

BISMILLAAHIR-RAHMAANIR-RAHIIM

SIRAJ-UL-ABSAR

(Lamp of the Sighted)

BY

Hazrat Bandagi Abdul Malik Sujawandi

Alim Billah^{RH},

Khalifa-e-Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}

English Translation by

Hazrat Mashaiq Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Saheb^{RH}

Abbreviations

SLM	<i>Salle Allahu Alaibi wa Sallam</i>
AS	<i>Alaibis Salam</i>
RZ	<i>Razi Allahu Anbu/ Anba/ Anbum</i>
RA	<i>Rahmatullabi Alaib</i>
MMP	Translation of Quran by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall
AYA	“The Glorious Quran”, English Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali
AMD	<i>Tafsirul Quran by Abdul Majid Daryabadi</i>
SAL	Al-Quran, English translation by Dr. Syed Abdul Latif
AED	Arabic-English Dictionary, ed. By J. Milton Cowan

Preface to the English Translation

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

In the month of August 2008, team members of www.khalifatullahmehdi.info visited Bangalore. During this visit, they met Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Saheb and requested him to translate Siraj-ul-Absar into English to be published exclusively on their website. At that time Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb was busy with other translations, so he promised the team to do the needful in the future, Allah willing.

The team of www.khalifatullahmehdi.info continued their requests over phone regularly and ultimately Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb commenced the translation in July 2010. This book was to be his last translation.

For the next 5-6 months Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb worked relentlessly on the translation. As and when he completed a few pages, he would mail them to me for compilation and safe-keeping. His health was failing but he continued the work regardless. At the time of his demise in December 2010, only a few pages of the translation remained to be done.

After he passed away, I completed the translation of the remaining pages and compiled the book into a single unit. The book was then reviewed and proof-read first by my father Hazrat Syed Khalilullah Saheb and subsequently by Janab Syed Mahmood Hasheer Saheb, Janab Syed Akber Saheb and Janab Syed Mahmood Mukarram Saheb. It was the practice with earlier translations of Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb that he would consider the comments from these reviews and would either accept or reject them. But his departure from this world meant that this important responsibility fell on my shoulders. Based on the review comments from the above-mentioned reviewers, I have finalized the book in the good faith and belief that Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb would have done the same had he been alive. Allah knows best. If you find any mistakes in the book, please point them out to me so that they can be corrected.

I have also taken the liberty of adding section headings in the English translation to make it easy for the reader to locate topics of interest. The original book does not have these sections.

It is with a mix of joy and sadness that I write this. I am happy that another translation of Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb is now being released into the public domain and I have been

fortunate to be associated with this book. I am equally sad that this is his last book and the days of working with my mentor have come to an end.

Along with this book, Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb has the honour of translating almost all the important first-generation books of Mahdavia. May Allah reward him for this outstanding service to His religion and bestow him with His vision. Ameen.

Syed Mohammed Suhael

1 Muharram 1433 Hijri / Novemer 27, 2011 C.E.

(email: suhaelsm@gmail.com)

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Bismillah ir Rahman ir Rahim

One day, answering a questioner [Mir Zunoon in this instance], Imam Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} said, *“Providing the proof is for Allah. Our business is only to propagate.”*

The book “Siraj-ul-Absaar” is without a speck of doubt, proof provided by Allah SWT through the pen of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi Alim Billah^{RZ}, who is a Mubashshir-e-Mahdi^{AS}, as the Imam^{AS} has given glad-tidings to Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} that scholars of high ranks will come and bow before you. The whole episode of the event narrated a few pages later, makes it evident that it was the divine hand which cleans the slate of knowledge of the possessor of more than a dozen sciences of religion to turn him into a genuine unlettered person [Ummi] to bestow divine knowledge and the manifest knowledge was again divinely restored solely for refuting the allegations on the Khalifatullah, his teachings and his followers.

We're too humble to describe the greatness of this book, which needs no introduction. So much knowledge is condensed in this small rebuttal tract that innumerable translations and voluminous commentaries have been written on it because there is no way for any one translation to capture the various aspects of each refutation. And no debate or argument on the subject of emergence of Mahdi^{AS} takes place satisfactorily without referring to this book or without its finer points being lifted from it.

Like all his previous translations, this translation by Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Saheb^{RH} is also smooth and flowing. We're confident that like us, other readers will also be absorbed in reading it and will not want to put it down without finishing it. It was this sentiment that fuelled our burning desire to deliver the best translation into the hands of the community. Do not forget that this is a translation of the Urdu text; one can only imagine the eloquence of the original book in Arabic language. This should and may very well inspire many to learn the language and relish it.

We're immensely grateful to Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Sahab^{RH} and lack the words to thank him enough for accommodating our request despite his advanced age and ailments. He left behind him one last gift to the community and we are pleased to present his work to mark his first death anniversary and pay due homage. One can

appreciate Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Sahab's selfless services and dedication to the community work, briefly covered by Bhai Suhael in the short biography given in this book. By translating most of the important books of Mahdavia, he has done for English Mahdavia literature what Hazrat Syed Dilawer urf Gorey Miyan Mahdavi Murshid Qibla^{RH} did for Urdu Mahdavia literature earlier. Mahdavis, by and large, would have been blind to literary gems of their community had it not been for the monumental translation works of these two selfless souls. We say Ameen to all the Du'a and invocations for the Maghfirat of Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Sahab that we hear, read and received in his favor. May Allah SWT place both of them in eternal bliss.

There are two fine points to be comprehended from the Naql Mubarak quoted above – proof and propagation, both of which have been accomplished through the Imam^{AS}, his great companions and pious ancestors, were not without Divine intervention and support. Our job now is to just present it and practice Mahdaviat for the proofs or teachings to have even an iota of effect on the reader as Hazrat Ali^{RZ} has said, *“That knowledge is superficial which is merely on the tongue. That knowledge is real which demonstrates itself in your practice.”*

This edition is intended for online publication only. However, if anyone wishes to print and distribute it (in regular book form with back-to-back cover binding) please contact Syed Mohammed Suhael or the Team at our respective email addresses to start the print job process.

Team,

KhalifatullahMehdi.info

Email: Team@[KhalifatullahMehdi.info](mailto:Team@KhalifatullahMehdi.info)

A Short Biography
of
Hazrat Mashaiq Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Saheb^{RH}

S/o Hazrat Mashaiq Syed Alam Yadullahi Saheb^{RH}
(November 26, 1926 – December 26, 2010)

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Hazrat Mashaiq Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Saheb was born in Channapatna, near Bangalore, in 1926. He was the second son of Hazrat Mashaiq Moulvi Syed Alam Yadullahi Saheb and Bibi Asgarunnisa Saheba. His grandfather was Hazrat Syed Ibrahim Saheb Yadullahi whose *silsala* reaches Miyan Syed Zainulabideen Saheb who was the son of Miyan Syed Yadullah alias Badey Sha Miyan Saheb, with whom the Yadullahi family line started. Miyan Syed Yadullah Saheb is the eighth generation descendant of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Mau'ood Alaihis Salam and the 33rd generation descendant of Hazrat Ali^{RZ}. His elder brother was the Syed Najiullah Yadullahi who migrated to Pakistan during partition, and sisters were Mrs. Akbarunnisa and Mrs. Rashida Bano Safiullah.

After his schooling in Channapatna, he moved to Hyderabad in 1944 and joined Nizam College for his B.A. It was during this period that he first tried his hand at translation by translating George Bernard Shaw's 'Political What's What' into Urdu. The translation was printed in the college magazine, *Nizam-e-Adab*. He completed his B.A. from Osmania University in 1948 and joined *Mazdoor* newspaper as Assistant Editor. In 1949 he returned to Bangalore and joined *Al-Kalam* newspaper. He soon joined *Pasban* and after working for it for a few years, he joined the National Sample Survey Organisation, Government of India in 1953. After rendering government service till 1960, he resigned and returned to his career as journalist and reported for newspapers like *Pasban* and *Salar*. In 1980 he joined the Pakistan Desk of Public Opinion Trends and it was here that he honed his translation skills by translating Urdu articles into English for four long years. In 1984 he visited Pakistan to meet his brother and brother-in-law late Hazrat Syed Allahbux. This visit proved to be a landmark visit.

This was the time when General Zia-ul-Haq had imposed martial law in Pakistan. There was no political activity of any name and many political leaders had gone underground. The journalistic instincts of Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb took over his personal visit and he

started contacting and meeting political leaders. He interviewed many prominent leaders during this visit. On returning to India, he published the interviews in the book “Pakistan - An End without a Beginning”. The book proved to be a huge success. It became mandatory reading for Pakistan watchers and diplomats alike. The US embassy ordered 200 copies of the book. Such was the success of the book that it went out of stock quickly and had to be reprinted within a few months.

The book won him accolades and also opened the door to his next job. In 1987, he joined the Pakistan Desk of UNI and contributed to newspapers like Hindustan Times, Patriot, etc. In 1992 he retired from UNI and returned to Bangalore.

The year 1992 presented another moment of glory in his journalistic career. The Karnataka Urdu Academy approached him to write a book on Urdu journalism. He accepted the challenge, but expressed his inability to buy books that he wanted to refer for this work. The Academy gave him a generous budget to purchase books for researching the subject. He wrote the book ‘*Urdu Sahafat – Tarjuma wo Idarat*’ and the book was published in 1994. This book turned out to be an iconic book on Urdu journalism in India. It soon became the standard textbook for M.A. Urdu course in many universities across India. Even today if you refer to the syllabus of M.A. Urdu of many universities you will find that this book is a standard reference book for scholars. The publishing of this book was the pinnacle of his career. It also marked the end of a successful career in journalism and it was time for him to start a new phase of his life.

Thus, in 1994 he performed the obligation of *Tark-e-Dunya* and began using his decades of experience and expertise in translations to translate Mahdavia literature into English.

His first translation was *Aqida Sharifa* of Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, which was published by Farah Committee, Dubai. After this he relentlessly translated many important books of Mahdavia. The list of books that he translated into English is as follows:

1. *Aqida Sharifa* (The Sacred Belief) by Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}.
2. *AlQoul Al-Mahmood* (An Introduction to Mahdavia Beliefs) by Allamah Syed Ali Yadullahi^{RH}.
3. *Majalis-e-Khamsa* (Five Sessions of Emperor Akbar’s Court) by Miyan Mustafa Gujarati. This is a translation of the record of debates in the court of Mughal Emperor Akbar.

4. Holy Angels of High Heavens – Excerpts from *Tazkira* – This book contains translated excerpts from *Tazkira* by Moulana Abul Kalam Azad.
5. *Insaf Nama* (Book of Equity) by Bandagi Miyan Vali^{RH} bin Yusuf^{RZ}.
6. *Hashia Insaf Nama* (Supplement to Book of Equity) by Bandagi Miyan Vali^{RH} bin Yusuf^{RZ}.
7. *Naqliyat* (Parables) by Bandagi Miyan Abdur Rashid^{RZ}.
8. *Tauzihat* (Explications) by Asadul Ulema Abu Sayeed Syed Mahmood Tashrifullahi^{RH}.
9. *Shawahid-ul-Vilayet* (Testimony to Sainthood) by Bandagi Miyan Syed Burhanuddin^{RH}.
10. *Dogana Lailatul-Qadr* by Afzal-ul-Ulema Hazrat Syed Najmuddin^{RH}.
11. *Maulud* (The First Ever Biography of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood Alaihis Salam) by Bandagi Miyan Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ}.
12. *Kuhl-ul-Jawahir li Arbab-e-Basair* (*Kohl* of pearls for Lords of Insights) by Mohsin-e-Millat Allamah Syed Nusrath^{RH}. This is the English translation of Volume 1, Parts 1 and 2.
13. *Zouq Shouq Namaḥ* (Desire and Delight of Namaz) by Moulana Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RH} of Panagudi, Tamil Nadu.
14. *Siddiq-e-Akber* (A short biography of Bandagi Meeran Syed Mahmood Sani Mahdi^{RZ}) by Hazrat Syed Ibrahim^{RH}, Bichpadi.
15. *Siraj-ul-Absar* (Lamp of the Sighted) by Bandagi Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RH}.

In addition to the above, he wrote the book *The Rebuttal* which was a response to the distortions of Mahdavia faith in the book *Sainthood and Revelatory Discourse* by David Emmanuel Singh. A draft of this book was sent for review to a few learned people in the community. Some of them responded with comments. Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb wanted to edit the book based on the comments, but fate willed otherwise. He never found time to do it, as he was pre-occupied with the translations.

Many of the above books have been printed and some are yet to be. However, most of the above books are available at www.khalifatullahmehdi.info.

The team which runs this website had requested Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb to translate *Siraj-ul-Absar*. They expressed a desire that since he had translated most of the first generation Mahdavia books, they wanted to read his translation of this book also. He was reluctant to work on this translation, as another translation already existed. He did not start the

work for a long time. But the team at www.khalifatullahmehdi.info persisted with their request. Ultimately, giving in to their pressure, he started to work on the translation of *Siraj-ul-Absar* in June 2010. The translation proceeded at quick speed, but in early December of 2010 he fell down, had a shoulder injury and was bedridden. He could not continue the translation although he was desperate to do it. He still had a few pages of the book left to be translated, when the call of the Creator came. On the morning of December 26, 2010 / 19 Muharram, 1432 Hijri, he departed from this world. *Inna Lillahi wa Inna Ilaibi Rajioon – To Allah we belong, and to Him we shall return.*

In a period of nearly 18 years since 1992, he has rendered yeoman service to the cause of Mahdavia literature in the English language. The translations, which he has done, are the fruit of hard labour, perseverance and a dedication which is rarely seen. The reader of his books will hardly be aware of the efforts which went into the translation. It is easier to write a book than to translate it. A translator has to stay true to the meaning, which the author of the book intends, but yet present the matter in an easily readable way in the translated language. The task is made much more difficult in the translation of religious literature, especially Mahdavia literature which contains unique terminology and deals with subjects that have no comparable reference in the literature of the outside world. But Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb succeeded in transcending these hurdles and wrote in a language that was easily understood by all and yet conveyed the meaning of the original text.

Praising the translation excellence of Hazrat Ziaullah Saheb, Hazrat Syed Ali Bartar Saheb, the well-known scholar of the Mahdavia community, writes in the foreword of the English translation of *Insaf Nama*:

Insaf Nama is a sizeable book with a large number of Quranic Verses, Prophetic Traditions (*Abadiths*) and the Imam's narrations (*Naqliyat*). Its translation into English is a difficult job. But Ziaullah Saheb has done it in an easy-to-read style. The reader may feel that he is reading an English book, not a translation. His work needs to be praised.

Hazrat Mashaiq Syed Yusuf Khaleel Saheb of Panagudi has written in the prologue of the same book:

His style and language are simple, clear, direct, effective, to the point and easily intelligible for the readers.

His translation journey was riddled with testing times as well. After he completed his translation of *Insaf Nama*, he lost his eyesight. Recounting this incident in the Translator's Note of *Naqliyat*, he wrote:

After I had completed the work on *Insaf Nama* and its proof reading was in progress, all of a sudden I lost my eyesight. That was an extraordinarily frustrating experience. In the same condition, I performed the *Haj* pilgrimage with the help Allah provided through friends. I was more disappointed when, on return and after a cataract eye operation, the surgeon told me that he "doubted" if I would ever be able to read and write again. However, I supplicated that Allah may restore my eyesight to enable me to continue my translation work. One day, after the prayers, when I opened my eyes, I saw the surroundings bathed in abundant light. I picked up a book at random and was able to read it. Allah Most High had answered my prayers in His infinite Kindness, Mercy and Grace. And now it was my turn to keep my promise to work for His religion. That too I could do with His help alone. I have faith in Him. So, I am back in the saddle and I propose to continue this work as long as He keeps me fit and capable of doing it. So help me Allah!

And true to his promise to Allah, he spent the rest of his life translating Mahdavia literature until his last breath. His translations are today read by thousands of Mahdavis worldwide and Insha-Allah will be a reference for many generations to come.

Syed Mohammed Suhail

Bangalore

9th August, 2020

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RH}

He was a resident of Sujawand. Hence, he is known as Sujawandi. This village is not in India. It may be in Rum,¹ Iraq or Syria. His ancestors arrived in India from there a long time ago and settled in Gujarat in Western India. They were employed by the king of Gujarat. Hazrat Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi acquired many villages as his *jagir* [fiefdom] from the king of Gujarat for his erudition and ability.

His genealogical tree is as follows: Miyan Abdul Malik, son of Miyan Abdul Majeed, son of Shah Abdul Malik, son of Shah Noor Muhammad, son of Shah Burhanuddin, son of Shah Yasin, son of Shah Noor Muhammad, son of Shah Qutbuddin, son of Shah Jalaluddin, son of Shah Nizam, son of Haji Mueen, son of Haji Samad, son of Khwaja Yunus, son of Khwaja Tahamoon Sujawandi, son of Imam Jafar Sadiq, son of Imam Muhammad Baqar, son of Syed Zain-ul-Abedin, son of Abi Abdullah Al-Husain, son of Hazrat Amir-ul-Mumineen Ali Murtaza Asad-ullah-il-Ghalib^{RZ}.

Shah Abdul Majeed had two sons: Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi and Miyan Abdul Ghafoor Sujawandi. Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi had learned fourteen religious sciences and he was well-known for his erudition. The village of Budhasan, which is to the east of Kadi in Gujarat, was granted to him as his *jagir*. When Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} arrived in Gujarat, many of the great *ulama*, nobles, ministers, and *Mashayakhin* of *tariqat* performed the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of the Imam^{AS}. However, the performing the *tasdiq* by Abdul Malik depended on a proper time.

Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} had given the glad tidings to Bandagi Miyan Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} that great *ulama* of the manifest and immanent religious sciences would become his disciples. These glad tidings were fulfilled by the arrival of Miyan Abdul Malik and Miyan Abdul Ghafoor as the disciples of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}.

The story of Bandagi Abdul Malik Sujawandi's *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of the Imam^{AS} is as follows: One day Miyan Malik was going to his *jagir*, Budhasan, in a buggy [light carriage]. He happened to pass by the *Daira* of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah

¹ Not the Rome of Italy.

Dilawar^{RZ}. He saw that a few boys were collecting firewood near the *Daira*. Then, it was time for the ‘*Asr* [late afternoon] prayers. One of the boys sounded the *azan* [prayer call]. All the boys then performed *vuzoo* [ablutions]. They all fell in a line and performed the *namaḥ* [ritual payer] in congregation [*ba-jama’at*]. One of the boys led the prayers and, then, the same boy started the *bayan-e-Quran* [the explanation of the Quranic Verses]. He explained some very important points that astonished Miyan Malik, who had neither heard nor read such *tafsir* of the Quran. He got down from his buggy, came near the boys and asked them where they resided. The boys showed the *Daira* where they were residing. Miyan Malik wondered, “If this is the exalted position of the children, what would be the condition of the elder residents of the *Daira*?” Then he followed the children to the *Daira*. When he saw Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}, he was floored and became his devotee. He touched the feet of the Shah^{RZ} and offered to pay fealty to him as his disciple. Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} said, “O brother! You are a learned scholar and I am an unlettered man. I pronounce *qaf* as *kaf*.” Miyan Malik said, “My knowledge is sacrificed on your *ummiyat* [condition as unlettered man].” Hearing this, Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} made Miyan Malik perform the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, made him his *murid* [disciple] and imparted *talqin* [religious instruction] to him. Then, he sent for some water, performed the *paskhurda* [sanctified leftover]. As soon as Miyan Malik drank the *paskhurda* [the sanctified leftover water], Miyan Malik forgot all his knowledge and became an unlettered man. He even lost the power of recognizing the alphabet.

In the same condition, he performed the obligation of *tark-e-dunya* [giving up or rejecting the world], and joined the company of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} with the intention of *hijrat* [migration]. Then, he stayed in the *Daira* of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}.

There was a person named Shaikh Ali Muttaqi in the *Daira* of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}. One day Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} said, “There is no *iman* [Faith] for an ‘*anin* [impotent person].” Sheikh Ali, whom the non-Mahdavis call as *Muttaqi* [pious person] and the Mahdavis call as *muftari* [slanderer], heard this remark. He was in fact an impotent person. He felt very bad. He left the *Daira* and went away. Another reason for his flight was that he could not endure the hunger that was a daily routine in the *Daira*. Somehow he reached Makkah [now in Saudi Arabia].

There, he drafted a short tract, entitled as *Ar-Rad* denouncing the Mahdavis. Then, he sent it to Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}. The Hazrat^{RZ} made somebody read it and listened to

it. Then, he asked Hazrat Bandagi Abdul Malik to rebut it. Hazrat Bandagi Abdul Malik said, “All my learning has vanished since I drank your *paskburda*.” Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} sent for a glass of water, drank a part of it and gave the remainder to Miyan Malik, who drank it. As soon as Miyan Malik drank it, his forgotten knowledge returned to him mysteriously in twice the quantity lost. All that he had forgotten revived in his mind. Miyan Malik told Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}, “I will certainly write the rebuttal, but I do not have the necessary books of the predecessors with me at present to write the rebuttal.” Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} said, “When you turn your attention to ‘*alim, imam* or *mujtabid*, his soul will present itself before you and produce before you the book you need. Then see the book and write the rebuttal.” Miyan Abdul Malik obeyed the command and wrote the rebuttal. Then, the rebuttal was sent to Sheikh Ali Muftari. The name of this rebuttal is ***Siraj-ul-Absar***.

This rebuttal is so well argued that, to this day, none among the hundreds of the great non-Mahdavi *ulama* could satisfactorily counter the book, ***Siraj-ul-Absar***. A *muqaddima* [long introduction] of this book has been written and published.

When during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar, a debate was convened between the non-Mahdavi *ulama* and Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Sheikh Mustafa Gujarati; Miyan Sheikh Mubarak Nagauri [father of the two ministers of the Akbar’s Court, Abul Fazal and Faizi] was present. Nagauri sent a list of questions to Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi to further elucidate the details about the Mahdavia religion. Miyan Malik wrote a comprehensive reply to the questions and the tract is entitled, *Minhaj-ut-Taqvim*. This book too has won great accolades for its excellence and elucidations.

Bandagi Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA} was a kind hearted, right minded, tolerant and patient person. He had eighteen sons. After performing the *tark-e-dunya* obligation, he had given up his *jagir* [fiefdom]. However, his sons used to benefit by it. Miyan Malik remained in the company of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} till his last breath. He was conferred with the *Khilafat* [successor of a Godly celebrity]. After the death of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}, seven hundred of his fourteen hundred *fuqara* [indigent persons] remained in the company of Miyan Malik^{RA}.

After the death of Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}, Miyan Malik^{RA} returned to Gujarat and established his *Daira* at Budhasan. One day, the revenue collector of Kadi came in the *Daira*. He was very happy to hear the explanation of Quran and thought the expenditure in the *Daira* was great and the income was meager. He offered Budhasan as a *jagir* but

Miyan Malik refused to accept it. He was going back, when the sons of Miyan Malik rushed to him and took the grant documents of the *jagir*. Miyan Malik became unhappy when he came to know of this incident.

Miyan Malik^{RA} died at Budhasan on Shawwal 24, 981 AH and is laid to eternal rest at the same place.

Appeal

We appeal to the *musaddiqan* of Hazrat Syed Muhammad of Jaunpur, Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} of the Last Era and the *Khalifat-ur-Rahman* and the Seal of the *Vilayat* [Sainthood] of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}:

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Qasim^{RA} Mujtahid-e-Groh-e-Mahdavia has written as under:

“Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA} was a scholar of the manifest and immanent [religious] sciences. He has satisfactorily answered all the questions raised by Sheikh Ali Muttaqi. He has also solved all the doubts raised by Sheikh Mubarak^{RA}.² Besides this, he has written such cogently argued tracts that compel everyone to perform the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}.”—See *Asami-e-Musaddiqin*, by Hazrat Mujtahid-e-Groh-e-Mahdavia^{RA}.

The author of the *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani* writes:

“The ancestors of Bandagi Abdul Malik Sujawandi, ‘*Alim Billab*,³ were the residents of Sujawand. After a long time they migrated to India. In those days, Gujarat was the most cultured part of the country in India, nay, it was the most distinguished part in the whole world. The acquired ‘*ilm* [knowledge] has been the legacy of the members of the various generations of this family. The king of Gujarat⁴ admired and was impressed by the erudition and capability of Hazrat Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA}. The king conferred a *jagir* and a post upon him. His honourable genealogical tree reaches Hazrat Ali^{RZ} (the fourth caliph and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}). His father, Shah Abdul Majid Sujawandi^{RA} had two sons; the first was Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA} and the second, Miyan Abdul Ghafur Sujawandi^{RA}. Miyan ‘*Alim Billab*^{RA} was an expert of 14 branches

² Sheikh Mubarak Nagauri^{RA} was the father of Abul Fazal and Faizi, the two ministers of the Court of Mughal Emperor Akbar. The author of *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani* [a book of Mahdavia history] has eulogized him with great titles of the scholars and writes about him that he was a great elderly man and a great scholar of his day. He paid fealty to Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} at his hands. —See *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani*, *Gulsban Hashtum*, *Chaman-e-Chaharum*.

³ ‘Alim Billah means a scholar who has been granted the divine knowledge by Allah Most High.

⁴ The king of Gujarat was Sultan Mahmood Be-gadha [of two forts].

of religious sciences. The fame of this excellence and knowledge had spread, beyond the nobles and king, to far flung areas. In that era, there was no scholar of his standing in the country. He was accepted and liked by the scholars, the nobles and the king. The village of Budhasan, which is about two leagues east of Kadi, was granted to him for his livelihood by the king. He and his brother and family and children used to reside in this village. It was then that Gujarat became the envy of the heavens by the arrival of the graceful feet of Hazrat Syed Muhammad of Jaunpur Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood of the Last Era *Khalifat-ur-Rahman Khatim-e-Vilayet-e-Muhammadi*^{SLM}. And all the men of understanding (*Oolul Albab*) were benefitted and blessed with the *tasdiq* [affirmation and acceptance] of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. However, the *tasdiq* by Hazrat 'Alim Billah^{RA} depended on a proper time. Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} had given the glad tidings to Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}⁵ that great scholars of the manifest and immanent knowledge would become his disciples.”— See *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani, Gulshan Nabum, Chaman Suwam*.

Further, he writes:

“If one were to write the details about the enmity of Sheikh Ali Muttaqi⁶ against the Mahdavia group, it will become a voluminous book, instead of it being a concise account. In short, the Sheikh went from Gujarat to *Bait-ullah* [Makkah] because his machinations could not bear fruit in Gujarat. In Makkah, he obtained *fatwas* for the killing of Mahdavis and sent these *fatwas* to the scholars and rulers of Gujarat. He also wrote a tract against the Mahdavis and sent it along with the *fatwas*. The great scholar of Gujarat, Hazrat Abdul Malik Sujawandi, who is among the *taba'in* [followers of the Companions^{RZ}] of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, wrote a rebuttal based on the great books of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at* and named the book as *Siraj-ul-Absar*. A large number of people have performed the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} after reading this book. Among them is Hafiz Abul Qasim who is a contemporary

⁵ Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} is the fifth Caliph of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}.

⁶ Sheikh Ali Muttaqi was a Mahdavi earlier. However, he could not endure the rigours of *faqiri* [indigence] and hunger and deprivation and abandoned the Mahdavi religion. He then ran away to Makkah. There he wrote a tract criticizing the Mahdavi religion and sent it to Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ}. —See *Asami Musaddiqin*, published, Page 7.

and classmate of Mullah Jeevan.⁷ He studied the book, *Siraj-ul-Absar*, with great care and concentration. Then he wrote the commentary of this book, which is long and comprehensive. This commentary is a very cogently argued book. Its title is *Zia-ul-Qulub*. — See *Mustatab* by Hazrat Miyan Syed Shihabuddin Shaheed ‘Alim^{RA}.’

Hazrat Miyan Syed Husain ‘Alim^{RA}’, grandson of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Ali *Sutun-e-Deen*^{RA} writes:

“Since, Allah Most High showed Miyan ‘Alim Billah the right path to perform the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, he went to Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} and requested him to perform the *talqin* [initiate into the order of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}] and treat him as one of his servants. Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} said, ‘You are a scholar and this servant [of Allah] is *ummi* [unlettered person]. He pronounces *qul* as *kul*.’ Miyan ‘Alim Billah^{RA} respectfully submitted, ‘This servant has given up his erudition and sagacity and come to you. He will follow what he hears from you. He has wiped clean the tablet of his heart from things other than Allah.’ After this, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} initiated him into the order of the Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} reminded the ‘Alim Billah^{RA} of the glad tidings given by Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, ‘Great scholars of the manifest and immanent knowledge will become the disciples of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}.’ Those glad tidings became true in case of Hazrat ‘Alim Billah^{RA}. He wrote a few tracts in proof of the Mahdiat of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, like the *Siraj-ul-Absar* and *Siraj-ul-Millat*. — See *Tazkaira-tus-Salihin* by Miyan Syed Husain ‘Alim.

The author of *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani* writes:

“There were 1400 seekers of Allah Most High in the *Daira* of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}. Seven hundred of them came to the *Daira* of Shah Abdul Karim Nuri^{RA} and the remaining seven hundred went to the *Daira* of Hazrat ‘Alim Billah^{RA}.—See *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani*, *Gulshan Nabum*, *Chaman Anwal*.

Hazrat Syed Dilawar of Begum Bazaar, Hyderabad.

28th *Jamadi-ul-Anwal*, 1373 *AH*.

⁷ Mullah Jeevan is the author of the book, *Nur-ul-Anwar*, which is a famous textbook on the principles of *Fiqh*.

Siraj-ul-Absar

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Bismillahir Rahmaanir Rahim

Siraj-ul-Absar

All praise is for Allah Most High Who held the appointment of the *Imam-e-'Adil* as goodness for this *ummah* [The Muslim Community], raised his mention to unprecedented heights and chose him for the governance of this community. Hence, he has been raised to heights both in this world and in the Hereafter. I praise Him in the morning and evening. And I send salutations to Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} who is the leader of all the Firsts and the Lasts. He is the selected among the most selected [and distinguished] people and is among the loftiest descendants of Marrah, son of Ka'ab, son of Lui, son of Ghalib, and the pure and genuine Arab race. And (I send salutations) on his descendants and on his wives who are the women of rank, honour and dignity, and who have been mentioned in the book of Allah Most High, the Quran. And in whose favour the following Quranic Verse has been revealed: "...And Allah only wishes to remove all abomination from you, ye members of the Family and to make you pure and spotless."⁸ And salutations on the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM} who are embellished with the Virtuous Manners of the Prophet^{SLM} and adorned with his cherished characteristics [and salutations] most particularly on the Perfect *Imam* whose superiority has been established in the galaxies of this universe and whose strands of equity have been drawn across the stars of the sky. No praises are worthy of consideration unless their adornment is centered on the blessed *zath* [nature, essence] of the Imam^{AS}. And no dignity can be discussed unless its superiority is centered on the sacred *zath* [nature, essence] of the Imam^{AS}. And no trait of character can be mentioned unless its elucidation and beauty is centered on the praised *zath* [nature, essence] of the Imam^{AS}. And no illuminated condition is considered to be worthy of grandeur unless the manifestation of its arguments reverts to his *zath* [nature, essence]. This is the Mahdi^{AS} who had been promised to be sent during the Last Era.

After the praises (for Allah Most High) and salutations (to Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}), be it known that when I saw the tract, which has come from Makkah-e-Muazzamah, and attributed to the Sheikh who is known as Ali Muttaqi, with the title of *Ar-Rad*⁹, Allah Most High may have it rejected as its name is manifest, I have decided that I would write the refutation or rebuttal of this tract, because I have seen at various places his deviation from the Truth. He has written things without any certainty and his sayings are without *iman* [Faith]. And I have given my tract the title of *Siraj ul-Absar li-raf'il-zulm 'an-abl-il-Inkar* [Lamp of the Sighted to remove the Veils of Darkness from the Eyes of the People of Denial.]

[The initial writing of the tract, *Ar-Rad* is as follows:]

Preamble

In the name of Allah, Most gracious, Most Merciful.

He [Muttaqi] says: All praises are for Allah Most High Who is the Lord of both the worlds and salutations for our leader Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and his descendants and his Companions^{RZ}. And after praises

⁸ Quran, Surah Al-Ahzaab (33): 33 AYA.

⁹ *Ar-Rad* means rejected; turned down.

for Allah and encomiums for Hazrat Prophet^{SLM}, this tract which I have titled as *Ar-Rad* is in refutation of those people who ordain and decree that Hazrat Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} has come and gone. Allah Most High may bless you. There is no doubt that the existence of the Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} is proved by the Traditions of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and by the *aasar* [the sayings of the Companions^{RZ}]. These Traditions are more than three hundred. And then there is a sect in the cities and towns of India that has the belief regarding a person who passed away about fifty years ago that he is the Promised Mahdi.

We say: The critic has taken unnecessary liberties in quoting the Arabic passage. In other words, he has written *يعتقدون في شخص مات* (...believe that a person who died...). There is no need for the word *في*. It should have been written like this: *يعتقدون شخص مات*.

He says: And the obvious Traditions contradict it.

We say: This saying of the critic is because of his flawed view of conditions, ranks and meanings of the Traditions: whether they are correct or infirm and faulty; strong or weak; in factual or metaphorical language. It is also because the critic has not taken care to consider the beliefs of the *mutaqaddimin* [people of the first few centuries of Islam] regarding clinging to Traditions [*tamassuk-bil-hadith*]. They have held that a person who does not have the status of a *Mujtahid* [Authoritative interpreter of Islamic law] is not permitted to cling to the Traditions [*tamassuk¹⁰-bil-hadith*]. Therefore, it has been stated in the books of principles that for an ordinary person clinging to Traditions is not permitted. And the status of the person who presents proof but has not reached the rank of the *mujtahid* is that of an '*ami* [common man]. In the margins [*Hashbia*] of the book *Husami*, it is mentioned under the discussion of *ijma'* [consensus] that a person who is not a *sahib-e-rai* [man of opinion] and *Sahib-e-ijtihad* [person entitled to interpret Islamic Law] is decreed to be an ordinary man. This goes to show that the person, who draws conclusions from the Prophetic Traditions in spite of not reaching the rank of a *mujtahid*, is, like the Sheikh [Muttaqi], ignorant about the religion of the pious predecessors (*Salaf-us-Saliheen*).

I have myself seen eleven Prophetic Traditions in which it is said that Mahdi^{AS} and Esa^{AS} would appear together. Some of these Traditions say that Esa^{AS} would lead the prayers and some of them talk of Mahdi^{AS} leading the prayers. Despite the presence of these Traditions, Allamah Tuftazani^{RA} has clearly stated in the book, *Sbarab-e-Maqasid*, that they will not appear together and that neither would follow the other in ritual prayers.

It is stated that Esa^{AS} would follow the Mahdi or *vice versa*. But this is something that has no basis or authority. Hence, one should not trust such sayings.

Hence, O Just Man! Know that the experts in the knowledge of Traditions are perplexed in pinpointing and ascertaining the Mahdi on a definite and certain issue in such a way that there remains no possibility of contradiction. They have come to this conclusion after a consensus that he [the Mahdi] is among the descendants of Bibi Fatima^{RZ} [the daughter of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}] and that he would be sent to help the religion. Hence, Imam Bayhaqi has written in his book, *Shu'b-ul-Iman*, that:

¹⁰ *Tamassuk* – means clinging to, adherence to, grasping at, persistence in; holding fast to; *tamassuk-bil-hadith* means drawing commands from a hadith – this is not allowed for a common man. It is allowed only for a Mujtahid, who understands the soundness of the hadith, its relation to other ahadith, its historical context, connection to the Quran, etc. and then draws commands from it.

People have differed in the matter of Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, one group has refrained and assigned its knowledge to its Knower [that is, God]. This group holds the faith that he [Mahdi] will be among the descendants of Fatima^{RZ}, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah^{SLM}, that Allah Most High would send him into the world when He wills and that He will commission him to help His religion.

O Just Man! Look at the saying of Bayhaqi that ‘one group has refrained’. This refrainment becomes manifest when arguments clash and where there is no preference for one argument over the other. Sheikh Ali Muttaqi, who has authored this tract, *Ar-Rad*, had himself written in a long tract earlier, quoting the *Imams of Hadith* [experts in the science of Prophetic Traditions], that:

Qurtubi has stated in his *Tazkira*, in respect of a long story, that the statement that Mahdi will emerge from the *Masjid-e-Aqsa* has no basis.

Hence, see O Just Man! Despite his being expert and most proficient in the science of Traditions, Imam Qurtubi has written in respect of the attribute of Mahdi^{AS} and his emergence that this has no basis. This shows that the critics of the science of Traditions are puzzled in identifying the Mahdi.

It is narrated by Ibn Manada that Ka’ab Ahbar has said that there would be twelve Mahdis and after that Esa Roohullah^{AS} would descend and kill Dajjal [Anti-Christ]. This is quoted from the book, *Sharah-Ghayat-ul-Abkam*. And then, Sheikh Najibuddin Abu Muhammad Waiz Dahlavi has written in his book, *Madar-ul-Fuzala*, that the co-existence of Mahdi^{AS} and Esa^{AS} is an issue of the Shia *Mazhab* [religion or school of thought]. If somebody has any doubt in accepting our assertion, he may refer to the said book.

Further, in the same book Sheikh Najibuddin writes that Tuftazani had written in the book, *Sharah-e-Aqaid*, that Esa^{AS} would lead the people in ritual prayers and Mahdi^{AS} will follow Esa^{AS}. However, he retracted that saying and has written in the book, *Sharah-e-Maqasid*, that:

It is said that Esa^{AS} would follow the Mahdi^{AS} in ritual prayers or that the Mahdi^{AS} will follow Esa^{AS} in ritual prayers. This is something that has no *sanad* [authority]. And it should not be relied upon.

