



THE WARITH MAGAZINE

An Official Magazine of the Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain (as)







EDITORIAL

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

By the grace of God, we humbly present to the Imam of our time, the third issue of The Warith Magazine.

This issue addresses some important topics with articles on the connection between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam Mahdi (af) according to the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), and on Imam Hussain (as) and human dignity. Another article addresses the issue of hope in Islam according to the teachings of Imam al-Sajjad (as) in the whispered prayer of the hopeful, which is particularly relevant as depression and despair are rife in the modern world.

As Sadiq school in Toronto participated in our first competition, where they asked their students from grades 7 to 12 to write letters to the Imam of our time (af) about the current plight of the world. The top three letters are published in this issue. This issue also contains poetry and a question and answer section, which also leaves a question open for our readers to discuss at home with family and friends. An answer will be provided in the next issue God willing.

Many hands have worked together to bring the issue to fruition. I would like to thank our content contributors, editors, designers, artists and The Batool Foundation for their contributions



Dr. Zoheir Ali Esmail
Editor of The Warith Magazine



السلام عليك يا أبا الشهداء

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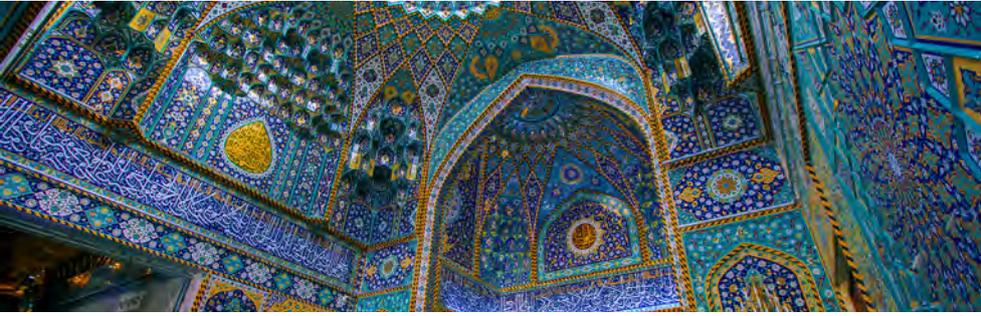
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*The Connection Between
Imam Al-Mahdi (af)
and Imam Hussain (as)*



Although there are similarities between all members of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) and they all originate from one light, there is a special link between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). In this paper, verses from the Holy Qur'an and ahadith of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) will be highlighted to demonstrate this connection. Indeed, Imam al-Mahdi (af) is from the progeny of Imam Hussain (as) and will rise on the Day of Judgement to speak about his grandfather's oppression. Imam Hussain (as) has also mentioned that Imam al-Mahdi (af) will avenge his death and the oppression inflicted upon him and his family. Help and support for Imam al-Mahdi (as) is parallel to the support offered by Imam Hussain's (as) family and companions on the Day of Ashura. Moreover, one of the best deeds recommended to be performed on the birthday of Imam al-Mahdi (as) is to recite the ziyarah of Imam Hussain (as) because in renewing one's allegiance to Imam Hussain (as), a person also renews his allegiance to Imam al-Mahdi (af).

As mentioned above, although there are many similarities between all members of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), there is a unique link and connection between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). We will now study some of the characteristics of this relationship and explain the reasons and philosophy behind it.



In Chapter al-Israa of the Holy Qur'an, Allah (swt) states:

Do not kill the soul that Allah has made inviolable, except with due cause, and whoever is killed wrongfully, We have certainly given his heir an authority. But let him not commit any excess in killing; the one who is the guardian of one who is killed would be helped by Allah and would be victorious. (Qur'an 17:33)

The most obvious case to which this verse may be applied, is the murder of Imam Hussain (as). Several ahadith refer to the wrongful killing of Imam Hussain (as) as an exemplification of this verse. Narrations from Imam al-Rida (as) and other Imams (as) state that this verse refers to Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). For example, Imam al-Baqir (as) states:



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‘The one who is killed is Hussain and his guardian is Imam al-Mahdi. And israaf is to kill someone other than his killers. Truly he is helped. This world will not expire until a man from the family of the Prophet arrives. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it has been filled with injustice and inequity. The demand of the guardian of that innocent life is establishment of justice all over the world.’ (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 44, p. 218, chapter 28, no. 7)

The blood of Imam Hussain (as) will only be avenged with the establishment of global justice. Of course, all Imams (as) after Imam Hussain (as) were guardians of the message and mission of Imam Hussain (as). However, Imam al-Mahdi (af) is special. He will receive divine help, victory and authority to enable Islam and true justice to prevail throughout the world.

