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Part 1: Finality of Prophethood

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s): Islam or Disbelief

Prophets Ibrahim (a.s.) and Yagoub (a.s.) advised their sons thus:

"O my sons! Surely Allah has chosen for you (this) faith, therefore die not unless you are Muslims." (Surah al-Bagarah, 2:132)

In another verse, Allah the Almighty addresses the believers,

"O you who believe! Be careful of (your duty to) Allah with care which is due to Him, and do not die unless you are Muslims." (Surah Aale Imran, 3: 102)

In another verse, He notifies:

"Surely those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers and (those who) desire to make a distinction between Allah and His messengers and say: We believe in some and disbelieve in others, and desire to take a course between (this and) that. These it is that are truly unbelievers, and We have prepared for the unbelievers a disgraceful chastisement. And those who believe in Allah and His messengers and do not make a distinction between any of them—— Allah will grant them their rewards; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful". (Surah Nisaa, 4:150–152)

In yet another verse, Allah the Almighty gives tidings,

"The Apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers; they all believe in Allah and His angels and His books and His Apostles; We make no difference between any of His Apostles and they say: We hear and obey, our Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course." (Surah Baqarah, 2: 285)

On paying attention to the above verses, it becomes amply clear that to accept Allah and whatever He has revealed, and to obey Him, is belief. On the flip side, refuting anything revealed by Him is disbelief and for the unbelievers, Allah the Almighty has prepared a painful chastisement.

True Islam

We should strive to ensure that our lives end on Islam (i.e. we die as Muslims). For this, it is essential that we must subscribe to all that Allah the Almighty has revealed and the Messenger of Allah (S) has conveyed.

It is easy to believe in something. Anybody can believe in anything. But only that creed can guarantee salvation, which has been endorsed by those whom Allah has chosen as witnesses over this nation. Allah the Almighty has appointed the Messenger of Allah (S) and the infallible Imams (a.s.) as witnesses over this nation. On the Day of Judgment, only those, whose belief and creed has been verified by these holy personas (a.s.), will gain deliverance.

True Beliefs

Sayyed Abdul Azeem Ibn Abdullah al-Hasani (r.a.) was a highly revered personality from the progeny of Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s.), whose resplendent shrine is in Rayy, a suburb of present day Tehran, Iran. The reward of visiting his shrine is as much as that of going to the holy shrine of Imam Husayn (a.s.). He enjoyed an extremely great position and had attained a high level of perfection in knowledge and virtues.

He is the pride of the family of Prophethood and Imamat. Fountains of guidance have gushed out from his clan. But concerning truth and correctness of his belief, he does not rely on his knowledge and preeminence. Rather, he goes to the Imam of his time, Imam 'Ali Naqi (a.s.), presents his beliefs to him (a.s.) for verification and deems him (a.s.) to be a witness over his creed. Come, let us hear it from the source himself.

"I went to the presence of my blessed master, Imam 'Ali Naqi (a.s.). On seeing me, he (a.s.) remarked, 'Welcome, O Abul Qasim! You are our true friend.' I requested, 'O son of Allah's Messenger! I want to present my beliefs and creed before you. If you declare these beliefs to be correct and are satisfied with them, I will remain steadfast on them and meet the Lord with them.' He (a.s.) ordered, 'Go ahead, and explain them."

I declared, 'I believe that

Tawhid (Divine Monotheism)

Allah, the High and the Almighty, is only One. None is like Him. He is between the two limits, the limit of denial and the limit of immanence (similarity). He is neither body nor form nor accident nor essence.

Rather, He is the Creator of bodies, the Maker of forms, the Originator of accidents and essences. He is the Lord of everything and their Master. He is their Originator and He is the One to grant them existence from non-existence.

Prophethood

I deem Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (S) to be the slave of Allah, His Messenger and His last Prophet. There will be no prophet after him till the Day of Judgment. His Shariah is the last Shariah and there will be no other Shariah till the Day of Resurrection.