Hence, in describing these differences [of opinion], our objective is to let the Just Man know that the identification of the Mahdi^{AS} is not possible based on any one thing, because we find no substance in this subject that leads to finality and certainty. Then, how can anybody say that the obvious Traditions oppose our Imam Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} of Jaunpur?

O brother! Know that even if the *mujtahidin* [Authoritative interpreter of Islamic law] had explained [regarding the Mahdi], their explanation would have only been their presumption. And if the things they mentioned were found in Mahdi^{AS}, then their *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement] would have been accepted as correct. Otherwise, their error would have come to light. However, when they have not given any explanation on the subject [of Mahdi^{AS}], how can it be permissible for a *muqallid* [imitator/follower of a *mujtahid*] to draw conclusions from the Prophetic Traditions? If one were to ask, when in a given period of time there is no *mujtahid*, what are we expected to do? The reply to this would be that we would go to the person who is superior to all of us and act according to his opinion. Hence, it is said that when a new issue arises and we need to solve it, and no saying of any *mujtahid* is available, we will accept the saying of the person who is superior to others at the given time.

And there is no doubt whatsoever that during the period of the Mahdi^{AS} and his companions they were the most superior of all people of the period and no one else. Now, there remain the arguments that prove the *Mahdaviat-e-manjooda* [the present *mahdaviat*] in favour of the *zath* [essence or nature] of the person whose

tasdiq [affirmation and confirmation] we have performed. We will deal with them shortly, Allah the Most High willing!

Doubt regarding *Tavil* and its answer

He [Muttaqi] says: Most often these people explain the Prophetic Traditions on the basis of their opinions, as they do in respect of the Quranic Verses in order to prove their objective.

We say: We do not explain the Traditions and the Quranic Verses in accordance with our opinions. On the contrary, when our opponents consider themselves to be *mujtahidin* and confront us with their arguments on the basis [of their opinions] of the Traditions, we too assume their (*mujtahidin's*) status and give a fitting, rational and traditionally reported reply. And if they accuse us of any prohibited matter, we counter their argument by explaining them in the same way. Allah willing, we will deal with this matter shortly.

He [Muttaqi] says: The *ulama* know that *tavil* [interpretation] is acceptable only when the text is of a person who is free from error [*kalam-e-ma'soom*] and it is not possible to accept the manifest meaning because of its impossibility.

We say: The critic has written these words : ان التاويل لا يسوغ الا اذا كان الكلام المعصوم لم يمكن حمل العبارة على ظاهرها للزوم الحال منه :
However, the correct text, free of presumption and interpretation, is like this الا اذا كان الكلام المعصوم لم يمكن حمل
ظاهرها [except when the speech of a person who is free from error is such that its text cannot be interpreted in its manifest form]. It means that the innocent speech should not be such that it is interpreted as its manifest meaning. Adding the condition of *Ismat* [being free from error] to the speech is also not correct. Instead, he should have said it like this ((*tavil* can be done) [the speech of a person who is free from error is such that its text cannot be interpreted in its manifest form] when the text requires additional instruction and its manifest meaning cannot be taken] so that it includes the speeches of the saints [of Allah] also. This point is evident from what the Sheikh himself has written at the end of his tract that, “if the person concerned is abstinent and strictly follows the *Shari'at* and if his speech can be interpreted to be in accordance with the *Shari'at*, that too can be interpreted [as *tavil*].”

Further, his saying لم يمكن [...it is not possible to accept the manifest meaning ...] too is not correct. This is so because, the *ulama*, at some places, in reverence to the *mazhab* [religion] of the *mutaqaddimin* [ancients], have allowed *tavil* to be done without any necessity. If this had not been their *mazhab* [religion], they would not have interpreted the hadith الخلافة من بعدى ثلاثون سنة [after me *Khilafat* (Caliphate) is for thirty years] as the perfect *Khilafat* wherein there was no dissidence and there was no disobedience of the Messenger^{SLM}. This kind of *Khilafat* would subsist for thirty years. After this, it would exist at times and would not exist at other times. This interpretation became necessary simply because the *mutaqaddimin* [ancients] had applied the term 'Khulafa' [Caliphs] on some of the Abbasid Imams and Marwani rulers, like Umar bin Abd-ul Aziz^{RA}, even though there was no need for deviating from the concerned Tradition. But according to the saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] these people should have been called the lords, nobles and kings.

And the Prophet^{SLM} told Ammar bin Yasir^{RZ}, ‘Soon a rebel group will kill you.’ This *hadith* has been interpreted by some *ulama* in a very farfetched manner. Thus, it is written in the book, *Sharah-e-Tajreed*:

The presumption would be that the rebel group would purport to mean the people who demanded the revenge for the murder of Usman^{RZ}; and this was the *tavil* despite the fact that Ali^{RZ} had accused Muawiyah^{RZ} and his followers as the rebel group. He had said, ‘Our brothers had rebelled against us.’ He then issued orders that were commensurate with the crime of rebellion, because rebels are those people who extricate themselves from the obedience of the *Imam-e-Haq* [the incontrovertible leader]. What was the need for them to resort to this deviant interpretation? And they resorted to it to avoid the use of the word ‘rebel’ against the Companions^{RZ}. The word ‘rebellion’ is such that if applied to the Companions^{RZ}, it would deprive them of their attribute of *adl* [justice]. Some *ulama* have said that the word ‘rebel’ cannot be applied to those companions^{RZ} who have erred in their *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement]. Whereas Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has clearly defined the rebels. [Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had told Ammar bin Yasir that, ‘soon a rebel group would kill you’].

Hence, when our opponents present Traditions against us, we too interpret them in the best manner we can so that it is favorable before the men of justice in such a way that mistakes and errors are not attributed to the person who has the capability to be the Mahdi^{AS}. We will deal with the arguments shortly, Allah willing. And our *tavil* is not beyond reason and possibility.

It is reported in the *Musnad* of Ahmad ibn Hanbal by Abdullah ibn Haris, that:

When returning from Suffain, I was walking along with Muawiyah and ‘Amr bin ‘Aas. Abdullah ibn ‘Amr told his father, “O my dear father! Did you not hear the Prophet^{SLM} telling ‘Ammar, ‘Alas! O ibn Samiah! A rebel group will kill you.’” ‘Amr told Muawiyah, “Are you not listening to what he is saying?” Then Muawiyah said, “We always blame each other and you people say that we have killed him. He was killed by those people who had brought him with them.” [Upto the end of the narration].

O Just Man! See the interpretation of the Companions^{RZ}! We do not resort to such interpretation!

Explanation of the Hadith: Mahdi^{AS} will fill the earth with equity and justice

He [Muttaqi] says: The interpretation of these people [the Mahdavis] is like this: In this *hadith*, it has come that Mahdi will fill the earth with justice from east to west. [They say that] if even one person accepts the obedience of the Mahdi, the objective will be achieved, because *insan* [human being] is *Alam-e-Kabir* [macrocosm]. Hence, see their open disavowal! Which prohibited matter had the text of the hadith demanded that they needed this interpretation?

We say: I have not heard this interpretation from my contemporaries. Nor have we heard it from our non-contemporaries. No such narrative has reached us from them. I do not know wherefrom did the Sheikh [Muttaqi] get wind of it. Why do we need this kind of an interpretation? Instead, to counter the allegation of our opponent [the Sheikh], there is so much ample material in the *hadith* that it is not easy to remember and list them. [That is, we have a large number of proofs. Why do we need this *tavil* (interpretation)?] Perhaps this argument has reached the Sheikh from those people who are neither the followers of the Mahdavis, nor are they reliable. Hence, accusing the community on the basis of the word of a person who is neither well-known as a just man nor as a man of piety, is not justified.

Be it known that the objective of the Sheikh [Muttaqī] in bringing this *hadith* ان المهدي يملأ الرض كلها قسطا و عدلا كما ملئت جورا و ظلما [verily the Mahdi will fill the earth with justice as it is filled with oppression and tyranny] here is to show that oppression and tyranny will be completely eradicated from the earth; and since this did not happen during the lifetime of that person who claimed that he was the Mahdi^{AS}; hence, they say, he is not the Mahdi^{AS}.

I say that if the meaning of the *hadith* is taken to be this way, then it is contrary to the Quran and the *sahih hadith* [Sound Traditions]. From among them, is the saying of Prophet^{SLM} that is narrated by Sawban^{RZ}:

The Messenger of Allah^{SLM} said, ‘When the sword is placed in my *ummah* [community], it will not be lifted from them till the Day of Judgement.’

Hence, which period would it be when the entire earth will be filled purely with justice and equity? This is so because the fight with the sword will be between the people of the justice and the people of oppression and tyranny. It will be between the people of the Truth and the people of the non-Truth. Hence, it becomes known that oppression and tyranny will never be completely eliminated from the earth.

Further, the saying of Prophet^{SLM} is that ‘a group from my *ummah* will always fight for the Truth and will be dominant till the Day of Judgement.’ This Tradition is in *Muslim* as narrated by Jabir Ibn Abdullah^{RZ}.

Hence, know that the fighting by the group of the Truth gives proof that the other group would be that of *batil* [Falsehood], oppression and tyranny. Is there a greater oppression and tyranny than fighting with the people of the Truth? And according to the wording of the Tradition, this killing will continue till the Day of Judgement. Hence, it is evident that the filling of the earth with justice and equity completely eradicating oppression and tyranny is an impossibility. The person who adheres to the meaning of the *hadith* [that the Sheikh holds] is certainly ignorant.

From these contentions is that which Imam Zahid says under the command of Allah: ”...O Jesus! I will take thee and raise thee to Myself...”¹¹ :

The Prophet^{SLM} has informed that Esa^{AS} will come down from the Heaven, even as Dajjal [Anti-Christ] will emerge and roam over the whole world. Then there will be famine. Work will become very difficult. [That is, the condition will deteriorate extremely]. And the *muminin* will assemble in Makkah and Madina. And Dajjal the accursed will reach the whole world, except Makkah and Madina. When he intends to enter Makkah, Esa^{AS} will come down from heaven in Makkah. He will perform the morning [pre-dawn] ritual prayers with a few *muminin* [faithful] in congregation. Then he will leave along with the few *muminin* to fight Dajjal. [Here the speech of Imam Zahid comes to an end.]

See, O Just Man! If at the time of the emergence of the *Dajjal*, had Mahdi^{AS} been the king of the whole world, the *Dajjal* will not be the master of the horizons. And if the *Dajjal* were to become the master of the whole world and were to spread oppression and injustice all over the world during the lifetime of the Mahdi^{AS}, then how can the earth be filled with justice and equity after eradicating the oppression and injustice? And which oppression would be greater than that of the *Dajjal*?

Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said about the *Dajjal* that:

¹¹ Quran, Surah Aal-Imran (3):55 AYA.

He would spread tumult and disturbance on the right side and on the left side [of the face of earth]!
O the servants of Allah! Be steadfast on your religion!

Hence, do justice! Allah May bless you with His Mercy! In the face of so many contentions, how can the meaning of the [said] *hadith* be as you have understood?

And besides these contentions, there is the command of Allah Most High:

“...And We have put enmity and spite among themselves till the Day of Resurrection...”¹²

Know that the existence of enmity and spite among themselves till the Day of Resurrection proves that they are the oppressors and perpetrators of injustice. Then know that the oppression with respect to its meaning of “usage of a thing inappropriately” is included in *ẓulm-‘alal-ghair* [oppression against others] like the killing or the usurpation of things over which one does not have a right, beating, swearing and abusing, causing injury or hurting. It also includes *ẓulm-‘alan-nafs* [oppression of the self] and that is infidelity and all kind of sinfulness. Hence, how can the eradication of the very root of all kinds of *ẓulm* [oppression] from the face of the earth be possible? And the *hadith* does not give any evidence as to which kind of *ẓulm* from among the various kinds of *ẓulm* is meant here.

Under the same Quranic Verse, it is mentioned in *Madarik*:

All of them would be in disagreement with one another forever and their hearts will be diverse. There would be no conformity among them, nor would they help each other.

And then there is the Command of Allah:

“Had thy Lord pleased, He would have pressed all mankind to form but one community [ummah]. But the differences will continue among them even then, (because of the freedom of action vouchsafed to man). Only those deserving the Mercy of thy Lord will not deviate (from the straightway)—to follow which man hath been created...”¹³

Hence, the Quranic Verse bears witness that Allah Most High did not intend to make the whole mankind as one community [ummah], and, therefore, He did not make it one community. And the saying of Allah Most High that differences would prevail among them explains that no period of time will be free of differences between the people of the Truth and the people of Falsehood. How, then, can it be imagined that oppression will vanish from the face of the earth in all its kinds, denominations, shades and manifestations? Hence, whoever specifies a particular kind of *ẓulm* [oppression] without any reason for it being specific, it should be understood that this is his whim (or personal opinion) [and not the truth].

Then again, know, O Just Man that the filling the earth with justice and equity is stated as a simile that has been given to compare with oppression and injustice. This simile can be of two kinds: either it is *Tashbih-fil-kaiḥy’yat* [simile in its state or condition] or it is *Tashbih-fil-kamiy’yat* [simile in its quantity]. If it is *tashbih-fil-kaiḥy’yat*, it is *musallam* [accepted]. In other words, as there is oppression and injustice among the people of the earth, the Mahdi^{AS} will be capable of establishing justice and equity in that part of the earth. And the *hadith* does not give any indication that he would establish justice and equity in the whole or a large part of the earth.

However, if it is the *Tashbih-fil-kamiy’yat* [simile in quantity] and if it purports to mean those people who are filled with oppression and injustice, then it is unacceptable because of the contentions that we have already

¹² Quran, Surah Al-Maaidah (5):64 SAL.

¹³ Quran, Surah Hood(11):118 and 119 SAL.

mentioned earlier. And this is a *hasan*¹⁴ [good] Tradition. A command about the correctness of such a *hadith* is issued when its content is found in the person for whom it has been specified. The exegesis of the meaning of this *hadith* will not be done in such a manner that it contradicts the Quran or the *Abadith-e-Sabiba* [Sound Traditions].

Thus the correct meaning and interpretation [of this *hadith*] can only be that Mahdi^{AS} will fill some inhabitants of the earth with justice and equity. And the word *ba'z* (some) is absolute with respect to abundance or deficiency. If among the parts of the earth, even one part is filled with justice and equity, it would be deemed correct to say that the earth is filled with justice and equity. This is so because there is *mulabisat* [close relationship] between various parts of the earth, as they are adjacent to each other. And this interpretation is supported by what has been written in the book, *Madarik*. The command of Allah is:

“And hath placed therein the moon as a light, and hath placed the sun as a lamp.”¹⁵

Under this Quranic Verse, the author of the book, *Madarik*, writes as under:

In other words, [Allah] made the moon a *nur* [light] in the skies, even though it is in the sky of the earth, because there is *mulabisat* [close relationship] among the skies in the sense that they are parts. Hence, it is allowed to say as such, even though it [moon] is not the *nur* [light] for all the skies. Further, it is said that such-and-such a thing has happened in so and so city, even though what has happened is in a part of the city [and not in the whole city]. [The speech of the author of *Madarik* ends here.]

And the following passage in praise of the attributes of Prophet^{S^{LM}}, from the book, *Sharah-e-Aqaid*, supports the writing of the author of the *Madarik*. It is as under:

[Prophet Muhammad^{S^{LM}}] made perfect a number of people in the excellences of knowledge and deeds and he illuminated the world with the Faith [*iman*] and righteous deeds.

Hence, see! O Just Man! The *Sharah-e-Aqaid* author's words 'illuminated the world' are like the saying '*yamla-ul-arz*' [fill the earth]. This does not mean that the whole of the world or a large part of the world will be illuminated. It means a part of the earth will be illuminated.

If one were to count the number of the Muslims during the period of Prophet^{S^{LM}}, one would find that the number of Muslims was not even one-tenth of a million of the whole population of the earth, because at the time of the death of Prophet Muhammad^{S^{LM}} the number of the Muslims was one lakh twenty four thousand [124000], according to one narrative. Now, see how small in number Muslims were when compared to the entire population of the world. In this kind of speech, the reality [or the exact number] is not taken into consideration. But its purport is *majaz-e-muta'araf* [outward appearance as is known].

And the *majaz-e-muta'araf*, in this case, is that the thing that was not manifest becomes manifest; the thing that was not to be found becomes available.

This interpretation is supported by what Kirmani has said in respect of the saying of Prophet^{S^{LM}}, 'Allah will eradicate *kufr* [infidelity] on account of me.' 'Eradication of infidelity' means that it will be eradicated from the towns and cities of Arabia or that the proof is dominant and the evidence is manifest.

¹⁴ *Hasan* – It is a rank of *hadith*. It is below the various ranks of *Sabih* (sound), but above the *zaeef* (weak).

¹⁵ Quran, Surah Nuh(71):16 SAL.

The example of this is that it is said that the market is full of wheat. It means that wheat is available in the market, it is visible and it is not hidden. The purport is not that wheat is available in abundance in every nook and corner. And similarly, it is not understood that wheat is available in a large quantity as compared to other food grains. Similarly, here too the term *'yamla-ul-arḥ'* [world filled with] has come. And it is difficult to comprehend the real meaning of the term because of the contentions that we have presented earlier. And the *majaḥ* is both *musta'mal* and *muta'araf* [the outward appearance is both known and in use]. Hence, we have to revert to the *majaḥ* [outward appearance] and it is that justice and equity being found and being manifest is in a part of the world.

All the arguments I have advanced in respect of this *hadith* are only one-tenth of the arguments that I can advance in this respect. Hence, see the negligence of this Sheikh [Muttaqi], who is the tormentor of the Saints of Allah and who has come out in the field to wage a war against Allah. How negligent is he of the said meanings? And because of his ignorance, he is taunting a community that is earnest in reviving the religion of Allah like the Companions^{RZ} of the Messenger^{SLM} did. For us, in respect of the Sheikh [Muttaqi], the command of Allah Most High is sufficient: *'And leave Me (alone to deal with) those in possession of the good things of life, who (yet) deny the Truth; and bear with them for a little while.'*¹⁶

Kings of the Earth

He [Muttaqi] says: There has come in *hadith* a thing that rejects the interpretation of the Mahdavis. And it is this: The kings of the earth are four; two of them are believers [*mumin*]. They are *Zul-Qarnain* and Prophet Suleiman^{AS}. The other two are infidels [*kafirs*] *Namrood* [Nimrod] and *Bakht Nasr*. Then, the fifth would be from among my descendants and would be the ruler of the world.

We say: I am astonished at how the Sheikh [Muttaqi], who is ignorant of the science of knowledge, has made allegations against us on the basis of this *hadith* when this *hadith* does not have the capacity to become proof, because none of the *imams* of *hadith* [experts in the science of Traditions] have held this *hadith* to be *sahih* [sound]. Even if these *imams* had certified its authenticity, it would not have been of any use so far as the beliefs are concerned, because this issue of Mahdi^{AS} is not a issue related to deeds that could depend on the presumptions, because presumption is enough in respect of deeds. Rather, this is an issue of beliefs, and it requires positiveness and certainty. Then how did the Sheikh [Muttaqi] say that a thing had come in the *hadith* that rejects the interpretation of the Mahdavis? If we, in accordance with the overweening pride of the Sheikh [Muttaqi], were to accept the interpretation of the said *hadith*, then we would say: Do you not see that there are two Traditions about the number of the Prophets that have been narrated. One of them says that there were 220,000 prophets, while the other *hadith* gives their number as 120,000 prophets. Since, this does not give the benefit of exactitude and certainty, the *ulama* have hesitated in fixing the exact figure of the prophets, and said, 'We will not confine ourselves on the number of the prophets.'

¹⁶ Quran, Surah Al-Muzammil(73):11 AYA.

Different Types of *Ahadith*

Then, know that the *khabar* [report or *hadith*] could be in three conditions: It could be a report the acceptance of which is obligatory. This is the report, on which the *imams* [experts] have quoted *nass* [categorical Quranic injunction]. Or it is the *hadith* the denial of which is obligatory and the categorical Quranic injunction has been produced to prove its falsehood or its weakness [*z'ayf*]. Or it could be the *hadith* about which the *ulama* hesitate to categorize it. Hence, the *hadith* that is to be known as correct is not a proof in the matters of beliefs. It only gives the benefit of a dominant presumption. Then, comes the *hadith* about which the *ulama* have hesitated. Such a *hadith* does not give the benefit of its being correct by itself. Then, how can it be of benefit to the belief in other matters?

Then, know that the text of the *hadith* does not enter the domain of credence, except in rare cases. On the other hand, the attribute of weakness or strength or a state between the two extremes is envisaged with reference to the attributes of the narrators, that is, their sense of justice and equity, *zab't* [control and discipline], memory, etc. Or [it is judged] in respect of its credentials, like *ittisal* [being adjacent], *inqita'* [separation], *irsal* [transmission] and *iztirab* [disorder].

And the *sahih hadith* is the one, whose chain of authority is unbroken and is narrated by a person who is disciplined as a Just Man and he narrates it from a person who has similar qualities and it has remained free of irregularities and defects. It is of seven kinds: (1) the best and the highest is that *hadith* which has the consensus of *Muslim* and *Bukhari*; (2) Then comes the *hadith*, which has been narrated only by *Bukhari*; (3) Then comes the *hadith* that has been reported only by *Muslim*; (4) Then comes the *hadith* that satisfies all the conditions of both *Bukhari* and *Muslim*, even if both have not described it with authorities; (5) Then comes the *hadith* that satisfies the conditions of *Bukhari*; (6) Then comes the *hadith* that satisfies the conditions of *Muslim*; and finally (7) comes the *hadith*, which has been treated as correct by *imams* of *hadith*, other than *Bukhari* and *Muslim*. Hence, the *hadith* that has been narrated with grammatical patterns, like 'said so-and-so' or the verb or the command or [prefixed by] 'narrated by' in the *ma'roof* [active] tense also is treated as sound. And the *hadith* that has been narrated in a *majhool* [passive] tense is not considered to be sound. It has been described in books of principles like the *Husami* and others that:

If the reporter of the *hadith* is well known in *Fiqh* and *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement] – like the *Khulafa-e-Rashidin* [the first four orthodox Caliphs of Islam] or the *Ibadilah-e-Salasa* [the three Abdullahs]¹⁷ and Zaid ibn Sabit, Mu'az ibn Jabal, Abu Musa Ash'ari and Ayesha^{RZ} and others who are well-known in *Fiqh* and judgement –, the *hadith* reported by these personalities is treated as *hujjat* [incontrovertible proof] and *qiyas* [analogy] is abandoned.

Hence, the Sheikh [Muttaqi] who is inclined towards devious ways and who has deviated from justice and equity should establish the soundness of the *hadith* and then make allegations against us.

Whereas the fact is that this *hadith* is not from the *Sibah*¹⁸ and a *hadith* similar to it has been narrated by Kalbi that: The kingship of the whole world will be given to none but three virtuous men – Suleiman, Zul-Qarnain and Abu Karb; and three infidels – Namrood [Nimrod], Bakht Nasr and Zahaak. This *hadith* is taken from the book, *Sharah-e-Shifa*. Hence, this *hadith* requires that the masters of the world should be six, excluding

¹⁷ The three Abdullahs are: Abdullah ibn Masud, Abdullah ibn 'Abbas and Abdullah ibn Umar^{RZ}.

¹⁸ *Sibah-Sittah* are the six famous Sunni collections of the sayings of the Holy Prophet^{SLM}, made by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizhi, Abu Dawood, Nasai, and Ibn Majah.

the Mahdi^{AS}. The people who argue on the basis of such Traditions and sayings are those who are devoid of knowledge and learning.

He [Muttaqi] says: And all their other interpretations will be analogous to these interpretations.

We say: O scandal-monger Sheikh! May Allah accept your repentance! You have scandalized us in respect of these interpretations as you had done in respect of other interpretations earlier.

On the contention that Mahdavi beliefs are against the Traditions

He [Muttaqi] says: With this belief these people [the Mahdavis] have become *bid'ati* [innovators] and *gumrah* [misled], because they have beliefs which are against the clear and open meanings of the Traditions.

We say: We do not accept this contention that our beliefs are against the clear and open meanings of the Traditions. On the contrary our belief is as per the ranks of the Traditions and we do not do *tamassuk* [clinging] to the Traditions, because the *salaf* [first few generations after the Prophet^{SLM}] have decreed that the '*uami* [common man] is not allowed to do *tamassuk* [clinging] to the Traditions [that is, the common men are not allowed to draw conclusions or commands on issues directly from the Traditions]. But this prejudiced Sheikh [Muttaqi] has done *tamassuk* from the Traditions [that is, he has drawn conclusions and commands directly from the Traditions] in violation of the beliefs of the *salaf* and has thus become a *bid'ati* [innovator] and *gumrah* [astray] himself, because he placed every tradition that has come in favour of the Mahdi^{AS} on par with the *mutawatir ahadith* [the Traditions with continuity or constancy] by giving them the benefit of firmness and certainty. He did not distinguish between the ranks of the Traditions nor on the ranks of their narrators. He has himself said in the last part of his tract as follows:

In short, the Mahdi^{AS} will not be proved to be true unless he manifests all those Traditions that have come in his favour, because, if the Mahdi is ascertained after some Traditions are found in him, then there would be no use mentioning the other Traditions. [Here ends the passage of the Sheikh (Muttaqi).]

O Just Man! See the ignorance and ineptitude of the Sheikh [Muttaqi], how he has jumbled up the *sahih* [sound], *hasan* [good] and *za'if* [weak] Traditions, which are conflicting and clashing with each other, and has tried to give the benefit of firmness and certainty to them like the Traditions with constancy. This is sheer *bid'at* [innovation] and *gumrahi* [depravity]. The charge he is making against us is reverting back to him. He has fallen into the very thing he was running away from.

The meaning of *Bid'at*

He [Muttaqi] says: When the matter pertaining to the *bid'at* [innovation] of these people is under discussion, I felt it appropriate to explain the meaning and kinds of *bid'at*, so that it becomes known what kind of *bid'at* these people [the Mahdavis] indulge in. In *shari'at*, all those things which were not present during the period of the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} and were introduced later are termed as *bid'at*. They are of two kinds: *hasana* [good] and *qabiha* [bad]. Hence, Sheikh Imam, whose *imamate* is universally accepted and whose title is *Sultan-ul-Ulama* Abu Muhammad Abdul Aziz bin Abdus Salam has written at the end of his book, *Qavaid-ul-Aqaid*, that the kinds of *bid'at* are: *Wajibat* [obligation], *muharramat* [forbidden], *mandubat* [recommended] and *makroohat* [disapproved things though not unlawful] and *mubahat* [permissible].

And he has given the procedure for segregating as follows: The *bid'at* should be juxtaposed with *Shari'at* laws; if it falls under the rules of *wajooab* [obligation], it is *wajibah* [obligatory]. If it falls under the rules of *tahrim* [forbidden], it is *muharramah* [forbidden]. If it comes under the rules of *mandubat* [recommended], it is *mandoobah* [recommended]. If it comes under the rules of *makroohat*, it is *makroohah* [disapproved but not unlawful]. And finally, if it comes under the rules of *mubah* [permissible], it is *mubahah* [permissible].

There are many examples of the *bid'at-e-wajibah* [obligatory]. One among them is the learning of the science of *nah'v* [syntax]. This is obligatory because the protection of *Shari'at* is obligatory; and this protects *Shari'at*. And the thing that helps complete the obligation, it is obligatory. And among them are the *ghara'ib* [rarities] of the Quran and the *Sunnat*. It also includes the compilation of the principles of *Fiqh*; criticism and cross-checking and the issues of the correct performance of various actions in ritual prayers; the discussion of the *sahih* [correct] and *saqim* [faulty]. Further, the rules of the *Shari'at* prove that the protections in matters that exceed the fixed things in *Shari'at* are a *farz-e-kifayah*.¹⁹

There are many examples of the *bid'at-e-muhramah* [forbidden]. Among them are the religions or the schools of thought of the *Qadriyah*, *Jabriyah*, *Marjiyah* and *Mujassimah* sects. To contradict the religions of these sects is *bid'at-e-wajibah* [obligatory].

There are many examples of the *bid'at-e-mandoobah* [recommended], like the construction of the caravan, serai and schools. In the earlier times these things were not seen as being constructed. And among the many *bid'at-e-mandoobah* are the performance of the *taraviah* [special night prayers in the month of Ramazan] and discussing the minute details of the *tasawwuf* [mysticism] and talking about the *jidat* [contentions and fighting], etc. Among them are also the issues of convening the *Majalis-e-Mujadilah* [congregations for arguing various issues], provided the objective of these congregations is to invoke the pleasure of Allah Most High.

The examples of *Bid'at-e-Makroohah* are the decoration of the mosques, beautification of the Holy Quran, and others.

Some of the examples of the *bid'at-e-Mubahah* are the shaking of hands by the *musallis* [performers of daily ritual prayers] after the pre-dawn and *Asr* prayers, eating of tasty meals, drinking of beverages, wearing of good dresses and residences, wrapping shawls and *chadors* and garments with loose sleeves, etc. Some of the *ulama* have disapproved some of these things that they are the *bidaat-e-makroohah*. Some others hold that these are the *Sunnats* that were in practice during the era of Prophet^{SLM} and later too. [Here, the speech of the Sheikh (Muttaqi) comes to an end.]

We say: Let it not be hidden that *bid'at* is an *amr-e-ghamiḥ* [ambiguous matter]. All the *bid'at* have not been affirmed by the *ulama*. They have differed [in their opinions] on whether they are the *Sunnat* [the practice of the Prophet^{SLM}] or the *bid'at* [innovations].

Different kinds of *Bid'at*

He [Muttaqi] says: Imam Shafei^{RA} has said that there are two kinds of the newly created things [*Bid'at*]. One of them is the *bid'at* that violates the Book of Allah Most High [Quran], or it violates the *Sunnat* [the practice of the Prophet^{SLM}] or the *aasar* [the sayings or deeds of the Companions^{RZ}] or the *ijma'* [consensus]. This is the *bid'at-e-zalalat* [deviation from the right path].

¹⁹ *Farz-e-Kifayah* is a general obligation, whose performance by an adequate number absolves all; adequate obligation.

The other *bid'at* [innovation] is the *bid'at-e-khair* [good innovation]. This *bid'at* is free from the violation of all the four sources of the *Shari'at* that is, the Quran, the *Sunnat*, the *Aasar* and the *Ijma'*. This innovation is not blame-worthy. And it is said in the book, *Nihayah*, that anything that is new is *bid'at*. The purport is to say that anything that violates the principles of *Shari'at* and is not in consonance with the *Sunnat* is a *bid'at*. The word '*bid'at*' is usually used for disapproving something. Hence, know, may Allah may make you fortunate that the *bid'at* of the Mahdavis is certainly the most unlawful evil.

We say: Whatever the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has said, he has said out of sheer prejudice and hostility. The person who does justice and considers the issues [in their proper perspective], Allah Most High will shower mercy on him. See how he [the Sheikh Muttaqi] has accused us of the most severe *bid'at-e-muharramah* [unlawful innovation]! This allegation is proved against only those people who abandon the *sunnat-e-sahiba* [the correct practice of the Prophet^{SLM}], in which, there is no scope for interpretation or use of *majaẓ* [metaphorical language] and no other *Sunnat* [Prophet^{SLM}'s practice] is violated. The Traditions that have come on this subject are *ahad* [Traditions transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain]. They do not give the benefit of finality and certainty. Besides, some of the Traditions contradict some other Traditions. And there is scope in them for interpretation and use of metaphorical language. Therefore, in this subject the constancy alone is worthy of inclusion and the only conclusion from such Traditions is the existence of the Mahdi^{AS}. It is for this reason that Bayhaqi²⁰ has said that the people have differed in the matter of Mahdi^{AS} and one group of people have hesitated and have left the knowledge about him to its Knower [Allah]. They hold the belief that he [Mahdi^{AS}] is among the descendants of Fatima^{RZ}, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. And none has finally and with certainty identified the Mahdi^{AS} since in this matter there is no particular clue that can definitely identify him, except this *Sheikh-e-palid* [the defiled Sheikh (Muttaqi)], who has said that the Mahdi^{AS} cannot be proved unless he possesses all those attributes that have been described in all the Traditions.

He [Muttaqi] says: Because, the command of the *Shari'at* are of two kinds; one is the principles or the *etaqadiyat* [beliefs] and, two, the *furoo* [the manifest deeds]. The *bid'at* of the beliefs is more serious than the *bid'at* of the deeds. Only the person who is an expert in the Prophetic Traditions, particularly those that are in respect of Mahdi^{AS}, can identify the *bid'at* of the beliefs.

We say: I am astonished at the words of this disoriented Sheikh [Muttaqi], because at times he talks as a sane and wise man and says that *bid'at-fil-eitaqad* is known only by a person who is an expert in the Prophetic Traditions. And at times, he talks like a lunatic and says that the person should be an expert especially in the Traditions that have come with respect to the Mahdi^{AS}, because, according to him, the *bid'at-fil-usul* purports to mean the beliefs. Then, which are the vitiated beliefs which we learn from the Traditions that have come in respect of the emergence of the Mahdi^{AS}? All the sects of Islam argue on the basis of the Book of Allah [Quran] and the *Sunnat*, and call each other as *bid'ati* [innovators] and *gumrah* [misled]. Now [the question is] among these sects which *bid'at* is evident in order to charge them on the basis of those Traditions which have appeared in favour of the Mahdi^{AS}? If you look at the afore-quoted passages, the *baladat* [stupidity] of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] will become obvious.

He [Muttaqi] says: It is for this reason [it is said] that fighting against a *bid'ati* [innovator] is superior to fighting against a *kafir* [infidel], because a *kafir* is identified by his bodily appearance and dress that he is a *kafir*. Hence, the Muslim does not go near him, nor does he accept his opinions and contentions. As for the *bid'ati*: He remains

²⁰ His full name is Ahmad Ibn Husayn al-Bayhaqi. His famous book is *Kitab as-Sunan al-Kubra*.

in the garb of the Muslims and the righteous. Hence, he is recognized only by the person who has a profound knowledge of *Kitab* [Quran] and *Sunnat*.

We say: The saying of the critic is like the *illat* [illness] of his saying, ‘The *bid’at* of the beliefs is more serious than the *bid’at* of the deeds’. His objective is to say that the *bid’at* of the Mahdavis is the *bid’at* of the beliefs. Hence, waging a *jihad* against Mahdavis is superior to waging a *jihad* against *kafirs*, because these Mahdavis hold the belief that a person who is not the Mahdi is Mahdi^{AS}. I am astonished at the Sheikh [Muttaqi] that he has, without any rhyme or reason, just on the basis of his own enmity and injustice [towards us], and for the simple reason of our belief, he holds that our killing is permissible and justified. Even if it is accepted that there is flaw in our belief, on the basis of the vast differences of opinion among the predecessors and others, and on the basis of uncertainty in interpretation and metaphorical language, and because there is no *mujtahid* to whom we could revert [for guidance], even then in ambiguous matters we do not consider that any Muslim who has erred in his judgment is liable to be killed, because this supposed error is like the mistake of a person who cannot find the direction of *Qibla* [Makkah] on an intensely cloudy day and on the basis of the testimony of his heart selects a direction and performs his ritual prayers in the selected direction.

If one were to argue as to how this supposed error could be like the error of the person who has erred in finding the direction of the *Qibla* because his error is the result of the absence of a person who could have guided him in finding the correct direction of the *Qibla*. Now in the matter we are discussing, there are many Traditions which describe the attributes of Mahdi^{AS}. Then, how can this mistake be like the error in finding the direction of the *Qibla*?

I say that this has been repeated many times that of these Traditions, some are very weak and some Traditions contradict some other Traditions, because they are equal in their weakness and strength; some Traditions are such that the attributes described in them are found in the *zath* [person] in whom we have reposed Faith. And in this subject [of Mahdi^{AS}], there is not even one Tradition which gives the benefit of finality and certainty, because the Traditions are decreed as *abad* [Traditions transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain]. This is so because, even if *abad* Traditions are *sahih*, such Traditions can only strengthen the *zan* [presumption], and a presumption does not give the benefit of belief, as has been stated in the books of *usul* [principles]. Hence, this is doubtful,²¹ because the necessary information is not available from the Traditions. Therefore it is like the error in identifying the direction of the *Qibla*. The purpose of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] would be that it is permissible, rather excellent, to kill the disavower of the real Mahdi^{AS}, because he [the Sheikh] has associated him with going astray and of leading the community astray, or has treated the killing as justifiable. Read the record of your deeds, O Sheikh! Your ‘self’ is enough in giving evidence against you.

Manifest deeds of Mahdavis

He [Muttaqi] says: And it is for this reason that you see that the ignorant and the common people have reposed faith in this innovative group, because they see the manifest deeds of the people of this group, like the daily ritual prayers, fasting and seclusion from the common people.

²¹ This means the identification of the Mahdi^{AS}.

We say: Allah may bless him who has said that even a liar tells the truth once in a while. The Sheikh [Muttaqi] has told a truth [for a change] in praise of our predecessors that they possessed laudable morality and graceful character, which was the fruit of the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. The attribute of the *tasdiq* of the Prophets^{AS} [of the yore] too is the same. Hence, it is written in the book, *Sharah-e-Aqaid*, that Prophet Muhammad^{S^{LM}} had perfected the nobility of character to its pinnacle. He also made many people perfect in matters of beliefs and deeds. He had illuminated the world with faith and virtuous deeds. Hence, Raghīb has said that there are two signs for every Prophet^{AS}: One of them is of wisdom which is recognized by the people of *baseerat* [insight], for instance, they display *anwar-e-raiqa* [glow of pure radiance] and *akhlaq-e-karimah* [bountiful disposition]. They possess the manifest knowledge in such a manner that their speech becomes authentic and *sabib-e-hujjat* [worthy of being treated as proof]. Their explanations bring satisfaction to their listeners. These circumstances are such that in their presence, no man of insight would demand a miracle, except those who are prejudiced. Since most people suffer from spiritual ailments, hence when we see someone who can cure the spiritual ailments and make people perfect, then we know that he is a skillful and expert physician and a true prophet. The other sign is the miracle. The demand for it is essential for one who cannot comprehend the difference between the divine word and the word of man.

