

[Home](#) > [Mikyal al-Makarim Fi Fawa'id al-Du'a Li'l Qai'm vol. 2](#) > [Part 8: Duties of people towards the Imam \(aj\)](#) > 1: To Obtain Knowledge About The Special Characteristics Of Imam (aj) And To Have Information About The 'Certain' Signs Of His Reappearance

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# 1: To Obtain Knowledge About The Special Characteristics Of Imam (aj) And To Have Information About The 'Certain' Signs Of His Reappearance

This is obligatory according to texts (Qur'an and Hadith), and reason.

**Rational Proof:** The Imam of the Time (aj) is a guide and a leader whose obedience is compulsory and it is necessary to recognize correctly one whose obedience is compulsory. So that if someone lays a false claim to be that leader, he can be exposed at once and we shall not be misguided by his false propaganda. Thus the recognition (Marefat) of the Imam of the Time (aj) is obligatory and it is also obligatory to learn about his special characteristics so that if a false claimant of Mahdaviyat appears we can, at once, realize his falsehood. Further details will come in the coming pages, Insha Allah.

**Textual Proof:** Shaykh Sadooq (r.a.) has recorded a tradition of Imam Musa Kazim (as) that he said, "One who doubts about four things has denied everything revealed by Allah. One of these being the Marefat of the Imam of age."

Also that which supports the above point is that which is mentioned in Kamaluddin, quoting from Imam Sadiq (as), who has narrated from his forefathers that Amirul Momineen Ali (as) said from the pulpit of Kufa Masjid: "O Allah, it is necessary that Your earth does not remain devoid of Your Proof on Your creatures, who may guide the people to Your religion and who teaches Your religion, so that Your argument is not rendered invalid and those who follow Your saints may not be misguided after having received guidance, whether this Proof be seen and not be obeyed or be hidden and the enemies are lying in ambush for him and himself he is hidden from the view of the people while his knowledge will not be hidden from the people and his laws are firm in the hearts of the believers and they act upon them." <sup>1</sup>

I say: According the Arabic dictionary Qamoos, the Arabic word ‘aadaab’ for manners is the plural of ‘daab’ which means manner or characteristic etc. Here it implies the special characteristic of the Imam of the Time (aj) that make an impression on the hearts of the people, especially his followers.

It is narrated in traditions that during the time of the advent of the Imam of the Time (aj) people will adopt virtuous qualities in order to emulate the Holy Imam (as). Another point derived from this is that the effectiveness of the Imam’s morals and manners on the hearts of the believers is a sign of faith. Another thing that proves the importance of this is the emphasis with which the Holy Prophet (S) has all times shown in informing the people about the special qualities of His Eminence. So much so that he is even having precedence over the other Imams (as) in this regard.

However this is only for the fact that it is necessary for all the people to have cognition of the special characteristics of Imam Mahdi (aj). On the basis of this it is obligatory on all believers to know the Imam of the Time (aj) with his distinguishing features so that they may not be deceived by the false claimants of this holy office.

In this book we have brought together all that is mentioned on this topic. Readers are requested to consider each of the subtopics and the Almighty Allah will indeed guide them to the right path.

**Note:** At the beginning of the book, we had a section regarding the obligation of recognition of the Holy Imam (as) and there it implied knowing him, along with his name and genealogy and we have explained therein that ones deeds are not accepted if not accompanied with recognition of His Eminence. Whereas here the topic of our discussion is proving the obligatory nature of recognizing the manners and morals of the Holy Imam (as) collectively, so do not forget this subtle point.

From both the views, it is obligatory to recognize our master (as) and this is amply proved through traditional reports that we have quoted so far. In addition the following reports also prove the same:

1. In Usool Kafi, through correct chains of narrators, it is narrated from Zurarah from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (as) that he said: Know your Imam as it would cause you no harm whether the matter is advanced or postponed.[2](#)
2. In the same book, through his own chain of narrators the author has narrated from Fudail bin Yasar that he said: I asked Imam Ja’far Sadiq (as) regarding the following verse of Qur’an:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ

**(Remember) the day when We will call every people with their Imam. (Qur’an, Surah Isra 17:71)**

He said: O Fudail, know your Imam, for if you recognize your Imam properly, the advancement or postponing of this matter will cause you no harm. Because one who recognizes his Imam but he dies

before the advent is having the same position as one who sat in the Imam tent; rather it is like one who sat under his banner. The narrator says: Some companions of the Imam said: The Imam said: It is like one who achieved martyrdom in the company of the Messenger of Allah (S).[3](#)