2

More than three hundred ahadith emphasise the fact that Imam al-Mahdi (af) is from the progeny of Imam Hussain (as). Of these ahadith, 180 are narrated from the Holy Prophet (s). Imam Hussain (as) himself has stated:

‘There will be twelve people who are guided. The first Imam who is guided by Allah and does not need to be guided by people, is Imam Ali, and the last one is from the ninth generation of my progeny. He is the Imam that will rise truthfully and the one who will give life to the earth after its being dead. And Allah will make the right religion prevail [over] all other religions even if the pagans do not like it.’

Therefore, the hadith emphasises that Imam al-Mahdi (af) is from the progeny of Imam Hussain (as).

3

According to various ahadith, the day of the uprising of Imam al-Mahdi (af) is the tenth day of Muharram. There will be call made for Imam al-Mahdi (af) in the holy month of Ramadan, followed by his rising in Muharram on the day of Ashura. Imam al-Sadiq has stated:

‘There will be a call for him on the 23rd night [of Ramadhan] but he will be raised on the day of Ashura on the [day] Imam Hussain was killed.’ (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 52, p. 290, Chapter 26, no. 29)

4

Imam al-Mahdi (af) will stand between the rukn and maqam next to the Ka’bah and clearly refer to the tragedy of Karbala when he publicly announces himself and the purpose of his movement:

‘O people of the world, I am the uprising Imam. O people of the world, I am the avenger. O people of the world, my grandfather Hussain was killed whilst he was thirsty. O people of the world, my grandfather was left without clothing. O people of the world, they damaged the body of my grandfather.’

Also, according to a narration, Imam Hussain (as) stated to Imam al-Sajjad (as):

‘By Allah, my blood will keep boiling until Allah sends the Mahdi and kills seventy thousand of the disbelievers who are transgressors and hypocrites.’ (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 45, p. 299, Chapter 45, no. 10)

When Hirawi asked Imam al-Rida (as) to check the authenticity of a hadith from Imam al-Sadiq (as) regarding Imam Mahdi (af) killing members of the progeny of the killers of Imam Hussain (as), Imam al-Rida (as) confirmed it to be true. He then asked:

‘How can this be explained with regards to the verse that states: “No one carries the burden of another person (Qur’an 6:164; 17:15; 38:18; 39:7)...’

His statement implies that if a person has committed murder, his progeny are not guilty of the crime and so, they would not deserve to carry the burden of the sin, according to the Qur’anic verse mentioned. However, he was not aware of the correct meaning of dhurriyyah used within ahadith. The term does not refer to progeny, but rather, it refers to a person’s ideological approvers.

When we say Aal Ziyad, we are referring to the party of Ziyad according to the Qur'anic perspective. One's progeny refers to those who fully follow him even if they are not his sons. Moreover, if one's sons do not follow him in action or principle, then they are not his dhurriyyah. This is what we understand from the story of Prophet Nuh (as) wherein Allah (swt) states, regarding Prophet Nuh's (as) son, that 'Indeed He is not of your family.' On the other hand, Salman was counted as a member of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) whilst he did not even share the ethnicity, let alone the blood line, of the Holy Prophet (s) and his family. As another example, when Talut's army reached a river, he told them that whoever drinks more than a small amount of water from the river, will not be considered from his family or party.

One of the beautiful practices of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) was holding discussions with their followers. Through these discussions, they equipped their followers with the knowledge and arguments required to carry out effective and fruitful discussions with others.