And you know that all these attributes were achieved by our people after performing the *tasdiq* of Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. And which ailment is bigger or more serious than the love for the world and its people? And which *sifat-e-karimah* [generous attribute] is greater and more preferable than giving up and rejecting the world and its people? This lone attribute of giving up the world and its people is equal to all the good attributes. And our people have achieved the noble attribute of rejecting the world and its people through the *tasdiq* [affirmation] of Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. The Sheikh [Muttaqi] himself has given evidence about this. However, a blind person cannot see! The Sheikh has associated the people who have reposed faith in Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} with ignorance. This is similar to the opponents of Islam associating the companions of Prophet^{S^{LM}} with ignorance and saying, ‘*They say: “Shall we believe as the fools believe?”*’²² And Allah may bless the poet who had said:

I find the goodness in a noble person to be praiseworthy
 The same goodness becomes a sin among the mean
 The person whose mouth is bitter, is an ailing person
 Because of it, even the sweet water tastes bitter [to him],
 As the rain water is like a pearl in the oyster shell
 And it is the poison in the mouth of a snake.

He [Muttaqi] says: The ignorant and the common people do not know that the manifest deeds [of these Mahdavis] are related to their immanent deeds which are the beliefs and principles. When the beliefs are correct, their manifest deeds too will be correct. When the beliefs get mixed up with *bid'aat* [innovations] the manifest deeds too will become null and void. Hence, it is said in Traditions that Allah Most High will not accept the ritual prayers [Namaz] or the fasting of a *bid'ati* [innovator] or his *sadaqa* [charity], or *Haj* or *umrah* [off-seasonal pilgrimage to Makkah], *jihad*, repentance, justice, *fidyah* [ransom]; and he is pulled out of Islam as the hair comes out of the kneaded flour. This tradition has been narrated by Huzayfah^{RZ} in the book, *Ibn Majah* that Allah Most High would not accept the deed of a person who is a *bid'ati* unless he gives up his *bid'at* [innovation]. This Tradition has been narrated in *Ibn Majah* with correct authorities. And Ibn ‘Asim^{RZ} too has narrated it in his *Sunan*, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas^{RZ}. Further, Allah Most High has barred the repentance of every *bid'ati*.

²² Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah(2):13 AYA

This Tradition has been narrated by Ibn Fil and Tabarani in his book, *Ausat*. And Bayhaqi too has narrated this from Anas bin Malik^{RZ}. Further, there are other Traditions that have been narrated in this matter.

We say: The purport of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] in quoting these Traditions is to show that because of their innovation of accepting a person who is not Mahdi^{AS} as Mahdi^{AS}, their deeds are abrogated. And as stated earlier, it is impossible to prove that we are practicing *bid'at* in a matter which is ambiguous. And how can *bid'at* be proved against us, when Mahdi himself is the adjudicator to distinguish between *sunnat* and *bid'at*, when there are differences of opinion concerning them, because this is from the particularities of Mahdi^{AS}. We will further deal with this matter in our discourse about the proofs of Mahdi^{AS} on the occasion of the Sheikh's [Muttaqi] example of the mosquito.

Then again, let it be known that the Traditions pertaining to the harshness and severity on the people of *bid'at* sound the death knell for the deeds of *munkirin* [disavowers], because when Mahdi^{AS} has been proved and affirmed, how can the deeds of the disavowers of Mahdi^{AS} not be decreed as void and wasted, as these people have reached a high station of *gumrabi* [going astray] because they accuse the Mahdi^{AS} and his Companions of going astray and leading people astray. May Allah have Mercy on some of our brothers who hesitate in declaring the disavowers of Mahdi^{AS} as infidels!

Ignorant are deceived by the deeds of the Mahdavis

He [Muttaqi] says: Our saying “that the manifest deeds [of these Mahdavis] which are *furoo* (branches) are related to their immanent deeds which are the beliefs and principles” is not understood by commoners and the ignorant. But if the same meaning is explained along with an example that is perceptible to him, he can easily understand and will accept it. The example is this:

The science of construction is of two kinds: *usool* [principles] and *furoo* [branches]. The knowledge of the principles is known to the expert engineers. That is, determining the foundation to be straight, or its being tilted; and there are some nuances which are known only to the engineers. And the knowledge of the *furoo* [branches] is known to the construction labourer. He knows how to place one stone on another stone. He also knows that his daily wages are just a few dirhams. The wages or the remuneration of the engineers is based on their depth of knowledge of the rules of construction. They are appointed to a post by the kings and wealthy people. The reason for this is that the knowledge of construction is a manifest deed and this deed is related to the immanent knowledge with respect to the soundness or faultiness of the building, which is possessed only by the engineers. The ordinary and ignorant people are not aware of these issues. And they are deceived by the manifest deeds of these people [the Mahdavis] and are ensnared by them.

We say: I am astonished at the deception of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] that he has tried to sow doubts in the minds of people who are unaware about this group that all the people of this group [the Mahdavis] are ordinary and ignorant. The reality, however, is not as he says. Rather, some of the Mahdavi *ulama* are like the prophets of the Bani Israel [Children of Israel]. They have themselves rejected and given up the world and they invite the ordinary people to reject and give up the world. They trust in Allah Most High in all conditions and in all frightening situations, they assign all their work to Allah Most High. Their manifest knowledge is profound and they excel in the immanent knowledge and receive *kashf* [divine unveiling]. Many among them are unlettered and common people too, as the companions of Prophets^{AS} have been in every era. Hence, it has come in verses of the Holy Quran:

“He it is Who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own to recite unto them His revelations and to make them grow, and to teach them the Scripture and Wisdom, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest.”²³

“But the Chiefs of the Unbelievers among his People said: ‘We see (in) thee nothing but a man like ourselves: nor do we see that any follow thee but the meanest among us, in judgment immature: nor do we see in you (all) any merit above us: in fact we think you are liars.’²⁴

“They said: ‘Shall we believe in thee when it is the meanest that follow thee?’”²⁵

The saying of Heraclius when he was answering Abu Sufyan supports this. He says, ‘I asked you whether the nobles amongst the people had followed Prophet^{SLM} or the weakest among them; you said that the weakest among them had followed Hazrat Muhammad^{SLM}. In fact, such people are the only ones who follow the prophets.’

Further, the saying of Ibn Mas’ood^{RZ} also supports this contention. He said,

‘In our day, the people who recite Quran are few and people who understand Quran [or people who act in accordance with Quran] are many. The letters of Quran are neglected [that is, they do not properly pronounce the letters from their *makharij* (proper outlets of sounds)], but its limits are protected. They protect the limits of Quran and they neglect the letters of Quran. The beggars are few and the people who give [charity] are many. They perform long ritual prayers and shorten the *khutbah* [sermon]. People begin their deeds before their desires. However, a time will come when the people who recite the Quran will be more, and those who understand it [and act accordingly] will be few. The letters of the Quran will be protected and its limits will be broken. Beggars will be more and those who give [charity] will be few. They will give long sermons and hurry in saying their ritual prayers. They will act according to the desires of their baser self before their deeds.

This is how it is stated in *Sharab-us-Sunnah* in the chapter “Transformation of the people and departure of the pious”.

Further, Ali Karamallahu Wajhu^{RZ} in response to Huzayfah^{RZ} or Ibn Mas’ood^{RZ} had given a *fatwa* [opinion] on an issue based on his *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement] after deliberating for two months. An Arab tendered evidence on this *fatwa*, saying, ‘I have heard the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} saying exactly like this.’ Huzayfah^{RZ} or Ibn Mas’ood^{RZ} expressed their pleasure on hearing the evidence of the Arab. Then Ali^{RZ} told Huzayfah^{RZ} or Ibn Mas’ood^{RZ}, ‘Why are you pleased with the saying of a person who urinates at his heels?’ This is stated in the book *At-Tabqeeq*, which is the *sharab* of *Husami*.

Hence, it is known²⁶ that the followers of the Prophets^{AS} were unlettered and common people. Therefore, opponents like the Sheikh [Muttaqi] have maligned them. Therefore, Mahdi^{AS} and his community are

²³ Quran, Surah Al-Jumu’ah(62):2 MMP.

²⁴ Quran, Surah Hood(11):27 AYA.

²⁵ Quran, Surah As-Shu’ara(26):111 AYA.

²⁶ Hence, it is known that the followers of the Prophets^{AS} were unlettered and common people. They were not people who could read and write. Hence, the Companions^{RZ} of Prophet^{SLM} like Huzayfah^{RZ} or Ibn Mas’ood^{RZ} became happy at the narration of an unlettered Companion^{RZ}. An adage in Arab is that if there is one who does not know reading and writing, they repeat the saying of Hazrat Ali^{RZ}. The intention is not to ridicule anybody. It is just a joke. And the joke that is in accordance with facts is permitted. Hence, it is narrated in the book, *Bustan al-Fiqh*, that one day Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} arrived at the house of Hazrat Bibi ‘Aishah^{RZ}. There was an old woman sitting in front of ‘Aishah^{RZ}. Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} said, “O ‘Aishah! Old woman will not enter Paradise.” Hearing this, the old woman started lamenting. Then the Prophet^{SLM} said, “The men of paradise will be young men (without beards). Among them, there would be no old woman.” The old woman

followers of the Prophets^{AS}. (As opponents had maligned the Prophets^{AS} and their Companions^{RZ}, so have opponents maligned Mahdi^{AS} and his Companions^{RZ}.) Hence, we do not take notice of the allegations made by the disavowers against Mahdi^{AS} and his Companions^{RZ}.

Further, know that the objective of the Sheikh is to frighten the people away from socialising with the community of the Imam^{AS} and to get them to shun the community. And he ought to do this very thing, in accordance with the command of Allah Most High:

“Their intention is to extinguish Allah’s Light (by blowing) with their mouths but Allah will complete (the revelation of) His Light, even though the unbelievers may detest (it).”²⁷

It has been stated in the book, *Futubat-e-Makkiyah*, in favour of Mahdi^{AS} that:

When the Mahdi^{AS} emerges, there would be no enemies of his other than the *fuqaha* [Muslim jurists], because their leadership would not remain. When the Mahdi^{AS} would issue commands against their *mazhab* [religious thought] they would think that he is misled, because their belief would be that the era of *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement] had expired and that after their *mujtabid imams* none would reach the rank of a *mujtabid*. [Further, their belief would be that the person who emerges with the claim of the *ma’rifat-e-Ilahi* (intimate knowledge of Allah Most High) and *ilham-e-Rabbani* (divine inspiration) would, in their opinion, be a lunatic and a *fasid-ul-khayal* (man of vitiated thinking). Hence, they would not pay any attention to him.] If he did not have the sword [of miracles] in his hand, the *fuqaha* [jurists] would have issued the *fatwa* of killing him. If he were a wealthy man and had great power in his hands, they would have become his obedient people in their greed of his wealth.

Further, Sheikh Izzuddin Abdur Razzaq Kashani has written in his book, *Tafsir-e-Taveelat*, under the Divine Command:

“Those who disbelieve among the People of Scripture and the idolaters could not have left off (erring) till the clear proof came unto them, A messenger from Allah, reading purified pages, containing correct scriptures. Nor were the People of the Scripture divided until after the clear proof came unto them.”²⁸ that

“they are veiled from the path that led to the religion and the truth like the People of the Book, or they are veiled from the truth itself like the *mushrikin* [idolators]. And the *mushrikin* were not those who would break away from their polytheism, until there came a *bayyina* [clear proof; one with indisputable evidence], who guided them to reach the *matloob* [the object of one’s love—God]. This is so because various groups of the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists, who had, under the influence of their carnal desires, gone astray and who were hostile to each other; and every group claimed that it was on the true path and invited others to join its path and denounced the faith of the others as false. Despite all this, they used to remain united on the point that they would not give up their faith, until the prophet who was promised in the Torah and Bible appeared and then they would follow the promised prophet, and with one *Kalimah* [creed] they would reach a consensus on the *tareeq-e-Haq* [the right path].”

became happy. The Prophet^{SLM} and ‘A’ishah^{RZ} both started smiling. This kind of a joke is permitted.—Quoted from the book, *Sharah-e-Siraj ul-Absar*, compiled by Muhammad Qasim^{RA}.

²⁷ Quran, Surah As-Saff(61):8 AYA.

²⁸ Quran, Surah Al-Bayyinah(98):1-4 MMP.

“In exactly the same way, different people of the religion [the people of the seventy-two sects of Muslims] are behaving like the above-mentioned intolerant people. They are waiting for the emergence of the Mahdi^{AS} in the *Aak^hir Zamana* [the Last Era]. They promise that they would follow the Mahdi^{AS} on the consensus of one *kalimah* [creed]. I do not think that the condition of these people of the seventy-two sects [of the Muslims] is any different from the groups of the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists described in the previous paragraph. They presumed that they would follow the Mahdi^{AS} when he emerged and Allah Most High might save them from the mischief of opposing the Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, Allah Most High mentioned their utterances and explained that the hostility and severe discord and arrogance of these people was exposed after the emergence of Mahdi-e-Mau’ood who came with the *bayyina* [indisputable evidence] [that is, the *Vilayat* (Sainthood)]. This is so because not just each sect but every person thinks that the Mahdi would be according to his desire and would uphold his opinion to be true. His pretense is because he has camouflaged his false faith and belief as the true religion, and so he is veiled himself from the true religion of Allah. So, when the Mahdi^{AS} appears in a condition that is not in accordance with his presumed thoughts, his infidelity and hostility would grow; his malice and enmity will aggravate.” [The statement of Sheikh Izzuddin Abdur Razzaq Kashani comes to an end here.]

And Abu Abdullah Husain ibn Ali^{RZ} narrates that he said:

“If Mahdi^{AS} were to establish himself, people would essentially oppose him, because Mahdi^{AS} would revert to them in a condition that he would be a young man while these people would be thinking that he would be an old man.”

This is what is written in the book, *Iqd-ud-Durar*. Further, in the book *Mazhar*, the *Sharah* of *Masabih*, it is written that:

“Mahdi^{AS} would be a *Mard-e-Aziz* [Mighty Man]; only *arifin* [people with intimate mystic knowledge of God] will recognize him.”

The purpose of quoting these sayings is to show that the opposition of the people is proof in itself of the *tasdiq* [affirmation] of Mahdi^{AS}.

Further, the saying of Waraqah bin Nowfal, that has been narrated in the Book of Traditions, *Bukhari*, too supports us. When the Prophet^{SLM} asked, ‘Would these people expel me?’ Waraqah said, ‘Yes. Whenever someone staked a claim like the one you did then he earned the enmity of others.’ This narrative proves that the people’s enmity against the Prophets^{AS} is a *Sunnat-e-Jariah* [continuing practice]. Since the Mahdi^{AS} is the follower of the Prophet^{SLM} in establishing the religion, as the Prophet^{SLM} has himself said that ‘He [the Mahdi^{AS}] will re-establish the religion in the *Aak^har Zamana* [Last Era] as I had established in the beginning period.’ Hence, Mahdi^{AS} gave the call towards the same religion that all the Prophets^{AS} had brought. He invited the people unto the religion and made the call of being the Mahdi^{AS}, who was sent by Allah similar to how the Prophets^{AS} invited people to the religion and their call of being sent by Allah Most High as Prophets^{AS}. However, if one were to say that the Mahdi^{AS} did not bring a new religion from Allah Most High but he invited the people unto the religion of the Prophet^{SLM}, I would in reply say that most of the Prophets^{AS} were like that. Even they did not bring any new religion, but their call was for the establishment of the *Deen-e-Qadim* [the old religion of Allah Most High], like the Prophets^{AS} among the Children of Israel had invited people to follow the teaching of the Torah. Hence, the enmity of the people is the result of establishing the religion and inviting the people towards it, as Allah Most High has said:

“...Is it ever so, that, when cometh unto you a messenger (from Allah) with that which ye yourself desire not, ye grew arrogant, and some ye disbelieve and some ye slay?”²⁹

Forbidding people from acquiring knowledge

He [Muttaqi] says: These people [the Mahdavis] forbid their companions from learning *ilm* [knowledge] and think this ignorance to be an excellence. They argue on the basis of their *hamaqat* [ineptitude] that Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} was *ummi* [unlettered]. See their ignorance! They compare their ignorance with the *ilm* [knowledge] that was bestowed by Allah Most High as the *Ilm-e-Ladunni* [divinely inspired knowledge.] Allah Most High may ruin them and terminate their relics.

We say: O Just Man! See the enmity and hostility of the Sheikh [Muttaqi]; how he has camouflaged the virtues [*tawakkul* (Trust in Allah), indifference towards the people] of our companions who were like the *As'hab-e-Suffah* [People of the Bench] as their evil. With respect to people like the Sheikh [Muttaqi], Allah Most High has said:

“...Behold! The Curse of Allah is on those who do wrong! Who debar (men) from the way of Allah and would have it crooked...”³⁰

Further, Allah Most High says:

“Those who work against God and His Apostle—it is they who shall be of the most humiliated.”³¹

Further, know that our Companions^{RZ} do not prevent or prohibit anybody to learn. On the contrary among them are scholars who are expert in the manifest sciences, who have acquired their *ilm* [knowledge] from reputed and accomplished teachers and their immanent *ilm* from their [spiritual] exercises, perpetual remembrance of Allah Most High, seclusion from the people and by their constant companionship with their *murshidin-sadiqin* [truthful preceptors]. All this they have achieved in accordance with the saying of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} who has said:

“Whoever sincerely and genuinely worships Allah for forty days, the fountains of wisdom will flow from his heart and his tongue will wax eloquent.”

However, the Mahdavi *ulama* [scholars] instruct the people to develop the desire for Allah Most High and to give up the desire of things other than Allah Most High. They also command that people should disassociate their *batin* [immanence] from both the worlds—the Here and the Hereafter. Where Allah Most High intends to grant good for any person, that person gives up the world and remains in the company of the *murshidin-sadiqin* [the truthful preceptors]. His preoccupation is to remain in the activities described above. Then, within a very few days he acquires all those things that others cannot achieve in years. This is the result of the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of Mahdi^{AS} and the sincerity of the immanence [of the seekers of Allah].

Hence, these people [the Mahdavis] do not need to achieve the sciences that are achieved by formal lessons and teachings in schools, because among them [the performers of perpetual remembrance of Allah Most High] are such people who have, by their efforts, achieved the manifest sciences. If they need any information about the issues concerning the *Fiqh* [Islamic Law], they ask their companions who are experts

²⁹ Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah(2):87 MMP.

³⁰ Quran, Surah Hood (11):18-19 MMP.

³¹ Quran, Surah Al-Mujadilah(58):20 SAL.

in those manifest sciences. This has been the practice of those people who are engaged in the deeds of the heart, like *zīkr* [remembrance of Allah Most High], *fīkr* [thinking], *muraqabah* [meditation], and *tavajjuh il-Allah* [attention directed towards Allah Most High]. They did all they could do in immanent matters. They adopted an easy-going attitude in the manifest matters. They achieved perfection in the matters of principles of religion [did research in the commands relating to daily ritual prayers—*namaz*, *roḥab* (fasting), *halal* (legitimate) and *haram* (unlawful; forbidden)]. All these are indispensable. Then there is the saying of *Sheikh-ash-Shuyookh* Shihabuddin^{RA}, which is narrated in the book, *Awarif*, supporting this. It is this:

It is narrated in *hadith* [Tradition] (that Prophet^{SLM} said), ‘The excellence of the ‘*alim* [scholar] over the ‘*abid* [worshipper] is like my excellence over my *ummah* [Muslim community].’ Here, it is not the knowledge about the sale, purchase, marriage, divorce, and ‘*itaq* [manumission or freeing of slaves] that is being referred to. What is referred to here is the knowledge conferred by Allah Most High and strengthening of the certainty of that inspired knowledge. Sometimes a slave of Allah becomes an ‘*alim bi-Allah* [a learned man on whom Allah Most High confers the divinely inspired knowledge], but he does not know what is *farḡ-e-kifayah* [a general obligation whose performance by an adequate number absolves all; adequate obligation]. The Companions^{RZ} of the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} knew more about the realities and the intimate knowledge of Allah Most High than the *ulama* [scholars] of the *taba’een* [followers of the Companions^{RZ}]. And among the scholars of *taba’een* [the followers of the Companions^{RZ}], there were people who were stronger than their compatriots. They were pious and had the competence to issue *fatwas* [religious edicts] and command over the manifest knowledge. May Allah Most High be pleased with them all!’

Further, it is also written in the book, *Awarif*, that:

The minds of these *ulama-e-ḡabiri* [scholars of the manifest knowledge of the religion] had been filled with the minor points. They were engaged fully in them. And due to this engagement with minor points they were separated from the comprehensive knowledge.

And the minds of the *ulama-e-ḡahidin* [the scholars among the mystic hermits] acquired the knowledge of the minor points to the extent of the principles of religion and the basics from the *Shari’at* and then turned their attention towards Allah Most High and became fully absorbed in His *talab* [desire].

Considering the killing of scholars as permitted

He [Muttaqi] says: It is for this reason that these people [the Mahdavis] consider the killing of the *ulama* [religious scholars] as *jaiz* [allowed or permitted]. And they prefer their killing to the killing of the *kafirs* [infidels]. May Allah kill them!

We say: Allah’s curse is on the *Sheikh* [Muttaqi] who has scandalized the sincere servants of Allah Most High! We do not consider the killing of the *ulama* as absolutely allowed or permissible as the *Sheikh* [Muttaqi] has said. On the contrary, what we say is: If on the basis of our belief, someone like the *Sheikh* [Muttaqi], concludes that our killing is allowed or permitted, then the killing of such a person becomes allowed or permitted. Otherwise, not! And the opinion that lends justification to this is the saying of the *Sheikh* [Muttaqi] himself that: ‘The *jihad* against the *bid’atis* [innovators] is superior to the *jihad* against the *kafirs*

[infidels].⁷ But then the condition of the *munkir* [disavower] is worse than a *bid'ati* [innovator], particularly those who consider the killing of our brothers as permitted.

He [Muttaqi] says: Their [the Mahdavis'] treating as allowed or permissible the killing of our *ulama* [that is, the non-Mahdavi scholars] is the proof of their *jahl* [ignorance] and *zalalat* [going astray]. This is also sufficient to prove that they are incapable of proving their false faith.

We say: We have proved our claim in the same manner as the *ulama* have proved the Unity [Oneness] of Allah Most High and the Prophethood of the Prophets^{AS}. In other words, we have proved our claim by rational arguments and through our [superior] character and behaviour. Hence, we will advance the necessary arguments when we deal with the Sheikh's example of the mosquito. However, the person who has covered his eyes with veils of enmity and hostility will not be able to see. Allah Most High says:

*"Say—For Allah's is the final argument—Had He willed He could indeed have guided all of you."*³²

*"This is the Book; in it is guidance, sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah."*³³

That is, in reality, [guidance is] for the people of equity and for those who repose Faith, and not for those who disavow and are hostile.

***Tafsir* on the basis of opinion**

He [Muttaqi] says: Then among their evils is the writing of commentaries [exegesis] of Qur'an on the basis of their opinion. Hence, it has been reported that a person, who writes the commentaries in this manner, has committed a blunder, even if his commentary or exegesis is correct.

We say: The speech of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] is mixed with the voice of the animals. It is not even comparable to the speech of the ordinary people. The question of it being akin to the speech of the eloquent people does not arise. Look at the *فاء*. What relation does this *فاء* of *فورد* have with its preceding phrase? The right phrase would have been *تفسيرهم القرآن بالرأى و ذلك غير جائز لانه قد ورد*. We have ignored other such sentences previously.

The Sheikh [Muttaqi] has made the allegation that we comment on the Quran on the basis of our opinion. This is one of his slanders against us, because our reliable brethren read the various *tafsir* [exegeses] and they explain them in accordance with the Arabic grammar. If any of their sayings is not found in one *tafsir* [exegesis] it will certainly be found in another *tafsir*. I have not heard any of their sayings, which is against the categorically proven beliefs.

The conditions that the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has subsequently mentioned are not essential. The reasons for this will be dealt shortly, Allah willing. And which prohibited matter can be blamed on the person who is an *'alim* [scholar] of lexicography, and knows the background of the revelation of a Quranic Verse; even if he does not know some of the things that the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has mentioned in his later passages.

From the point of view of eloquence, the Verse that holds the highest rank in Quran is as follows:

³² Quran, Surah Al-An'aam(6):149 MMP.

³³ Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah(2):2 AYA.

وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكَ وَيَسْمَأْهُ أَقْلَعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَأَسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ³⁴

And this is so because this verse has such fine points which the experts in the science of *fasahat* [eloquence] and *balaghat* [rhetoric] have failed [to explain], so much so, that even the disavowers have asserted that this is not the speech of a human being, but it is the *kalam* [speech] of Allah Most High. Most of the commentators [of Quran] have explained this verse without going into the details of the relevant points. Hence, if somebody explains the Quranic Verses in the following manner – ‘*yaaa-arzūb-la-‘ii maaa-‘akī*’ [‘O earth! Swallow up thy water’]; ‘*wa yaa-samaaa-‘u ‘aqli-ii*’ [‘O sky! Cease pouring’]; that is hold back your water and stop raining; ‘*wa giizal-maa-‘u*’ [and the flood abated]; ‘*wa quzi-yal-‘amru*’ [and the destruction of the community of Nuh^{AS} was completed]; ‘*wasta-wat ‘alal Juu-diyyi*’ [and the ark settled down on the Judi] – then, which prohibited matter can he be accused of?³⁵

Then I will explain the difference between the *tavil-e-masnu*’ [the permissible interpretation] and the *tafsir-e-mamnu*’ [the prohibited exegesis], *Insha-Allah*.”

Five kinds of *Tafsir* on the basis of opinion

He [Muttaqi] says: This *Hadith* has been narrated with credits and authority by Abu Daud, Tirmizi and Nasai³⁶. There is another *Hadith* on this matter which says that ‘The person who explains the Quran without the [necessary] knowledge should search for his place in the Hell.’ This *Hadith* has been reported in Abu Daud as narrated by Ibn ‘Abbas. And Sheikh Jalaluddin Suyuti^{RH} has said in ‘*Al-Itqan fi Uloom-il-Quran*’, copying from the writing of Ibn-e-Naqib that there are five sayings about *Tafsir-bir-Rai* [exegesis on the basis of one’s opinion]: (1) writing the *tafsir* without the knowledge of those *uloom* [fields or branches of knowledge] which should be known for writing the *tafsir* [exegesis].³⁷ (2) The writing of *Tafsir* of the *mutashabihat* [allegorical Quranic Verses] the meaning of which is known only to Allah Most High. (3) The writing of the *tafsir* that proves the *fasid mazhab* [corrupt religion] to be correct in a manner that places the depraved religion as the core and subjugates the *tafsir* to it; and making the *tafsir* to conform to such perverted religion in whichever way possible, even if such a way is weak. (4) To say, without a valid argument, that certainly the purport of Allah is this. (5) To write the *tafsir* with lenient interpretation and under the influence of one’s carnal desires. All these kinds [of *tafsir*] are found in this group [of Mahdavis].

We say: The Sheikh’s saying that all these kinds of *tafsir* are found in this group [of Mahdavis] is a slander against us [Mahdavis], because none of these five kinds of *tafsir* is found among us. And we will refute the allegations about every kind of the above mentioned *tafsirs*. We have already answered the allegation about the first kind under the saying of the Sheikh “Then among their evils is their writing the commentaries [exegesis] on the basis of their opinions.” We would not repeat it.

³⁴ Quran, S. 11:44 MMP. The meaning of verse is: “And it was said: O earth! Swallow thy water and O sky! Be cleared of the clouds! And the water was made to subside. And the commandment was fulfilled. And it (the ship) came to rest upon (the mount) Al-Judi and it was said: A far removal of the wrong doing folk!” - AYA

³⁵ Judi is the name of the mountain on which the ark finally settled.

³⁶ Abu Daud as-Sijistani, Muhammad ibn Isa at-Tirmizi and Ahmad bin Shu’ayb an-Nasai are the three of the eight Imams of Prophetic Traditions of the ninth Century AD.

³⁷ Writing of *Tafsir* without the knowledge of these branches of knowledge is not allowed or permitted.

***Tafsir* of Allegorical Quranic Verses**

The answer to the second kind [about the allegorical Quranic Verses] is as follows: We do not do the *tafsir* of the allegorical Quranic Verses. Neither do we do the *tafsir* of *yad* [hand] as the ‘organs [of the body].’ Nor do we prove in the *tafsir* of *wajh* [face], the face which includes the eyes, nose, ears, tongue and lips. Similarly, we do not do the *tafsir* of *istava* [to sit firmly on] as *istiqrar* [residing] (as sitting on the *arsh* [Empyrean]). Rather, with regards to *Mutashabihat* [allegorical verses] our creed is the same as that of the *salaf*³⁸. That is, we repose faith in *mutashabihat* [allegorical Quranic Verses] and we do not engage in the details of their conditions. Allah Most High may void the deeds of the Sheikh for he has slandered us by alleging that we do the *tafsir* of the *mutashabihat* [the allegorical Quranic Verses]. In fact, the *ulama-e-khalaf*³⁹ have done the *tafsir* [in the past] of the *mutashabihat* [allegorical Quranic Verses] by interpreting various words. They have done the *tafsir* of *yad* [hand] as the divine omnipotence; they have interpreted *wajh* [face] as the *zath* [essence, nature] and *istava* as *istila* [hegemony, intention]. Hence, this is what we found in the various *tafsirs* [exegeses]. Therefore the charge of interpreting on the basis of one’s own opinion, the ambiguous Quranic Verses, the meanings of which nobody other than Allah Most High knows, is a charge on the *ulama-e-khalaf* of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat-o-Jama'at*.

***Tafsir* that Proves the Depraved Religion**

The answer to the third kind of exegesis — according to the Sheikh [Muttaqi], “the writing of the *tafsir* that proves the *fasid mazhab* [depraved religion] to be correct in a manner that places the depraved religion as the core entity and subjugates the *tafsir* to it; and making the *tafsir* to conform to such perverted religion in whichever way possible, even if such a way is weak” — is that this too is a slander against the Mahdavi group, because our religion does not depend on our opinion, so that we could make the religion as we like it and then make the *tafsir* conform to it in a manner we like. On the other hand, Mahdi^{AS} has asserted that the Quran is the real basis of the religion. Hence, the commands [and interdictions] from among the various schools of thought of the religion that are in conformity with the Quran, are correct and good; and what is not in conformity with the Quran is not correct, according to the commands of Mahdi^{AS}. This is the *mansab* [position] of Mahdi^{AS}, as there is a *Hadith*, wherein the Prophet^{SLM} has said, ‘Mahdi^{AS} will establish the religion in the Last Era, as I have established it in the First Era.’

And it is narrated by Jaafar^{RZ} that the Prophet^{SLM} was asked, ‘When Mahdi appears, what would be his *sirat* [behaviour]?’ The Prophet^{SLM} said that he would be on the same *sirat* as that of the Prophet^{SLM}. He would demolish the innovations of those times as the Prophet^{SLM} had demolished the falsehoods [of his time]. We will, Allah willing, deal with this issue in detail presently.

Deciding the Purport of Allah without Corroborating Argument

And the answer to the Sheikh’s fourth kind of exegesis — “To say, without a valid argument, that certainly the purport of Allah is this” — is that we do not issue any command in this manner. On the other hand, the *zath-e-muqaddas* [the holy person] whom we accept as the Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} has said that certain Quranic Verses are in his favour or in favour of his group [that is, Mahdavis]. This is among his distinctive features

³⁸ *Salaf-as-Salihin* purports to mean the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM}, their successors and the followers of the successors.

³⁹ *Khalaf* are those who came after the *Salaf*.

because, as his knowledge about he being the Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} is categorical and absolute, so also his knowledge that some of the Quranic Verses are in his favour or in favour of his group too is categorical and absolute. When we have performed the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] that he is Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} on the basis of the very proofs which make the *tasdiq* of the Prophets^{AS}, compulsory [and we will go into the details, Allah willing, of this presently], then what proof is more authentic and reliable than the word of Mahdi^{AS}?

Interpreting with Leniency and as per One's Desires

However, the reply to the fifth kind of exegesis, according to the Sheikh [Muttaqi]—that is, “doing the *tafsir* on the basis of the matters interpreted with leniency and one's carnal desires”—is that we do not do any *tafsir* in this manner. On the other hand, this issue is one of the issues that have already been dealt. It is not correct to enumerate here as another issue.

O my brother! I have stayed in the company of the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} and have heard their *bayan* [explanation of Quran]. Hence, I have seen many of the listeners crying and weeping on hearing the *bayan*.⁴⁰ Many of them were lamenting with their heads bowed down in humility and fear of God! There were many whose faces were changing colour! And many who had fallen unconscious! And many who were shivering! And many who were so impressed by the *bayan* that their body hair would stand up while the birds of their thought flew in the gardens of the meanings and secrets of the Holy Quran! They found the gardens full of their cherished fruits. No tree in these gardens was cut. There was no let or hindrance. Whenever the horses of their thought were let loose in the fields of the treasures of the meaning of the Holy Quran, they found the fields free, open and unconcealed. O my brother! After having seen this open and obvious matter, who would demand oratorical eloquence from them?

Specifying Verses of Quran with Mahdi^{AS} and his Companions^{RZ}

He [Muttaqi] says: These people especially reserve the divine command of Allah for Mahdi and his companions:

*“Say: This is my way; I call (men) to God resting my stand on firm conviction—I and he who follows me. And glory to God! I am not of those who set up peers for God, ”*⁴¹

We say: The Sheikh has written this incorrectly. There is no mention of ‘and his Companions’. Here the Arabic word ‘*man*’ (he) [in the above verse] purports to mean the *zath* of Mahdi^{AS}, and not the companions of Mahdi^{AS}. This is a narrative that is proved with constancy [*tawatun*].

He [Muttaqi] says: About the divine saying:

⁴⁰ The author has described the glory of the *bayan* of Quran by the Companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. This shows the exaltation of the *bayan*, full of the intimate knowledge of God, of the *noorani zath* [the luminous essence] of the Companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. They were so close to God. Their nearness to God and the depth of their *bayan* are the result of their *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. It appears that the author [Hazrat Bandagi Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA}, ‘Alim Billah] wanted the critic to see this rare incident with great solemnity. Hence, he has addressed the critic as *Ya Akbi* [O Brother!].

⁴¹ Quran, Surah Yusuf(12):108 SAL and AYA.

“...soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him...”⁴²

They say that its purport is Imam Mahdi Al-Mau’ood^{AS} and his Companions.

We say: I do not know whether this horrible passage is really that of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] or it is the *tas’beef* [mistake of the copier or the calligrapher], because the correction of the passage is not possible in any manner. [The Sheikh says] *و في قوله تعالى فسوف ياتي الله بقوم يحبهم و يحبونه هم المهدي الموعود و اصحابه*. The correct phrase should have been *و قوله تعالى* with *nasab* (*zabar* on the letter lam) so that this *qual* becomes *ma’toof* (dependant) upon the first *qual* which is the *maf’ool* (object) of *يخصون* (these people specify). That is *و يخصصون ذلك القول و هذا القول* (The people specify that saying and this saying). Or it can be stated this way, *و يقولون في قوله تعالى فسوف ياتي الله الخ هم المهدي* و *اصحابه*.

And the mention of the Mahdi in the *tafsir* of this community is not done by our [Mahdavi] Companions^{RZ} of their own accord. But it is narrated with constancy from Mahdi^{AS} that the purport of ‘this community’, whose arrival is promised, is the community of the Mahdi^{AS}, and no one else.

And this is among the peculiarities of Mahdi^{AS}, after the Prophet^{SLM}. We will deal with it presently, Allah willing.

Difference between *Tafsir* and *Tavil*

Hence, now I begin to discuss the difference between the *tavil-e-mubah* [permissible or lawful interpretation] and *tafsir-e-mubarram* [forbidden exegesis]. I say that from amongst the common meanings of the ‘*Manwal*’⁴³, is that meaning which has preference with a predominant opinion. *Manwal* is derived from *aal* or *yaul*. And *aal* is used for the person who returns. When you return something and turn it around, you say *awlatabu*. It means: I have returned and turned it around. Thus when you reflect upon the usage of a word, and you turn it towards a certain meaning, then truly you are doing *tavil* towards that meaning of the word. And this opinion, in the end, is the possible result. Allah has said:

“Do they wait to see the [tavil] results (of evil activity) on the day when the [tavil] results of what they were warned against will manifest themselves?”⁴⁴

In other words, they see only its *tavil* or its consequences.

And the meaning of *mufassar* [made clear] is that the purport of the statement that has come from the *mutakallim* [person who makes the statement] is so clear from the words themselves, that there is no scope for *tavil* [interpretation] or *takhsis* [specialization]. That is why it is called *mufassar* [made clear] because it is open, without a doubt and visible. And this word is derived from the Arabic expression *asfar-us-subh* [unveiling of the morning]. When the morning becomes bright and there is no element of doubt in it, then the Arabs call it *asfar-us-subh*. And this is a derivative from *asfarat al-maratu ‘an wajhiba*. This is said when a woman removes the veil from her face. Hence, this word is a transposition of the word *tafsir* [exegesis]. And this is the meaning of the saying of the Prophet^{SLM} that, ‘the person who does the *tafsir* on the basis of his

⁴² Quran, Surah Al-Maaidah(5):54 AYA.

⁴³ The object of *tavil* [interpretation] i.e., the thing which is interpreted.

