages. Some of them are not even capable of using any language but

themselves are a kind of entreaty personalized. All this means that:

The voice of one person does not prevent the Imam from listening to that of another person. It is one of the limitations of the human beings that they could not listen to many voices at the same time. And if more than one person talks to him at one and the same time, he could not understand even one of them. But Imam-e-Zaman (a.s.) listens to everyone of us, he recognizes and distinguishes our different voices and even solves our problems.

All the people do not call Imam (a.s.) in the same language. Everyone calls him in his own language and dialect. This proves that Imam-e-Zaman (a.s.) is familiar with all the languages and dialects of the world. That is why he is the Imam of the whole universe. How can those

who do not even know the language of the creatures become their Imams?

There is no fixed time for calling upon the Imam (a.s.). Every time of the day someone is calling him, because no time is fixed for any difficulty. Whenever someone encounters problem

he call the Imam that very moment. Thus it can be said that Imam (a.s.)

listens to all those who call upon him every time of the day. Sleep and awaking does not make any difference. This means that Imam (a.s.) is capable of answering the prayers of everyone at anytime. The Imam who has such magnanimous powers could not be deterred by the limitation of Ghaibat (occultation). He is capable of helping people while in occultation just as well as he could when he is present. Even after his reappearance, he will be visible at many places at a time and at that same time he will be away from the sight of other people just as if in occultation. Hence this proves that the occultation of Imam-e-Zaman (a.s.) is not a hindrance

in solving the problems of those who pray to him.

The response to the call for help is not for any particular difficulty. Any type of problem is solved by Imam (a.s.), whether it is for the removal of poverty or disease, concerning house, children, education, training, respects, this world or the hereafter. This shows the vast powers of Imam (a.s.). Every creature in every sphere of the universe is obedient to Imam (a.s.) and Imam (a.s.) has a right upon all of these. The best thing about all this is that when the Imam (a.s.) wishes to solve any of the problems he himself provides the ways and means. A doctor relies upon the medicine to cure a disease and it even takes time for the same. But if Imam

(a.s.) wishes to cure anyone he is immediately cured. Neither time is required by him nor medicine. If he wants to grow a tree, he just plants a seed and a huge tree grows up immediately.

If we reflect upon all these things we realize that Imam-e- Zaman (a.s.) is the mirror of the quality of Allah, the Almighty, namely 'Ghayaasul Mustagheseen' (means, the refuge of those who seek refuge). Just as Allah listens to the calls of everyone and knows their languages, just as Allah hears the voices of the people at any time of the day and removes every difficulty, so does the Imam of our age. The only difference is that these qualities originally belongs to Allah (a.s.) but he has bestowed them upon his Last Deputy Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). Allah is the Creator and Imam is the creature.

Without any further explanation we would like to inform our readers about the various prayers and invocations through which we could call upon our Imam (a.s.). However, before this, we must know about the methods and the rules of these invocations. For it is necessary to know the rules of approaching someone we wish to contact:

- To be with Wuzu (ritual ablution) and to wear clean and pure clothes.
- To seek forgiveness of our sins first.
- To pray for blessings of Allah upon the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny -i.e. to recite Salawaat.
- To pray as if one is seeing Imam (a.s.) with his own eyes. And Imam is seeing him and hearing his entreaties and as if Imam is himself listening to his voice and will eventually solve the problems. One must also keep this in mind that all the blessings and the bounties given by Allah is only through the channel of Imam (a.s.). On the night of Qadr, all the affairs are brought in the presence of Imarn-e-Zaman (a.s.).
- One must have a firm conviction that Imam-e- Zaman (a.s.) loves and values his Shias and lovers more than their parents and relatives. One tradition says: "Our Shias are so much dear to us that if one of them has fever, we feel the heat." The effect of such belief will be that we could be sure that one who loves us more than our parents will surely answer our prayers and solve our difficulties.
- He should repent for his sins and ask for Allah's forgiveness sincerely, so that he can achieve nearness to Imam-e-Asr (a.s.) by repenting for his sins; both physical and spiritual.
- If we have hurt the feelings of a believing brother we must make up for it till he is satisfied from us. Without this we cannot present ourselves before Imam-e-Asr (a.s.) with our problems. Imam (a.s.) and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Allah does not like that we hurt the sentiments of our brothers.

After performing these preparations we can begin our prayers with a firm belief that it shall be accepted.

As stated before, we quote a few Duas and invocations below:

(1) "O Muhammad! O Ali! O Fatema! O Sahebaz Zarnan! Help me and do not desert me for destruction."

(2) The following dua should be recited in a deserted and lonely place:

"O Abul Qasim [this is the agnomen of Imam (a.s.)], reach to give me refuge. O Aba Saleh Al Mahdi (this is also a title of the Imam) help me, help me. Do not leave me alone. I am insulted and helpless, hopeless and weak."