...Imam al-Rida (as) replied:

***'Allah says the truth in all his sayings but these [people] are those who are proud and satisfied with what their fathers did. When one is pleased with something, he is like the one who is doing it. If someone is killed in the east and another person in the west is happy with this killing, it is as if he is also involved.'* (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 45, p. 295, Chapter 45, no. 1)**

Although the punishment deserved by the person who is satisfied and pleased with the crimes of others may be different from the punishment deserved by the criminals themselves, both should be punished. Similarly, the people who are happy about the crimes committed in Karbala, deserve to be punished for this attitude. We will later explain how the 'end of times' (akhir al-zaman) relate to and centre around the personality and tragedy of Imam Hussain (as). For example, Imam Hussain (as) will serve as the a standard of truth and virtue and loyalty and opposition to him will determine people's commitment to truth and falsehood respectively.



There are ahadith that state that the helper of Imam Hussain (as) will be similar to the helper of Imam al-Mahdi (af). For example, Imam Hussain (as) stated during the night of Ashura:

'My grandfather said: "My son Hussain will be killed in Karbala whilst he is alone and thirsty and abandoned. [In that lonely time,) whoever helps Hussain has helped me and has helped his son, al-Hujjah."'

Thus, helping Imam Hussain (as) is akin to helping both the Holy Prophet (s) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). They share the same values and objectives and if a person accepts and pursues their principles, he may be considered aligned to them. Betraying any of these eminent personalities of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) is like betraying all of them. Hence, if we sincerely and wisely spread the message of Imam Hussain (as) today, we will also be helping Imam al-Mahdi (af).



Imam al-Sadiq (as) states that whilst 4000 angels asked Imam Hussain (as) on the Day of Ashura if they could assist him, Imam Hussain (as) refused their offer. The angels then sought permission from Allah (swt) to partake in the battle without the Imam's (as) permission. However, when they descended upon the earth, they found that the Imam (as) had already been murdered. Imam al-Sadiq (as) states:

'When they descended to the earth, the Imam was already killed. They have remained in Karbala. They are covered with dust and will cry for him until the Resurrection. They are waiting for the coming of Imam al-Mahdi.'

Imam al-Rida (as) has also stated:

'Four thousand angels descended to earth to help him. They found him killed. They will remain there until the coming of Imam al-Mahdi. Then they will help him. And their motto is "Yaa latharat al-Hussain!"' (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 44, p. 285, Chapter 34, no. 23)

In another narration, Imam al-Sadiq (as) states:

‘The supporters of Imam al-Mahdi wish to be killed in the way of Allah and their motto is “Ya litharat al-Husayn!” Whenever they move, fear goes in front of them one month in advance.’ (Bihar al-Anwar , vol. 52, p. 307, Chapter 26, no. 81)

7

One of the most highly recommended actions on the eve of 15 Sha’ban, the eve of the birth of Imam al-Mahdi (af), is the recitation of the ziyarah of Imam Hussain (as). Shaykh Abbas al-Qummi writes in Mafatih al-Jinan that there are many authentic ahadith regarding the rewards granted to those who visit Imam Hussain (as) in the middle of Sha’ban. For example, in visiting Imam Hussain (as), it is as if the visitor has shaken hands with 124,000 prophets. Moreover, renewing one’s allegiance to Imam Hussain (as) is synonymous with renewing one’s allegiance to Imam al-Mahdi (as). One who does not harbour love for Imam Hussain (as) cannot be counted as a lover of Imam al-Mahdi (af).

8

The Night of Qadr is a night that centres and pivots around Imam al-Mahdi (af). Every year, on this night, ‘the spirit and angels descend’ (Qur’an 97:4) upon the heart of Imam al-Mahdi (af), the Proof of Allah (swt):

‘He sends the spirit to the one whom he is pleased with.’ (Qur’an 16:2)

The Qur’anic verse above evidences and supports the Imamah of Imam al-Mahdi (af) because the Imams are the only people to whom Allah (swt) sends angels. On the night of Qadr, Allah (swt) decides people’s destinies for the following twelve months of the year and the spirit and the angels descend to bring these decisions to the heart of Imam al-Mahdi (af).

Moreover, on this night, one of the most highly recommended actions is to visit Imam Hussain (as). A specific ziyarah has been recommended to be recited on the night of Qadr.

his ziyarah reflects the strength of the spiritual connection between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). It is also through the recitation of this ziyarah that one receives the handshakes of all the prophets because in supporting the message and mission of Imam Hussain (as), a person is aligned to the mission of all the prophets of God. Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur’an:

‘We sent aforetime our messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance [of right and wrong], that men may stand forth in justice.’ (Qur’an 57:25).