Imamat

I believe that after Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (S), the Imam, the Caliph, and the one in authority (Wali al-'Amr) is Amir'ul-Mu'minin 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), followed by his two sons, Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.), the Chief of the Martyrs. Thereafter, Imam 'Ali Ibn Husayn (Zain ul-'Abideen) (a.s.), Imam Muhammad Ibn 'Ali (al-Baqir) (a.s.), Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad (as-Sadiq) (a.s.), Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (Kadhim), Imam 'Ali Ibn Musa (ar-Ridha') (a.s.), Imam Muhammad Ibn 'Ali (Taqi) (a.s.), and after him, you, O master!

Mahdawiyyah

{On hearing this} Imam (a.s.) remarked, 'After me, my son Hasan (al-'Askari) (a.s.), followed by his successor. What will be the condition of the people concerning his successor?'

I asked, 'Master! What will be this condition and what will happen?'

He (a.s.) informed, 'He will not be seen. It will not be permitted to remember him by his name till he reappears and fills the earth with justice and equity as it would be fraught with injustice and tyranny.'

Tawalla and Tabarra

Tawalla (Loving the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.)) and Tabarra (Expressing Disgust Against their Enemies)

I said, 'Master! I acknowledge their Imamat and believe that their friend is Allah's friend and their enemy is Allah's enemy. Their obedience is tantamount to obeying Allah and disobeying them is defying Allah.

Day of Judgment

I believe that the ascension (Me'raaj) is truth, questioning in the grave is truth, paradise is truth, hell is truth, the bridge (Seraat) is truth and the weighing scale (Meezaan) is truth. Certainly, the Day of Judgment is bound to arrive and there is no doubt or reservation about its advent. And most surely, Allah, the Powerful, will raise the dead from their graves.

Branches of Religion

I subscribe to the creed that after Imamat and Mastership of the Ahle Bait (a.s.), the following obligations exist: Prayers, Fasting, Hajj, Struggling in Allah's way, Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil.'

After hearing all these, Imam Ali Nagi (a. s.) exclaimed,

"O Abul Qasim! Surely this is the very religion that Allah has chosen for His servants. Be steadfast on it. May Allah keep you committed on this in this world as well as the Hereafter!"1

Another Chain

There is a very important ziyaarat of Imam al–Zamaana (a.t.f.s.) called Ziyaarat al–Aale Yaaseen. Renowned traditionalist Shaikh Abbas Qummi (r.a.) has mentioned it as the very first ziyaarat of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) in his celebrated work, 'Mafaateeh al–Jenaan'. It is highly recommended to recite this ziyaarat on Mondays and Fridays. These beliefs have been stated in this ziyaarat as well and Imam al–Zamaana (a.t.f.s.) himself is made as a witness over these beliefs.

"Then you be a witness on what I have made you as a witness."

Belief, Disbelief and Deviation

The lowest grade of belief: Amir'ul-Mu'minin 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) states,

"The bare minimum by which a person becomes a believer is that when Allah introduces Himself, he should submit himself completely and absolutely before His commands. And when He grants him the recognition of His Prophet (S), he must obey him (S). And when He introduces His Proof and His Witness on His earth to him, he should acknowledge him and obey him (a.s.)."

On this Sulaym asked Amir'ul-Mu'minin (a.s.), "Even if he remains unaware of other realities?"

He (a.s.) replied, "Yes. This will apply till he continues to obey what has been made obligatory on him and refrains from what has been prohibited."2

The lowest grade of disbelief: In the same tradition, Amir'ul–Mu'minin (a.s.) proceeds to explain the minimum thing that makes a person an unbeliever.

"The minimum that makes a person an unbeliever is that he considers Allah's command as prohibition and that Allah has determined for him a religion which he is following, and he thinks that he is worshipping as per the dictates of Allah, although the fact is that he is venerating the Devil."

The lowest grade of deviation

"And the minimum level of deviation is that man does not recognize Allah's proof, His witness upon the creatures, whose obedience has been ordered by Allah and whose leadership and mastership is compulsory."3

Please Note

Man is either a believer or an unbeliever or deviated. In this tradition, Amir'ul–Mu'minin (a.s.) has provided the standards for all three. Belief is that man recognizes Allah, the Messenger of Allah (S) and the Imam of his time. Along with this recognition, he also worships Allah and obeys His Messenger and the Imam.