(3) One dua is as follows:-

"O Allah I invoke You by the right of Your Wali and Your last Proof, the Master of the Age. Help me in my problems. Protect me from the evil of every tormentor, traitor and tyrant. Help me through Hazrat. My patience has reached its limit. Deliver us and our children, relatives and all those who are dependant upon us from every enemy, calamity and debt. Amen, O the cherisher of the Universe."

(4) Abul Hasan Muhammad Ibne Ahmad bin Abi Lais (r.a.) was in fear from being killed by the King of his time. He took refuge in the cemetery. Hazrat Imam Zamana (a.s.) taught him the following dua by the recitation of which his life was saved. The Dua is as follows:-

"O Allah! Calamities have aggravated, the absence prolonged and the curtain of modesty has been lifted and the hope has been curtailed and the earth has been straitened and the sky has become unbearable and You are the One from whom help is sought and complaints are made and in You we trust at the time of difficulties. O Allah! send blessings upon Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and the progeny of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) the possessors of authority, whose obedience You have enjoined upon us and by that made us aware of their position. Then do solve for us for their sake an immediate opening, immediate as a wink or sooner than that. O Muhammad! O Ali! O Muhammad! Suffice me both of you for both of you are sufficient. Help me you two for you are my helpers. O my master, O master of the time- Help, Help, Help, Rescue me, Rescue me, Rescue me. This moment, this moment, this moment. Hasten, hasten, hasten. O Most Merciful of mercifuls, for the sake of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and his holy progeny."

(5) The feet of Mirza Muhammad Saeed began to hurt badly. They became swollen. The pain was so terrible that it was difficult to walk properly. He used to limp slowly. He took medical treatment which gave him temporary relief but the pain returned. The puss spread to the whole legs. The other parts of the body began to be affected by the malady. The puss oozed from

various places.

The disease increased day by day. He could not even put his feet on the ground. The loss of blood reduced him to a skeleton. The continuous suffering made him hot tempered. All the family members were fed up with this disease. The whole body was so much diseased that if hand was put on one part of it the puss came out from another. By coincidence the disease of plague had spread in the area and people left the village. He was examined by a skillful doctor by the name of Abu Yusuf. He examined him and then told something to his uncle Mirza Abdul Wahab. It could be surmised that he was also helpless in the case. After this the family members became more desperate. It became known that there was a person by the name of

Mirza Abu Talib in one village.

He had a prayer to seek the help of Imam-e-Asr (a.s.). This dua is very effective. The mother of the sick man went to Abu Talib and requested him to write this Dua for her son. It was written on the day of Friday. She took it to a well so that she could send it for the Imam of the time. When she dropped it in the well it remain to float and was aggrieved. The brother of the sick man had a dream. He saw that Imam (a.s.) has come with a spear and touched the side of his brother and said, "Get up and welcome your uncle." Now this uncle of his had gone on a long journey and there was no news of him for a long time. When the brother awoke he first went to the sick man to awaken him. It was already dawn. When he awoke he was found to completely cured of his disease. The one who could not even put his feet on the ground was

walking all over the house. The invocation is as follows:

"I make you a medium, O Abal Qasim, Muhammad Ibne Al- Hasan Ibne Ali Ibne Muhammad Ibne Ali Ibne Moosa Ibne Jafar Ibne Muhammad Ibne Ali Ibne Husain Ibne Ali Ibne Abi Taalib, the Great news, the Right Path, the Protective Infallibility. For the sake of your mother, the chief of the women of the universe for the sake of your purified ancestors and chaste mothers. For the sake of Yasin, the Holy Quran, the Great Power, the Reality of Faith, the Light of lights and the written Book that you be my representative to Allah, the Almighty, in my need, for so and so..."

This invocation should be written on and kept in pure mud and dropped in running water or a well.

The above incident was during the time of the first and the second special deputies of Imam (a.s.) namely, Usman Ibne Saeed and Muhammad Ibne Usman (r.a.). Hence the following lines

were also added:

"O Usman Ibne Saeed and O Muhammad Ibne Usman, convey my story to the Sahebuz Zaman peace be on him."

May Allah bestow upon all of us the nearness with Hazrat Baqiyatullah, Wali-e-Asr, Imam-e-Zamana Hujjat Ibne al Hasan al Askari upon whom our souls may be sacrificed. May we have the honor of approaching him for our difficulties. May we have the opportunity of serving him. May we obtain immunity from the daily calamities and destructions! May we be delivered from

the non-performance of good deeds!

.(May Allah count us among the slaves of Imam-e-Zaman (a.s