⁴⁴ Quran, Surah Al-A’raaf(7):53 SAL.

own opinion should search his place in hell.’ In other words, if a person does *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement] and on the basis of his own opinion and interpretation issues the command that this is the real purport of Allah Most High, then the above threat is held open for him.

Hence, the difference between *tafsir* and *tawil*, which we have mentioned earlier, is discussed in the books of *Usul* [principles], like *Manar* and others. Our brothers [that is, the Mahdavis] do not do the *tafsir* in this manner. Hence we do not fall under the injunction that ‘he who did the *tafsir* of the Quran on the basis of his own opinion should search his place in the hell’.

Bayan of Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}

Now turning to Mahdi Al-Mau’ood^{AS}’s *bayan*: it is not as per his opinion and it is not interpretation that could have the likelihood of being right or wrong, because the rank of *Mahdiyat* [the station of being the Mahdi^{AS}] is above *ijtihad* [interpretative judgement]. This is by virtue of the saying of the Prophet^{SLM} in favour of Mahdi^{AS} that, ‘he [Mahdi^{AS}] would follow in my footsteps and will not err’. And further, on the basis of the saying of the Prophet^{SLM} that he [Mahdi^{AS}] will establish the religion in the Last Era as he [the Prophet^{SLM}] had established it in the First Era. We will present all the remaining arguments shortly.

It is impossible for a person to establish the religion in the Last Era in the same way as the Prophet^{SLM} had established it in the First Era without possessing the *mushabida-e-rubani* [spiritual vision of divinity] to inquire from Allah and His Prophet^{SLM}. This is because the person who is subservient to such conjectural differences which result from the *tawil* [interpretation] of the Quranic Verses and the Prophetic Traditions, and selecting some of them while rejecting some others, it cannot be said about him that he had established the religion in the same way as the Prophet^{SLM} had established it in the First Era. The reason for this is that the Prophet^{SLM} is subject to certainty while the other person would be subject to his conjecture, and consequently he would not be free from error. The difference between certainty and conjecture is like the difference between the heaven and the earth. Allah Most High says:

‘Most of them follow naught but conjecture. Assuredly conjecture can by no means take the place of truth. Lo! Allah is Aware of what they do.’⁴⁵

And the *bayan* [explanation of Quran] of Mahdi^{AS} comes from the command of Allah [*amrullah*] and His teachings. Hence, if it is asked on this occasion as to what is meant by the command of Allah, because the command of Allah is specific to the Prophets^{AS} and Mahdi^{AS} is not a Prophet, because the door of the Prophethood has already been closed and a curtain has been hanged to cover it [Prophethood].

The reply to this is that we do not accept that the command of Allah does not come to anybody other than the Prophets^{AS}. Do you not see that when Khizr^{AS} took leave of Musa^{AS}, he replied to all the matters on which Musa^{AS} was not patient and said, ‘...I did it not on my own accord...’⁴⁶ It is obvious that the meaning is that ‘I did not do this on my own but on the command of Allah Most High.’ And some of the narratives prove that Khizr^{AS} is a *wali* [saint] among the Saints of Allah. Hence, the expression ‘*amrullah*’ [command of Allah] is being applied to a saint by the Holy Quran. Then, how could it not apply to Mahdi^{AS}? It has been stated in some of the Prophetic Traditions that Jibrail^{AS} [Gabriel] will be in front of Mahdi^{AS} and Mikail^{AS} [Michael] would be behind him.

⁴⁵ Quran, Surah Yunus(10):36 MMP.

⁴⁶ Quran, Surah Al-Kahf(18):82 AYA.

Obligatory to accept the word of Mahdi^{AS}

In short, after it is determined that he is the Mahdi^{AS}, whatever is confirmed to have been said by Mahdi^{AS} is essentially a *hujjat* [incontrovertible proof] and it is obligatory on everyone to accept it. It is also obligatory to eschew all the sayings of the *mujtabidin* that go against the sayings of the Mahdi^{AS}, because if we assume the co-existence of the Mahdi^{AS} and the four *mujtabid Imams*^{RH}, the situation will present two alternatives: either he will be subservient to the *mujtabidin* or the *mujtabidin* will be subservient to him. The Mahdi^{AS} becoming subservient to the *mujtabidin* is inconceivable, because Mahdi^{AS} is protected from erring because he is the Vice-Regent of Allah, he is the *khalifa* of the Messenger of Allah^{SLM}, his mission is to invite the people unto Allah and obedience to him is obligatory for every person. The *mujtabid* is not like this. Hence, his [the Mahdi^{AS}] being a *matbu* [one to whom others are subservient] is proved. When the Mahdi^{AS} is proved on the basis of those arguments with which the Prophets^{AS} are proved, then his sayings are in themselves evidence for us, irrespective of whether the sayings of scholars match his sayings or not, because that [the saying] in itself is *hujjat* [incontrovertible proof]. No argument is required to support the *hujjat* nor is it in need of any further proof. Hence, Abu Shukoor Salami^{RH} has discussed in his book, *Tambeed*:

Because they [Prophets^{AS}] are the *hujjat* [incontrovertible proof] of Allah Most High for the people. And no further proof is produced to prove something that is already proven. Nor is it in need of any further proof. [Here ends the statement of Abu Shukoor Salami].

Specification of Verses of Quran by Mahdi^{AS} is not excluded from principles of Arabic Grammer

Then, know O Just Man! That the Mahdi^{AS} making the two Quranic Verses specific to himself and his community [It is on these that the critic (Sheikh Muttaqi) has raised his objection] is not excluded from the principles of Arabic grammar because the common is sometimes taken as special. It is stated in the book, *Bazdooi*, that:

The Arabic word ‘*man*’ (who; the one who; those who; whoever) possesses the probability of both the common and the special [meaning]. And in the *Sharab-e-Mutavassit* of *Kafiah*, which is known in our cities as *Vafiah*, it is written that ‘*man*’ (who) and ‘*ma*’ (what) are used for singular, doublet [*tasniyah*], plural, and male and female genders. [Here ends the statement of *Bazdooi*].

In summary, there is need for a system for *takhsis* [specificity], which proves the specificity like the command of Allah Most High: “‘*Afa-many-yakbluqu ka-mallaa yakbluq...*”⁴⁷, the purport of ‘*many-yakbluqu*’ (the one who creates) is *Haq-Vahda-hoo* [God Alone], because creation by anyone other than Him is impossible. Hence, in the command of Allah, ‘*ana wa man ittaba’ani?*’ (‘...I and the one who follows me...’⁴⁸), the arrangement of the words indicate that the ‘*man*’ (the one who) is specific because it forms a conjunction with the personal pronoun which is present in ‘*aduu*’ [I invite]. Then the meaning of this Verse is this: ‘I invite unto Allah on

⁴⁷ Quran, S. 16:17. The meaning of the quoted words is: ‘*Shall He then who createth and he who cannot create anything be given the same regard?*’

⁴⁸ Quran S. 12:108. The meaning of the complete verse is: *Say: "This is my way: I invite unto Allah, upon vision — I and the one who follows me. Glory to Allah! And never will I join gods with Allah!"*

baseerat [vision] and the one who follows me will also invite people unto Allah on *baseerat* [vision].’ This ‘*atf* [conjunction] demands that the *d’awat* [invitation] of the *tabe’* [follower] and the *matboo’* [one who is followed] should be one and the same. Otherwise, there will be discord between the two calls or invitations.⁴⁹ The harmony in a conjunction is among the virtues of a joined sentence.

Further, it is known that inviting [the people unto Allah] was obligatory for the Prophet^{S.L.M.}. Similarly, it should be an obligation on his follower. Hence, the *tabe’* [follower] on whom the inviting of the people of the *ummah* towards Allah is obligatory cannot be anybody other than the *zath* of the Mahdi Al-Mau’ood^{AS}, because the Mahdi^{AS} is sent only with this mission. Hence, the saying of the Prophet^{S.L.M.} is: ‘How can my *ummah* be annihilated when I am at its beginning, Esa^{AS} is at its end and Mahdi^{AS} from among my descendants is in the middle.’ Hence, as the Prophet^{S.L.M.} and Esa^{AS} are inviters towards Allah Most High, the Mahdi^{AS} too is the inviter towards Allah. And It is so particularly because the command of Allah ‘*man ittaba’ani*’ [the one who follows me] is absolute. And in perfect emulation one would turn towards the *fard-e-kamil* [the Perfect individual]. In this particular situation, the perfect individual is the Mahdi^{AS} only, because the Mahdi^{AS} is the Seal of the *Vilayat* [Sainthood] of our Prophet^{S.L.M.}. And what I have mentioned is possible, probable and likely. But the irrefutable argument in this matter is the saying of Mahdi^{AS}, the acceptance of which is obligatory on us by the same evidence on which it becomes obligatory to accept the saying of the Prophets^{AS} and that [the evidence] is his character. Besides, Allah Most High is the One [God] who inspires the good [deeds].

Further, in the Word of Allah Most High; ‘...*fa-sanfa ya’-tillaahu bi-qawminy-yu-hibbbum wa yuhib’-buunahuu...*⁵⁰ Mahdi Al-Mau’ood^{AS} has specified the word *qawm* for his community. This is not improbable on the basis of ‘*aql-o-naql* [rationality or narration]. Hence, we will deal with it.

Imam Baghawi⁵¹ has written in his book of *Tafsir, Ma’alim-at-Tanzil*, under the divine saying: ‘*O ye who believe! Look to your own selves.*⁵² That:

Some of the [Quranic] Verses are such that their interpretation has occurred even before they were revealed. The interpretation of some other Verses has occurred during the period of Prophet Muhammad^{S.L.M.}. The interpretation of some other Verses has occurred sometime after the Prophet^{S.L.M.}. And some Verses are such that their interpretation will occur in the *Aakhir Zamana* [Last Era] (Here ends the statement of the *Ma’alim-at-Tanzil*).

⁴⁹ It is proved by the Holy Quran that the *Tabe’* and the *Matbu’* are one. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Burhan^{RA}, author of *Shawahid Al-Vilayat*, writes that:

‘Hence, Know O Musaddiq! The positions of *Vilayat* [Sainthood] and *Nubuwwat* [Prophethood] are the attributes of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{S.L.M.}. *Vilayat* is his immanent attribute and *Nubuwwat* is his exoteric attribute, as Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} has said that Prophethood is the manifestation of the Prophet^{S.L.M.} while *Vilayat* is his immanence. Hence, know O Musaddiq! That Allah Most High has terminated Prophethood with the Seal of Prophethood. And He terminates *Vilayat* with the Seal of Sainthood. And Muhammad^{S.L.M.} and Mahdi^{AS} are equal [to each other] by the irrefutable arguments in *Shari’at*, *Tariqat* and *Haqiqat*. It is for this reason that the Mahdi^{AS} is called the Seal of Sainthood, *nazir* [equal] of the Prophet and his perfect follower. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} has said in his book, *Ba’az al-Ayyaat*, quoting Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{S.L.M.} who has said that ‘In every *ummah* there is one like its prophet and the *misl* [equal] can be only he who is like the prophet of that *ummah* in the view of Allah Most High. Hence, when the follower gets the rank of the prophet, it is necessary that he becomes a *Khalifatullah* [Vice-Regent of Allah]. And in the *ummah* of the Seal of Prophethood too there would be his equal, and that equal is the Mahdi Al-Mau’ood^{AS}. [Here ends of statement of Hazrat Shah Burhan^{RA}.]—From *Shawahid Al-Vilayat*.

⁵⁰ Quran, S. 5:54 SAL. Transliteration. It means; ‘‘Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him...’’ [Translation by MMP.]

⁵¹ His full name is Husayn bin Mahmud al-Farra’ al-Baghawi.

⁵² Quran, S. 5:105 SAL.

Now I say that the interpretation of this Verse has occurred at the time of the emergence of Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, if it is said that the *mufasssirin* [commentators of Quran] have explained that the purport of the *qawm* [community] is the community of *Ansar* [helpers of Madina] or Abu Bakr^{RZ} [Siddiq] and his community, or Salman Farsi^{RZ} and his community. Its reply is that this is not so, because Allah Most High says ‘*fa-sanfa ya’-tillaabu bi-qawm*’ [Allah will bring a people ...]. However, the *Ansar*, Abu Bakr^{RZ} and his community and Salman Farsi^{RZ} and his community, were already present during the period of the Prophet^{SLM}. And the Arabic word ‘*sanfa*’⁵³ indicates that the advent of the *qawm* [community] will be in the distant future. Then how is it possible for that *qawm* to be present during the period of the Prophet^{SLM}?

The statement of Hasan Basari supports the meaning we have expressed. He has said that Allah Most High knew that a *qawm* will renege on its commitment to Islam after the demise of the Prophet^{SLM}. Hence, He has announced that He will bring a *qawm*. That *qawm* will be friends with Allah and Allah Most High will be the friend of that *qawm*. Same is what the *Ma’alim-at-Tanzil* too has said under this Quranic Verse. This shows that the emergence of the expected *qawm* will occur after the demise of the Prophet^{SLM}. And the purport of this *qawm* is not the *Ansar*, or Abu Bakr^{RZ} and his community or Salman Farsi^{RZ} and his *qawm*, as has been mentioned earlier by some commentators.

This is also supported by the saying of Qazi Shihabuddin who has said in his *tafsir, Bahr-e-Mawwaj*, that:

It is narrated that after the *irtidad* [the revolt of apostates], two thousand people of the Nakh’ee Tribe and three thousand people of the Kundi Tribe, and three thousand from various [miscellaneous] other tribes came into the Religion of Islam and became sincere *muminin* [believers]. ‘*Fa-sanfa ya’-tillaabu bi-qawm*’ [Allah will bring a people...] purports this group and this revelation has come in reference to them.

Some say that that the Prophet^{SLM} was asked who these people were. The Prophet^{SLM} said that they were the *Ansar* [Helpers]. Some others say that the Prophet^{SLM} gestured towards Salman Farsi^{RZ} and bestowed this glory to his *Qawm*. Then, he [the Prophet^{SLM}] said, ‘Even if *Iman* [Faith] were hung on the *surayya* [Pleiades], some men of *Faris* [Iran, Persia] will achieve it.’ Yet some others have said that this Verse is in the *shaan* [glory] of Abu Bakr^{RZ}, who fought and killed *murtidin* [apostates—people who had rebelled and refused to pay *zakat*—poor-due] with a large army.⁵⁴ He made such an arrangement for the killing and did not stop and was not bothered by the blame of the blamers. He

⁵³ *Sanfa* – means will, shall; it is used for an action to be done in the distant future and not in the near future

⁵⁴ The Muslims residing in the outskirts of the city of Madina refused to pay *zakat* [poor-due] and *ushr* [tithe] after hearing the news of the demise of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. They also revolted against most of the commands of *Shari’at*. Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had, while on his death bed, sent a contingent of the army under the leadership of Osama bin Zaid to the frontiers of Syria. The contingent had gone about ten leagues from Madina and had stopped there because the health of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} was deteriorating. When the death of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} occurred, the people of the villages around Madina had refused to pay the poor-due. Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}, the first Caliph of Islam, ordered that the rebels be attacked. Hazrat Umar^{RZ} and all the Companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} opposed the orders of Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}. Their argument was that the rebels were Muslims and had only refused to pay the poor-due and how could they be killed for not paying the poor-due? Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ} said, “If you do not cooperate with me [in fighting the rebels], I will fight alone against them till my last breath. Even if you tie my hands and feet, I will not stop [fighting them].” Hazrat Umar^{RZ} asked, “What is your argument in continuing to fight against them [those who had refused to pay the poor-due], despite the saying of the Prophet^{SLM} that I have been commanded to fight the people until they accept that God is one and that I am His Messenger. If one did this, he would save his life and property from me, except by a right.” Hence, Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ} said, “By God! I will fight with that person who differentiates between *namaḥ* [ritual daily prayers] and *zakat* [poor-due], because *zakat* is the right of the *maal* [property]. And the Prophet^{SLM} has said that by suppressing [or misappropriating] somebody’s right, their *maal* [property] and *khoon* [blood] would not be safe.” Hazrat Umar^{RZ} says, “By God! I had seen that Allah Most High had guided [Hazrat] Abu Bakr^{RZ} to fight. And this matter is certainly *haq* [Truth].” Up to the end.—[Excerpted from the book, *Mojez-Numa Mutavassit Quran-e-Sharif*, printed at Latifi Press, Delhi.]

did not compromise with them, and said, “By God! Even if they [people who opposed the killing] shackle me to prevent me from fighting, I will continue the killing [the rebels].” Then he hurried to fight the *jihad* [holy war] with them. And by Allah’s help and will, he was successful. Some among the rebels were killed while others converted to Muslims.

However, the above-mentioned Quranic Verse, wherein the promise to bring a *qawm* [community] is stated to happen in the future, is difficult to relate to Abu Bakr^{RZ}, the Ansar [Helpers] or Salman Farsi^{RZ}, who were present at the time of the revelation of the Verse. However, by the Verse: ‘*Fa-sanfa ya’tillaabu bi-qawm*’ [Allah will bring a people...] purports to bring the new community in the future. If the purport is not to bring or create the community in the future, it will create ambiguity, difficulty and complications. [Here ends the statement of the book, *Bahr-e-Mawwaj*].

In the book, *Tafsir-e-Naishapuri*, it has been [clearly] stated that:

“Probably the purport is the community of Mahdi^{AS}.”

Then, know, O Wise man! The correct meaning of this Quranic Verse is the one that has been stated by Mahdi^{AS}. And Allah Most High has given the news of the community of Mahdi^{AS} at many places in His Book [Quran]. Among the many Quranic Verses [that have given the news] is the following one:

“*As well as (to confer all these benefits upon) others of them, who have not already joined them...*”⁵⁵

In this Verse, the purport of the word ‘*Aakhariina*’ [others of them] is the community of Mahdi^{AS}.

Along with this is the command of Allah Most High:

“*A number of them will be from among the earliest believers, And a smaller numbers will be from among the later believers...*”⁵⁶

This command also supports the same meaning. The saying of Imam Baghawi in his book, *Ma’alim-at-Tanzil*, under this Quranic Verse, which is as follows:

“One group of *ulama*, that is, Abu’l Aa’liyah Mujahid ‘Ata’ bin Abi Riyah and Zahhak, are of the opinion that both the groups mentioned in this Quranic Verse are from the *ummah* [community] [of Prophet^{SLM}] and ‘*Sullatum-minal-’anwaliin*’ [a number of them...] are the early people of this *ummah* [community], and the purport of ‘*qaliilum-minal-’aa-’kbiirin*’ [a small number...] are those people who will be born in the *aakbri zamana* [Last Era]. (They are the group of Mahdi^{AS}).

In the *tafsir* [exegesis] of the Quranic Verse, ‘*A number of them will be from the earliest believers, And a smaller number will be from among the later believers*’, it is narrated by Ibn ‘Abbas that Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had said, ‘Both these groups are from my *ummah*.’ Hence, the group that has been promised to be brought is the group of Mahdi^{AS}.

If it is asked wherefrom is this matter understood that the promised *qawm*, which is mentioned in the two Quranic Verses⁵⁷ is the community of the Mahdi^{AS}? It is probable that there could be any other community

⁵⁵ Quran, S. 62:3 AYA.

⁵⁶ Quran, S. 56:13-14 SAL.

⁵⁷ Quran, S. 5:54 and S. 56: 13 and 14. “*Fa-sanfa ya’tillaabu bi-qawminy-yu-bi-bbubum wa yubib-buunabuu...*” and “*Sallatum-minal-’anwaliin, Wa qaliilum-minal-’aakbiirin.*” Meaning “Nay! God will raise up others, loved of God and loving Him...” and “*A number of them will be from among the earliest believers, And a smaller number will be from among the later believers...*” —English transliteration and translation from *Al-Qur’an* rendered into English by Syed Abdul Latif.

from the *ummah* of the Prophet^{AS} whose emergence is awaited. What is the reason for specifying this community to be that of Mahdi^{AS}?

The reply to this question is this: Allah Most High may grant you *barakat* [blessings in abundance]. Do justice! Do not resort to crookedness! When we have proved that a *qawm* would emerge after the Prophet^{SLM}, then it should be seen that besides the *qawm* of Mahdi^{AS}, is there any other *qawm* whose coming is mentioned in the Quran, when the Mahdi^{AS} and his group possess certain specific qualities which are not found in others? And it is these specific qualities which increase the preference for choosing them. Then, what reason do we have to reject this *qawm* that performs *karamaat* [wonderworks] and look for others?

If it is said that it is possible that the said *qawm* could be purported community of Esa^{AS} [Jesus Christ], then what is the reason to reject the *qawm* of Esa^{AS} and to prefer the *qawm* of Imam Mahdi^{AS}? The reply to this question is that your argument could of course be correct with respect to *aqal* [rationality]. But the *naql* [narratives or traditions] rejects it. This is so, because the Prophet^{SLM} has informed [us] that the *qawm* of Mahdi^{AS} would come before that of Esa^{AS}. He has said that Masih [Messiah—Jesus Christ] would meet the various *aqwam* [communities] of the [Muslim] *ummah* that could be like you or better than you in strengthening the religion. This has been mentioned by Ibn Jarjan^{RA} in his book, *Irsbad*, with relevant authorities, as narrated by Ali Sayeed ibn Marzooq Kindi upto RasoolAllah^{SLM}. Similarly, Imam Qurtubi has narrated it in *Tazkirah*. Further, it is narrated in *Hadith* in *Sihab*.⁵⁸ Anas bin Sam'an narrates in the story of Dajjal [Antichrist], 'Then a community whom Allah will protect from the *fitnah* [mischief] of Dajjal will come to Esa^{AS}. He will wipe his hand over their faces and will talk to them in accordance with their ranks and grades. (Up to the end of the Tradition).

Hence, if it is asked, how is it understood that the *qawm*, which will come to Esa^{AS}, whom he would caress their faces with his hands and would talk to them in accordance with their ranks and grades and that Esa^{AS} will find them to be emulating the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM}, is the *qawm* of Mahdi^{AS}. Rather, it is possible that it could be some other *qawm* too.

The answer to this question is that, the matter is not how the questioner has assumed, because the Prophet^{SLM} has said:

'How can the ummah [community] be destroyed, when I am at its initial part, and Esa^{AS} is in its final [or last] part, and Mahdi^{AS} from my descendants is in the middle part?'

And Razin^{RA} has added the following words in the *Hadith* [Tradition]: 'And there would be a long period between Mahdi^{AS} and Esa^{AS} and during this intervening period there would be a crooked group.⁵⁹ Neither this group is from me nor am I from it.'

Hence, the *Hadith* with its connotation proves that the advent of the Mahdi^{AS} would be before that of Esa^{AS}. Now the situation presents two alternatives with respect to the people who will be protected from the mischief of the Dajjal. They will either be from the people who have performed the *tasdiq* [affirmation] of Mahdi^{AS} or they would be from the ones who have rejected the Mahdi^{AS}. The second alternative is *batil* [void]. Hence, the first alternative will prevail.

⁵⁸ *Sihab* are the six famous Sunni collections of Holy Prophet's Traditions made by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi, Abu Daud, Nasai and Ibn Majah.

⁵⁹ Terha *ḥak* crooked.

If it is said that [in the Quran] at one place, the word *qawm* [community] has been used, while in another place, the word *aqwam* [communities] has been used. How can there be any conformity and consonance between the two? The reply to this is: In reality, the *qawm* is one single unit. However, since there are many places and many tribes, the word *aqwam* is used due to their number.

Investigation about Mahdi^{AS} being mentioned clearly or symbolically in the Quran

He (Muttaqi) says: Despite this, nobody has said that there is a clear or symbolic mention of the Mahdi in the Holy Quran.

We say: If the purport of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] is that the *ulama* of the past have not given the proof of existence of the Mahdi^{AS} from the Holy Quran, because none has quoted Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} as saying that a particular Quranic Verse is in favour of Mahdi^{AS}, then it is correct.

However, the possibility of explanation remains. It does not disappear because it has not been explained in the previous eras. This is because, despite not obtaining any narration from the Prophet^{SLM} regarding some Quranic Verses, the *ulama* [scholars] have extracted commands from these Verses. And they have proved [the validity of] those commands through those verses. Hence, it is mentioned in the books of principles of *Fiqh* [Islamic Code of Law] that the Messenger of Allah^{SLM} departed from this world without clearly explaining the details of the *riba* [usury]. Therefore, for the matters, which he has not clearly explained, the possibility of explanation still persists. It will not fade away only because the *ulama* [scholars] of the past have not explained them. The delay in explaining an issue is allowed until the need for explanation arises. This has been clarified by Imam Nawawi in his book, *Sharab-e-Muslim*, in respect of Osama killing a person who on being pursued had recited: *La ilaha illa Llah* [There is no god but Allah]. That clarification is as follows:

The Prophet^{SLM} did not make it obligatory upon Osama *qisas* [capital punishment], *kaffarah* [expiation] or *diyat* [blood money]. Hence, the argument for the annulment of these three alternatives is made. However, the *kaffarah* [expiation] is obligatory on the person [who kills by mistake] and *qisas* [capital punishment] is annulled on the basis of the doubt that the killer [Osama] had presumed the killed person to be a *kafir* [infidel] or he had assumed that the recitation of the *Kalimah* [the Islamic Creed—*La Ilaha illa Llah*] in the given circumstances did not make him a Muslim. On the obligation of *diyat* [blood money], there are two sayings of Imam Shafei^{RA} and the *ulama* have accepted each one of these sayings. The answer to the lack of mention of the *kaffarah* is that *kaffarah* [expiation] is not immediate; it can be given after a delay. And to delay the explanation of a matter until the need arises is permissible as per the scholars of the fundamental principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. [The saying of Imam Nawawi ends here.]

And what has been stated in the book, *Tawale'*,⁶⁰ too supports this view.

The Jews say: Either there would be an explanation in the *shariat* of Musa^{AS} which would make it clear that Musa^{AS}'s *shari'at* would be annulled in the future or there would be no mention of it. If it

⁶⁰ Its Arabic spelling is طوالع.

was explained, it would have been well-known with constancy in that *shari'at*, like the real religion of Musa^{AS} is well-known and is *mutawatir* [constant]. Hence, if there is mention about its perpetuity in the *shari'at* of Musa^{AS}, then its annulment would be impossible. If the point that proves the perpetuity of the *shari'at* is not there, then his *shari'at* would not be repeated (the *shari'at* of Musa^{AS} would not have been constantly applicable to the Prophets^{AS} of the Bani Israel). Hence, the commands of this *shari'at* would not have been obligatory more than once.

We [the author of *Tawale*] would answer this point by saying that there exists in the *shari'at* of Musa^{AS} the proof which points towards its annulment. However, it was not repeatedly narrated because the need for narrating it did not occur many times, as the need for narrating the original religion had occurred. Or, on the face of it, it supports the contention that it would persist forever, but this is not absolute, because its annulment is not *mumtana'* [prohibited or impossible].

Hence, see, O Just Man! The saying of *Tawale*' *لم يتوافر الدواعى الى نقله* [the need for narrating it did not occur many times] indicates that the lack of narration of it is possible, because the reasons for it were not needed often. The matter we are now discussing is similar.

And this is supported by the saying of Sheikh Abu Shukoor Salami in his book, *Tambid*, under the discussion about vision of angels. He says:

Some of the *fuqaha* [Muslim Jurists] have hesitated because there is no *nass* [categorical statement] in the matter of the angels. And prohibition is also not allowed when there is no proof. Hence, there should be hesitation on the matter.

Hence, see, O Just Man! See the saying of Salami that, 'prohibition is also not allowed when there is no proof. Therefore, prohibiting without the proof of prohibition is itself prohibited.

If the purport of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] is that lack of proof about the existence of Mahdi^{AS} in the Quran is irrefutable, then we do not accept it, because the finality is achieved by a clear statement [*nass*] from the Book of Allah [Quran] or the *Khabar-e-Mutawatir* [Tradition with constancy] of the Prophet^{SLM} or the *ijma'* [consensus] of the *ummah* [Muslim community]. And from among these things, none is present. Hence, how can finality be achieved in future regarding the lack of proof about existence of Mahdi^{AS} in the Quran? On the other hand, there is not even a *Khabar-e-Wahid* [solitary Tradition of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}] or a narrative from the Companions^{RZ} [of Prophet^{SLM}] that there is no Verse in favour of Mahdi^{AS}. Similarly, there is no narrative in this respect even from the *mujtahidin* [Muslim Jurists entitled to independent judgment].

Hence, if one were to say that how a thing that has not been proved in the past can be proved in our times, the reply to this question is that it will be proved by the *bayan* [speech] of Mahdi^{AS} after his *zath* [the person] is proved as the Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, because he is the *'alim-e-Rabbani* [scholar on whom the divine knowledge is bestowed]. The secrets of the Book of Allah that have not been revealed to anybody after the Prophet^{SLM} have been revealed to him [Mahdi^{AS}]. We will shortly submit the [relevant] arguments in this respect.

The same is the case with Esa^{AS}. Thus, with respect to the Book of Allah, the explanation and certainty of Esa^{AS} and Mahdi^{AS} is final and binding, there is no doubt about this. This is because the final command that they would issue could either be based on their presumption or *ijtihad* [interpretation of the Islamic Law] or

opinion. Or it could be based on the basis of the command of Allah Most High or by *kashf-e-yaqini* [convincing divine unveiling] or the *ilham-e-Rabbani* [divine inspiration].

If you accept the first proposition, you would be deemed to attribute certain things to both these eminent personalities that should lawfully not be attributed to them. This is so for the simple reason that calling a matter that is *ẓanni* [presumed] as *qata'i* [categorically imperative] is *kufr* [infidelity], because it is tantamount to giving evidence against Allah Most High. A presumption gives the benefit only of a presumption.

If you accept the second proposition, the objective is achieved. Then, if you say that the divinely inspired commands cannot give the benefit of being imperative because the *ulama* [scholars] have already proved that *ilham* [divine inspiration] is not a *hujjat-e-qaviah* [strong argument or proof] (because the comparison of *ilham* is possible only with other similar type of *ilham*).

The reply to this is that the *ilham* [divine inspiration] and *kashf* [divine unveiling] of one who is not Mahdi^{AS} or Esa^{AS} does not give the benefit of absolute finality because such a person is not definitely *ma'soom* [sinless or free from error] or *mahfuz* [protected from error]. However, the *ilham* and *kashf* of Esa^{AS} and Mahdi^{AS} is absolute and imperative, because both of them have been commissioned to invite people unto Allah Most High. Hence, it is necessary that they should have the correct knowledge of the beliefs and deeds from Allah Most High. But Esa^{AS} issuing commands on the basis of *ilham* and *kashf* is obvious and manifest, because when Esa^{AS} descends he will not be a person who receives *wahi* [divine revelation]. Jibrail^{AS} [Gabriel] too will not be sent to him. Esa^{AS} will issue his commands on the controversial issues of the Muslim *ummah* [community] on the basis of his *ilham* and *kashf* [divine inspiration and unveiling]. He will not be subservient to the *mazahib* [schools of religious thought] of the four Imams. On the contrary, he would abolish them, because this matter is among his specialties. Similar is the case of Mahdi^{AS} who is protected from committing errors [or sinless] on the basis of the arguments and proofs that we have already mentioned.

In short, the proof of the existence of Mahdi^{AS} from the Book of Allah is liable to be awaited till it is explained, in case it has not been explained by anybody. Hence, all the sayings of Mahdi^{AS} that are proved to have been issued by him are the final and absolute arguments or proofs. They cannot be compared with the presumptive arguments on the basis of the *dalil* [argument or proof] which we have already mentioned in the discussion about Mahdi^{AS} joining the *mujtahidin* [Muslim Jurists entitled to independent judgment]. The specialties that have come in favour of Mahdi^{AS} also guide us in this matter.

Specialities of Mahdi^{AS}

Besides these is the narrative in which the Mahdi^{AS} was mentioned before Husain^{RZ}, son of Ali^{RZ}. Husain^{RZ} is quoted as saying, 'If I were to meet Mahdi^{AS}, I would serve him all my life.' The Sheikh [Muttaqi] has quoted this narrative in his *risala* [tract]. Similarly, it is mentioned in the book, *Iqd-ud-Durar* also. Apart from these specialties, there is the saying of Prophet^{SLM}, which is narrated by Ali^{RZ}. He said, 'I asked, O Messenger of Allah! Is Mahdi from us or from other than us?' Prophet^{SLM} said, 'He is from us. Allah Most High will conclude the religion with him as He had initiated it from us.' [up to the end of the Tradition]. A group of *huffaz* [people who have memorized the Quran or Traditions] have narrated this *hadith* [Tradition] in their books with *sanad* [authorities]. Besides these, Abul Qasim Tabarani, Abu Na'im Asfahani, Abdur Rahim bin Hatim, Abu Abdullah Na'im bin Hammad and others have also narrated this Tradition.

See, O Just Man! The person whose *zath* is the concluder of the religion, how can such a person not ascertain [issues and commands] with Allah Most High and His Messenger? Hence, it is known from this Tradition that everything that Mahdi^{AS} says or does or the thing he decrees as lawful or *haram* [unlawful or prohibited] is the true religion of Muhammad^{SLM}. The whole mankind is bound to repose *iman* [Faith] in his sayings.

And among the specialties is what is narrated by Ka'ab Ahbar. He said, 'Without doubt, I find Mahdi^{AS} written in the books of the Prophets^{AS} of the yore. There is no oppression or defect in his commands.' This Tradition has been narrated with authorities by Imam Abu Amr Muqri in his book *Sunan* and this Tradition has been narrated with authorities by Hafiz Abdullah Na'im bin Hammad. Hence, see, O Just Man! When Mahdi^{AS} is mentioned in the books of the previous Prophets^{AS}, on the basis of rational argument, there is all the more reason that he must also have been mentioned in our Book (Quran), as Mahdi^{AS} has explained. Among the specialties is what Salim Amsal⁶¹ has said. He said, 'I have heard Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali^{RZ} as saying that Musa^{AS} has seen in the *Sifir-e-Awwal* [the first book of Torah], the rank and grade that were given to the *Qayam-Aal-e-Mubammad* (Mahdi^{AS}).' He told Allah Most High, 'O Allah! You make me the *Qayam-Aal-e-Mubammad*.' Then he was told, 'He would be from the descendants of Ahmad^{AS} [that is, Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}].' Hence, he saw in the *Sifir-e-Sani* [second book]. There too he found a similar thing. Then he said the same [as he had said before]. Then he was given the same reply. Then he saw in the *Sifir-e-Salis* [third book]. It was the same here too. Then he said the same. Then he was given the same reply. This has been narrated in the third chapter of the book, *Iqd-ud-Durar*.

Hence, see, O Just Man! How could the explanation of a person who has been mentioned in the three books in the Torah essentially not be final and absolute? It has been mentioned in the book, *Awarif*, as narrated by Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ}, 'For every Verse [in the Quran] there is a *qaum* [people] that will know its meaning shortly.' The author of the book, *Zawarif*, which is the *Sharah* of *Awarif*, Maulana Ali Peero has said that it is understood by the saying of Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ} that some of the meanings of the Holy Quran that did not occur in the minds of the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM}, will occur in the minds of the *Mashayakhin* [saintly guides], particularly the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS}.

Hence, see, O Just Man! And ponder over the saying of Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ}. In the past there was no explanation about the mention of the Mahdi^{AS} in the Quran. Can this be taken as an argument that there would be no such explanation in the future also, especially when the people giving the explanation are Mahdi^{AS} and his Companions^{RZ}? From the quotation of the *Zawarif*, it is understood that the explanation of the Companions^{RZ} of Imam^{AS} would be such that it would not be found in the past. Then, how could the explanation about Mahdi^{AS} be found in the past? (When the rank and grade of the explanation of the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} is manifest from the saying of Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ}.) Their explanation cannot be treated as the *tafsir bir-Rai* (exegesis of the Quran on the basis of the commentator's opinion). Hence, the one who reproaches has become the reproached, the one who curses has become the accursed, the one who drives has become driven...!

And Sheikh Abdur Razzaq Kashi too in his *tafsir*, *Tavilat-e-Quran*, has mentioned that the explanation of Quran will be done only by Mahdi^{AS} as it should be done and none other can do it. Hence, he has specified that '*Alif-Laaam-Miim*' as a *qasam* [oath] and its reply is *mahzooof* [dropped]. The dropped reply is this: 'Verily, I will explain this Book [the Quran that was revealed to Muhammad^{SLM}] which was promised through the tongues of the Prophets^{AS} of the past in their books. And in their books, it is written that the Quran will be

⁶¹ The Arabic spelling is *سالم امثل*

with Mahdi^{AS} in the Last Era. And no one, other than Mahdi^{AS}, will know the real explanation of the Quran as it should [be known and understood]. Esa^{AS} has stated that, ‘We bring to you the words, and *Farqalit* [Paraclete] will bring you the meaning thereof in the Last Era.’

Sheikh Abdur Razzaq has understood the term *Farqalit* used by Esa^{AS} to be the *zath* of Muhammad Mahdi^{AS}, although others have understood it as purporting to mean Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. However, the truth is what Sheikh Abdur Razzaq has said, because the saying of Esa^{AS} is, ‘We bring to you the *tanzil* [revelation or words].’ This purports to mean all the Prophets^{AS} to whom the divine books were revealed, as Prophet^{SLM} has stated, ‘We are the group of the Prophets^{AS}. We are neither the heirs of anybody nor anybody could be our heir.’

Hence, see, O Just Man! Without proof, how can it be said with certainty that the existence of Mahdi^{AS} is not present in the Quran when the absence of an explanation in the past does not preclude the possibility of its explanation in the future? On the other hand, the explanation will be awaited till it comes from Mahdi^{AS} whose mention is found in the books of the Prophets^{AS}, as has been revealed in the sayings of Ka’ab Ahbar, Ja’far Sadiq and Sheikh Abdur Razzaq.