Disbelief is that man denies all that has been revealed or acknowledges that which Allah has not revealed. He accepts them as his Prophet and Imam whom Allah has not appointed. Deviation is that he denies the Imamat and mastership of those whom Allah has deemed to be His Proofs on the earth and made them as His Witnesses on the people.

To believe in the Messenger of Allah (S) and his recognition implies that we recognize him (S) as Allah has introduced him (S). Moreover, we should believe that he (S) enjoys all those positions and stations that Allah has determined for him (S). It is evident and everybody is aware of the fact that the Messenger of Allah (S) is the chief of all messengers and prophets (a.s.). He is the last of all His messengers and prophets (a.s.). Messengership and Prophethood have ended with him (S).

Now, till the Day of Judgment, no messenger or prophet will arrive. His shariah is the last heavenly

shariah and his book, the Holy Quran, is the last divine and heavenly book. Islam is the last and most perfect of all religions. Things that have been made permissible by it shall remain so till the Day of Judgment and articles that have been prohibited by it shall remain so till the Day of Judgment.

To believe in Allah's Proofs connotes that we believe only in the leadership, mastership and caliphate of those appointed by Allah; whose following is the guarantee for salvation, and whose love and obedience are deemed to be the keys of paradise. The Messenger of Allah (S) has fixed their number to be twelve and prophesied,

"After me, till the Day of Judgment, the number of my successors will be twelve. All of them will be from Quraish. The first of them will be 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and the last and twelfth will be the son of Hasan al-Askari (a.s.), the Hujjah, the Mahdi. Allah will grant him a long life and keep him in occultation. During his concealment, people will benefit from his existence like they draw advantage from the sun when it hides behind the clouds."4

Our Prophet is the Last Prophet

From the above, we can easily deduce that the Messenger of Allah (S) is the seal of all of His Messengers and Prophets (a.s.), Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the last Imam, the Majestic Quran is the last book and Islam is the last religion.

But from times ancient, anti-Islamic forces, imperialist powers and Zionist conspirators have tried their best to create obstacles in these universally accepted and firmer than mountain beliefs of the Muslims, and to deviate them from the right path. Therefore, there were a few from the community, willing to sell their conscience and negligent of realities, who claimed the elevated station of Mahdawiyyah.

Worse are their followers, who throw their leaders into further depths by becoming their ardent fans, to the extent that they (the claimants) seriously start considering themselves as a Prophet or an Imam. Meanwhile, the Holy Quran has declared in no uncertain terms,

"And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah, or says; it has been revealed to me; while nothing has been revealed to him, and he who says: I can reveal the like of what Allah has revealed and if you had seen when the agonies of death and the angels shall spread forth their hands: Give up your souls: today shall you be recompensed wit h an ignominious chastisement because you spoke against Allah other than the truth and (because) you showed pride against His communications. " (Surah An'aam, 6:93)

Similarly, in another verse, it warns,

"...who, then is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah that he should lead astray men without knowledge? Surely Allah does not guide the unjust people." (Surah An'aam, 6:144)

False Claimants

Besides these clear statements, Allah the Almighty has made such fantastic arrangements, which expose these false claimants and show their true colours. They forgot that they as well as their followers are/were believers of the Messenger of Allah (S) and the Holy Quran. When Allah the Almighty declares our Prophet (S) to be the last of all Prophets and the Holy Quran to the final of all revelations, then where does the question of someone else's Prophethood arise?

And if they don't believe in our Prophet (S) and do not regard the Holy Quran as their book, the fact stands that till date Allah the Almighty has not sent a Prophet (S) or a Messenger, who has not verified the previous prophets and accepted their books. Hence, if these false claimants accept the prophethood of our Prophet (S) and acknowledge the truth of the Majestic Quran, then the Book of Allah as well as the Prophetic traditions declare very clearly that Muhammad (S) is the last messenger and Islam is the final religion.

Therefore, the question of another prophethood is completely ruled out and when the possibility of another prophethood is refuted, the discussion of another religion is rejected at the very outset.5

And if these false claimants do not accept the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (S), then such a person can never claim to be a divine prophet, who does not verify the prophethood of the previous prophets and their books. Hence, these false claimants cannot prove their claim in any manner whatsoever.