Each of the 124, 000 prophets sent by Allah (swt), worked to establish justice. However, it is only under Imam al-Mahdi’s (af) guidance and leadership, that true and prevailing justice will be achieved. Hence, when a person visits Imam Hussain (as) and affirms his commitment to the cause of justice, all the prophets of Allah (swt) shake hands with him. Of course, a person can only advance upon the path towards social justice after he first establishes and implements the principles of justice within his own life.

9

Dua al-Nudbah is a supplication that connects all the prophets with the Holy Prophet (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt (as). Within the supplication, we cry out:

‘Where is Hasan? Where is Hussain? Where are the sons of Hussain?... Where is he who shall avenge the blood of the one killed in Karbala? Where is he who shall be aided against all who transgress against him or lie about him?’

The one helped by Allah (swt) in the lines above refers to Imam al-Mahdi (af) because Allah (swt) will help him, as mentioned in the Qur’anic verses noted previously. Whilst Du’a al-Nudbah is a supplication addressed primarily to Imam al-Mahdi (af), there is a clear relationship denoted between Imam al-Mahdi (as) and Imam Hussain (as).

10

In Ziyarat Ashura, the link between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af) is also emphasised. One passage of the ziyarah states:

'I ask Allah that He grant me the opportunity to seek your revenge with the victorious Imam from the family of Muhammad.'

Another passage states:

'I ask Allah and that He grant me the ability to fight for justice and fair play with the rightly guided Imam, who surely will come and speak the truth, [and who is] from your progeny.'

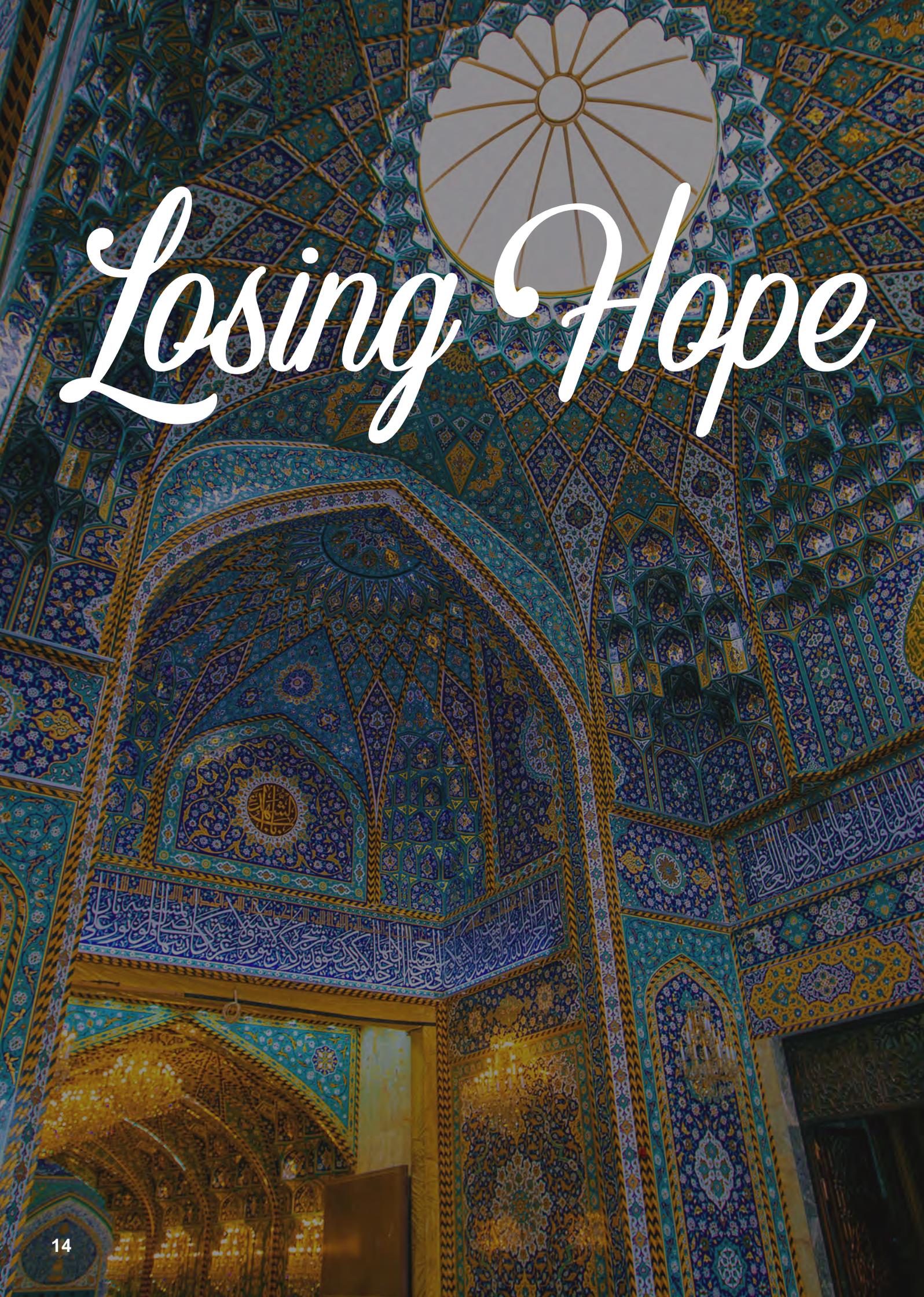
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On the day of Ashura, we are recommended to offer condolences to each other by saying:

'May Allah make our reward and your reward great, for our grief for Hussain, peace be on him, and may He place us and you from those who help his cause with His guardian, the guided Imam from the family of Muhammad, peace be on them.'
(Al-Balad al-Amin, p. 268)

In conclusion, there is very clearly a special connection between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). The tragedy of Karbala and the advent of Imam al-Mahdi (af) are closely connected. Mourning for Imam Hussain (as) and preparing for Imam Mahdi (af) are deeply connected to one another. In the paper above, we have discussed and evidenced eleven reasons that clearly illustrate the relationship between Imam Hussain (as) and Imam al-Mahdi (af). In the paper that follows, we will further analyse this unique relationship and explore how the tragedy of Karbala can provide both symbolic and inspirational guidance in preparing for and establishing the justice of the saviour of humanity, Imam al-Mahdi (af).





Losing Hope

Throughout our lives, we face challenges and situations that test our ability to have hope. At almost every juncture in our lives, if we carry out a post-mortem of all our hardships, milestones, and accomplishments, we find that the motivation to attain our goals is based on the hope we have to achieve them. In today's world, we are surrounded by confusion, starvation, oppression, hatred towards God-loving and God-fearing people, and above all, intellectual and spiritual vacuity, all of which challenge our capacity and inclination to maintain hope. In schools and in the workplace, we often find ourselves struggling to explain why hope is important and why it is a righteous trait to possess. Hope in its unpolluted and purest form is considered alien and impractical in contemporary times. A hope-driven person is often regarded as unrealistic and dismissed as one whose faith does not correspond to facts and pragmatic realities. There is a regular stream of pressure from economic, political and social circles contesting all values and principles based on hope and faith.

In fact, these challenges are not new but rather, they resonate with the challenges faced by the divinely appointed prophets (as) and the Infallibles (as) within varying contexts. Hence, guidance and inspiration can be drawn from their exemplary interaction with various trials and tribulations. Moreover, in contemporary times, without facing tests and dilemmas, the threshold of our faith cannot be benchmarked. We can better gauge our spiritual capacity when we face challenges. Hope amidst obstacles and difficulties is dependent upon hope and faith in Allah (swt). It requires faith, trust and reliance upon Allah's (swt) power, will and wisdom.

So, what exactly is hope? How do we define it? According to an article written by Katie Hanson on the works of psychology professor, Charles Richard Snyder, the concept of hope can be broken down into 4 categories:

- Goals
- Pathway Thoughts
- Agency Thoughts
- Barriers



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Snyder defines goals as anchors of hope that deliver direction and guidance for hopeful thinking. Pathway thoughts are the methods by which we choose to arrive at these goals, whereas agency thoughts are defined as grit or motivational stimulation that direct us towards reaching our goals. Barriers are simply those factors that block us from arriving at the goal we desire to reach. According to Snyder's study, a high level of hope is considered meritorious because it nurtures positivity. In Islamic literature, it is clearly recognised that the power of hope is only effective when the achievement of the goal is within the realm of possibility.