This is supported by the saying of Kirmani which he has made under this saying of Ali^{RZ}, which Ali^{RZ} had said in reply to a question by Abu Juhaifa. The question is this: ‘Do you have anything that the Quran does not have?’ Another time he said, ‘That which is not with the people?’ Then Ali^{RZ} said, ‘Oath on the *zath* Who split the grain and created the soul! There is nothing with us that is not in the Quran [We have only what is in the Quran], except for the comprehension of His Book which is bestowed by Allah and that which is in this *sabifa* [tract]. [That *sabifa* was handed over by the Prophet^{SLM} to Ali^{RZ} and there were some commands.] Abu Juhaifa says, ‘I asked, what is there in the *sabifa*?’ Then he said, ‘It has information about blood money and the freeing of a prisoner; and that a Muslim should not be killed in lieu of a *kafir* [infidel].’ Kirmani says: It can be said that it is mentioned in the chapter ‘*Haram* [sanctuary] of Madina’ that it is stated in the *sabifa* that, ‘for Madina also [like Makkah Mukarramah] the *haram* is upto so-and-so place so if a person perpetrates an incident or shelters the perpetrator, Allah’s curse will be upon him.’ Despite this being present in the *sabifa*, Ali^{RZ} was content to describe only three issues and did not explain the fourth issue that was in the *sabifa*. This necessitates a contradiction. In reply to this complication, Kirmani says that not mentioning the presence of a thing does not mean that it does not exist. Hence, there is no contradiction [Here ends the statement of Kirmani].

The saying of Ali^{RZ} is to be found in the 28th part of the thirty parts of Bukhari, in the Chapter *Aaqila*.

Hence, see, O Just Man! Look at Kirmani’s saying that, not mentioning the thing that is there in the *Sabifa* does not mean that it does not exist, for the simple reason that it was not mentioned [either confirming it or negating it]. And this is supported by the statement made in the *Tambid* of Abu Shakoor in favour of the vision of angels. Abu Shakoor has said that some *fuqaha* [Muslim Jurists entitled to independent judgment] have hesitated in this matter, because there is no categorical command about the vision of the angels. And denying it too is not allowed, because there is no proof of even that. Hence, one is bound to hesitate in this matter. Hence, if it is said that the explanation of Quran is not permitted in any way other than *sama’at* [listening][of traditions], because the commentator may not be protected from the misfortune of doing the exegesis on the basis of one’s own opinion; the reply to this is that we do not accept this contention that it is not permitted even if the explanation of the commentator is in accordance with the principles of *tafseer* and the words of the Quran support it; rather, till the Day of Judgment, the deducing of the meaning of the

Quran will remain entrusted to the commentators who have the rank of extracting commands from the Quran. We will give all the detailed arguments about this shortly.

In addition to all these arguments, is the narrative in the Bukhari Sharif, as narrated by Abu Juhaifa, who has said, 'I had asked Ali^{RZ}, is there any book with you?' He replied, 'I have no book other than the Book of Allah and the comprehension that is given to a Muslim man.' Kirmani has explained this *Hadith* by saying that there is a guidance in this saying of Ali^{RZ} that a person of understanding is permitted to extract certain things from the text of Quran, in accordance with his comprehension, that have not been extracted by the earlier commentators. However, this permission is subject to the condition that such extractions should be in accordance with the principles of *Shari'at*. This has been narrated from the *Bukhari Sharif*, Chapter *Kitab-ul-Ilm*.

Besides all these arguments, is the saying of the Prophet^{SLM} that the person, who was present in the company of the Prophet^{SLM} and heard it, should convey this *Hadith* [Tradition] to those who are absent because those who are absent may comprehend it better than those who were present. Kirmani has mentioned in the first part of the Chapter 'Some people to whom knowledge is conveyed comprehend it better than those who hear it', that it is obligatory for an '*alim* [scholar] to convey the *ilm* [knowledge] to the people to whom it has not reached and to explain it to the people who have not understood it. And it is a promise that Allah Most High has extracted from the *ulama* that they would "...*make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it...*"⁶². And in it is also the matter that verily there will come in the Last Era, those people who will be given the knowledge and understanding that was not bestowed to the people before them. But this will be among a very few people because the term *rubba* [some] was coined for *taqlil* [minimizing].

And besides all these arguments is the one that the author of *Ta'aliq*, has said in the introduction of his book:

'Since all knowledge is the bestowal of Allah Most High and, in particular, special gifts, it is not impossible that people from later periods of time are given more than what is given to earlier people'.

And among all the arguments is the one that Imam Hujjat-ul-Islam Abu Hamid Muhammad Ghazali^{RA} has said in his book, *Ihya ul-Uloom*, that decreeing a speech as *haram* [prohibited] without hearing about it is taboo. The reason for this [prohibition] is because we have not heard anything from Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} on some of the Quranic Verses and there is so much disagreement amongst the Companions^{RZ} and the people of the later periods that a consensus is impossible and hearing from the Prophet^{SLM} on all matters too is impossible. And the *akbbar-o-aasar* [Prophet's Traditions] argue in favour of their expanse in meaning. The Prophet^{SLM} said in favour of Ibn Abbas^{RZ}, 'O Allah! Make him a *faqeeh* [Muslim Jurist] in religion and confer on him the knowledge of *tavil* [interpretation of Quranic Verses].⁶³ If *tavil* was based on hearing [that is, it was not permitted beyond stating what was listened], then there was no reason for specifying [of Ibn Abbas^{RZ} by the Prophet^{SLM}]. Allah Most High says, "...*those among them who are able to think out the matter would have known it...*"⁶³ And said Abu Darda^{RZ}, 'A person does not become a *faqih* [Muslim Jurist] unless he is able to explain many perspectives of the Quran.' And Ali^{RZ} has said, 'If I wanted I would have written the exegesis of the Surat *Fatiba* which would be enough to load seventy camels.' Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ} has said, 'When a person intends the knowledge of the Firsts and the Lasts, he should choose the Quran.' Some of the *ulama* have said that every Quranic Verse has sixty meanings. And what remains without being understood is in addition [to the sixty meanings]. They have also said that the last part of the Quran is comprised of 77,200

⁶² Quran, S. 3:187 AYA

⁶³ Quran, S. 4:83 MMP.

sciences, because every *kalma* [word] has a manifest and an immanent meaning and a beginning and end. And there are signs and indications about all sciences. And for a person who thinks, every matter that appears to be difficult to him, there are hints in the Holy Quran about it.

From among all these is the one that has been mentioned in *Zawarifi* in the explanation of the saying of Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ}, 'There is no [Quranic] Verse, except for it there is a community, which will learn the meaning of the Verse.' This statement of Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ} incites every seeker who is a man of courage that his courage should not cease on the matters that are listened to, but clear the place in his heart for the matters that are heard so that he understands the nuances of the meaning thereof, the meaning that even the Companions^{RZ} too had not comprehended. In fear of improper length [of this discourse], I have abridged some of the arguments and for the wise Just Man only one word is enough to understand.

Exegesis of Quran by the Sufis

He [Muttaqi] says: It is said in *Itqan* that the *tafsir* [exegesis] of the Quran by the Sufia is not *tafsir* at all. And Ibn Salah has said in his *Fatawa*, 'I have obtained this point from Imam Hasan Wahidi who is a commentator of Quran. He told me that Abu Abdur Rahman Salami has written "*Haqaiq-ut-Tafsir*" [the realities of the exegesis]. If his belief is that the realities he wrote is a *tafsir* [exegesis], then he has become a *kafir* [infidel].'

We say: This saying of Imam Wahidi [that he had called Abu Abdur Rahman as *kafir* (infidel) for his belief that his *tafsir* was the realities] is not correct, because the realities that Abu Abdur Rahman has written can be called a *tafsir*. There is no objection to calling it a *tafsir*, because it is clear that there are exoteric and esoteric meanings of Quran. And there are nine esoteric meanings of the immanence of Quran. Hence, the term *tafsir* is applicable to each one of the nine esoteric meanings. Then what happened to Wahidi that he treated Abu Abdur Rahman like this? Abu Abdur Rahman has used the sayings of great saints like Abu Yazid Bistami, Junaid Baghdadi and Sheikh Shibli in his *tafsir*. These sayings have illuminated the *ummah* [community] of Muhammad^{SLM} in its desire for Allah as a dark night is illuminated by the stars. One is astonished how Sheikh Wahidi, despite his knowledge that Abu Abdur Rahman is among the [eminent] Saints of Allah Most High, could use the term *kafir*⁴⁴ for him. This is despite the fact that Abu Abdur Rahman has written very few things of his own accord. If an ambiguity arises from such exegesis, the same ambiguity would be true for the exegeses of other commentators also because at some places [in the Quran] most of the exegists have given commentary just like Abu Abdur Rahman. Under the Quranic Verse, '*Yet of mankind are some who take unto themselves (objects of worship which they set as) rivals to Allah, loving them with a love like (that which is the due) of Allah (only) - those who believe are stauncher in their love for Allah...*'⁶⁵ Qazi Baizavi has written that *andad* [objects of worship which they set up as rivals to Allah] are the idols and also said that they are the *sardars* [chiefs] of the infidels and the infidels were obedient to their chiefs as Allah has said: '*(On the day) when those who were followed disown those who followed (them)...*'⁶⁶ And perhaps the purport of *andad* could be something other than the above mentioned two meanings and that is the thing which keeps them away from the remembrance of Allah Most High. And this meaning of Baizavi is similar to the meaning of Abu Abdur

⁶⁴ Here the author has used the word '*mu'wajj*' [crooked] or '*kaif*' (in Urdu) *كاف* instead of '*kafir*'. This shows that the seekers of Allah know the eminence of the seekers of Allah. How can the seekers of the world know the eminence of the seekers of Allah? Here, Sheikh Muftari [the Slanderer Sheikh] has slandered Hazrat Seal of Saints^{AS} [or Imam Mahdi^{AS}] and his Companions^{RZ}.

⁶⁵ Quran, S. 2: 165 MMP.

⁶⁶ Quran, S. 2: 166 AYA.

Rahman. That which is written in *Tafsir-e-Madarik* under the Quranic Verse: ‘...Give them such a deed if ye know any good in them,’⁶⁷ is so similar to the statement of Abu Abdur Rahman that it is almost exactly the same. See the *Tafsir-e-Madarik* if you have any doubt.

He [Muttaqi] says: And it is for this meaning [that the explanation of the Sufia does not have the rank of *Tafsir*], that some of the *ulama* [scholars] have criticized it. The statement of the Sufia is as follows: Under Allah’s saying, ‘And remember thy Lord when thou forgettest,’⁶⁸ the Sufia explain the meaning of *nasiita* [‘forgettest’] as [*nasiita nafsika*] ‘you forget your *zath* [essence, nature].’ And before the said Verse, is the Verse which says, ‘Never say in any matter, I will surely do it tomorrow,’⁶⁹ On the other hand say, ‘I will do it God willing. [Then remember your Lord’s will or pleasure].’ Apart from this, there are many places in Quran where the *ulama* have taken objection. And the commentator of the Quran needs to master fifteen *uloom* [sciences].

We say: The Sheikh’s Arabic quotation is much below the standard of correct language and idiom and it does not give the fullest meaning that he intended to convey, because it is devoid of the relative pronoun. On the other hand, the passage written eloquently is . و ما يحتاج اليه المفسر من العلوم خمسة عشر علما .

Sciences a *Mufassir* should master

He [Muttaqi] says: The fifteen sciences are as follows: 1. Lexicon; 2. Grammer; 3. Morphology; 4. Derivation; 5, 6 and 7. Meaning, Explanation and Science of rhetoric; 8. Recitation of Quran; 9. Principles of Religion; 10. Principles of Fiqh [Islamic Law] or commands, interdictions, story [Tradition], abridged, clear or manifest, common and special, absolute or confined, strong, ambiguous, manifest, *mawwul*, reality, outward appearance, obvious and allusion or metaphorical; 11. Reasons for the revelation of Quran; 12. Annulling and Annulled; 13. Fiqh [Islamic Law]; 14. The Traditions that explain the abridged and ambiguous matters [or verses].

We say: A commentator of Quran need not know all the sciences that the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has mentioned. The commentator needs to know some of these sciences and the *mujtahid* [Muslim Jurist] needs to know some others of them, because the *mujtahid* has to extract the commands and explain the *Shari’at*. However, the *mufassir* [commentator] does not have the responsibility of extracting the commands from the verses of the Quran. Hence, he does not need to know all those sciences. The commentator needs to know [or master] some of these sciences, like grammer, morphology, lexicon, explanation and the *shan-e-nuzool* [circumstances of the revelation of a Quranic verse]. Hence, these sciences are found necessary for commentary. Most of the commentators, while writing the commentary, have not explained these sciences, which the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has presented as a condition for writing the commentaries of Quran. The argument for not needing all the sciences that he has enumerated, is that Faqih Abul Lais Samarqandi has written in his book, *Bustan*, that the Quran was revealed for the people as a *hujjat* [clear proof]. Hence, if the commentary of Quran was not permissible, then the Quran would not have been a *hujjat* for the people. When such is the case, it is permissible for any person who knew the lexicon and the circumstances of the revelation to write the *tafsir* of the Quran. But for the person who has not mastered the circumstances of the revelation of the verses of the Quran and the lexicon, it is not permitted to write the commentaries. However, he can say or

⁶⁷ Quran, S. 24: 33 AYA.

⁶⁸ Quran, S. 18: 24 MMP.

⁶⁹ Quran, S. 18: 23 SAL.

write what he has heard, as a story and not as a *tafsir*. In these circumstances, there is no fear for him. If such a commentator knows that his *tafsir* is confined to what he has listened, and he wants to extract a command or commands from a verse of the Quran, for him also there is no fear.

Hence, know, O Just Man! Our brothers [who have given up the world and become the seekers of Allah Most High] do not comment on the Quran on the basis of their thinking. Rather, they study the exegeses [written by others] and they take only those points from these exegeses that are excellent, in accordance with the command of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, who said, ‘The Quran is the treasure of many facets, take only the best from among them.’ Since our brothers have turned their faces away from the world and turned them towards Allah Most High, sometimes a point is revealed in their pure hearts that is not found in the exegeses. From among their explanation is the command of Allah Most High, ‘O Messenger! Proclaim the (message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission...’⁷⁰. Its meaning is understood as: ‘The thing you have conveyed would be deemed that you have not publicized it if you did not practice it yourself.’ The reason for this meaning is that the preaching of a message is of two kinds: one is oral, that the preacher simply says through his tongue, and the other is expounded by action or deed of his limbs. The point [to be noted here] is that it is obligatory on the *muballigh* [preacher] to practice the message he conveys, so that the oral preaching of the preacher should have definite effect on the people preached. Hence, it is said that the *zaban-e-bal* [practical conveyance of message] is more effective than the *zaban-e-maqal* [oral word]. If the *muballigh* [preacher] does not practice what he preaches, he becomes disgraced in the eyes of the people he preaches. They dislike him. Hence, the preacher by word of mouth is ineffective. Hence, he is not fit to be called a preacher.

Apart from this is the explanation of the command of Allah Most High, ‘Say: Short is the enjoyment of this world: the Hereafter is the best for those who do right...’⁷¹ Its meaning has been given as ‘for the person who keeps his *zath* [essence, nature] away from the little wealth of the world.’ Hence, it is obligatory on the seeker of the Hereafter that he abstains from his desires, which pollute the purity and cleanliness of the heart. Allah Most High says, ‘As for that Abode of the Hereafter we assign it unto those who seek not oppression in the earth, nor yet corruption. The sequel is for those who ward off (evil).’⁷² The meaning of this Quranic Verse is given as ‘wickedness and rising [in revolt] are both mentioned in the Quranic Verse; the abode of the Hereafter is given to those who abstain from both these [evils].’ Apart from their explanation, is the command of Allah Most High, ‘Every soul shall have a taste of death: and We test you by evil and by good by way of trial. To Us must ye return.’⁷³ *Fitna* [trial] is testing. *Shar* [evil] is the world. And *khair* [virtue] is the Hereafter. As the world and its *ne’maten* [good things of life; divine blessings] are a trial for the people from Allah Most High and *sadiq* [true or sincere] is the person whose heart is not involved in the love of the world. So much so that he saves his heart from the love of the world and comes out of it; similarly, the *ne’maten* of the Hereafter are the testing (examination) for the *sadiqin* [true, sincere people]. Hence the *sadiqin* too, should not show respect or inclination towards them, because this respect or inclination will be a veil for the *visal* [meeting, union with God] of *matlub-e-haqiqi* [real objective] as has been said about the *matlub-e-majazi* [worldly objective]:

[Couplet]

*I have left to the people, their religion and their world
For being engaged in Your remembrance, O my religion, O my world!*

⁷⁰ Quran, Surah Al-Maaidah(5): 67 AYA.

⁷¹ Quran, Surah An-Nisaa(4): 77 AYA.

⁷² Quran, Surah Al-Qasas(28): 83 MMP.

⁷³ Quran, Surah Al-Anbiyaa(21): 35 AYA.

Hence, see, O Just Man! Which prohibited matter have our brothers adopted and which unlawful matter have they accepted? Can it be called the exegesis on the basis of one's opinion, even if this explanation is not found in the exegeses of the past, despite the fact that the commentators are the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} and the *tabayeen* [followers of Companions]? They are of such lofty ranks and grades that the predecessors of the past did not excel them. Nor have the Saints of Allah of the later period reached such ranks of excellence. Hence, Pure is the *Zath* that has kept the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} and the *tabayeen* away from the excessive useless conversations [and He guided them to remain in His remembrance]. He also gave them the ease and comfort of *mo'ainah* [inspection or seeing] and *mushabada* [observation of divinity] and thus made them carefree and indifferent to the anguish of excessive argument.

Divinely Bestowed Knowledge for Exegesis

He [Muttaqi] says: The fifteenth science that is among the sciences for the exegesis is the divinely bestowed Knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge that Allah Most High bestows on him who works in accordance with his knowledge. Hence, it is stated in the *hadith* that the person who acts in accordance with his knowledge is made the heir to a knowledge that he does not know.

We say: The lone *fazilat* [mastery] of this divinely bestowed knowledge is enough to support the things that the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has enumerated earlier for the lawfulness of the exegesis, because the person who is among the ones who are endowed with the bestowed knowledge will not do a thing that angers Allah Most High. And the matter that angers Allah Most High is the exegesis on the basis of one's own opinion. Even if a person has done the exegesis despite his ignorance of the sciences that the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has enumerated, it is because Allah Most High protects such people from falling into error and he inspires them on the path of correctness. Hence, Allah Most High may keep some of our brothers unharmed and steadfast on the truth in this world and in the Hereafter, because they knew some things and practised what they knew, their practice made them the inheritors of the unknown sciences. The evidence of our explanation is given by their obvious condition.

He [Muttaqi] says: If a person has learned these sciences and practiced according to them, then Allah Most High bestows on him the *ilm-e-ladunni* [divinely inspired knowledge or the bestowed knowledge].

We say: It is astonishing that Sheikh [Muttaqi] has exaggerated in his apostasy, and said that, 'the person who has learned these sciences...' [up to the end]. The astonishment is because the Sheikh has mentioned some of the sciences for the purity and cleanliness of the immanence. Nobody else has laid down the condition of learning these sciences. The cleanliness that makes Allah Most High bestow the *ilm-e-ladunni* is granted to the special people of Allah Most High. Hence, Sheik-ash-Shuyookh Sheikh Shihabuddin^{RA} has written in his book, *Awarif*, and I have mentioned this before. It is that sometimes, the servant of Allah becomes '*Alim Billah* and becomes the Man of Certainty but he does not have the knowledge of the *Farq-e-Kifaya*. Hence, what is the use of the *ilm-ul-ishtiqaq* [etymology], syntax, lexicon, *badi'* [science of rhetorical devices], *qira'at* [recitation of Quran] etc. for a seeker of the Truth. He needs the knowledge that enables him to correctly perform *namaḥ* and *roḥa*. A seeker of Truth who is a *faqir* [one who has performed the obligation of giving up the world—*Tark-e-Dunya*] need not know the knowledge of *ḥaḥat* [poor-due] and *haj* [pilgrimage to Makkah]. Similarly he need not know the detailed knowledge of marriage, divorce, *ila*, *Khula'*

and *zihar* [various kinds of divorce], if he is unmarried and without a wife. On the contrary, learning these sciences, which the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has mentioned precludes the achieving of the *ilm-e-ladunni*.

Hence, Imam Ghazali has said about the science of *Fiqh*, in his book *Ihya ul-Uloom* that the science of *Fiqh* is of course the science of religion, but it hardens the heart if one is engaged in reading it all the time. It also removes the fear of God from one's heart. Hence, this characteristic is seen in the people who have become the people of *Fiqh*.

Hence, ponder, O Just Man! Always engaging oneself in reading the science of *Fiqh*, which is a science of religion, renders hardness to the heart then what do you think about being engrossed in sciences other than *Fiqh*? Whatever I have mentioned are the sayings of the saints of Allah, who had received the *Ilm-e-Ladunni* [the knowledge bestowed by Allah Most High to His Friends (*Awliya*)]. According to a saying of the Prophet^{SLM}, if a person engages himself continuously for forty days in pure remembrance of Allah then fountains of wisdom overflow from his heart and tongue. The books of the *Awliya-Allah* are full of their sayings.

Among the sayings is the one mentioned in the book, *Awarif*, in the matter of the person who reads or recites the Holy Quran. Such a reader of the Quran should not confine his comprehension to the emulation of the *mazhab* that he follows. Then the reader gets the *barkat* [bounty] of the Book of Allah with the manifestation of its secrets. And that *barkat* [bounty or abundance] is proved for the sacred *zawath* [personalities] of the people of wisdom. And that *barkat* is achieved by these *nufuos* [souls] through remembrance [of Allah]. (Here ends the statement of the Sheikh-ash-Shuyookh^{RA}).

He [Muttaqi] says: And he, who has done the *tafsir* [exegesis] of the Quran without the above-mentioned sciences, is deemed to have done it on the basis of his own opinion.

We say: The answer to the issue of the exegesis on the basis of one's own opinions has already been given many times and we do not repeat it.

Question about the knowledge of the Companions^{RZ} and its response

He [Muttaqi] says: The language of the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM} and their followers was Arabic and for this reason they had achieved the sciences of the Arabic Language by nature, not by the benefit of their teachers, and also not by the usual processes of learning. And the *uloom-e-ukhravi* [the sciences of the Hereafter] was known to them from the Prophet^{SLM}. This has been mentioned in the book, *Itqan*. The author of *Itqan* has copied from *Allamah* Tuftazani^{RA}, who has written in his *Sharah* that the *mulhid* [heretics] have been named as *Batiniah* [Carmathian sect of the Shi'ites] on the basis of their claim that the clear commands of the Quran and Traditions [of the Prophet^{SLM}] are not based on their manifest meaning but they have an immanent meaning, which is known only to the person who has been bestowed the inspired knowledge by Allah Most High. The purpose of this claim of the heretics is the total negation of the *Shari'at*. However, the *mazhab* [belief] of some *muhaqqiqin* [research philosophers] is that there are clear manifest meanings for *nusoos* [categorical Quranic commands], despite the fact that there are hidden hints about the immanent nuances, which are revealed to the *arbab-e-suluk* [people of the mystic initiation]. The consonance between the immanent nuances of the clear Quranic commands and their manifest meanings are possible. Hence, that revelation of the minute points is because of the *Iman* [Faith] and pure *Irfan* [intimate knowledge of God and highest form of mystical experiences].

We say: That the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has referred to the *Itqan* for this narrative is proof that he is unaware of the *Sharab-e-Aqaid*, because this narrative is as evident as sunlight in the book, *Sharab-e-Aqaid*. Had he read this book, he would never have referred to the book, *Itqan*. Hence, the Sheikh's mentioning of this narrative from the book, *Itqan*, is proof of his *Adm-e-Itqan* [total absence of perfection], in the knowledge of those books that are current among the *ulama* as the Quran is current among the children.

Then again, know, O Just Man! *Allamah* Tuftazani^{RA} has clarified that the nuances are revealed to the people of the mystic initiation and said that these revelations are because of their perfect *Iman* [Faith] and pure *Irfan* [intimate knowledge of God]. And you, O Sheikh! You know, because you have lived [for some time] with our brothers, that our brothers are those who seek the proximity and nearness of Allah Most High; they fight their *nafs* [self, concupiscence], they perform religious and spiritual exercises, they assign their own work to the will of Allah Most High and they are happy with the pleasure of Allah, making themselves devoid of the love of the world and keeping themselves aloof and away from their own and other people. They also live in loneliness and seclusion for the remembrance of Allah and lay down their lives in the path of Allah and they help and benefit others. Hence, all these virtues of our brothers are manifest and are well known to the people. And nobody knows their hidden conditions and what has been kept concealed for them: that is, the vision of God in this world, [which is] the eternal coolness of the eyes [that is, the cherished desire of the heart]. That is the reward for their good deeds. They are the leaders of those who follow them [in time]; they judge the opinions of those who have gone before them. They explain the Quran and their commentary of it is the best.

Leader of the *Mutakhireen* [people of the later era], Scrutinizer of the opinions of the *Mutaqaddimeen* [people of the early era], Commentator of the Quran with excellent explanation, Author of the *tafsir Tabsir-ur-Rahman*, Maulana Ali Peero has, in the *Sharab* of his book *Awarif*, known as *Zawarif*, quoted the saying of Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ} that 'There is no verse, but there is a community for a verse, and the community would shortly know the meaning of that verse.' Under this saying, he said:

The saying of Ibn Masood^{RZ} incites every man of courage, so that his courage is not confined to what he has listened to. And that he should clear the place in his heart where the saying reaches, so that he understands what he has heard, that is, the nuances of the meanings that were not understood even by the Companions^{RZ}, despite their extreme purity and their hearts being free of things other than Allah Most High and their being the source and fountainhead of asceticism and continence. May Allah Most High be pleased with them all!

The Sufi who has both the attributes, that is, his heart being free of the things other than Allah Most High and giving up the world, gets the information about the meaning of every Quranic Verse that is opposed to the thinking and comprehension of common man. Rather, he achieves a new meaning from the Quran every time he reads it. This is for the simple reason that whenever he is given the comprehension of the new thing, a new good deed is born and this new deed becomes the cause of the purity of his comprehension. And this is because the *nur* [divine light] reaches from the manifestation to his immanence. Then, he acts in accordance with his second comprehension, because of which he gets a new purity of heart and that results in a new comprehension. And this chain of events continues. These deeds that are born one after another are not the deeds of the materialistic mould, because they are known to a certain extend under the manifest *Shara'* [divine law]. On the other hand, these are the deeds of the heart, which are as good as known. They are as comprehensible as the others. Thus it happens like this: the reasons for the comprehension are not

dependent and the deeds of the heart are known, because they are a clean anecdote as they are the deeds or motives or intentions; in other words they are the intentions or the beliefs. They are also the flattery or the lamenting of the soul in the presence of the Almighty. It also learns the etiquette of the heart in the presence of the soul, which is latent, and then becomes *munanwar* [illuminated]. And from these matters, every matter becomes the cause of a new inspiration. Hence, for that Sufi a large number of sciences get accumulated and it is also expected that the knowledge of one person is different from that of the other. Hence, under these circumstances, how can the reasons be limited? [Here ends Maulana Ali Peero's saying].

Under the command of Allah Most High, 'And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation), write it for them if ye are aware of aught of good in them, and bestow upon them of the wealth of Allah which He hath bestowed upon you,'⁷⁴ it is stated in *Madarik* that

If the other servant of Allah Most High is the *kbudawand-e-ishrat* [Lord of pleasure]; then he is the 'confidant' of the court of the Almighty. He meets the people to test them. He sees them admonishingly and commands them to rekindle their sense of honour. He is the successor of the Prophet^{SLM}. He commands like the command of Allah Most High. He takes [things] for the sake of Allah Most High and he spends in the path of Allah Most High. He understands from Allah Most High and he speaks to Allah Most High.

Oath in the name of Allah Most High! The Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} were endowed with the attributes, which have been mentioned in the *Madarik*. Allah Most High has sealed the heart of the Sheikh [Muttaqi]. He has made him deaf. He [God] has blinded his [the Sheikh's] eyes. He [the Sheikh] lived in the company of the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} at one time. However, he [the Sheikh] did not achieve the thing that the other Companions^{RZ} were divinely bestowed upon. He did not come to know that their *bayan* [explanation of Quran] was perfect *Iman* [Faith] and pure *Irfan* [intimate knowledge of God], as has been stated by *Allamah Tuftazani*^{RA}.

Narration from Baizavi and its response

He [Muttaqi] says: And its [the saying of *Allamah Tuftazani*^{RA} *و اما ما يذهب اليه بعض المحققين الخ*] *nazir* [precedent] is the command of Allah Most High, 'The recompense for an injury [evil] is an injury [evil] equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loveth not those who do wrong.'⁷⁵ Baizavi has said that the second *sayya 'ah* [evil deed] is named as *sayya 'ah* because there is alliteration between the first *sayya 'ah* and the second *sayya 'ah* or it could be because the second *sayya 'ah* takes revenge on one who behaves in an evil manner. And the Sufis^{RZ} have acquiesced to the manifest meaning of the Verse and then taken the hint. They have said that the path of *tariqat* [mystic way of life] is that the sinner is rewarded with *jaza* [blessings] along with an evil, which is appropriate to his sin. So, the *salik* [seeker] should forgive the evil-doer. He should not compensate with an evil deed. Ponder over these things so that the difference between the *Batiniah* sect and the Sufis becomes obvious.

We say: May Allah Most High give right guidance to the Sheikh [Muttaqi] for he has produced arguments from the conditions of the Sufis so that the conditions of our brothers could be compared with the

⁷⁴ Quran, Surah Al-Noor(24): 33 MMP.

⁷⁵ Quran, Surah Ash-Shura(42): 40 AYA.

conditions of the Sufis, because our deduction or drawing conclusion is similar to the Sufis. Then again know, O Just Man! The *ulama-e-zahir* [the scholars of the manifest knowledge] have tried to decree that the Sufis are the misguided people and they have spared no effort to brand them as ignorant, even after the scholars of the manifest knowledge had realized the difference between the *Batiniah* sect and the Sufis. Like the saying of Wahidi regarding Abu Abdur Rahman even though he has quoted only the most eminent Sufis in his *tafseer*. Hence Sheikh [Muttaqi] accusing our brothers of infidelity and innovation is like the scholars of the manifest knowledge accusing the Sufis of *gumrahi* [being misguided] and *bidat* [innovation], etc.

Under the command of Allah Most High, ‘*They take their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of Allah, and (they take as their Lord) Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One Allah: there is no god but He.*’⁷⁶ the *Tafsir-e-Arais* says that

Junaid Baghdadi^{RA} has said that when Allah Most High intends to do *neki* [goodness, virtue] with the *Murid-e-Aakhirat* [the disciple of the Hereafter], He gives right guidance to him to remain in the company of the Sufis, and protects him from the company of the *qaris* [readers or reciters, who do not act upon what they preach]. If the *be-amal ulama* [scholars who do not perform deeds according to their knowledge] are engaged in their work and in accumulating the goods and chattels of the world, in vexing and provoking the friends of Allah Most High, in trying to disgrace them, even then their misfortune was enough to disgrace them, more particularly when they taunt the truthful people and the *arifin* [those who have the intimate knowledge of God]. [Here ends the quotation from Junaid Baghdadi^{RA} in the book, *Tafsir-e-Arais*.]

Calling the Disavower of the Mahdi^{AS} as *Kafir*

He [Muttaqi] says: And one of the evils of these Mahdavis is that every Mahdavi has the belief that the person who disavowed the ‘dead person’ [Imam Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}] became a *kafir* [infidel]; and on the basis of this belief of theirs, they call the Muslims as *kafirs*. Since they unreasonably call the Muslims as *kafirs*, they themselves become *kafirs* [infidels]. This is so because none has said that the disavower of the Mahdi^{AS} is a *kafir*.

We say: It is not known whether the last horrid passage of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] is written by him or it is the distortion of the calligrapher. Rather, the passage that completes the objective is this: لان انكار المهدي لم يقل احد بسببه الكفر [This is so because not even one has said that the disavowal of Mahdi^{AS} is the cause of infidelity.]

Or it could have been said, لان منكر المهدي لم يقل احد بكفره [This is so because nobody acquiesces that the disavower of the Mahdi^{AS} becomes an infidel.]

Then, one is astonished why the Sheikh [Muttaqi] overlooked the *fatwa* of the *muftis* of Makkah, which he himself has quoted as an argument in his previous long tract. In this *fatwa* he has happily and contentedly accepted the contention that the disavower of Mahdi^{AS} is a *kafir* [infidel]. And the infidelity charge against the disavower is the *fatwa* of the *muftis* of Makkah. Hence, the *Muftis* of Makkah have written that:

But this group of Mahdavis is calling a person from among the Muslims who has opposed their wrong belief as *kafir*, that is: ‘One who accepts is *mumin* and the one who disavows is *kafir*.’ If, by this, the purport of the Mahdavis is that, in accordance with their belief, the Muslims are on *na-haq*

⁷⁶ Quran, Surah At-Towbah(9): 31 AYA.

[unjust or untruth], and that they are expelled from Islam, then the Mahdavis have become *murtid* [apostate]. Allah Most High may protect them. However, the decree about the person who disavowed the Mahdi^{AS}: Verily, the Prophet^{S^{LM}} has given the news of infidelity for the person who has disavowed Mahdi^{AS}. [Here the *fatwa* ends. The person who has given the *fatwa* is Yahya bin Muhammad Hanbali].

The thing which is even more astonishing is what the Sheikh says a few lines later in this tract while calling us as *kafirs* because of our disavowal of that Mahdi (who according to him will emerge later) in whom, as per his opinion, all the signs will be found. In his opinion, our acceptance of this Mahdi is a testament of the rejection of their (Sheik's and his brothers') Mahdi, who they think will manifest all the supposed signs. Hence, it is clear that the allegations he is making against us are reverting to him. He has fallen into the thing which he had run away from! The point to be noted in this is that Allah Most High has brought the truth on the tongue of the Sheikh and has placed the accusation back on him from his own saying. Had it not been this, it does not behove the glory of a wise man that his first word was nullified by the last part of his saying without a considerable distance between them! It is like the Arab woman who spun the thread for half a day and later in the day she destroyed the spun thread with all her strength!

Is the issue of Mahdi^{AS} part of beliefs?

He [Muttaqi] says: But the issue of Mahdi^{AS} has not been discussed in the books of beliefs, despite the mention of those things whose disavowal renders a person *kafir*, like the chastisement in the grave, the affirmation of the *pulsirat* [straight bridge]⁷⁷ and others.

We say: This statement of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] is like his reference of *Itqan* for the issue of *Sharab-e-Aqaid*. It bears witness to his lack of study of the well known books. Had he studied the books, he would never have said what he said, because the issue of Mahdi^{AS} is mentioned in lengthy and detailed books, like *Sharab-e-Maqasid* and others. "However, the emergence of Mahdi^{AS} is narrated by Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood^{RZ}." And this statement is mentioned in the book, *Sharab-e-Maqasid*, along with a detailed description. Similarly, it is mentioned in the book, *Sharab-e-Aqaid* also, under the topic of Esa^{AS} in dealing with the conditions and signs of the Doomsday. Allah Most High may destroy those people who repose faith and beliefs in such a Sheikh who is devoid of the manifest religious sciences and immanent inspirations.

Is the *Munkir* (disavower) of Mahdi^{AS} a *Kafir*?

He [Muttaqi] says: Hence, if it is said that the *hadith* [Prophetical Tradition] says 'He who disavows the Mahdi^{AS} is a *kafir*' then it is evident that the *munkir* [disavower] of Mahdi^{AS} is *kafir* [infidel]...

We say: Jabir bin Ibn Abdullah has narrated this *hadith* [Tradition] and Imam Abu Bakr Al-Askaf has reported in the book, *Fawa'id-ul-Akbbar*, in these words: 'He who disavows the emergence of Mahdi^{AS}, verily, he has committed *kufr* [infidelity] on what had been revealed on the Prophet^{S^{LM}}'.

⁷⁷ *Pul-sirat* is the extremely narrow bridge over which the righteous pass into Paradise, according to the Muslim beliefs. This bridge is the only pathway to the Paradise.—Urdu English Dictionaries.

Know, O Just Man! The meaning of the words of the Tradition is suggesting that the emergence of the Mahdi^{AS} is included in those things that were revealed to the Prophet^{SLM}, that is, in Quran. And Imam Abul Qasim Suhaili has copied this hadith in his book, *Sharab-e-Siyar*. Similarly, it is also narrated in the book, *Fasl-ul-Khitab*.

Reason for *Takfir* of a Disavower of Mahdi^{AS}

He [Muttaqi] says: ... the reply to this is that the Tradition about the disavowal is a weak *abad*⁷⁸ Tradition and gives only the benefit of presumption. Hence, its disavower's *kufr* [infidelity] is not certain under this Tradition.

We say: This issue can be unveiled only by Mahdi^{AS} whose disavowing this hadith mentions. If the Mahdi^{AS} decrees *kufr* on his disavower, that would be the [correct] belief. And if he does not decree, then that would be the [correct] belief. When we research the issue of the disavower's *kufr*, we find that there are many arguments that support the infidelity of the disavower. The reason is that the Mahdi^{AS} is the *khalifa* of the Messenger of Allah; he is the one who revives the religion of the Messenger of Allah, according to the proven consensus of the Muslim *Ummah* [community] from the day of the Prophet^{SLM} to our day.

It is said in the book, *Navadir*, that the person who has not accepted one who invites people to follow the *Shara'*, on the basis of contempt, becomes a *kafir*. Here, the person who invites people to follow the *Shara'* is the *Qazi* [judge] or the *Muhtasib* [censor]. When the disavowal of the judge or the censor on the basis of contempt is *kufr*, the disavowal of the Mahdi^{AS} is *kufr* for a better reason. [One may ask the disavowal of the judge or the censor was on the basis of contempt: is the basis, here contempt too?] Yes. Here too, it is contempt on account of not performing the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of the Mahdi^{AS} and attributing falsehood and wrong claim to the Mahdi^{AS} is tantamount to insulting him.