How meaningful and consequential are the following verses of the Noble Quran!

"And when Allah made a covenant through the Prophets: Certainly what I have given you of Book and wisdom- then an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him, and you must assist him. He said: Do you affirm and accept My pact in this matter? They said: We do affirm. He said: Then bear witness, and I too am of the bearers of witness with you.

Whoever therefore turns back after this, these it is that are the transgressors.

Is it then other than Allah's religion that they seek (to follow), while to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him shall they be returned.

Say: We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us, and what was reveled to Ibrahim and Ismail and Ishaq and Yaqoub and the tribes, and what was given to Musa and Isa and to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit.

And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers. " (Surah Aale Imraan, 3:80-84)

Seal of the Prophets

The aforementioned verses unmistakably declare that it is compulsory and obligatory to believe in all the previous prophets, messengers, and the books revealed on them. Moreover, Allah will not accept any religion other than Islam. Apart from the above, we present hereunder three verses from the Holy Quran and one tradition that plainly announce our Prophet to be the last Prophet and Islam to be the final divine religion..

1."Muhammad is not the father of any of your men but he is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets. And Allah is the Knower of all things." (Surah Ahzaab, 33:40)

This verse evidently announces of the finality of the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a) prophethood.

2. "Say: O people! Surely I am the Apostle of Allah to you all... " (Surah A'raaf, 7:158)

In the above verse, the terms, 'O people!' and 'to you all' explain that the Messenger of Allah (S) is not confined to a particular era or to a special group or generation of people. Rather, his messengership and prophethood is universal and forever.

3. "He is the one Who sent His Apostle with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to dominate over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse." (Surah Tawbah, 9:33)

Noticeably, domination and overpowering imply that this religion will continue to survive till the day of resurrection. Had Allah the Almighty revealed any religion other than Islam and raised any other Prophet, certainly this religion and Prophet would have abrogated Islam just as Islam had abrogated the laws of the previous prophets.

In this case, Islam should not gain clear victory and domination over other religions. But when Allah the Almighty is clearly declaring that We have raised Our Messenger with Islam to grant it victory and domination over all religions and sects, then such triumph can be achieved only when Islam is the last heavenly religion and no other religion ensues. This, undoubtedly, is the fact that Allah has not sent any other shariah or religion or sect after Islam.

4. The following tradition is present in most of the authentic books of the Shias as well as the Sunnis. Addressing Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), the Messenger of Allah (S) declared,

"You are unto me as Haroon was to Musa except for the fact that there is no prophet after me."

After these irrefutable and undeniable proofs, the falsity of all claimants of prophethood after the Messenger of Allah (S) stands exposed, whether he is the Punjabi of undivided India, Ghulam Ahmad Qaadiyaani, or the Iranian, 'Ali Mohammad Shirazi, known as Baab.

Interestingly, the teachings and ethics, which they claim to be their creation, are all plagiarized from the Holy Quran and traditions, and not a single of these belong to them. And whatever actually belongs to these (impostors) is replete with contradictions. These inconsistencies and paradoxes are sufficient proofs that they had nothing to do with Allah.

Before claiming divinity, they had averred Mahdawiyyah. The sequence of events was as follows: Initially, they claimed to be the representative and door (Baab) of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), thereafter, they claimed to be the Mahdi, then a Prophet and finally, God. Since there is no position beyond divinity and godhood, they stopped at it. Incongruities in these claims are sufficient evidences to expose these opportunistic claimants.6 ()

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.)-The Last Imam

We have already mentioned that after the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.), the number of his successors and the leaders of this nation is twelve. The first of them is Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and the last is Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.), who is still alive and in occultation on Allah's command.