However, within western literature, hope is discussed without sufficient reference to the possibility or impossibility of achieving hope-invested goals. Hence, there is a clear divergence here between western and Islamic psychology. Within the Islamic view, high, aspirational hopes that are not grounded in the realm of possibility and reality are not considered valuable. Clinging to such high hopes eventually leads to hopelessness and despair. Moreover, in striving towards unrealistic goals, a person strives against the wisdom and will of Allah (swt) who always directs

and guides man's aspirations towards attainable goals of human perfection.

It is worth noting at this point that there are certain core concepts of Islamic belief, such as the existence of Allah (swt), prophethood, the Day of Resurrection and the afterlife, that should be understood and accepted through rationality and study of the intellectual sciences, thereby enabling a person to develop certainty of faith, hope, and fear of Allah (swt). Other concepts, such as the details of the afterlife, the reasons for the number of ritual prayers or the details of how they should be performed, are not discussed within the intellectual and rational sciences because they cannot be explored and identified in this way.

To understand the details of ritual worship or unseen realities such as Heaven and Hell, we rely upon the information and reasoning provided by the Holy Qur'an and verbal narrations from the Infallibles (as). In these aspects of belief, if we try to derive a true understanding by relying upon our intellectual reasoning and inner hopes and feelings, we will be unable to do so. True understanding in such matters can only be determined through the guidance of the Holy Qur'an and the verbal traditions of divinely appointed, infallible guides. Within western psychology, however, concepts relating to the unseen world and the soul of man are discussed and deliberated on the basis of hypothesis' and supposedly educated guesses, rather than consideration of divine sources of true knowledge, such as divine revelation or the narrations of the Infallibles (as).

Within Islamic texts, righteous and realistic hope is referred to by the Arabic term, *raja*, a term replete with a plethora of meanings and connecting philosophies including faith in Allah (swt), trust in His wisdom and decree, divine worship and submission to Him, and fear and consciousness of Allah (swt). Most passages regarding hope, both in the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), are mentioned alongside fear of Allah (swt). What is the relationship between hope in Allah (swt) and fear of Him? Whilst we should be full of hope in the divine mercy of Allah (swt), we should also be wary and fearful of displeasing and angering Him. At various points in the Holy Qur'an, Allah (swt) advises believers to be fearful of Him (swt) and to remember that He is the Creator and the very existence of their respective existences is completely in His control and power. The following Qur'anic verses reflect this advice:

'Supplicate to your Lord, beseechingly and secretly. Indeed, He does not like the transgressors. And do not cause corruption on the earth after its restoration, and supplicate to Him with fear and hope: indeed, Allah's mercy is close to the virtuous.'
(Qur'an 7:55-56)

Within Islamic history, there are various examples of how the Infallibles (as) guided people away from confusion and despair during challenging and difficult times. For example, Imam al-Sajjad (as) utilised the power of supplication to address various social, political and spiritual challenges and dilemmas. He guided believers through difficult times through various supplications. After the tragedy of Karbala, the ummah (Muslim community), under the political yoke of Yazid bin Muawiyah, a tyrant and blatant enemy of Islam and the Ahl al-Bayt (as), was in a state of intense hopelessness. Due to the oppression inflicted upon the Ahl al-Bayt (as) and the evil, cruel and corrupt nature of Yazid's despotic rule, the believers faced a dire and challenging situation. Due to the fragile and fragmented state of an ummah that had lost the Holy Prophet's (s) unifying and perfect religious, political and spiritual leadership and now suffered the harsh rule of a corrupt caliph, a unique method of guidance suited to the particular needs of the time, was required. Supplication, as a clear and beautiful manifestation and invocation of hope and faith, served as the best means to strengthen and guide the believers struggling to find light and hope in dark, despotic times.