Hadith-e-Ahad* and *Hadith-e-Mutawatir

Then, know, O Just Man! The disavowing of a thing that is proved by the *abad* Traditions is tantamount to not being certain that the *hadith* [Tradition] has emanated from the Prophet^{SLM}. This is so because even if the *abad* Tradition is *sahih* [sound], it gives only the benefit of presumption. And the person who denies a thing that is proved by a *hadith-e-mutawatir* [the tradition with repeated continuity] his being a *kafir* is proved by a Prophetical Tradition and it is certain and there is no doubt about it. Because of the large number of the narrators, certainty is achieved and the doubt is erased. Hence a thing which is proved by *abad-e-zanni* [solitary traditions which give the benefit of presumptions] becomes certain without a doubt after the fact predicted by the Tradition comes into existence. Hence, the rise of the sun from the west is proved by a *hadith-e-abad* [Tradition narrated by only one narrator]. In the exegesis of the command of Allah Most High, 'In the day when one of the portents from thy Lord cometh,'⁷⁹ it is stated that when the sun rises from the west and the people see it, the presumption will vanish and certainty will be achieved. At that time, the disavowal or the doubt about this *abad* Tradition of the Prophet^{SLM} will not persist in the heart [or mind] of the *mumin* [believer]. Similar is the case of the *hadith-e-abad* in the matter of Mahdi^{AS}. [The doubt about the *hadith-e-abad*

⁷⁸ *Abad* are the Traditions transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain, though its core text is not disputed.

⁷⁹ Quran, Surah Al-An'aam(6):158 MMP.

will persist till the emergence of Mahdi^{AS}. After his advent, the doubt will vanish and the matter becomes certain.]

And what has Imam Ghazali^{RA} said in the fourth chapter of his book, *Ihya-ul-Uloom*, about the dangers of *Munazarab* [dialectical speech or controversy], supports this view about the *hadith-e-abad* becoming correct after the manifestation of the predicted event. The Prophet^{S^{LM}} has said that when the people learn the sciences and give up deeds, express love with their speech and nurture hatred and enmity in their hearts, and terminate relations with their near and dear ones, Allah Most High will curse them, make them deaf and blind. This Tradition is narrated by Hasan bin Ali^{RZ} and verily, this Tradition is proved to be *sahih* by *mushahidab* [observation]. (Here ends the statement of Imam Ghazali^{RA}).

Hence, see, O Just Man! The saying of Imam Ghazali^{RA}, “this Tradition is proved to be *sahih* by *mushahidab* [observation]”, means that the *hadith* of the Prophet^{S^{LM}} became *sahih* [sound] among the *ulama* upon the manifestation of the predicted event. And what Kirmani has said in the *Sharah-e-Bukhari*, under what Umar^{RZ} had told his son Abdullah^{RZ}, is close to the matter mentioned above. (Umar^{RZ} had told his son Abdullah^{RZ} that) ‘If Sa’ad bin Abi Waqas^{RZ} narrates any *hadith* from the Prophet^{S^{LM}}, do not ask any questions of him.’ Kirmani has said that sometimes the *hadith-e-abad* is systematically surrounded by circumstances, and such *hadith* gives the benefit of certainty. Under those conditions, there remains no need for raising questions. And this saying of Umar^{RZ} is in the first part of the thirty parts of *Bukhari*, about the chapter on *mas’h* [wiping] of the *manzab* [socks or footwear].

And among the arguments of *takefir* [decreeing *kufir*] is the saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] at the end of his tract and that is: ‘In short, the Mahdi^{AS} cannot be proved unless all those Traditions, which are narrated about him [Mahdi^{AS}] are found in him.’ And the Tradition, ‘He, who denies the Mahdi^{AS}, verily became a *kafir*,’ is also among those Traditions that have been narrated about the Mahdi^{AS}. And if the Mahdi^{AS} does not decree the command of *takefir* against his disavower, then as per the condition put by the Sheikh [Muttaqi], the Mahdi^{AS}’s *Mahdiat* does not stand proved, because the command of the Mahdi^{AS} will not be in conformity with the *hadith*. Thus it is astonishing at the Sheikh’s lunacy and lack of adequate knowledge of the science of *Hadith* and *Usul* [principles] for he has issued his command only on this *hadith* [‘He who denies the Mahdi^{AS}, verily became a *kafir*,’] that it is weak and does not give the benefit of finality and correctness, despite the fact that most of the *ahadith* about Mahdi^{AS} are *abad* and do not give the benefit of their being final and certain. Yes! (It is the answer to the question of its importance. The question is whether anything has been narrated with constancy in the subject of Mahdi^{AS}?) The *ahadith-e-abad* about the existence⁸⁰ of Mahdi^{AS}, despite not having proof of finality, have achieved *tawatir* [constancy], because the narrators themselves have reached the limit of *tawatir*. Because the narrators of the *ahadith-e-abad* are in a large number, their number makes it impossible that all of them are saying things that are false. Their large number is perpetual to this day. Hence, the beginning of this *kbabar* [Tradition] is like its end and its end is like its beginning. All the Traditions that have been reported about the emergence of the Mahdi^{AS} are unanimous and consistent, except in the matter of signs and attributes. This is so because a large group of people from each of the Islamic sects has narrated it.

⁸⁰ The Sheikh [Muttaqi] has written after praises of God and Prophet^{S^{LM}}, ‘There is no doubt that the existence of the Mahdi^{AS} is proved by the *ahadith*, that are more than three hundred in number.—See Sheikh’s first saying.

Is it sufficient to believe in a Mahdi, but not in the specific Mahdi?

He [Muttaqi] says: Certainly the Tradition ('He, who falsifies the Mahdi^{AS}, verily became a *kafir*') argues in favour of the belief in a Mahdi; it does not argue in favour of the belief in a specific Mahdi.

We say: It would have been better if he had said لان الحديث with *lam jar'ab* so that it could be the reason for his saying مع ان الحديث or he could have said مع ان الحديث.

I say that the Sheikh's statement لا المهدي المعين [and not a specific Mahdi] is meaningless. The reason is that the obligation of belief in a Mahdi commands that one should believe in the Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, who has actually been proved. And it does not mean that one says that 'one who disavows the Mahdi^{AS} is a *kafir* [infidel]' and then say, 'Whoever is Mahdi, I will believe in him; but I do not believe in this Mahdi because of the doubts that occur to me.' If this belief is enough for him, then he is like the person, who says that: 'I believe that the Seal of the Messengers^{SLM} will come during the Last Era. But I do not hold the belief that Muhammad is the Seal of the Messengers^{SLM}'.

Hadith of Sufiani is Ahad and not Mutawatir

He [Muttaqi] says: If it is accepted that the disavowal of the Mahdi is a *kafir*, then the Mahdi, whose disavowal is an infidel and whose acceptance is obligatory should conform to the Ahadith and signs that have been narrated for him. However, this person [who has staked the claim] does not possess most of the authentic signs which are particularly related to the Mahdi and are stated in well known Traditions. For example The Sufiani will be present during the era of the Mahdi and the Mahdi will come with Esa^{AS} on the soil of Palestine to kill Dajjal, and there are other signs.

We say: The scholars of science of Traditions in their authentic books have not ascertained the soundness [*sahih*] of the Sufiani Tradition. Since they have not clarified whether this Tradition is *sahih* or *mandhu* [sound or fabricated] therefore it cannot be determined whether it is *sahih* or *mandhu* [sound or fabricated]. Rather one would hesitate because of the silence of the scholars of the science of Traditions. This point has been stated in the principles of Traditions. Hence, the Tradition, which one is obliged to accept as sound, is not considered as a *hujjat* [final proof] in respect of dogmatic beliefs. This is so because such a Tradition does not give the benefit of finality and certainty, as the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has mentioned earlier in his saying in answer to some other point, that the *Khabar Abaad*⁸¹ gives only the benefit of presumption, despite its being *sound*. In our reply, we say the same thing as the saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi]. The Tradition whose soundness the Imams have hesitated on, does not give the benefit of its own correctness, then, how can it give the benefit of the correctness of the belief for others? [If the confirmation of a given Tradition is lacking, it cannot give the benefit of finality and certainty, and it cannot be taken as a proof in the matters of beliefs]. Then, how can the Tradition about which the authorities have remained silent be taken as reliable? Because the Tradition, which does not give benefit of its own correctness, how can it give the benefit of the correctness of the belief of others? Hence, I have already mentioned this point clearly.

⁸¹ *Khabar Abad* is the Tradition transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain.

Hence, the Traditions of this kind, about which the authorities have hesitated, will not be decreed as correct, until they actually occur. Thus, if later when the fact predicted in such a Tradition⁸² comes to happen and is manifested, it would be understood that the Tradition was pronounced by the Prophet^{S.L.M.}. Otherwise, when these matters do not come to happen and are not manifested, the Tradition concerned would be treated as fabricated. Hence, how can such Traditions be presented against the person concerned whose claim is proved by those things with which the claim of Prophets^{AS} is proved? That is, their character and behavior. I will deal with these matters shortly, Allah willing, when discussing the Sheik's [Muttaqi] example of the mosquito. We have already dealt with the issue of Mahdi^{AS} appearing along with Esa^{AS} and we do not reiterate it here.

The Sheikh's saying about the matter of the *Bab-e-Lud* [Gate of Lud], on the soil of Palestine, is just a hint about the Tradition, which is narrated in Qurtubi. This is a very weak Tradition. Hence, Imam Bayhaqi⁸³ has said in the book, *Shu'b-ul-Iman* that the consensus of the *ulama* is on the unambiguous belief. Then again, know that bringing the Sufiani Tradition among the Traditions issued by the Prophet^{S.L.M.} is proof of the ignorance of the Sheikh [Muttaqi], because this Tradition is not among the Traditions issued by the Prophet^{S.L.M.}. And the argument is on the point that the Traditions about the attributes of Mahdi^{AS} do not specify any particular attribute of the Imam^{AS}. Some of the *ulama* have hesitated about these Traditions, as Bayhaqi has mentioned in his book, *Shu'b-ul-Iman*. I have already dealt with this matter earlier.

If the Traditions had been issued in specifying the attributes of the Mahdi^{AS}, there was no need for the *ulama* to hesitate. However, the ignorance about the Traditions and the suspicion about such ignorance is not justified against the authorities who examine the quality of the Traditions.

Charge of *Kufr* on Mahdavis because they do not believe in the supposedly real Mahdi who is yet to come

He [Muttaqi] says: Hence, his disavowal becomes necessary, because it is necessary to believe in that person who will possess all the signs. Under these circumstances, their *kufr* [infidelity] is the result of their belief in the *Mahdiat* of a person, which makes it necessary for them to disavow the *Mahdiat* of the Mahdi who would possess all those signs.

We say: Verily, it has been mentioned earlier that this saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] contradicts his earlier saying in his discussion about the disavowal of the Mahdi^{AS} not becoming a *kafir*. That saying of the Sheikh is this: '...they themselves become *kafirs* [infidels]. This is so because none has said that the disavowal of the Mahdi^{AS} is a *kafir*.' And the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has become a *kafir* under his own saying because he has made the charge of *kufr* against us, just on the basis of our *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of our Mahdi^{AS}. His contention is that our *tasdiq* of our Mahdi^{AS} is tantamount to the denial of his supposed Mahdi that he expects in the future. [This is so because his charge of *kufr* against us is without a justification of the *Shari'at*.] Hence, you [the reader] think over it, so that contradiction between the two sayings of the Sheikh becomes obvious to you.

⁸² In other words, the matters mentioned in the Tradition are treated as correct after these matters have come to happen and are manifested.

⁸³ His full name is Ahmad ibn al-Husayn al-Bayhaqi^{R.H.}

He [Muttaqi] says: And among the follies of the Mahdavis is that they mention some of the Traditions that have no reality [significance] in the opinion of the *Sarrafan-e-Hadith* [Experts of Traditions] and in their imagination they compare these Traditions with the correct Traditions that have come through various manners. And it is not a hidden fact that the comparison is done only between those Traditions that are equal in the matter of their strength and weakness. The comparison does not take place between the Traditions that are *mashur* [well-known], *mutawatir* [repeatedly constant], and *mustafiz* [favoured] Traditions, which have been proved in various manners and some of those Traditions are *mat'oon* [blame-worthy] Traditions that are not considered to be Prophetical Traditions.

We say: I have found that in the saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi], المطعون فيها the feminine pronoun ها turns to the *alif* and *lam* of المطعون and this is not correct. On the other hand, the pronoun should be masculine. I do not know whether it is the mistake of the calligrapher or of the Sheikh. It could well be the mistake of the Sheikh, because the last [part of the] saying proves the point that I have mentioned with reference to the Arabic syntax. And the saying is الذى لا ثبوت له اصلا . Then know that this is the folly of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] that he has accused us of folly. Hence, there has been no discussion between us and the *Sarrafan-e-Hadith* [Hadith experts] at any time. If there had been a discussion, we would have advanced our contentions about those Traditions, which do not exist in the view of the experts of Traditions. This is another one of the malicious accusations of the Sheikh against us [the Mahdavis]. One can understand from the sayings of the Sheikh that the Sheikh claims to be an expert of Traditions. However, the Sheikh's folly and his lack of proficiency in the science of the Prophetical Traditions are obvious and are being witnessed, where he has said, 'In short, the Mahdi^{AS} will not be proved unless all those attributes that have come in the Traditions are not found in him.' We will shortly deal with this matter.

I swear by Allah! Even a person, who has an iota of understanding of the Traditions, will not pass an order the like of which the Sheikh has passed. The question of an expert in the science of the Traditions passing an order like that of the Sheikh does not arise at all.

Accusation of a Folly

The Sheikh [Muttaqi] has accused us of *bimaqat* [folly]. It is like a Gujarati parable, which is uttered as a proverb. It is like this: A Dakhani [south Indian] was talking with a Gujarati. The Dakhani told the Gujarati, "How strange is the language you speak in your everyday life [of Gujarati language] where you utter a word, and then dropping the first letter of the word you add an 'em' [or *mim*] in its place and utter it again? Instead of saying 'roti', you say 'roti moti'; for 'pani' you say 'pani mani'; and for 'talwar' you say 'talwar marwar'." The Gujarati in order to free himself of this defect replied that 'Such utterances are used by people who are *bazaari mazzaari* [or traders]'. Hence, by saying 'bazaari mazzaari', the Gujarati confessed his defect in his effort to deny his defect.

Similarly, the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has associated us with *bimaqat* and arrogated himself to the title of *Sarrafan-e-Hadith*. Despite this, he talks like a *havan'naq*⁸⁴ [fool, simpleton]. Hence, the Sheikh's sayings are not hidden from the people of wisdom.

⁸⁴ *Havan'naq* is a person who talks like a lunatic at times and like a wise person at other times.

He [Muttaqi] says: Despite verification and contentions, it becomes necessary that the obligation of belief is discarded by both sides. Then, how can the claim of the Mahdavis about the belief of *Mahdiat* be accepted as obligatory? This is nothing but their ignorance.

We say: Even if, according to the rule laid down by the Sheikh [Muttaqi], inconsistency is accepted, the acceptance of claim of the claimant becomes obligatory on the basis of the *akhlaq* [morality or ethics] of the claimant. This is so because the *akhlaq* prove the miracles of the Prophets^{AS} and the evidence of their *Nubuwwat* [Prophethood] is provided by the witnesses. Had there been no *akhlaq*, the miracles and the evidence of the witnesses would not have been proved. This is so, because if we compare the Prophet who performs miracles with a sorcerer who creates extraordinary imagery, and each of them claims to be a prophet, how can we differentiate between the two and accept one as the Prophet and disavow the other as a sorcerer? Ordinarily, it is not possible to differentiate between the two, except by their *akhlaq*. Hence, if the *akhlaq* of the person are like the *akhlaq* of the Prophets of the past, then it becomes obligatory to accept him as a Prophet. Otherwise, he would not be accepted as a Prophet. Hence, the correctness of the miracle depends on the *akhlaq* of the claimant. Similarly, the evidence of the witness is rejected, unless the witness is just and a person of good and likeable *akhlaq*, in which case, he is accepted [as a good and reliable witness]. Hence, the factor that decides the acceptance of the evidence too, is the *akhlaq* of the witness. A detailed discussion about the matter will follow while dealing with the Sheikh's example of the mosquito.

He [Muttaqi] says: Among the matters besides their ignorance, is the breaking of the *ijma'* [consensus].

We say: Allah Most High may increase lunacy in the treasure of the Sheikh! How he spends his lunacy without any fear of its being spent! Allah Most High says: '*On account of their arrogance in the land and their plotting of Evil, but the plotting of Evil will hem in only the authors thereof.*'⁸⁵

Belief of Mahdi^{AS} being Free from Error

He [Muttaqi] says: Their 'breaking the *ijma'* " is that they hold the belief of the '*ismat* [being free from sin] in favour of a *vali*. Hence, they [the Mahdavis] do not allow any mistake or *zillat* [ignominy] for a *Vali*.

We say: The Sheikh [Muttaqi] is aware that we [Mahdavis] believe that, except the Mahdi^{AS}, a *mutlaq vali* [ordinary saint] does commit mistakes. However, the Sheikh has tried to confine the Mahdi^{AS} as an ordinary saint. This manifests his enmity and hostility. However, we do not think it to be lawful for the Mahdi^{AS} to commit mistakes in his *ma'loomat* [information] which is achieved from Allah Most High, because the position and rank of being the Mahdi^{AS} keeps him free from error. This is so, because if we make it lawful for the Mahdi^{AS} to err in his *ma'loomat*, it becomes lawful for the Mahdi^{AS} to commit mistakes in his knowing that he is the Mahdi^{AS}. In those circumstances, it would not become obligatory for the people to repose *iman* [Faith] in him as Mahdi^{AS}. The benefit of his being commissioned [by God] to invite the people unto Allah Most High will perish. Then the Imam^{AS} becomes a person who bears a burden that he is not obliged to bear. And this is not allowed for the Mahdi^{AS} [because the Mahdi^{AS} is the *Khalifatullah* (Vice-Regent of Allah) and *Hujjatullah* (proof of Allah Most High)]. Whatever I have so far written are the rational arguments. However, I will submit the traditional arguments on the matter shortly, Allah willing.

⁸⁵ Quran, Surah Faatir(35): 43 AYA.

He [Muttaqi] says: It is not like what the Mahdavis believe. On the other hand, the *vali* [saint, friend of Allah] is *mahfooz* [protected from sin]. In other words, it is possible that a *vali* may commit an error. However, a *vali* will not insist on [committing] the error. And despite this, there will be no change [for the worse] in his ranks. Hence, it is said that a *vali* is a *vali*, even if he becomes subject to a *sharyi had* [penalty for transgressing the limits of *Shari'at*] and is punished for it. [This will not expel him from his *vilayat* (the rank of a saint)] unless he transgresses the limits of *fisq* [sinfulness] by insisting on and repeating [the sin perpetually]. This cancels the manifest rank of the *vilayat*.

We say: Our brothers hold this kind of belief in favour of the non-Mahdi [*vali* or saint].

Response to the point that Mahdi^{AS} should possess all the characteristics mentioned in *ahadith*

He [Muttaqi] says: In short, the Mahdi will not be proved, unless he possesses all those attributes that have come in the Traditions about him.

We say: I have already mentioned the mischief of this statement of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] many times. Hence, I will not repeat it. Allah Most High may have mercy on him who did justice and observed the waywardness of the Sheikh who has disobeyed the *mazhab* [creed] of the authorities of the Principles and the *muhaddisin* [experts in the science of the Prophet's Traditions] and has applied the condition that all Traditions must be found in the Mahdi, despite the fact that the Traditions differ from one another like day and night.

Hence, see, O Just Man! This is the condition of the person who has claimed to be among the *sarrafan-e-hadith* [experts of Hadith]. What would be the condition of the people who are not among the claimants of *sarrafan-e-hadith*, and yet argue on the basis of the Traditions to prove their disavowal? Woe to the Sheikh [Muttaqi] and his brothers!

He [Muttaqi] says: [This is so] because if the Mahdi is proved by some of the Traditions, there would be no use of the mention of other Traditions.

We say: The contention of the Sheikh indicates that he does not know the principles, arguments and interpretations of Traditions by the *mujtahidin* [Islamic jurists entitled to independent judgment]. Further, he does not even know that the Traditions, the *mujtahidin* hold to be strong, are classified as *asl fil-bab* [fundamental in this subject] and they ignore the Traditions that they consider to be *z'af* [weak] and contradict the strong Traditions.

If the Sheikh were to see the *ahadith-e-Sibab* that deal with raising the hands [during the ritual prayers] with justice and equity, he will find more than ten Traditions. In spite of this, these Traditions are abandoned by the Hanafis. Similarly, if he sees the Quranic Verses and the Prophetical Traditions, which deal with the *iman* [Faith] increasing and decreasing, he would find that they are innumerable. In spite of this, they are subjected to *tawil* [interpretation] by the Hanafis. In the same manner, those Traditions that deal with scarcity of water for cleanliness [for ablutions] are abandoned by the Hanafis. In the matter of estimating the amount of water for cleanliness using the ten by ten [10x10] [yards] method there is no authority with all the *muhaddisin* [experts in the science of Prophetical Traditions] that could be relied upon. *Faqa'iy Sharah-e-Masabih* and other books mention it. Despite this, that is the *mazhab* [creed] of the Hanafis. It is astonishing

that the Sheikh and those of his ilk, know that in all the matters of religion like divorce, poor-due, *le'an* [mutual cursing (by a couple in a court of law in a case of adultery)], *Kbula'* [divorce obtained by the wife], *su'lam* [advance payment in a sale agreement], *hi'bab* [gift], *riza'* [foster relationship], *atuqa* [freeing the slave], *tabarat* [cleanliness], *najasat* [impurity], *ightisal* [washing, bathing], and other matters, there are Traditions pertaining to them. However, the *mujtahidin* [jurists entitled to independent judgment] have not been able to draw conclusions because there are controversial issues in them. Hence, they have drawn conclusions where they thought that a given Tradition was preferable in the matter of its correctness. Thus they have decreed only such Ahadith as sound and correct. Besides these Traditions, they either abandoned the other Traditions, or they interpreted them. And in the matters of the religion, there is no subject in which they arrived at a consensus and did not disagree.

If the *mujtahidin* had pondered in fixing the signs of the Mahdi^{AS}, they would have certainly differed from one another because of the contradictions in the Traditions, as they have disputed in all the other matters of the religion. Hence, how can a wise person imagine that all the Traditions that have come in respect of Mahdi will be found in him? This is a thing that the intellect refuses to accept. Please think over it because it is obvious.

He [Muttaqi] says: Verily, Tirmizi has mentioned in his book, *Shama'il*, that the Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} used to protect his *zuban* [tongue] [that is, he did not speak without an objective]. He used to speak only when there was an objective.

We say: The purpose of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] in bringing the saying of Tirmizi is to support his contention, “if the Mahdi is proved by some of the Traditions, there would be no use of the mention of other Traditions”. In other words, the Prophet^{SLM} did not say anything without an objective. Hence, if [some of the attributes mentioned in the] Traditions are not found in the Mahdi^{AS} then he is not the Mahdi. And if in spite of some [of the attributes mentioned in the] Traditions being found and some other Traditions are not found; if in these circumstances, the Mahdi^{AS} is accepted, then it becomes imperative that the Prophet^{SLM} said something without an objective and as such, it becomes unlawful. In this respect, I say that the reply to this contention has already been given. We do not reiterate it. How can the nation prosper, whose [imaginary] grinding hand-mill is running on the strength of people like the Sheikh [Muttaqi]?

Real *Shari'at* is what Mahdi^{AS} explains

He [Muttaqi] says: If somebody stakes a claim of being the Mahdi^{AS} his claim should be juxtaposed with the *ahadith* and the *Shari'at* and examined. If it is in consonance with them [Traditions and *Shari'at*], the claim should be accepted and its *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] should be performed; otherwise, it should not be affirmed and confirmed. If the claimant is pious, a strict follower of the *Shari'at* and his sayings are capable of being interpreted and can be set right in accordance with the *Shari'at*, his sayings will be interpreted and it will be set right in accordance with the *Shari'at*, in good faith in favour of the *muminin* [believers].

We say: Verily, we found the claim of our *matbu'* [leader—Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}] to be perfectly in consonance with the *Shari'at* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}; moreover, we found him to be one who issues commands as the commander of *Shari'at-e-Ijtihadi* [Interpretative Islamic Code of Law] and one who also explains it, because this point is among the conditions that validate him as the Mahdi^{AS}. This is so, because

Mahdi^{AS} and Esa^{AS} will repeal some of the commands of the interpretative Islamic Code of Law. If they do not do this [repeal some of the commands of interpretative Islamic Code of Law], and follow the commands of the *mujtabidin*, the claims of both the celebrities will become suspicious. Hence, both of them will not be the *muqallid* [conformists, followers, and disciples] of the *mujtabidin*.

He [Muttaqi] says: If the claimant does not accept the interpretation of the *Shari'at*, then rejecting the claimant and disavowing his claim and following the *Shari'at* will become obligatory. But interpreting the *Shari'at* on any issue violating the *ijma'* [consensus], and turning it in accordance with one's own claim, affirming it as the reality, and making the *Shari'at* subservient to one's own opinion is sheer apostasy. Allah Most High may protect us from this heresy.

We say: What the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has said is correct in respect of all the *awliya* [saints]. [Every word and deed of the saints of Allah Most High must be seen in accordance with the *Shari'at*.] However, with respect to Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, when his being the Mahdi^{AS} is proved, it is not lawful for anybody to juxtapose any proven saying of the Imam^{AS} with the *Shara'-e-Ijtihadi* [interpretative Islamic Code of Law] and accepting it if in consonance, otherwise, rejecting it. On the contrary, the real *Shari'at* is what the Imam^{AS} explained. The good *tawil* [interpretation] is that which the Mahdi^{AS} has decreed as good and the bad *tawil* [interpretation] is that which the Imam^{AS} decrees to be bad. This is so, because the controversies that exist among the *mujtabidin* cannot be brought to consensus. Hence, it is necessary that the Mahdi^{AS} issues commands regarding some controversial matters as correct and some other controversial matters as incorrect.

The example of this controversy is this: In the view of Imam Abu Hanifa^{RA} intending the manifest and reality from one and the same word is not correct. But it is correct in the view of Imam Shafei^{RA}. Similarly giving preference to the confined over the absolute is not correct, except under certain conditions, in the view of Imam Abu Hanifa^{RA}, whereas it is correct without any condition in the view of Imam Shafei^{RA}. Similarly, the generality of the manifest is correct in the view of Imam Abu Hanifa^{RA} and it is not correct in the view of Imam Shafei^{RA}. Using this analogy for all the differences among the *A'immah-e-Mujtabideen*, is it permissible for every follower of each of the four *mazahib* to examine and compare the saying of Mahdi^{AS} and accept it if it is in consonance with the thing of his own *mazhab* [creed], otherwise, reject it? [It is not like this.] Rather it is obligatory on all the followers of all the *mazahibs* [creeds] to accept the sayings of Mahdi^{AS} and reject the sayings of all the imams of the four *mazahibs*. This is so because Mahdi^{AS} is the final argument [*hujjat*] of Allah Most High, like the Prophets, on all the people. And no other argument is valid over the final argument of Allah Most High.

And our explanation is supported by the thing that Abu Shukoor Salami has mentioned in his book, *Tambid*, in the matter about crossing the *pul-sirat*.⁸⁶

This affair [of crossing the *pul-sirat*] will be for the believers and infidels, and not for the Prophets^{AS} and Messengers^{AS}. This is so, because entering the hell and crossing the *pul-sirat* is necessary for common *muminin* and is related to [divine] rewards, accountability, weight and the record of deeds. They are necessary for all the *muminin* [believers]. They are not necessary for the Prophets^{AS} and the Messengers^{AS} of Allah Most High. The reason is that all these things that have been mentioned are for the manifestation of good and evil and for giving the reward for the good or punishment for the evil [deeds]. And the Prophets^{AS} are born free and undefiled of these evils because they are the proof

⁸⁶ *Pul-sirat* is the extremely narrow bridge providing the only approach to Paradise; or Paradise Pathway.

of Allah Most High for the people. And no *bujjat* [argument or proof] is advanced over the *bujjat* [argument or proof] of Allah Most High. Nor is it in need of any argument or proof! [Here ends his (Abu Shukoor Salami's) statement].

Answer to the charge that many Mahdis will emerge if only some Traditions are required for proof of Mahdiat

He [Muttaqi] says: If the Mahdi is proved by only some of the Traditions, then the *Mahdiat* of every person will be proved for one in whom some of the Traditions will be found. Hence, many *Mahdis* would be found in one and the same period and, similarly, many Esa^{AS} and Dajjal too will be found.

We say: One is astonished at the short-sightedness of the Sheikh [Muttaqi]. If some of the signs [described in the Traditions] are found, how does it become necessary for many *Mahdis* to be gathered together [at the same time]? This is so because, along with the proof of *Mahdiat*, the Mahdi has to necessarily invite the people unto Allah Most High with the divine teachings, his good *akhlaq* [virtues and morality], and he should remain constantly and consciously insistent on his claim to being the Mahdi until his death. And Allah Most High does not want to give a wrong-doer and a liar the position of a virtuous and likeable person, and leave him in that exalted position till his death. Further, He will not leave the signs of such an imposter alive after his death.

Hence, the Prophet^{SLM} said when he was close to his demise, 'Verily I had intended to send word to Abu Bakr^{RZ} and his son and make a declaration, so that Allah may save us from the situation in which aspirants become desirous, or the gossipers gossip. Hence, I said that Allah Most High would never permit and the believers will not allow that, in the presence of Abu Bakr^{RZ}, some other person becomes the *Khalifa* [Caliph].' Similar is the case in the matter of the discussion about *Mahdiat*.

If in any person, some of the signs of the Mahdi^{AS} are found, and in reality he is not the Mahdi^{AS}, Allah Most High does not want to fulfill his desire and He does not allow his claim to continue.

Example of the Elephant and the Mosquito

He [Muttaqi] says: I did not find any example for this group of Mahdavis other than this one. A person caught hold of a mosquito and tied a thin thread on one of its legs. Then, holding the mosquito in his hand, went to another person, and said, 'Is there someone who will buy an elephant from me.' The other man said, 'How much does it cost?' He named the price. The other person said, 'Bring the elephant so that I can buy it.' He opened his palm and said, 'This is the elephant.' Hence, the other person [the intending buyer] was astonished at the folly of this person who had offered the elephant for sale, and said, 'How do you call a mosquito an elephant?' Then he said, 'Did you not see its trunk?'

Hence, the example of the group of the Mahdavis is like the man of the mosquito. Simply on the basis of their knowledge that he [Syed Muhammad^{AS}] is among the descendants of the Messenger of Allah Most High and his name is Muhammad, they became the believers that he is the Mahdi^{AS}. Allah may protect us from their ignorance.

We say: The Sheikh [Muttaqi] has told the truth! He could not find another example because of his blindness! His truth is like the truth of a blind person, who said that he had never seen the sun and its light! This is so because he has exposed his own condition through his own words. Similar is the case of the person, on whose heart, ears and eyes Allah Most High has placed the veil of blindness. His thinking becomes confused like that of the blind she-camel on a dark night. Hence, Allah Most High has told the story of people such as the Sheikh [Muttaqi]: He says: ‘*And when they saw them they said: Lo! These have gone astray.*’⁸⁷ In other words, the infidels and the hypocrites say about the *muminin* [believers] that they have been misled. But when the believers go to Paradise, the infidels and the hypocrites will say wistfully and repentantly [in the Hereafter], ‘*...What has happened to us that we see not men whom we used to number among the bad ones? Did we treat them (as such) in ridicule, or have (our) eyes failed to perceive them?*’⁸⁸ The infidels had called the believers as having gone astray. However, the believers were the perfect ones.

However, the saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] that – ‘simply on the basis of their knowledge that he [Syed Muhammad^{AS}] is among the descendants of the Messenger of Allah Most High and his name is Muhammad, they became the believers that he is the Mahdi^{AS}. Allah may protect us from their ignorance,’ – is the negligence of the Sheikh because the thing which makes the reposing of Faith in Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS} as obligatory is the same thing that made the reposing of Faith in the Prophets as obligatory. And this thing is their *akhlaq* [virtues and morality], because *akhlaq* alone are the foundation of reposing Faith in the Prophets^{AS}. Hence, we too repose our Faith on the basis of the *akhlaq* of Mahdi^{AS} as the people of insight and discernment had reposed their Faith in the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. This is so, because we have found some Traditions that are proved in the *zath* [personality] of Mahdi^{AS}. We also found some Traditions that did not have the rank of being the [correct] beliefs and proper arguments in the matter of Mahdi^{AS}. Further, we found some of the sayings of the *ulama* [scholars] contradicting each other, so much so that some of the *ulama* have remained silent on the conditions of identifying the Mahdi^{AS}.

Morality of Mahdi^{AS}

Now I will present the arguments about the *akhlaq* [morality] of the claimant [Imam Mahdi^{AS}] which are worthy of being presented. From among the various arguments is the one, which has been mentioned in the book, *Sharah-e-Aqaid*, in respect of the argument about *nubuwwat* [Prophethood].

And the people of vision have argued on two counts about the Prophethood. First, the condition and the situation just before the *dawat* [call, invitation], during the period of the call and then after the completion of the call is taken into account. And then the great *akhlaq* [morality] of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and his sage-like commands, his proceeding towards a place where great wrestlers were poised for a confrontation with him, his Trust in Allah Most High in every adverse situation, and his straightforwardness was such that even his bitterest enemies who tried their best in their efforts to be hostile and taunt him, could not find enough room to find fault with him. Hence, verily the intellect can be certain that all these matters will not come together in the ordinary people who are not the Prophets. Further, the intellect does not accept that Allah Most High accumulates all the excellences and perfections mentioned above, in a person about whom Allah Most High is aware that he slanders Him and then He gives him a respite period of twenty-three years, and makes his

⁸⁷ Quran, Surah Al-Mutaffifeen(83): 32 MMP.

⁸⁸ Quran, Surah Saad(38): 62-63 AYA

religion overpower all other religions and defeat all his enemies, and keep his Signs alive even after his death till the Day of Resurrection.

Secondly, the Prophet^{SLM} staked claim to a great matter, that is, the Prophethood among the people of a community, which had neither a Book nor *bikmat* [wisdom]. He manifested upon the community a Book and wisdom. He taught them the religious commands and illuminated paths and perfected them with grand *akbblaq*. He also filled most people with the excellence of knowledge and deeds. And he illuminated the world with *iman* [Faith] and righteous deeds. Then Allah Most High made his religion predominate over all other religions as He had promised. And Prophethood and Messengership have no meaning other than these matters. [Here ends the statement of *Sharab-e-Aqaid*].

Hence, see, O Just Man! When the people of insight and discernment have argued on the basis of *akbblaq-e-hamidab* [praised morality] and *ausaf-e-mahmoodab* [praise-worthy attributes] for the proof of Prophethood, then which *hadith-e-zanni* [conjectural Tradition] prevents you from accepting a person who is perfectly endowed with these moralities and attributes as the Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}? The reason is that the *akbblaq* [morality] are the final arguments for the acceptance and cannot be compared with *Abad-e-zanni* [conjectural Traditions]⁸⁹.

This matter has been established beyond doubt that the attributes and moralities of Imam Mahdi^{AS} have been illuminated in the world like the light of the sun. The effectiveness of his speech is well-known all over the world. And verily, by remaining in the company of the Imam^{AS}, cowards have become courageous, the most ignorant have become great scholars, the great sinners have become the most obedient worshippers, and the great misers have become most generous. The real meaning of eradicating the oppression and injustice from the hearts [and minds] of the people of the earth and filling them with justice and equity is that the oppression is the opposite of the things that have already been mentioned. [As per the command of Allah, "...Save him who repenteth and believeth and doth righteous work; as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful."⁹⁰] This community of Mahdavis in reality is the *ahl-e-arz* [People of the earth]. Apart from them, the other people are like their donkeys.

From among the other arguments is the one, which is mentioned in the book, *Tawale*, that:

His [the Prophet^{SLM}'s] great *akbblaq* [virtues and morality] are the witnesses to his truth: for instance, his adherence to the Truth and his remaining abstinent from the world throughout his life [or *tark-e-dunya*: rejecting the world], his great generosity that he did not preserve more than one day's food; his bravery was so great that he did not run away even if he had to confront the great pomp and power like that of the battlefield of Uhud [about five miles from Madina]; his eloquence was so great that great orators among the Arabs became dumb before him [the Prophet^{SLM}]. Despite great difficulties and hard work, he was insistent on his claim to be the prophet; he was disdainful of the wealthy people, he was courteous to the *faqirs* [indigent people]: all these *akbblaq* [virtues and morality] are not to be found in people other than Prophets^{AS}. The attributes that he had are not found in the other people. The manifestation of all these attributes in his *zath* is a great miracle, and it was a strong argument in favour of his *nubuwwat* [Prophethood]." (The statement of *Tawale* ends here).

⁸⁹ *Abad-e-zanni* are the Prophetical Traditions, which are transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain. [*Zanni* means conjectural]. Then the meaning of the Arabic expression is Conjectural Traditions of the Prophet^{SLM}.

⁹⁰ Quran, S. 25: 69 and 70 MMP.