On analyzing these false claimants, the following consequences come to light:

- 1) The presence of false claimants proves the existence of the true claimant to this esteemed position. The counterfeit of only those currencies are available, which are actually in circulation. Hence, one can never find a 75 paise coin or a 25 rupee counterfeit note in the market.
- 2) An important peculiarity of the real Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is that he will spread Islam to the nooks and corners of the world. The Islamic slogan 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" will echo throughout the universe. All these bogus charlatans have departed from this world but failed in making Islam as the dominant religion of the universe. On the contrary, they became the cause of further dissension and disputes among the Muslims.
- 3) Yet another significant characteristic of the real Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is that his Imamat and leadership will continue till the Day of Judgment. Immediately after his martyrdom, Resurrection will

occur. These phony claimants have already left this world, causing confusion and chaos with all their deviations and no sign of Resurrection. Their demise without the occurrence of Resurrection is another proof of their falsity.

- 4) Yet another very important feature of Imam Mahdi's (a.t.f.s.) leadership, which has been highlighted in all books concerning him, is that he will fill the earth with justice, fairness and equity as it would be fraught with injustice, tyranny and oppression. These sham impostors neither reduced the oppression and tyranny of the world nor did they fill it with justice and fairness. The converse was the reality. They became the cause of intense augmentation and increase in tyranny and oppression. This is another evidence of their deception and fallacy.
- 5) Allah the Almighty has never appointed any fallible and sinning person as a Prophet or an Imam. Human intellect supports the idea that a person who is responsible for the guidance of the entire humanity and is the guarantor of their salvation has to be infallible (ma'soom). While, we observe that among all these fake claimants, none were infallible. A brief look at their lives will reveal the filth and contamination in which they existed.
- 6) The true representatives of Allah always raised their voice against injustice and oppression. Consequently, the tyrants and their despotic reigns always opposed them and afflicted them with all kinds of tortures and troubles. On the other hand, these sham impostors assisted the oppressors in their mischievous designs and considered rebellion against the tyrants as prohibited. Obviously, they had to support these oppressors for otherwise, from where would they receive support and assistance for their devious aims?

This is precisely the reason that even today their head offices are based in imperialist and colonial capitals. For instance, while intense war rages on in Palestine, Bahaism continues to have its headquarters in Israel. Similarly, Qaadiyanism has its main centers in Britain and the United States. Obviously, children feel secure in the lap of their parents and are nourished in better there.7

For details, refer to books on Finality of Prophethood and on Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.). Moreover, reliable and authentic books have been penned in refutation of these self-idolizing impostors and their sham religions.

These few lines have been jotted down to caution all from being deceived by every false claimant and glib talker, and to preserve our religion and belief.

The Messenger of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (S) is the last Prophet, his Shariat is the last Shariat and the Majestic Quran is a divine book. After him (S), there is neither any prophet nor book nor religion. Even today, he (S) is a Prophet and hence, everyday we proclaim in our azaan and our prayers, 'I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (S)'. Not that he 'was' the Messenger of Allah, but he 'is' the Messenger of Allah.

Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is the twelfth and last of the chain of leadership and guidance. He is alive and in occultation on divine command. Further information concerning Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) will be provided for in the coming pages, Inshallah.

Blessings of Allah be on you, O Master of Age, help us!

The belief in the Imamat, awating and reappearance of Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) is a mirror, which reflects the peak and perfection of true Islam. In it lies the cure of oppressed mankind and the remedy for tyrannized humanity.

In which one can observe justice, equity, brotherhood and fraternity, instead of injustice, oppression and tyranny. In which one sees the manifestation of pure monotheism (Tawhid) and sincere worship instead of polytheism and unbelief. In which man, free from all sorts of dangers, hazards and insecurities, is worshipping the One God.

It is the reappearance of the Imam who will raise the standard of a divine government. Who will destroy and uproot the oppressors and raise the oppressed slaves to unprecedented glories. Whose advent will be a living portrait of perfection of religion, completion of bounties and satisfaction of the Lord.

- 1. Kamaal al-Deen, vol. 2, p. 379-380
- 2. Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 414, Tr. No. 1
- 3. Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 415
- 4. Saheeh al-Muslim, vol.2, p. 19; Mataaleb al-So'l, vol. 2, p. 79; Kamaal al-Deen, vol. 1, p. 280; Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 52, p. 93
- 5. Tableegh al-Resaalat, vol. 2, p. 144; Ayyaam al-Sulh, p. 146
- 6. Talkhis al-Tarikh al-Nabeel, p. 317 by Haikaluddin
- 7. Taryaaq al-Quloob, p. 15

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