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Awaiting the Faraj (Second Coming of Imam al-'Asr (aj))

One of the Shaykh's outstanding features was his profound devotion to Hazrat Wali 'Asr (may our souls be sacrificed for him) and awaiting his holiness' *faraj* (advent) and reappearance. He said:

"Many people state that they love Imam Al- 'Asr (aj) more than they love themselves', whereas it is not so. For if we love him more than ourselves, we should work for him rather than for ourselves. Pray you all that Allah (s) may remove the obstacles and hindrances of his reappearance and maintain our hearts in line with his blessed heart."

The Shaykh's Significant Demand

One of the Shaykh's friends related: 'In all the years I was at the service of the Shaykh, I never sensed that he had any other wishes than the *faraj* of Hazrat Wali 'Asr (aj). He would remind the friends not to demand from God anything except the *faraj* of "the Imam of Time" as far as possible. The state of awaiting was so strong in the reverend Shaykh that when someone would talk about the *faraj* of Wali 'Asr (aj), he would get extremely moved and wept.

How the Ant Strived to Reach the Beloved

The one important thing his reverence emphasized was the preparedness and being well-equipped by all those awaiting the reappearance of Imam al- 'Asr (aj), even though they do not live long enough to witness the time of that noble Imam's advent. He gave an account of Hazrat Dawood (a) as follows:

"While passing through a desert, His Holiness saw an ant picking some dust from a small mound and carrying it to put in another place. He asked Allah (s) to inform him of the secret of this ant. ... The ant began to speak: 'I have a beloved who has set as a condition for my union with her the carrying of all dust from that mound to this place!'

'How long will you be able to shift such big mound of dust to the required location? After all, will your life be sufficient for that'? The Prophet Dawood (a) asked the ant. To which he answered: 'I know all this! But my joy is in that if I die in this way I will have died in the way of my beloved!' Hearing this, Hadrat Dawod got quite overwhelmed and figured out this story as a lesson for himself."

The reverend Shaykh always insisted that:

"With all your being (whole-heartedly) be awaiting Wali 'Asr (aj) and carry on this state of awaiting while depending on Divine Dispensation."

"Give my Regards to that Holiness (aj)"

One of his disciples said: 'He was always conscious of that noble Presence (aj), never saying the dhikr of *Salawat* without ending it with the phrase, "Wa 'ajjil farajahum." (Hasten his reappearance)'

His sessions were never held without homage to the Imam al- 'Asr (aj) and supplication for his reappearance. In the latter years of his life when he felt he would die before the *Faraj*, he would say to his friends:

"If you would find the honor to witness his (Holy Imam's) reappearance give my regards to him."

The Purgatory State (*Barzakh*) of a Young Man Awaiting Imam Mahdi (aj)

During the burial of a young man, the Shaykh said:

"I saw Harat Imam Musa bin Ja'far (a) stretched his arms to embrace this young man. I asked (the people around) what his last word before dying was. They said it was this poem:

The awaiting ones are parting with their souls in their last breaths, O King of the noble, grant us your Succor!"

The Second Coming of some of the People Awaiting Imam Mahdi (aj)

The reverend Shaykh believed that those really awaiting Imam al-'Asr (aj) will return to the world after their death to accompany His Holiness (aj) upon his reappearance. 1 Among the ones he named as those who will return to the world at the time of Imam's (aj) return are: Ali bin Ja'far buried in "Dar-i Bihisht" cemetery in Qum, and Mirza Qummi in a Shaykhan cemetery in Qum.

A Cobbler in Shahr-i Ray

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'Once I was in his presence and we were talking about *the faraj* of Mawla Imam al-'Asr (aj) and the conditions of awaiting. He said:

"There was once in Shahr-i Ray a cobbler (apparently) named Imam Ali, an Azeri speaking man with no wife and children, who lived in his workshop too. He has been described as being in very outstanding spiritual state. He did not demand anything but the *faraj* of Mawla Imam al- 'Asr (aj). He had specified in his will when he died to be buried at the foothill of Shahrbanu mount—on the outskirts of Shahr-i Ray. Whenever I directed my attention toward his grave, I saw the Imam (aj) was there!"2

- 1. This reminds me (the author) of Imam Khomeini (ra) whose blessed life ended with regularly reciting the Du'a-i 'Ahd (supplication of the covenant), a supplication about which Imam al-Sadiq (a) said: "Whoever reads this covenant for forty mornings they will be ranked as our Qa'im's helpers and if he dies before reappearance of that Hazrat, God will raise him from his grave to be at the service of that Hazrat." See also Mafatih al-Jinan.
- 2. See "The Heart with which everything is Present", Chapter Three, Part 3.

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