High Morals are Adequate Proof of Mahdiat

Hence, ponder over it, O Just Man! When it is found that a person stakes his claim to a possible matter [that of being the Mahdi^{AS}], which is close to the matter of Prophethood; and he is bestowed with the attributes which would have made it obligatory, during the period of the Prophethood, to accept the claim of Prophethood; would these attributes not make obligatory, the affirmation of this possible matter [the *Mahdiat*] of the claimant of being the Mahdi^{AS}, and the rejection of the relevant Traditions based on conjectures?

And among the arguments, is the one, which was adduced by Imam Raghīb that:

There were two signs for every Prophet: one of them is based on wisdom, which is recognized by the people of insight, and that is the manifestation of *amwar-e-ra'iqā* [pure radiance] and the existence of *akblaq-e-karīma* [bountiful virtues] and their being experts in manifest sciences in such a way that their sayings become the *sabīb-e-hujjāt* [master of arguments] and their explanations gives contentment to their listeners. These matters are such that in their presence no man of insight will demand miracles. Only those who are obsessed with hostility will demand the miracles.

The second sign is the miracle, the demand for which is necessary for the person who is incapable of differentiating between the sayings of man from that of God! Some of the research philosophers have said that the person who is deficient in wisdom demands proof through miracles over and above the true beliefs and virtuous deeds of the claimant. And the person who is perfect in his wisdom considers the perfection of the true beliefs and virtuous deeds as the proof of the truthfulness of the claim of the claimant and of the obligation of his emulation, because the spiritual diseases are dominant in most of the people because their beliefs and deeds are defective. When we have seen that a person cures spiritual diseases and makes them perfect, then we have understood that he is an expert physician and a truthful prophet. His statement ends here.

This narrative has been written under the Quranic Verse, ‘*The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace*’⁹¹, in the book, *Tafsir-e-Rahmani*.

Hence, see, O Just Man! That when an expert physician, who cures spiritual diseases [like the troubled beliefs, defect in deeds, hardness of heart, negligence and the spiritual love for those other than Allah Most High], and who has cured thousands of people from their spiritual afflictions, is the Mahdi^{AS}, why should we not accept him as such and repose faith in him as the Mahdi^{AS}? And how can he be rejected on the basis of conjectural Traditions?

[‘*Alim Billah*’⁹²—Bandagi Miyan Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA}, the Author of this book] says: Decidedly and verily, I have found my companions [*ta’bayeen* (next generation of) of Mahdi^{AS}], as those who lament at the separation from their beloved [that is, God Almighty]; who remained standing throughout the night in the remembrance of Allah, their legs swollen of the stress and strain of standing, their eyes swollen with profuse flow of tears and being awake in prayers during the night, and among them are people whose eyes remain open all the time, and most of them remained crying, and many of them remained standing all the time grieving and sighing, many more wailing and weeping, lying on their back and crying loudly — these are the

⁹¹ Quran, S. 1: 7 AYA.

⁹² *Alim Billah* means the scholar bestowed with the divine knowledge by Allah Most High.

followers of the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS}. Whereas, the Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} were the perfect physicians who cured the people suffering from spiritual illness. What are your evil thoughts, O slanderer, about the *zath-e-pak* [pure and unblemished personality] of Mahdi^{AS}? Allah Most High is the One Who guides to the right path and inspires rectitude and correctness [in His pious servants].

Ambiguity of Imam Razi regarding Prophethood

And among the arguments is the one, which the author of the book, *Tafsir-e-Naishapuri* gave in reply to the ambiguities of Imam Fakhruddin Razi. And the ambiguity of Imam Razi is his saying:

I know that we are not protected from the lies, falsehoods and deception of Iblis [the Devil] only from the heard arguments. And the correctness of the heard arguments depends on the truthfulness of Muhammad^{SLM}; and the truthfulness of Muhammad^{SLM} depends on the fact that the Holy Quran is a miracle from Allah Most High, and not from *Shaitan-e-kehabis* [the wretched devil]. And the achieving of this knowledge [that the Quran is a miracle from Allah Most High and that it is not from Shaitan] depends on achieving the knowledge that Jibrail^{AS} is truthful and free from the evil deeds and deceit of the devil. And it necessitates a mutual dependency [*daur lazim aata hai*].⁹³ And this is a hard position. [Here ends the statement of Imam Fakhruddin Razi's ambiguous statement.]

Its answer is the following reply of Naishapuri^{RA},

‘I have often said that the difference between the miracle and necromancy is that he who performs the miracle invites people unto goodness, while the sorcerer invites people towards evil. And the difference between an angel and devil is that the angel gives the inspiration of good while the devil inspires evil. When this is the situation, how can the miracle become like the necromancy and Jibrail^{AS} become like the devil? And how can the *daur* [rotation] become necessary? End of Naishapuri^{RA}'s statement, under the command of Allah Most High: ‘*The commandment of Allah will come to pass, so seek not ye to hasten it.*’⁹⁴

Hence, see, O Just Man! The ambiguity of Imam Razi^{RA} has been safely overcome from a narrow and difficult position by *kehair* [good]. This is the comprehensive name of all the praised ethics and morality. And that which is achieved from the *shar* [evil] is the blame-worthy morality. When it has been proved that the person concerned and his community are endowed with the nobility of character of the Prophets^{AS}, then no fair-minded person will have any doubt about the truthfulness of that person.

And among the arguments is what Imam Muhammad Nasrabadi says in his book, *Tafsir-e-Kashif al-Ma'ani*, under the command of Allah Most High, ‘*Behold! Allah took the covenant of the prophets, saying: "I give you a Book and Wisdom; then comes to you a messenger, confirming what is with you; do ye believe in him and render him help." Allah said: "Do ye agree, and take this my Covenant as binding on you?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses.*’⁹⁵ Under this Quranic Verse, Imam Muhammad Nasrabadi has said that:

The purport of the saying, ‘The Messenger, confirming what is with you’ is that the Messenger will follow the commands of the Book, in his speech, deeds and condition.

⁹³ In other words, achieving the knowledge of the truthfulness of Jibrail^{AS} depends on the truthfulness of heard arguments, and the truthfulness of the heard arguments depends on the truthfulness of Hazrat Jibrail^{AS}.

⁹⁴ Quran, Surah An-Nahl (16): 1 MMP.

⁹⁵ Quran, Surah Aal-Imran(3): 81 AYA.

Although this Verse in the Quran is specifically for the affirmation and confirmation of our Prophet^{SLM}, the command also applied to the Prophets^{AS} preceding Muhammad^{SLM}. Hence Abu Mansur Maturidi^{RZ} has said that the *tafsir* of the phrase is that the Messenger^{AS} would be the one who affirms and confirms all the Prophets^{AS} and Messengers^{AS}. Hence, any Prophet^{AS} or any *ummah* [community of the prophet] was not commissioned except for acting according to what He had made obligatory and what He had desired. And when a righteous person with true sayings, deeds and conditions, which are in consonance with the conditions of the Prophets^{AS} of the past and the present, stakes his claim to be a Prophet^{AS}, then it becomes obligatory on them to accept him as the Prophet^{AS}. And then the person from the *ummah* who remains doubtful and suspicious, demands a miracle. However, the person who reposes Faith in the claimant before seeing the miracle becomes the one whose *iman* [Faith] is the strongest, like the *iman* of Abu Bakr Siddiq^{RZ}. The reason is that the most important thing in accepting the Prophethood is the morality and ethics of the claimant of the Prophethood. However, the miracle conflicts with necromancy. Both are similar in that they surpass reason and experience. But they are not similar in reality. However, the person who does not accept the *akblaq* [morality and ethics] as the basis and associates miracle with necromancy, will never repose *iman* in the claimant.

However, in the *ummah* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, when a person possessing the attributes of the Prophets in perfect Sainthood comes [upon his claim of khilafat and Mahdiat] with the commands of Allah Most High and the Prophet^{SLM} [and says that ‘Allah has commanded me,’ or that ‘the Messenger^{AS} of Allah has ordered me’] and he gives the details of his own condition under the divine command, under circumstances which are possible and in a manner which the Shari'at does not disapprove, then it becomes obligatory upon the people to accept him [and his claim]. His disavowal is not lawful, because, prior to his staking the claim, he has not uttered anything that violates the Shari'at and his [divine] trance is blended with his consciousness, but his consciousness dominates his trance; it will not be only trance [that is, he will not be devoid of his senses during divine ecstasy.] Hence, his denial will be deemed to be the denial of the Prophets^{AS}, because his rejection becomes a charge of infidelity against him. And charging infidelity against a *mumin-e-saleh* [virtuous believer] is infidelity in itself. This is an obvious matter.

And his giving the information from Allah Most High through the soul of the Prophet^{SLM} becomes a final proof. When final proof comes in conflict with conjectural argument, the latter becomes annulled, because the person, who reaches that position, does not utter slander and falsehood against Allah Most High. Hence, his *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] becomes obligatory, because the *tasdiq* of the Prophets^{AS} did not become obligatory but for the reason of their *akblaq* [morality and ethics] that were like those of the Prophets^{AS} of the past era. Hence, praised character would become the cause of the obligation of the affirmation and conformation. And that praised character is present in this Saint [that is the claimant to the Mahdiat]. Hence, the command of the obligation of the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation of the Imam^{AS}] will continue to persist. [That is, the *tasdiq* of the claimant of the Mahdiat becomes obligatory.] And this matter that has been mentioned is among the principles of the Fiqh Hanafiah. Up to this point is the statement of Imam Abu Muhammad Nasrabadi^{RA}.

Hence, ponder over it, O Just Man! that, after this satisfactory statement, how can a Just Man argue on the basis of *ahadith-e-abad* [Traditions transmitted by only one narrator in each link of a chain] and reject the

claim of a person whose claim has been proved by a thing that proves the claim of the Prophets, that is, [it is proved] by good character and conduct and likeable morals and ethics.

Among the arguments is the one that has been mentioned in the Bukhari [Book of *Hadith*—Traditions], the saying of Bibi Khadija^{RZ} who told the Prophet^{SLM} after he asked her to cover him with a blanket, 'I am afraid of my *z'atbi*!' In reply to this Bibi Khadija^{RZ} said, 'By Allah! Allah will never disgrace you! You treat your [uterine] relatives with kindness. You do hard work. And you achieve such things that others do not achieve. You treat your guests hospitably. In times of trouble, you support and help the people who are on truth.'

Hence, see O Just Man! How Bibi Khadija^{RZ} has commended the character and conduct of the Prophet and said the Satan will never be able to give trouble to the Prophet because of the latter's good character and conduct.

Kirmani, the commentator of *Bukhari*, has said under the saying of Bibi Khadija^{RZ} that good conduct becomes the cause of avoiding evil deeds. And the noble character becomes the source of eradicating the evil deeds.

And among the arguments is the saying of Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad Ghazali^{RA} in his book, *Ihya-ul-Uloom*, in the matter of Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. After enumerating the virtues in the Prophet^{SLM}'s character and conduct, he says:

Verily all those traits that are mentioned, cannot be expected or imagined in any imposter. Those character and conduct cannot even be concealed. On the other hand, the Prophet^{SLM}'s praised qualities and the likeable conditions are the witnesses to his truthfulness. So much so, that an ignorant person saw the Prophet^{SLM} and spontaneously cried out, 'By Allah! This is not the face of a liar!' And had there been no immanent matters in the Prophet, the manifest matters themselves were enough for his *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation]. Here ends the statement of Imam Ghazali^{RA}.

Hence, O Just Man! See the arguments that make the *tasdiq* of the Prophets obligatory!

And among the arguments is the one, which Imam Ghazali^{RA} has said in his book, *Ghayat-ul-Uloom*:

If you have a doubt about a particular person being a prophet or not being one, you cannot achieve certainty about him, except with the knowledge of his conditions and circumstances; or after seeing his conditions and circumstances with your own eyes; or by repeatedly listening to the narratives about him by narrators. Hence, verily when you come to know about the science of the medicine or the science of *Fiqh* [Islamic Code of Law], it will be possible for you to know the physician and the jurists by seeing their conditions and listening to their sayings. Hence, if you do not see the conditions of the physicians and the jurists with your own eyes, you will not be able to know that Imam Shafei^{RA} was a jurist and Jalinos [Jalon] was a physician. This is so because you recognize them from your knowledge and not because of the emulation of others. On the other hand, when you learn the two sciences, that is, the science of medicine and Islamic Code of Law and read their books and writings, you acquire the necessary knowledge about their characteristics that one is a jurist and the other is a physician.

Similarly, when you come to know the meaning of Prophethood and ponder over the meaning of the Prophetic Traditions, you will come to know that the Prophet^{SLM} had a high ranking, and then you strengthen this knowledge with the experience of those things: the worship and its effectiveness

and the purity of the heart. About them, the Prophet^{S^LM} has said a very good thing! When a person works according to his knowledge, Allah Most High bestows on him a knowledge, which he does not know. This is the *ilm-e-batin* [immanent knowledge]. Further what a good thing the Prophet^{S^LM} has said. He said, if a person helps an oppressor, Allah Most High appoints that oppressor over him.

Further, the Prophet^{S^LM} has said another good thing that if a person rises in the morning and his objective was only one: that of achieving the Vision of Allah Most High, then Allah Most High frees him from the intentions and thoughts of this world and the Hereafter. Hence, when you have experienced the saying of the Prophet^{S^LM} among thousands of people, you have achieved the necessary knowledge. You should not have any more misgivings about that knowledge.

Hence, do not achieve the certainty about the proof of Prophethood from the miracles such as the staff of Musa^{AS} or the splitting of the moon into two. Because if you were just to see the staff become a serpent and not consider the innumerable facts which are not included with it, then under these circumstances then there is high possibility that you would suspect it to be necromancy. And that this is just your thought. And it is due to being misled by Allah Most High, because Allah Most High misleads whom he will. And all that has been mentioned earlier was the condition of the *ilmi iman-e-qawi* [strong Faith based on knowledge]. However, the *zaunq* [fervour] that is, seeing with one's own eyes or holding with one's own hands can only be achieved by the practices of the *Sufis*. Hence, whatever proof I have mentioned is enough to support the proof of the Prophethood for that objective which I had intended. Up to here is the statement of Imam Ghazali^{RA}.

Conditions of the Community of Mahdi^{AS}

Hence, know O Just Man! The mystic knowledge of Mahdi^{AS} is proved by his condition, words and their effectiveness. Hence, many of the powerful and arrogant people, who used to exploit and drink the blood of [other] people, gave up all their evils after being in the august company of Mahdi^{AS} for a day or two. And then they distributed their wealth in the way of Allah Most High. They took to indigence, hunger and contentment. Many of the thieves and highway robbers and burglars quit their evil deeds after remaining in the company of Mahdi^{AS}. They then took to the remembrance of Allah Most High and meditation and then immersed themselves in their obedience to Allah Most High. All their spiritual maladies were cured and they started sporting the condition of the *Sufis* [mystics]. In other words, they distanced themselves from the people [and became closer to Allah Almighty]. They spent their time in seclusion; remained in indigence and hunger; spent their nights in the worship of Allah Most High. They also remained content with little, were patient in difficulties, remained aloof from others for the remembrance of Allah Most High. They used to remain ashamed of their misdeeds and indulged in the remembrance and meditation of Allah Most High. All these virtues were manifest among the followers of Mahdi^{AS} and the followers' followers. I have examined the effectiveness of the companionship of Mahdi^{AS} among thousands of people.

Hence, O Just Man! If you do not achieve certainty about the *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] of the Imam^{AS} from his praise-worthy character and conduct, how did the wise people of the time of Prophet Muhammad^{S^LM} achieve the certainty about the affirmation and confirmation of his Prophethood? The condition of the call of Mahdi^{AS} towards Allah, which was always in chaste and eloquent language, was such that people would come to him out of their own desire and yearning. Never was his condition separated

from being engrossed with *tajalliyat* [divine manifestations] and *mushabidaat* [observations], immersed in the ocean of *mukalamaat* [dialogues] and *mua'inaat* [inspections]; perishing in the *zath* of Allah Most High and remaining with Him under all conditions. Every word he uttered was from the divine command. His every saying was a verse from among the verses of the Holy Quran. So much so, that had his *zath*, which possessed the characteristics of a Prophet, come during the periods of the proclamation of the claims of the Prophets, reposing faith in his Prophethood would have been obligatory on the basis of those arguments which I have already mentioned. Then, how can his claim to be the Mahdi^{AS} be disavowed? How can he be opposed on the basis of the *Abad-e-Zanniah* [the conjectural Traditions transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain]? His *tasdiq* is made obligatory by the thing that makes the *tasdiq* of the Prophets obligatory, in other words, his exemplary *Akblaq* [character and conduct].

Tradition of Emperor Heraclius

And among the arguments is the one that has been mentioned in the *Hadith-e-Harqil* [Tradition of Byzantine Emperor Heraclius] of *Bukhari*. This Tradition is narrated by Abul Yaman Hakim Bin Nafe'. He said that he was informed by Shu'yeb and he narrates from Abdullah bin Utabah ibn Mas'ood quoting Abdullah ibn 'Abbas who quoted Abu Sufyan bin Harb that Harqil sent a man to him [Abu Sufyan] when he was sitting among some mounted Quraysh nobles—they had gone to Shaam [Syria] as traders. This incident happened at the time when the Prophet^{S^LM} had concluded a limited treaty [of peace] with Abu Sufyan and other infidels of Quraysh.

In short, all the Quraysh came to Emperor Heraclius. These people were in Ailia. Then Heraclius summoned them to his court. At the time, he was surrounded by the nobles of Rome. He then called an interpreter. Heraclius told the interpreter: 'Ask these people who among them has a very close family relationship to him [Muhammad^{S^LM}] who calls himself a prophet.'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said I am genealogically closest to him.'

On hearing this, Heraclius said, 'Bring him [Abu Sufyan] closer to me. And bring his companions too near me.' This meant that these other people should be made to stand at the back of Abu Sufyan.

Then Heraclius told the interpreter, 'Tell these people that I will ask Abu Sufyan about the person who calls himself a Prophet. If he [Abu Sufyan] lies to me, they should immediately contradict him.' Abu Sufyan says, 'By Allah, Had I no sense of honour that these people would allege that I was lying, I would certainly have told lies about him [Muhammad^{S^LM}].'

In short, Abu Sufyan says, Heraclius first asked me, 'How is his lineage among you people?'

I told him, 'He [Muhammad^{S^LM}] is of [great] lineage among us.'

Then Heraclius asked me, 'Had anybody among you made a similar claim [to be a Prophet] earlier?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, No.'

Heraclius asked me, 'Had there been a king among his ancestors?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, No.'

Heraclius asked, 'Have the wealthy people supported and followed him or the weak people?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, Only weak people [have supported and followed him].'

Heraclius asked, 'Are his followers increasing or decreasing [in number]?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, They were increasing.'

Heraclius asked, 'Does anybody after entering his religion abandons it being displeased with it?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, No.'

Heraclius asked, 'Were you accusing him of lying before he staked his claim?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, No.'

Heraclius asked, 'Did he ever go back on his promise?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, No. Now we are in a period of truce with him. We do not know what he will do. [Whether he will keep his word or not, we do not know.]'

Abu Sufyan says that he did not get any chance to add anything other than the facts about the truce.

Heraclius asked, 'Have you ever fought a war with him?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, Yes.'

Heraclius asked, 'How was your war with him?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, it was like a contest. Sometimes we won and sometimes they won.'

Heraclius asked, 'What does he command you to do?'

Abu Sufyan says, 'I said, He commands us to worship only Allah. Do not assign partners to Him. Give up all that your forefathers used to do. [Besides this], he commands us to say our ritual prayers, pay poor-due, tell the truth, be pious, be kind to your relatives.'

After this, Heraclius told the interpreter, 'Tell Abu Sufyan this: I asked you about his lineage and you told me that he was of a high pedigree. All Prophets are of high pedigree among their communities. Then I asked you if anybody among you had staked the claim to be a Prophet and you said no. Then I thought if you had said yes [to this question] I would say that he was emulating the earlier claimant. Then I asked you whether there was a king among his ancestors. You said, no. If there was a king among his ancestors, I would say that he was such a person who wanted to regain the country of his forefathers. Then I asked if you had accused him of lying before he staked his claim to be a Prophet. You said, no. I am certain that a person who does not like to lie about people in general, how could he lie about Allah specifically? Then I asked whether wealthy people were following him or weak people, you said weak people were following him. Indeed, only such people who were weak have followed the Prophets. When I asked if his followers were increasing or decreasing, you said they were increasing. In reality, this is the way *iman* [faith] flourishes till it finally reaches perfection. Then I asked if his followers ditch him after being displeased upon entering his religion, you replied in the negative. *Iman* [Faith] is like that. Once its cheerfulness enters the hearts, it stays there. Then I asked if he went back on his promises, you said, no. All prophets keep their promises. Then I asked what commands did he issue to you, you said he commanded you to worship Allah and not to assign partners to Him. He commanded you not to worship idols. He commanded you to perform the *namaḥ* [daily ritual prayers] to Allah. He also commanded you to be pious and being truthful. [...upto the end of the *hadith*]

Hence, Know O Man of Wisdom! The *ḥaqiqah* [essence, nature] of the person whom we have accepted as Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}, his glory and that of his Companions^{RZ} is the same as has been described in

the *Hadith-e-Haqil* [the Tradition of Heraclius]. His morals and ethics and those of his Companions^{RZ} are exactly like the morals and ethics of the Prophets^{AS}. Hence, how can one whose attributes are like those of the Prophets^{AS} be disavowed?

Hence, O Man of Wisdom! It is necessary for you to think in the matter of the *ẓath* of Mahdi^{AS} in the same way as the people of wisdom had pondered over the *ẓath* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. Hence, see O Just Man! Most of the Companions^{RZ} [of the Prophet^{SLM}] saw the cherished morals and exalted ethics of the Prophet^{SLM} and performed his *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation]. This has come to be known because of the reason of their *tasdiq*. For instance, Abu Bakr Siddiq^{RZ}, Ali^{RZ}, Abu Zar Ghifari^{RZ} and Zamad Tayyab^{RZ} joined Islam and their story of joining Islam has been described in the book, *Bukhari*. Similar is the case of Buraidah^{RZ} and sixty mounted Companions^{RZ} converting to Islam. This story is mentioned in the book, *Roẓat-ul-Ulama*. Similar is the case of other people reposing Faith in the Prophet^{SLM}. If you want to count all those instances, you will not be able to count them. Similarly, the Arabs too reposed Faith in the Prophet^{SLM} after the conquest of Makkah. They joined Islam in droves. Hence, this is learnt from the *Bukhari*, the book of Prophetical Traditions, from the reply of Abu Jamila. The Arabs used to censure those who joined Islam before the conquest of Makkah and used to say, 'Ignore him and his community! If Muhammad^{SLM} overpowers the people of Makkah, he is a 'True Prophet.' Hence, when Makkah was conquered, every community hastened in joining Islam. 'And my community overtook me in joining Islam.' Hence, when Abu Jamila came from the Prophet^{SLM} to his community, he said, 'I have come to you from the Prophet^{SLM} who is True!'

Hence, see O Just Man! Abu Jamila's saying, 'Every community has hastened in joining Islam.' What miracle had they seen in the conquest of Makkah? And in which book had he read that the conquest of Makkah was the truthfulness of the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}? All this, despite the fact that they had seen and heard about the miracles of the Prophet^{SLM}, but had refrained from reposing Faith in him. Hence, it is known that Faith is the sheer generosity and bounty of Allah Most High. The story of Abu Jamila is mentioned in the seventeenth of the thirty parts of *Bukhari*, in the chapter about the station of the Prophet^{SLM} at the time of the conquest of Makkah. Similarly, the Bedouins of Arab reposed their Faith in the Prophet^{SLM} after hearing that the people of Makkah had joined Islam. As has been mentioned in *Kirmani*, the Bedouins of Arabia were waiting for the people of Makkah to repose faith in the Prophet^{SLM}. Hence, when the people of Makkah became Muslims, all the wild Arabs too became Muslims. All Praise is for Allah Most High at their joining the religion of Islam. And this narrative is mentioned in the *Kirmani* in chapter ten of *Bukhari* about the treaty with the idolaters.

Hence, see O Just Man! The wild Arabs reposed Faith in Islam just in emulation of the people of Makkah. They were neither impressed by the miracles nor were they persuaded by the *akhlaq* [morals and ethics of Prophet^{SLM}] like the people of insight and vision. They joined Islam simply by the Guidance of Allah Most High. Allah guides whom He will!

Similarly, Abdullah bin Salam [a Jew scholar residing in Madina] asked three questions and then reposed Faith in the Prophet^{SLM}. It is mentioned in *Bukhari*. *Bukhari* says that the Tradition was narrated by Hameed as quoted by Anas. He said that Abdullah bin Salam heard that the Prophet^{SLM} had arrived in Madina. At that time he was collecting dates from the ground. He came to the Prophet^{SLM} and said, 'I ask you three questions, which none other than the Prophet^{SLM} knows. 1. What is the first condition among the conditions of the Day of Resurrection? 2. What is the first thing that the people of Paradise will eat? And 3. What is the thing that causes the likeness of the mother or father in a child?' The Prophet^{SLM} said, 'Just now, Jibrail^{AS}

has informed me about the answers.’ Abdullah asked, ‘Has Jibrail informed you?’ Then the Prophet^{SLM} said, ‘Yes.’ Abdullah said, ‘Jibrail is the enemy of the Jews among the angels.’ The Prophet^{SLM} recited this Quranic Verse: ‘*Say (O Muhammad, to mankind): Who is an enemy to Gabriel! For he it is who hath revealed (this Scripture) to thy heart by Allah's leave, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, and a guidance and glad tidings to believers.*’⁹⁶ Then the Prophet^{SLM} said, ‘The first condition of the Day of Resurrection is the Fire. It will herd the people from the East to the West. The first thing the people of Paradise will eat is the liver of the fish. When the water of the mother is dominant, the child assumes the likeness of the mother and when the water of the father is dominant over that of the mother, the child assumes the likeness of the father.’ Abdullah spontaneously cried, ‘I testify that there is no god but Allah, and that you are the Messenger of Allah.’

Information given by the Prophet^{SLM} does not give certainty about his Prophethood

Hence, know O Just Man! Giving mere information about the three things does not give the certainty about Muhammad^{SLM} being the Messenger of Allah Most High, for the apprehension that he [Muhammad^{SLM}] might have heard these things from the Jews who used to visit Makkah for trade and commerce or he might have heard it from the idolaters who went to the Jewish cities for trade. On the basis of this apprehension the eternal disavower would not be certain that Muhammad^{SLM} is the Prophet. And this narrative is to be found in the 18th of the 30 parts of *Bukhari* about the hostility towards Jibrail^{AS}.

Further, according to a *Bukhari* narrative, the cause of the conversion to Islam of Abdullah bin Salam is his listening to the Quranic Verse: ‘*O ye unto whom the Scripture hath been given! Believe in what We have revealed confirming that which ye possess, before We destroy countenances so as to confound them, or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-breakers (of old time). The commandment of Allah is always executed.*’⁹⁷ It is narrated that when Abdullah bin Salam returned after his journey to Syria, he heard this Quranic Verse. He joined Islam, came to the Prophet^{SLM} and said, ‘I was not certain that I would return to the members of my family before my face got distorted.’ It is narrated this way in *Tafsir-e-Madarik*.

Hence, think over it O Just Man! What miracle had Abdullah bin Salam seen [that he joined Islam]. Hence, if it is said that he had seen a great miracle that would stay put till the Day of Resurrection, and that miracle was the *kalam* of Allah [that is, Quran]. The reply to this is that, this would have been a strong argument if Abdullah had presented this Verse before the experts of Arabic eloquence and demanded from them a verse of this nature and excellence, and when the experts failed to create a verse of this excellence then Abdullah would have been certain that this speech was the speech of Allah and no human being was able to create such an eloquent Verse.

What a beautiful thing is written in some of the books, that the basis for the *tasdiq* of the Prophets is the immanent harmony between them and their followers. And then, the correct Tradition of *Bukhari* speaks a lot about this immanent harmony, that a legion of human souls were created and the soul that recognizes the Prophet loves him and the one that does not recognise the Prophet, differs from him.

⁹⁶ Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah(2): 97 MMP.

⁹⁷ Quran, Surah An-Nisaa(4): 47 MMP.

And similarly, Abdullah ibn Salul and his followers joined Islam after the battle of Badr. Hence, it is narrated in the *Bukhari*, Chapter 18 *و لتسمعن من الذين اوتوا الكتاب* . Thus when the Prophet^{SLM} fought the Battle of Badr and killed the heads of the Quraysh then Ibn Salul and his companions, that is, the idolaters said, ‘This virtuous man has come.’ therefore they took the oath of allegiance on the hand of the Prophet^{SLM} and became Muslims.

Hence, see O Just Man! The reason for Abdullah and his companions joining Islam was not the victory of the Prophet^{SLM} over the idolaters of Badr but it was the guidance of Allah to his servants. Otherwise, how could the overpowering of the idolaters be a proof of the veracity of Prophethood, because the Prophets and non-prophets become victorious sometimes and vanquished at the other times. Hence, this cannot be the correct argument for the veracity of Prophethood. Hence, it becomes obvious that Allah Most High provides guidance to whomsoever he wishes with whatever thing He wishes! The miracle was the proof of the truthfulness of the Prophethood for the people of the past.

Similarly, when the Jewish boy who used to serve the Prophet^{SLM} became ill, and the Prophet^{SLM} went to enquire about his health and asked him to become a Muslim, he instantly became a Muslim. Hence, see O Just Man! The Jewish boy who used to serve the Prophet^{SLM} became a Muslim at the time of his death at the mere saying of the Prophet^{SLM}. Whereas the miracles and the good manners of the Prophet^{SLM} had no effect on him. Allah Most High says: ‘*It is not for any soul to believe save by the permission of Allah. He hath set uncleanness upon those who have no sense.*’⁹⁸ It is obvious from this Quranic Verse that *Iman* (faith) depends on the command of Allah Most High and not on the miracle, although the miracle puts blame upon the enemy. The story of the Jewish boy is in the thirteenth part of the *Bukhari*, under the matter of visiting the sick idolater to enquire about the health.

Similarly, Negus, the king of Abyssinia, his companions, monks and intellectuals reposed faith in the Prophet^{SLM} immediately after listening to the Quran without any investigation or analysis, despite the fact that experts in Arabic eloquence were present and there was a possibility of confrontation with them. The Quran is eloquent about the immediate reposing of faith. Allah Most High says: ‘*When they listen to that which hath been revealed unto the messengers, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears because of their recognition of the Truth. They say: Our Lord, we believe. Inscribe us as among the witnesses.*’⁹⁹

Similarly, the Jinns [or *Jinnat*] too became Muslims immediately after listening to the Quran. ‘... and they said: *Lo! we have heard a marvellous Qur'an, which guideth unto righteousness, so we believe in it...*’¹⁰⁰ Some among them are such who reposed Faith after demanding miracles, because the correctness of the miracle too is dependent on *Akblaq* [morality]. Hence, the person, who does not repose Faith on the basis of *Akblaq* [morality], associates the miracle with sorcery.

Morals are the only thing to recognize the Prophet^{SLM}

Our foregoing submissions are the proof that in the matter of *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation], the real thing is the *akblaq* [morality]. Allah Most High says: ‘*Or do they not recognise their Messenger that they deny him?*’¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Quran, Surah Yunus(10):100 MMP.

⁹⁹ Quran, Surah Al-Maaidah(5) :83 MMP.

¹⁰⁰ Quran, Surah Al-Jinn(72) :1-2 MMP.

¹⁰¹ Quran, Surah Al-Muminoon(23) :69 AYA.

In other words, they did not recognise him by his honesty, truth, perfect wisdom achieved without being taught by somebody, perfect knowledge and good character and conduct. In other words, they recognised that he possessed the above listed attributes. All the commentators of Quran have developed a consensus on this meaning of the above Quranic Verse. None of them has differed on the matter of this meaning of the Verse, because this Verse is in favour of the polytheists. And the polytheists recognised the Prophet only by those attributes. If this Verse had addressed the *Ahl-e-Kitab* [people of the Book], the exegesis of this Verse would possibly have been that they recognised the Prophet^{SLM} by what their Book had said [about him]. Therefore, their disavowal of the Prophet was the result of their hostility and malice. Similar is the exegesis in the *Tafsir-e-Madarik*. And in *Tafsir-e-Kawashi* [under the foregoing Quranic Verse] it is said that, enquiry is done merely for the purpose of reprimand and disavowal. In other words, they recognised the Prophet^{SLM} from those attributes, but even then they disavowed him. Hence, it becomes known from this Verse that the reason for *tasdiq* [affirmation] of the Prophet was their knowledge that the Prophet was endowed with those attributes. Had this not been the cause of the *tasdiq*, what would have been the cause of the reprimand? Hence, it becomes evident that, after acquiring the knowledge, their disavowal is the result of their malice and hostility. *(It will be said to him:) "Read thine (own) record: Sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee."*¹⁰²

Companions^{RZ} of Mahdi^{AS} are like the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophets^{AS}

The reason that I have quoted these arguments and narratives is that our opponents, who have resorted to exaggeration in our disavowal, have concluded that the community of Mahdavis is ignorant and it does not know anything. Then, what would be the condition of these people who charge a community of having been misled despite their [the Mahdavis'] arguments about the *tasdiq* of the Mahdi^{AS} being similar to that which the companions of the Prophets have advanced during all periods of time regarding their *tasdiq* of the Prophets and the attributes of the companions of Mahdi^{AS} are just like the attributes of the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophets?

O brother! If you ponder over the Quranic Verse about the *Ibad-ur-Rahman* [servants of the Merciful God¹⁰³], you will find that the group of Mahdavis are the true servants of Allah Most High. When you read the Verse: [Allah says:] *'Lo! men who surrender unto Allah, and women who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere (in righteousness) and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard (their modesty), and men who remember Allah much and women who remember - Allah hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward.'*¹⁰⁴, you will recognise that they alone are the true Muslim men and Muslim women. When you read the verse, *'Successful indeed are the believers.'*¹⁰⁵ you will come to know that the successful believers are these Mahdavis. And if you desire the verse: *'Not so those devoted to Prayer; Those who remain steadfast to their prayer.'*¹⁰⁶, you will always find them steadfast in their prayers. And if you ponder over the Quranic Verse: *'Whenever the Signs of (Allah) Most Gracious were rehearsed to them, they would fall down in prostrate adoration and in*

¹⁰² Quran, Surah Al-Isra(17): 14, AYA.

¹⁰³ Quran, Surah Al-Furqaan(25):63

¹⁰⁴ Quran, Surah Al-Ahzaab(33):35 MMP.

¹⁰⁵ Quran, Surah Al-Muminoon(23):1 MMP

¹⁰⁶ Quran, Surah Al-Ma'arij(70):22-23 AYA.

tears.¹⁰⁷, you will be certain that these are the same people who prostrate and who weep in prostration. The community of Mahdi^{AS} has obtained all these qualities by virtue of reposing faith in the Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, these people were like the dead and became alive after performing the *tasdiq*. Who is more generous than Mahdi^{AS} in distributing the *Faiḏ* [Bounty] of *Ṣilayat*? Who is more veracious than Mahdi^{AS} in his speech? And who is more effective than Mahdi^{AS} in curing the spiritual maladies? Allah Most High says: ‘*And who is better in speech than him who prayeth unto his Lord and doeth right, and saith: Lo! I am of those who are Muslims (surrender unto Him).*’¹⁰⁸

And I have given lengthy arguments here so that the just man comes to know that when Mahdi^{AS} being Mahdi^{AS} is proved by that thing which proved the Prophethood of the Prophets^{AS}, then that thing which plagues the mind [of the just man] on the basis of *Ahad-e-Zanniab* [conjectural Traditions transmitted by only one narrator in each link of the chain] creating doubts and misgivings will not prevent the just man from performing the *tasdiq* of Mahdi^{AS}. This will make it obligatory on the just man to emulate the sayings of Mahdi^{AS} without any more arguments.

Traditions in Favour of Mahdi^{AS}

Now, I will produce those Prophetic Traditions and the sayings of the predecessors that are found in favour of Mahdi^{AS} and his community. Among the Traditions is the one about which Abu Is’haq has quoted Ali^{RZ} as saying after seeing his son, Hasan^{RZ}, ‘Truly, this son of mine is a Syed, as the Prophet^{SLM} has named him. Soon Allah Most High will bring forth from him a man whose name will be like the name of the Prophet^{SLM} and who will resemble the Prophet^{SLM}. He will fill the people of the earth with justice.’ Abu Daud has narrated this Tradition with proper authorities in his book, *Sunan*. Besides him, Imam Abu Esa Tirmizi has quoted it in his *Jami’* and Imam Abdur Rahman Naishapuri in his *Sunan* also.

I say that Mahdi^{AS} has the *akhlaq* [morals] resembling those of the Prophet^{SLM}. What remains to be addressed is the discussion about the filling of the earth with justice in the saying of Ali^{RZ}. This matter has been elaborately dealt with earlier.

Among the other things is the saying of Ali^{RZ} that ‘I asked the Prophet^{SLM} whether Mahdi^{AS} will be from among us or from among others?’ The Prophet^{SLM} said, ‘He will not be from others. On the other hand, he will be from among us. Allah Most High will conclude the religion with him.’ In other words, Allah Most High will perfectly manifest the religion in his era and he will deliver his companions to the ranks of the *muqarriboon* and *siddiqoon* [closest trusted favourites of Allah; and the Truthful]. They will be the people of the *mushabadah* [divine observation or contemplation], *mo’a’enab* [seeing with eyes] and *mukalama* [dialogue]. However, no one will recognise them except Allah Most High and His saints, as Allah Most High has said, ‘My *awliya* [saints, friends] are under my tunic. One who is stranger to me will not recognise them.’ This Tradition has been narrated by a group of people, who have memorised the Prophetic Traditions, and quoted them in their books. This group includes Abul Qasim Tabarani, Abu Na’im Asfahani, Abdur Rahman bin Hatim, Abu Abdullah Na’im bin Hammad and others.

