

Recognition of Imam of the Age

In the Ahl al-bayt (a.s.) school, it is fixed that the land has never been, and shall never be void of a divine hujjah (proof) and leader and the people of every era are duty-bound to recognize such a leader appointed by God and not to deny him. Uthman-ibn-Saeed Amri who held representation for Imam Hadi, Imam Askari and Imam Mahdi (a.s.) says:

“I was in the presence of Abu Muhammad Hasan-ibn-Ali (a.s.). He was inquired about the hadith narrated from his forefathers that the land would never remain void of Allah’s plea until the Day of Judgement and anyone who dies and does not recognize the Imam of his time has died the death of ignorance.”

In reply, Imam (a.s.) said:

“This is the true just as daylight is true.”

They said:

“O the offspring of the Messenger of Allah. Who is the Hujjah and Imam after you?”

He (a.s.) replied:

“He is my son Muhammad. He is the Imam and Hujjah after me. Anyone who dies and does not recognize him has died the death of ignorance.”^{[1](#)}

As certified by Imam Sadiq (a.s.), the death of ignorance refers to the very death while having strayed and deviated.^{[2](#)}

Recognition of Imam of the age (a.t.f.s.) holds importance from two aspects: ancestral and noble birth. A Shia should know who Imam’s forefathers are and what status and dignity he holds. By this recognition, the true claimant is distinguished from the false ones and nobody will have the least doubt at any time.

About acquaintance with Imam of the Age (a.t.f.s.), the Holy Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and the Imams (a.s.) have narrated numerous traditions that have come down in independent books. For

instance, Shaikh Tusi has narrated them in the book “Al-Ghaibah”, Shaikh Nu’mani in “Al-Ghaibah” and Shaikh Saduq in “Kamaluddin.” Sadr-ul-Islam, Hamadani says: During the current era, it is obligatory for all believing men and women and every Muslim to have a few copies of these books in Arabic and Persian languages in their houses for their reference.[3](#)

[1.](#) Kamaluddin; 2/409 & Kifayatul-Athar/292.

[2.](#) Al-Kafi; 1/376

[3.](#) Takaleef al-Anam/269

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