3. Also in the same book, through a correct chain of narrators, it is narrated from Fudail bin Yasar that he said: I heard Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) say: One who dies without having an Imam, dies the death of a pagan, and one who dies with the Imam's recognition, it will cause no harm to him whether this matter (reappearance) is advanced or delayed. And one who dies having the recognition of his Imam, is like one who has stayed in the tent of the Qaim (aj) with him.[4](#)

4. In the same book, in a correct report it is narrated from Umar bin Aban that he said: I heard Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) say: Recognize the sign; for if you know the signs, it will not cause any harm to you whether this matter is advanced or postponed. Indeed Allah, the Mighty and Sublime has said:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ

***(Remember) the day when We will call every people with their Imam. (Qur'an, Surah Isra 17:71)***

Thus one who recognizes his Imam is like one who has been present in the camp of the Awaited Imam.[5](#)

I say: The phrase "know the signs" with regard to the recognition of the Imam is a comprehensive statement; and the sayings of great personalities are great sayings. It can be further explained by saying that one who is having some special signs is differentiated through those signs. Thus one who knows these signs will not fall into doubt. And the signs of the Imam are either related to his genealogy or to his personality, or his manners and morals, his knowledge etc during the time of his reappearance. And they are related to the inevitable signs that the Holy Imams (as) have informed about.

The signs of the Imam are the miracles that would take place through him. Thus one who is aware of the signs will not fall into doubt even though the false claimants of this position may put forward their claims. And it is from this view that the Imam said: Our matter is as clear as the shining sun and "like a clear day". Thus by the grace of Almighty it becomes clear that it is obligatory to recognize the qualities, signs, manners and proofs of His Eminence since the recognition of the Imam will be achieved through this.

Now that you have understood this point, I say: Without any doubt, the recognition that the Holy Imams (as) have commanded is in fact aimed to protect us from the doubts created by the false claimants of this divine office and the apostates. It accords us security from the deviation of the misleading ones. And this recognition cannot be achieved except through the following two steps:

Firstly: Recognition of the Imam through his name and genealogy.

Secondly: Recognition of his special and distinguishing features.

To have these two recognitions is the most important thing. It is clear that the first recognition is obligatory, in addition to what we have mentioned in the section one of this book, it is also proved by the tradition quoted by Muhammad bin Ibrahim Nomani through his own chain of narrators from Imam Sadiq (as) that he asked him: “Someone believes in your guardianship, exempts himself from your enemy, permits what you have permitted, refrains from what you have prohibited and thinks that the Imamate is still among you and will never go to other than you, but he says: They (the infallible Imams) have disagreed among themselves while they are the leading Imams. If they agree upon a man and say that it is he (the Imam), we will say that it is he.” Imam Sadiq (as) said: “If this person dies with this belief, he will die as a disbeliever.”<sup>6</sup>

Through another channel from Sama-a bin Mehran<sup>7</sup> it is related from Imam Sadiq (as) and from Humran bin Ayyin<sup>8</sup> also from Imam Sadiq (as) a similar statement is reported. Pay attention to this traditional report how it is considered obligatory to know the Imam by his name and genealogy and the least of it is this and this much is sufficient.

As for the recognition of his characteristic, since we have not had the honor to see him directly, if anyone in this claims to be the Imam of the Time (aj) we cannot know the facts except through two ways: One that we witness a miracle at his hand or that we see the signs that the Holy Imams (as) have mentioned with regard to the Awaited Imam. Thus when the believer recognizes those signs and becomes aware of the special moral qualities of His Eminence, he does not heed every call that reaches his ears and he is able to distinguish the truthful and the liar.

From this same point of view, our master, Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) told to Umar bin Aban, who was a prominent companion of His Eminence: Know the signs...because if one knows the signs one will not be deviated after being guided, and one shall not be led astray by those who want to deceive him. It is amazing that a commentator of Kafi has explained the above traditional report as follows: The ‘signs’ implies Imams, as they are the signs through whom are known the conditions of the initial creation and the resurrection; and the laws of the Shariah.