And among many others is the Tradition narrated by Ka’ab Ahbar^{RZ} that Mahdi^{AS} is one who performs *muraqabah* [meditation] especially for Allah Most High like the *gidh* [vulture] hiding its head in its feathers.

¹⁰⁷ Quran, Surah Maryam(19):58 AYA.

¹⁰⁸ Quran, Surah Fussilat(41):33 MMP.

This Tradition is narrated by Imam Abu Muhammad Husain in his book *Masabib* and it has been explained with authorities by Imam Abu Abdullah Na'im bin Hammad.

And among them is the one narrated by Abu Sayeed Maula Ibn Abbas. He said he had heard it from Ibn-e-Abbas that he used to say, 'Without doubt, I hope that the days and nights will not come to an end unless Allah Most High will send from among us, the *Ahl-e-Bait*¹⁰⁹, a boy who would be in the prime of his life and young and the shenanigans of the time will not encounter him, and neither will he encounter the shenanigans of the time. He will restore the rule of this *ummah* [the Muslim Community], as it was established through us in the beginning.' This has been narrated by Hafiz Abu Bakr Bayhaqi with relevant authorities, in the discussion about the *ba'sa* and *nushoor* [Emergence (of the Mahdi^{AS}) and Resurrection].

Verily, this attribute was found in Mahdi^{AS} that he did establish the rule of the *ummah* [the Muslim Community] as it was during the period of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. The purport of the *ummah* [Muslim Community] here is the community that is obedient to Mahdi^{AS} and which has accepted him as Imam Mahdi Al-Mau'ood^{AS}. It does not mean all the people who were invited. As for the disavowers (who are from among the people who were invited), the Prophets^{AS} too did not establish the rule of the disavowers.

And among the narratives is the one that has been narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah^{RZ}. He said that a person came to Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali^{RZ} and told him, 'Take this five hundred *dirham* from me. They are the *zakat*¹¹⁰.' Abu Ja'far replied, 'You take it yourself and spend it on your poor Muslim neighbours, the poor and brothers. Then, when our Mahdi from our *Ahl-e-Bait* arrives, he will distribute with equality and justice among the people. He, who obeys him, obeys Allah Most High. He who disobeys him, disobeys Allah Most High.' This has been narrated with relevant authorities by Imam Abu Abdullah Na'im Bin Hammad in the *Kitab-ul-Fitan*.

I say, Verily, I found in Mahdi^{AS} this distribution (among the free people, the slaves, the children and the elders) and I found the Mahdi^{AS}'s justice among those who obeyed the Mahdi^{AS}. And he, who disobeyed the Mahdi^{AS}, he disobeyed Allah Most High. Hence, the disobedient does not accept the justice of the Mahdi^{AS}.

And among them is the narrative narrated by Ka'ab Ahbar^{RZ} that, 'Verily, I find Mahdi^{AS} written in the Books of the earlier Prophets^{AS} that there would not be any *zulm* [oppression] and *Aib* [defect] in his commands.' This has been narrated with relevant authorities by Imam Abu Abdullah Na'im Bin Hammad.

I say that verily, this narrative of Ka'ab Ahbar^{RZ} is proved by Mahdi^{AS}. He has said that he is mentioned in the Book of Allah Most High and the Books of the Prophets^{AS}. And there was no *zulm* and no *'aib* [no oppression and no defect] in his commands as is well-known.

Further, from among the others is the narrative, narrated by Abu Ja'afar bin Ali^{RZ}. Abu Ja'afar says that Amir-ul-Muminin Ali^{RZ} bin Abi Talib was asked about the attributes of Imam Mahdi^{AS}. Ali^{RZ} said, 'Mahdi^{AS} would be young, of medium height and face. The hair of his head would spread on his shoulders. The *nur* of his face would dominate the hair of his head and beard. I say that the attribute of Mahdi^{AS}, whose *tasdiq* [affirmation and confirmation] we have performed, was all like this.

And among them is the narrative that is narrated by Haris bin Mughaira Basari, 'I asked Abu Abdullah Husayn bin Ali^{RZ} as to what would be the sign by which Mahdi^{AS} will be recognised?' He said, 'By his *sukoon* [peace] and *vaqar* [prestige and dignity].' And I asked, 'And by what other thing?' He said, 'by his knowledge

¹⁰⁹ *Ahl-e-Bait* are the members of the Holy Prophet^{SLM}'s family comprising Hazrat Fatima^{RZ}, Hazrat Ali^{RZ}, and their children, Imam Hasan^{AS} and Imam Husayn^{AS} [according to the Shi'ites].

¹¹⁰ *Zakat* is Religious tax as a basic in-function in Islam.

of *halal* and *haram* [by his knowledge of the things allowed and prohibited]. And by his not being *muhtaj* [needy]. Other people will be needy of him and he will not be needy of others.’ I say that Haris had spoken the truth. Mahdi^{AS} was like that.

And apart from those is the narrative that has been narrated by Abu Abdullah Husayn bin Ali^{RZ}. He said, ‘If Mahdi^{AS} is established, people will disavow him, because he would go to those people when he would be young and they would think that he is very old.’ Hence, O Just Man! See the saying of Husayn ibn Ali^{RZ} that when Mahdi^{AS} is established, people would disavow him. This means that the disavowal of Mahdi^{AS} by people is among the *mo’ay’idat* [supporting factors] of Mahdi^{AS}.

And among other things is the narrative that has been narrated by Ali bin Huzail and he quotes his father to say, ‘I reached Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and he was in a condition in which his blessed soul was being seized. What I see is that Fatima^{RZ} was near the head of the Prophet^{SLM}.’ The Tradition is long. At the end of it, Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} is quoted as saying: ‘O Fatima! By Him Who has sent me with the Truth! The Mahdi^{AS} of this *ummah* [Muslim Community] is from these two: Hasan and Husayn. When the world plunges into turmoil and trials will emerge, paths will be cut off and one will plunder the other; the elder will not show pity on the younger and the younger will not show respect to the elderly; in those circumstances Allah Most High will send a person from these two. That person will conquer the forts of misguidance and closed hearts. He will establish the religion in the Last Era as I had established in the Beginning; he will fill the world with justice as it would have been filled with oppression and injustice.’ This narrative has been narrated with relevant authorities by Hafiz Abu Na’im Isfahani in the matter of the attributes of Mahdi^{AS}.

Hence, see, O Just Man! *Quluban ghulfa* [closed hearts]. This saying of the Prophet^{SLM} is *atf-e-tafsir* [conjunction] with his saying *busun-az-zalalah* [forts of misguidance]. Hence, it has become known that Mahdi^{AS} will open the closed hearts by his *faiḏ* [beneficence] and he will fill the hearts with his justice. And this is the meaning of the expression: ‘He will fill the earth with justice as it would have been filled with oppression and injustice.’

Hence, Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal has mentioned in his *Musnad* that ‘Allah Most High will fill the hearts of the *ummah* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} with contentment and it will include *adl* [justice].’

And among the others is the narrative, which has been narrated from Amir-ul-Mumineen Ali^{RZ} bin Abi Talib. He quoted Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} as saying that Mahdi^{AS} will be from among us, the *Ahl-e-Bait*,¹¹¹ and Allah Most High will create the needed ability and capacity in one night. That is, in a part of the night. This story has not been recorded because of its length. By Allah! The narrator has spoken the truth narrating from Amir-ul-Mumineen Ali^{RZ}.

And among the others is the Tradition, narrated by Taus^{RA} that the sign of the Mahdi^{AS} would be that he would be hard in dealing with the rulers and he would be merciful while dealing with the poor and meek [*masakin*]. I say that Mahdi^{AS} was hard on the worldly people and it was impossible for them to befriend him because they were afraid of him. However, the *fuqara* [the indigent] had friendship with Mahdi^{AS} as a brother has friendship with his brother and a father has friendship with the son. Abu Abdullah Na’im bin Hammad has narrated this Tradition with relevant authorities.

Among the other things is the Tradition narrated by Abdullah bin Ata who said, ‘I asked Abu Ja’far Muhammad Bin Ali^{RZ}, ‘when Mahdi^{AS} appears, what would be his *seerat* [biography or character].’ He replied,

¹¹¹ *Ahl-e-Bait* are the Holy Prophet^{SLM}'s family comprising Hazrat Fatima^{RZ}, Hazrat Ali^{RZ} and their children, Imam Hasan^{AS} and Imam Husayn^{AS} and their descendants [according to the Shi’ites].

‘he will demolish the things that existed before him as Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} did and he will revive Islam.’ This is stated in the book, *Iqd-ud-Durar*. In other words, he would demolish the innovations. And he would also demolish all those mistakes in the matters of deeds and beliefs that the *mujtahidin* might have committed in the course of their work. This is among the peculiarities of the Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, we have mentioned this earlier. The saying of the Prophet^{SLM} that, ‘he [Mahdi^{AS}] would establish the religion in the *Aakbir Zamana* [Last Era] as I had done in the *awwal zamana* [First Era]’ guides the statement of Abu Ja’far, because if the Mahdi^{AS} does not command that the mistake of the *mujtahidin* is a mistake, the establishing of the religion in the Last Era, as the Prophet^{SLM}, did will not occur. Hence, this shows that the Mahdi^{AS} is the ruler over the four *mazahib*.¹¹²

And among them is the Tradition, which is narrated by Ali^{RZ} Bin Abi Talib who has said in the matter of Mahdi^{AS} that, ‘he will not leave any *bid’at* [innovation] without demolishing it, and he will not leave any *sunnat* [Prophet^{SLM}’s Tradition or practice] without re-establishing it.’ This is stated in the book, *Iqd-ud-Durar*. The meaning of this saying is that Mahdi^{AS} will perform his deeds and command others to follow him in those deeds. And the Persian couplet of Sheikh Sa’adi supports it. Sa’adi said, ‘he is the orphan who, before reading or writing the Quran, has washed some of the books of the religion.’ In other words, he issued the edict that they were cancelled. And the believers thought that the edict was correct, because the heavenly books are not washed with water; they were washed away from the hearts of the believers who had reposed Faith in the Prophet^{SLM}. In other words, the deeds [as per those books] were given up. All these narratives are taken from the book, *Iqd-ud-Durar*, although some of them are weak. However, when they were found in the *zath* of the person who claimed to be Mahdi^{AS}, it became obvious that they were correct, even if they had not reached the stage of correctness [as per their classification].

And among them is the one, which is narrated by Tabari in his history that Mahdi^{AS} will appear in the year 905 Hijri, and the emergence of the Mahdi^{AS} occurred in that year. [The *da’wa-e-Mu’ak’kad* (claim with emphasis) came in that year. The claim was, ‘He who accepts me is a *mumin* (believer) and he who disavows me is a *kafir* (infidel)’].

And among them is that which is said in the commentary of the Tradition narrated by Abu Huraira^{RZ}. He said, ‘‘Amongst the things that I learnt from the Prophet^{SLM} is that he said, ‘Allah will send in this *Ummah* at the beginning of each century a person who will revive the religion and the reviver of the religion in the tenth century is the Mahdi.’’’ This Tradition is present in the book *Tambeeb-ut-Tabarruz*, etc. and it has been mentioned by Nawawi. Similarly, the true Vali, Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz has mentioned it in his *Malfuz* [utterances].

He [Muttaqi] says: Thus we learn that the departed Syed [Mahdi^{AS}] is not the Mahdi^{AS} because he did not have those qualities in him which have come in favour of the Mahdi^{AS}. In summary, those qualities are that Mahdi^{AS} will be the Imam [he will be a king having worldly splendour].

We say: The truth is that the Sheikh [Muttaqi] should have said منه instead of منها because the pronoun is for the ٤ which is masculine.

¹¹² The four *mazahib* are the Hanafi, Shafei, Hanbali and Maliki named after the great Imams of these Islamic sects.

Mahdi^{AS}'s Imamatus is proved even if people oppose him because it is Allah Who has made him an Imam

He [Muttaqi] says: And the Mahdi is not an Imam because Imamatus is ordinary leadership and it is established by one of the three ways. One among them is when those in power from among the scholars and wealthy people pay fealty without any condition of numbers. It is not necessary for the entire city to pay fealty, but only those who can assemble easily. Rather, even if one person agrees to follow it is enough for the fealty of Imamatus. The second way is that the king makes him his vice-regent and takes fealty from the people. The third way is that the Imam vanquishes and triumphs. This is written in *Sharah Maqasid* and none of these three ways was found in him [the Mahdi^{AS}]. The last two ways not being found in him is evident. As for the first way, he did not obtain fealty from those in power from amongst the scholars and the wealthy people. Thus the saying of the person who proved his [Mahdi^{AS}] *imamatus* is null and void.

We say: The Mahdi^{AS} is Imam by verification although the opposing disbelievers in their ignorance have rubbed dust on their noses (i.e. they oppose paying fealty to him). This is because Mahdi^{AS} has been made an Imam by Allah Most High and hence his Imamatus is proven. This is similar to prophets, that they are prophets because Allah Most High made them prophets and not because the people accept and follow them.

Its example is this: A king appoints someone as a Qazi (judge) of the city and commands the inhabitants of the city to obey the Qazi. Then with the command of the King he becomes a Qazi irrespective of whether the people obey him or not. Thus if they obey him they will get prosperity. If they don't obey him and do not heed to his call, then if the Qazi has the means, he will subjugate and punish them. But if he does not have the means to subjugate and punish them, he will not lose his position of Qazi because the proof of him being the Qazi is his appointment by the King and not the obedience of the people.

And I produce arguments in favour of my statement. Among them is the one that Abu Shukoor Salami has stated in his book, *Tambeed*. He says: Some people have said that when the Imam is not obeyed, he would not be the Imam. We [Abu Shukoor Salami] say that it is not like that, because the obedience of the Imam is obligatory on the people. If they do not obey, the fault is with the people who do not obey and their fault does not adversely affect the *imamatus*.

Have you not seen that Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} was not obeyed in the beginning of Islam, and due to his nature neither could he be severe on his enemies. The infidels had rebelled against helping him and his religion. However their rebellion was not detrimental to the Prophet^{SLM} nor did it deprive him of his Prophethood. Similarly Imam Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} definitely is at the same station as Rasoolullah^{SLM}. Similarly, Ali^{RZ} bin Abi Talib was not obeyed by all the Muslims. Despite this, Ali^{RZ} was not deprived of his position as the Vice-Regent of Prophet^{SLM}. Hence, our contention has become correct. Even if the people abandon Islam, the Imam will not be deprived of his position as the Vice-Regent. Similarly, people indulging in sins will not deprive the Imam of his Imamatus. Further, if the Imam loses his dominance, it is the result of the rebellion of the people and their rebellion does not deprive the Imam of his Imamatus. Hence, O Just Man! See the saying of Abu Shukoor Salami with deliberate consideration.

Among the other things is the saying of Hujjat-ul-Islam, Imam Muhammad Ghazali^{RH}, in his book, *Mukhtasar al-Ahya*:

And know that whoever has an inclination of the desire of the world and turned his face away from the Hereafter, such a person is the Dajjal of the religion and the one who establishes the religion of

the Satan. He is not an Imam of the religion because an Imam is one who is followed because he induces people to turn their faces away from the world and become attentive to God Almighty, like the Prophets^{AS}, their Companions and the religious scholars among the ancestors. (Up to here is his statement.)

Hence, see, O Just Man! The statement of Imam Ghazali^{RH}, that he did not impose the condition of fury and dominance for the correctness of Imamate.

And among other things, is that which has been mentioned in *Hameedi*, the *Sharah* of *Hedaya*, that:

The person who is suitable for Imamate is one who has all the attributes of Imamate in himself. In other words, he should have in himself the attributes like Islam, freedom, *bulugh* [maturity], *aql* [intelligence], and justice. Further, one becomes an Imam when a group of Muslims takes an oath of fealty to him and that group is pleased with his Imamate. Further, that Imam should raise the *kalmah* of Islam and have the intention to strengthen the Muslims. And the blood, property, chastity, of the Muslims should be safe in his hands. He should behave like a loving brother and merciful father to his group of people.

And one who does not possess these attributes is not a suitable person and is not suitable to become an Imam. Supporting him and helping him is not obligatory on the people. On the other hand, it is obligatory on them to attack and wage war against such a person till he is corrected or he is killed. And these are the meanings that open up and remove the doubts. [Here ends his statement.]

Hence, see, O Just Man! The commentator has not imposed the condition of the fealty of the people with authority, as some others have imposed such a condition. On the contrary, he has mentioned only the general fealty of a group of Muslims.

By Allah! Verily, that person, whose Imamate we proved [that is, Imam Mahdi^{AS}] has all the attributes that are mentioned in *Hameedi*. Verily, the perfect group of Muslims who turned their faces away from the seekers of the world, who gave up the life of the world to remain in the quest for Allah, performed *bayat* [paid fealty] of Imam Mahdi^{AS} through divine inspiration, unveiling and mystical experiences of the divine omnipresence. Many years before Imam Mahdi^{AS} manifested his claim to be Mahdi^{AS}, Allah Most High had revealed to the members of this group that this *zath* is to be the Imam Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, they came in the presence of the Imam^{AS} and told him about their inspirations, the Imam^{AS} told them Allah Most High would soon manifest the claim.

Hence, the saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] that ‘those in power did not pay fealty to the Imam^{AS}, hence, the saying of the person who proved the Imamate became null and void’ is the convincing proof of the ignorance of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] about the attributes of the people who paid fealty to the Imam^{AS}. What rank do the people in power have when compared to the people who paid fealty to the Imam^{AS}? They are a group of people who are surrounded by the angels. They have achieved the peace of Allah Most High. Allah Most High has counted them among his *musabiban* [Companions]. He who sits with them is fortunate.

Hence, the *hadith* [Tradition] too is saying the same thing that, ‘Allah has raised their stations. Although they are not from the Prophets and Martyrs, but the Prophets and Martyrs will desire for their status.’ [When a community which has received such a status from Allah pays fealty to Imam Mahdi^{AS}] the saying of the person who did not accept the Mahdiat and Imamate of the Mahdi^{AS} is nullified and the saying of the person who accepted the Mahdiat and Imamate of the Mahdi^{AS} is proved.

Qualities of the Community of Mahdi^{AS}

I have previously described the qualities of the community of Mahdi^{AS}. Now I will describe some of those qualities of the community of Mahdi^{AS} which are in conformity with those things that are stated in the hadith that mention the qualities of the *Awliya* [Saints] under the command of Allah Most High, ‘*Lo! Verily the friends of Allah are (those) on whom fear (cometh) not, nor do they grieve.*’¹¹³

Omar bin Khattab^{RZ} narrated that the Prophet^{SLM} said, ‘Among the servants of Allah, there are some people who are not Prophets^{AS} and Martyrs, but the Prophets^{AS} and the Martyrs would desire their station and ranks which Allah Most High would confer on them on the day of Resurrection.’ The Companions^{RZ} said, ‘O the Messenger of Allah! Give us the news of these people, as to who they are.’ The Prophet^{SLM} said, ‘They are a group of people who love one another for the pleasure of Allah Most High, despite the fact that they have no close relationship among themselves, and despite the fact that they have not given any riches to any one of them. By Allah! Their faces will be lit with the *nur* [divine light] and they will be sitting on the pulpits of divine light. They will not be afraid while others will be afraid. They will not be scared while others will be scared. They will not grieve while other people grieve.’ Then Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} recited the Quranic Verse: ‘*Lo! Verily the friends of Allah are (those) on whom fear (cometh) not, nor do they grieve?*’¹¹⁴ Listen! Those are the people who are the Friends of Allah, they are not afraid of anybody and they will not grieve. Abu Dawud has explained with relevant authorities in his *Sunan*. And this *riwayat* [Tradition] is treated as *agreed* by the *Sabihain* [Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim].

It has been narrated by Abu Hurayrah^{RZ} that on the day of resurrection, Allah Most High will ask the Prophet^{SLM}, ‘Where are those people who had friendship with each other. By My *Jalal* [Majesty]! Today I will give refuge to them under My shade. Today there is no shade other than My shade.’ Muslim has narrated this with authority [*sanad*]. It has been narrated by Ma’az bin Jabal that ‘I heard Rasoolullah^{SLM} say that Allah will say, ‘Where are those people who had friendship with each other. By My *jalal* [Majesty]! There are the pulpits of *Nur* for them. The Prophets and the martyrs will desire for those pulpits and positions.’ Tirmizhi has narrated this.

Baghawi has narrated with authority that Abu Malik Ash’ary said, ‘I was near the Prophet^{SLM} who said, ‘Truly there are servants of Allah. They are not the Prophets and Martyrs on the day of Judgement but Prophets^{AS} and Martyrs will desire their positions because of their positions’ proximity to Allah Most High’. Abu Malik Ash’ary said that at that time an Arab was sitting amongst a group of the community. Hearing this he sat on his haunches and stroked both his hands on his thighs and said, ‘O Rasoolullah^{SLM}, inform us about them as to who those people are.’ Then Abu Malik said that he had seen the holy face of the Prophet^{SLM} that it was very happy. Then, the Prophet^{SLM} said, ‘These are the servants of Allah Most High from various cities and various tribes. They will not have close blood relationship with one another because of which they can have love and affection amongst them. Nor will they possess wealth because of which they could be in close love and affection amongst them. Their relationship and love will be simply because of their seeking the pleasure of Allah Most High. Allah Most High will make their faces *noorami* [illuminated] on the Day of Resurrection. He will also make tall pulpits of pearls and gems for them. Because of the dread of the Day [of Resurrection], people will be scared but these people will not be afraid.’

¹¹³ Quran, Surah Yunus(10):62, MMP

¹¹⁴ Quran, Surah Yunus(10):62 MMP.

It has been narrated from the Prophet^{SLM} that he had said quoting Allah Most High as saying, ‘From among My servants, My friends are those who remember Me and I remember them.’ Similarly Baghawi too has narrated without authorities quoting Abu Huraira^{RZ}, who said quoting the Prophet^{SLM} that from among the servants of Allah Most High, there are His servants whose station and positions the Prophets and Martyrs will desire. The Companions^{RZ} asked the Prophet^{SLM} as to who these people were so that they could also love and respect them. The Prophet^{SLM} said they are a group of people who love one another because of their love of Allah Most High. Their faces would be illuminated and they would be sitting on the pulpits of *nur* [Light]. They will not be afraid while others will be afraid. They will not grieve while others will be in grief.

Hence, see O Just Man! That the above mentioned attributes that are the attributes of the Saints of the *ummah-e-Muhammadiyah* [Friends of Allah among the community of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}] are to be found among the members of the community of the Imam Mahdi^{AS} (the Mahdavis). Thus how can their pledge of allegiance not be taken as proof of his (the Mahdi^{AS}) Imamah? And how can their conclusion not be taken as the argument for others? And Allah says the truth and shows the path of truth.

Claimants of Mahdiat

He [Muttaqi] says: Then know that Allah Most High have Mercy on you. From the beginning of Islam to the present, many people have claimed to be Imam Mahdi^{AS} from among the wealthy people and the *mashayakheen*. From among them, there is a Sheikh whose name was Syed Muhammad Nur Bakhsh and among them was a Sheikh who lived in Rum.

We say: I found in the Sheikh’s original saying كان the *kana* is placed before the word Sheikh and this is not correct. He should have said *و منهم شيخ كان في الروم* .

He [Muttaqi] says: The name of the Sheikh who lived in Rum is Owais. He was a contemporary of Bayazid and he had eighty vice-regents. When the issue of the Mahdiat came before him, he called his vice-regents, and told them that, ‘the issue of Mahdiat is presented before me in this manner, so you turn your faces towards Allah.’

We say: The eloquent phrase would have been *فتوجهوا الى الله انتم* .

He [Muttaqi] says: [The Shaikh further said to his vice-regents] ‘And tell me the thing that is revealed to you.’ His friends became busy with the issue of Mahdiat for a few days and then came to him and said, ‘It has been revealed to us that you are on the truth. [and the issue of Mahdiat is proven in your *zath*].’ When the issue of Mahdiat was told to the Sultan of that time, since the Sultan was from amongst the Awliya-Allah, he said, “Mercy be upon you. Come out with the call of Mahdiat, we are with you and will help you.” After a few days Owais no longer had the thought of the call of Mahdiat.

We say: Even in this saying of the Shaikh [Muttaqi], there is an proof for the soundness of our contention about Mahdiat which is that Allah Most High does not leave a *Vali* [Saint or Friend of Allah] on the wrong path — a mistake that creates a defect in his religion. Allah Most High will make the *Vali* aware of the mistake so that the *Vali* then corrects his mistake. On the other hand when Allah leaves the *Vali* on his call of Mahdiat till his death, then it is known that either the *vali* was true in his claim. Or alternatively he is not

a *vali* at all because remaining on the wrong path is impossible for a *Vali* which the Sheikh himself has mentioned it earlier.¹¹⁵

He [Muttaqi] says: Then there is a person who is virtuous and is a Syed in a western country. He is now alive. And he is an elderly respected person and is the leader of an army. He has won victories in the western countries for as long a distance as could be traveled in four months. He is now prospering and claims that he is the Mahdi.

We say: We have come to know of this information from the traders who have come from Makkah that this virtuous person has been killed. He was a *kimiagar* [alchemist]. His intention was to conquer the cities of the Muslims. His invitation was not the *tark-e-dunya* [renunciation of the world] and *ishtgibal ma'Allah* [engagement with Allah]. All the Prophets were sent to the people to propagate the *tark-e-dunya* and *ishtgibal ma'Allah*. Allah Most High says that, '...*We have made some of you as a trial for others...*'¹¹⁶ It is said in *Tafsir-e-Kashshaf* that 'O Muhammad! We have made you a test for the others. This is so because if you had owned wealth and gardens, they [the people] would have flocked to you in the lust of wealth and desire of other acquisitions. We have made you a *faqir* [indigent], so that the people who follow you would do so exclusively with the desire to achieve Us. Hence joining your group for the sake of world, even if it is in thousands, is not considered to be for the sake of the religion. Allah Most High says, '*Say: Not equal are things that are bad and things that are good, even though the abundance of the bad may dazzle thee.*'¹¹⁷

Conclusion

He [Muttaqi] says: Allah Most High be Merciful to you! Know that the *aakhirat* [the next world or the life after death] is the home of the reward and blessings while the world is the House of Testing. Allah Most High has tested His servants in various ways. Hence, some of the servants of Allah Most High are those who were tested by the hardships of penury and starvation, some others are those who were tested by disease and many other calamities and difficulties in succession one after the other, still others are those who were tested by health and well-being [this was the calamity of good (*hasanah*)], yet others are those who were tested by a large number of enemies, and they were tested by the great number of infidels, innovators and the famous seventy—one sects [of Muslim *ummmat* or community] and the innovative sect, the Mahdavis, in our day. We seek refuge in Allah from them.

We say: In being inimical to our Companions [the Mahdavis] the Sheikh [Muttaqi] has gone to such an extent that he has troubled himself by travelling from Makkah to Gujarat [India] to oppose them. He intends to extinguish the *Nur* of Allah Most High by blowing his breath. However, his deceit has dissolved as salt dissolves in water. He did not achieve his objective. Then he returned to Makkah. And after a long time he wrote a letter to the Sultan of Gujarat urging him to kill our brothers in Gujarat. The Sultan accepted the advice of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] and murdered eleven of our Mahdavi brothers, who were sincere in believing in the religion of Imam Mahdi^{AS} and acted according to the Mahdavi religion thinking it to be the source of divine rewards. But Allah Most High took revenge against him within four months. One of the servants of the Sultan killed the Sultan and his ministers. Hence, the sword is in use since that time up until now [the time of writing this passage by Hazrat Sujawandi^{RA}]. The period since then is in turmoil and there is no

¹¹⁵ The Sheikh's saying is that it is not like that. On the other hand, the *vali* is protected from a mistake, it means that it is possible for a *vali* to commit a mistake but he does not insist on continuing to repeatedly commit the mistake.

¹¹⁶ Quran, Surah Al-Furqaan(25):20 AYA

¹¹⁷ Quran, S. 5:100 AYA

peace. Allah Most High says, ‘*Did We not destroy the men of old (for their evil)? So shall We make later (generations) follow them. Thus do We deal with men of sin. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!*’¹¹⁸. Hence the Shaikh [Muttaqi] saw their Tasdiq in Mahdi^{AS} to be upright and firm which was similar to the way that Abu Sufyan replied to the question of King Heraclius ‘Is anyone leaving Muhammad’s religion after joining it because of the hardships he is facing?’ that ‘No [they aren’t leaving his religion].’; thus the Shaikh [Muttaqi], disheartened by the rejection and refutation of the Mahdavis, said, that ‘Allah has tested us through this innovative sect’. If you see the writing of the Shaikh [Muttaqi] with justice you will find that it is similar to the saying of the idolators when they said, ‘Verily this talk benefits [Muhammad^{SLM}]. We haven’t heard of this in the previous religions so it is a fabrication.’ Thus, what a joy it is for the believers of Mahdi^{AS} and what a devastation it is for the deniers of Mahdi^{AS}.

He [Muttaqi] says: May Allah have mercy on you! Know that it is the habit of Allah pertaining to his servants that sometimes a person is a *vali* by nature, he adheres to the Book [the Holy Quran] and the Sunnah. After the death of this *vali* a group which transgresses the limits of religion is born. In the cities of Persia is a person by the name of Syed Nematullah *vali*. The Rafzis are his believers but they have no connection to this *vali*. Then there is a person whose name is Shahbaz Qalandar. We have heard that he was a pious man and the Qalandariya group found today is related to him, although this group has moved away from the path of Shahbaz Qalandar. Then another person Shah Qasim Anwar was from the Awliya Allah. Most of his companions were apostates and proud. Then in the cities of India was a person by name of Badi’uddin Shah Madar who was from the *Ahlullah* [people of Allah]. His companions are called Madaris but they are far away from him [from his path]. There are many others apart from these people. The purpose of mentioning these Awliya-Allah is that after the demise of these Awliya-Allah their sects went out of their religion. Similarly, because of the innovations of the believers of this deceased Syed [Imam Mahdi^{AS}] it is not necessary that the deceased Syed [Imam Mahdi^{AS}] was also an innovator, because one cannot have such a suspicion about him.

We say: The saying of the Sheikh [Muttaqi] that after the demise of the Awliya their communities turned away from their path would have been true if they did not have the correct traditions of their leader through constancy. But when they have written those things upon which their beliefs and actions are based from those narrators who were liked and considered truthful by their leader, then how can one suspect that they have started a thing which was not sanctioned by their leader or they have made a mistake in noting the narration of their leader. In summary, the intellect does not accept this and the narrations refute it. If this is made permissible, the entire religion will be cast in doubt and *hadith* of constancy [*mutawatir*] and singular *hadith* [*abad*] will become equal and will not give the benefit of certainty.

Thus see, O Just Man! Allah has protected the Mahdi^{AS} from the slander of an opposing person like the Shaikh [Muttaqi] and has firmly established the high morals of the Mahdi^{AS} upon the Shaikh [Muttaqi] to such an extent that the Shaikh himself had said that one cannot suspect innovation in the *zath* of the Mahdi^{AS} despite his knowing that some of the verses in Qur’an have been specified in favour of Mahdi^{AS} by the Mahdi^{AS} himself, and not by the companions. Otherwise, who has the power to make specification in the Book of Allah and believe in it unless such a thing has been narrated through constancy from the Mahdi^{AS} himself? And how can one suspect that the Mahdi^{AS} has fabricated lies against Allah or has committed a mistake because the reasons for accepting the Mahdi^{AS} are those morals that keep his denial far away. Thus with respect to these very meanings the Shaikh [Muttaqi] has said that ‘one cannot have such a suspicion about him.’

¹¹⁸ Quran, Surah Al-Mursalaat(77):16-19 AYA. Allah has repeated this verse ten times in this Surah (*al-Mursalaat*).

He [Muttaqi] says: And for Allah is the Authority of Eloquence. He casts astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. He knows best who they are that receive His guidance.

We say: It is He who has astounded the *wasileen* [newcomers] and has made the *kamileen* [perfect people] to reflect upon the fruit of their actions. “*He cannot be questioned for His acts, but they will be questioned (for theirs).*”¹¹⁹ The Shaikh’s [Muttaqi] tract along with its answers has been completed. All praise is for Allah and all virtues are completed by His blessings.

¹¹⁹ Quran, Surah Al-Anbiya(21):23 AYA

SUPPLEMENT

I then decided that apart from all these discussions (which are present in Siraj-ul-Absar) I should write a short discussion in Persian language. Hence I say: [text follows]

Question: If someone asks what proof do you have for the affirmation of Meeran Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood Alaihis Salam, then my answer is [as follows].

When we pondered regarding the time of the advent of Mahdi Alaihis Salam we found without doubt that his advent would be at a time which would be bereft of the *Mujtahidin* [jurists entitled to independent opinion or judgment] as per the consensus between us and the scholars. And we saw that our position did not surpass *taqleed* [adherence]. Thus it is not appropriate for us to cling [*tamassuk*] to the hadith for the proof and rejection of any matter because this is the speciality of the *Mujtahidin*. Even if we suppose that *tamassuk-bil-hadith* [clinging to a hadith] is permissible, the rectification of *abadith*, its adaptation, harmonizing and conveying the phrase either factually or metaphorically is not within our possibility. This is because, the people who were unique pearls in this field made mistakes in specifying the rank of the *hadith* as per its attributes.

Therefore, Ibn Salah, who was an Imam of *abadith*, taunts a leader of the science of *Hadith* like Ibn Juzi saying, 'Ibn Juzi has composed books on the *Manzu'at* [Fabricated Traditions]. However there is no proof that these are *Manzu* [fabricated]. The truth is that they are counted among the *za'if* [weak traditions].' This narration is present in *Arjuzah* which is about the principles of Hadith.

Similarly there is consensus amongst the exegesists that Satan threw (some suggestions) into the recitation of the Prophet^{SLM} whereupon he said, 'These are the lofty idols and their intercession is hoped for'. This is explained for the verse, 'And We have sent before thee no apostle or prophet but when he read the Satan cast forth suggestions in respect of his reading:...' ¹²⁰ and no exegesis fails to mention this narration, except those which Allah wills. The traditionists have consensus on *alqa* (throwing of suggestions) being *Manzu* [fabricated] to the extent that they say that whoever believes in the narration of *alqa* is feared to have fallen into infidelity.

Similarly, the *usuliyān* [principle-ists] of hadith narrate that the Prophet^{SLM} said that, 'Soon after me, you will have many *abadith* with you. Present them upon the Book of Allah. If they conform [to the Book of Allah] then accept them, else reject them.' The *Muhaddisin* [traditionists] are of the opinion that this tradition is *Manzu* [fabricated] and has been introduced by disbelievers. Similarly, in the explanation of the hadith — if there is conflict between two traditions and neither of them are invalid then the Mujtahid [independent jurist] can act upon any one of the two as per the testimony of his heart. The *usuliyān* [principle-ists] present the hadith 'fear the vision of the believer because he sees with the light [*nur*] of Allah.' But the Muhaddisin have mentioned this hadith amongst the fabricated.

Further, it is popular amongst the commoners and the elite that after the Quran, Bukhari and Muslim are the more correct books. Despite this Ibn Salah says that Bukhari and Muslim contain weak traditions. This statement of Ibn Salah is present in *Arjuzah*. With regards to accepting the traditions of the people with differences, the correct religion is that his tradition is acceptable if he does not keep the belief of the fabrication of hadith like the Khitabiyah [rhetorics]. And he says in *Arjuzah* that Bukhari and Muslim is full of traditions of the Shia.

¹²⁰ Quran, S. 22 :52

And further some of the ahadith which are mentioned in *Hedaya*, have also been criticised as fabricated. Similarly some traditions of Ihya-ul-Uloom have been criticised. The purpose of this lengthy discourse is that one should see with justice that inspite of such differences and their likelihood, how can we reject the claim of such a person (the claim of Imam Mahdi Mau'ood Khalifathullah^{AS}) who has been bestowed with the qualities of the Prophets^{AS}? Therefore, following the scholars becomes necessary for us.

And the Prophet^{SLM} has described two ranks for the scholars. He^{SLM} said, 'The scholars are the successors of the prophets^{AS}. They are those who do not desire the world. And if they desire the world, stay away from them' And similarly, the Prophet^{SLM} said, 'Scholars¹²¹ are the trustees of Allah as long as they do not mix together with the kings. So when the scholars start associating with the kings, avoid them. Verily they are the thieves of religion! They are the thieves of religion! They are the thieves of religion! And robbers too!' Thus it becomes imperative for us to investigate both kinds of scholars and follow those scholars who are the trustees of the Prophets^{AS}.

And we see that the scholars who are deniers of Mahdi Alaihis Salam are inclined towards the world and associate with the kings. Thus when we see the condition of those scholars who accepted the Mahdi Alaihis Salam, we find that they renounce the world and its constituents, possess the desire for Allah, have trust on Allah, lead a *shar'ee* [Islamic code of conduct] life and shun the world for the sake of Allah so much so that they attain the status of being the 'trustees' of the Prophets^{AS}. Then why should we not follow them? Thus, you understand this matter and do justice. May Allah have mercy on one who does justice.

Translated by:

Abqar Dilawer alias Gorey Miyan Mahdavi [Hazrat Moulana Syed Dilawer^{RH} Saheb of Begum Bazar, Hyderabad]

English Translation by:

Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Saheb. Completed in December 2010.

¹²¹ The scholars are the trustees of the Prophet^{SLM} as long as they do not mix together with kings and do not desire the world. When the scholars mix together with the kings and desire the world, they have committed treachery with the Messenger^{SLM}, so you avoid them (Refer: Jame-ut-Tafseer, Jild Duwam, Pages 57-58 by Imam Jalaluddin Suyuti^{RH}, published in Egypt)