Alas, if I could only know what has made this writer reach this conclusion? And he has overlooked the real import of the word. Since the matter of His Eminence, the Qaim (aj) is the greatest and the most amazing of all issues, and since the position of His Eminence is the highest of all, as proved from a large number of traditional reports that have come in his favor from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (as), and they have said: From among us is the Mahdi of this Ummah. And they have described his special characteristics and the signs of his reappearance, in such a way that they be clear to all the men and the women the urban as well as the rural folks. Also, the signs and characteristics should be opposed to the ordinary, so that difference could be discerned between the true and false claims.

All these signs should have come to us through traditional reports of the Holy Imams (as) as is clear for all those who have sense. That which supports our contention and that which throws more light on this issue are traditional reports regarding the signs of reappearance and the special characteristics of His

Eminence, the Qaim (aj), that is the brilliance of his light in the time of his advent, a clear and general announcement, a fearful call which would be heard by all, a cloud that shades His Eminence, and announces: This same Mahdi is the Caliph of Allah, so follow him; and rising up again of the sun and the moon at the call of His Eminence; removal of hardships and pains of believers through his Barakah; presence of the stone and staff of Prophet Musa (as) with the Holy Imam (as) etc. and many other signs that we have mentioned in Part Four of this book.

Our scholars, may Allah reward them from our side, have compiled those traditional reports in their books. Among that which has been mentioned to us is the traditional report of Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) quoted in Biharul Anwar from Nomani that the Imam said: Till the heavens and the earth are at rest, you must also keep quiet – that is do not stage an uprising against anyone – because your matter is not concealed; you should know that it would be a sign from Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and not from the people. Know that it would be more clear than the sun; it will not remain concealed from any person, good or bad, do you recognize the morning? Indeed that matter is as clear as the morning, there would be nothing secretive about it.<sup>9</sup>

Among the traditional reports quoted from the Holy Imams (as) which clearly prove the obligatoriness of obtaining these two recognitions is a report mentioned in Tafseer Burhan from Muawiyah bin Wahab narrating from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) that he said: Indeed the best and the most obligatory duty of man is to recognize God and to confess ones servitude to Him, and the limit of recognition is that he should recognize that there is no real deity except Him and there is nothing like Him; and he should know that God is eternal and ever-living, without absence, He is described without being compared to anything, there is nothing like Him, and He is the hearer and the seer.

And after that is the recognition of the messenger of God and to testify for his prophethood. And the minimum recognition of the messenger is to believe in his prophethood and that the book he has brought or the commands and prohibitions that he has prescribed are from Allah, the Mighty and Sublime. After that is to follow an Imam in every circumstance after recognizing him by his name and qualities. And the minimum level of recognition of the Imam is to believe that except for the rank of prophethood, he is equal in all aspects to the Messenger of Allah (S); and that the Imam is the successor of the Holy Prophet (S).

Obedience of the Imam is obedience of Allah and the Prophet and submission of every matter to him and to refer to him in all issues and to accept his statements are the levels of recognition. And we should know that the Imam after the Messenger of Allah (S) is Ali Ibne Abi Talib (as) and after him Hasan, then Husain, then Ali bin Husain, then Muhammad bin Ali, then Ja'far bin Muhammad, then Musa bin Ja'far, then Ali bin Musa, then Muhammad bin Ali, then Ali bin Muhammad, then Hasan bin Ali and then the Hujjat from the son of Hasan (as). Then Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) said: O Muawiyah, I have laid out the basic principle of faith for you, so should act on it..<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>. Kamaluddin; Shaykh Sadooq; Vol. 1, Pg. 302

- [2.](#) Usool Kafi, Vol. 1, Pg. 371
- [3.](#) Usool Kafi, Vol. 1, Pg. 371
- [4.](#) Usool Kafi, Vol. 1, Pg. 371
- [5.](#) Usool Kafi, Vol. 1, Pg. 372
- [6.](#) Ghaibat Nomani, Pg. 65
- [7.](#) Ghaibat Nomani, Pg. 66
- [8.](#) Ghaibat Nomani, Pg. 66
- [9.](#) Biharul Anwar; Vol. 52, Pg. 139, Tr. No. 49
- [10.](#) Tafseer Al-Burhan; Sayyid Hashim Bahrani; Vol. 2, Pg. 34, Tr. No. 3

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