Similarly, in today's challenging times of confusion and despair, we too can find guidance for our daily lives in the supplications taught by Imam al-Sajjad (as). In particular, Imam al-Sajjad's (as) Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful provides guidance on the fundamental aspects of developing and maintaining faith and hope in Allah (swt).

The supplication begins with the following line:

‘O He who gives to a servant who asks from Him [and] takes him to his wish.’

At the very beginning of this supplication, Imam al-Sajjad (as) clarifies that Allah (swt) answers the prayer of the one who asks Him for his needs and wants. When a person looks to other than the Almighty to fulfil his needs and thereafter, his needs remain unfulfilled due to the incapacity of any and all beings other than Allah (swt) to fulfil the needs of a human being, a seed of despair begins to grow within the person’s heart. Underlying the opening line of Imam al-Sajjad’s (as) supplication, is the concept of tawakkul.

What is tawakkul? In brief, tawakkul refers to having faith that the will and wisdom of Allah (swt) manifests itself in all circumstances and situations. If a person trusts in Allah’s (swt) will, it does not mean that he sets a goal for himself and believes that insha Allah (God-willing), it will definitely happen. Rather, he strives to do his best to arrive at his goal, always aware and fully confident that whether the goal will be attained or not is within the remit and authority of Allah’s (swt) wisdom and will.

As we continue our journey in this world, we tend to look back to the actions we have committed, including both good deeds and bad deeds. We often carry out an audit of our relationship with Allah (swt) and consider what changes are required to reach the height of our spiritual potential. We analyse ourselves in an effort to determine what vices we need to shed and virtues we need to acquire in order to reach spiritual perfection. During this process of self-analysis, we may dwell upon our vices and sins and thereby, lose hope in being forgiven by Allah (swt). If a person arrives at this point of despair, it indicates that he has abandoned his faith in the mercy of Allah (swt). Imam al-Sajjad (as) guides us to reject this feeling of despair in the Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful by stating:

‘[He] brings him near and close when he approaches Him, covers over his sin and cloaks it when he shows it openly.’

Sometimes hopelessness is triggered when we doubt the possibility of securing something we desperately want, such as financial or physical security, stability within marriage or family relationships, or tolerance and respect within a secular society. In situations of strife and struggle, we often waver between the two opposing forces of hope and despair. At such times, we should reflect on the following verse from Imam al-Sajjad’s (as) Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful:

‘How should I hope in other than Thee, when the good - all of it - is in Thy Hands?’

This line of prayer reinforces our certainty that He is the only One from whom we should seek our needs because He alone is able to respond to the supplicant and fulfil his needs.

Another common way of losing hope in Allah (swt) is through the door of ingratitude. We often fail to thank Him and appreciate all the blessings He bestows upon us; moreover, He continues to bless us whilst we remain oblivious to the extent of His kindness. In the line of prayer below, Imam al-Sajjad (as) reminds us that Allah (swt) has blessed us with abundant bounties and yet we worry that He will not answer our prayers. In fact, if we seek bounties from other than Him, it reflects our doubt and lack of faith in Allah’s (swt) power, generosity and mercy.

‘How should I expect from others, when Thine are the creation and command? Should I cut off my hope for Thee, when Thou has shown me of Thy bounty [granted] without [my] seeking [from You]?’

The cancer of hopelessness leads us to overlook Allah’s (swt) compassion, generosity, and mercy and ultimately results in a state of stress, depression and anxiety. When the desired effect of our struggle and efforts is not achieved, we descend into a downward spiral of discontent and self-pity. Throughout the Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful, we affirm our relationship with Allah (swt) as servants who consistently need His pardon and favour and who trust in His generous response to supplication. We cry out:

***'O He who is the asylum of every one who flees,
the Hope of every seeker!
O best object of hope!
O most generous object of supplication!
O He who does not reject the one who beseeches
Him or disappoint the hopeful!
O He whose door is open to supplication and
whose veil is lifted for those who hope in Him!'***

Due to a lack of awareness and acceptance of our limitations, pride acts as a veil over our intellect, enabling our carnal soul to take charge and trick us into thinking that we have absolute control over what occurs in our lives. Of course, it would not be correct to desire and intend that a goal to be reached and then neglect making the required effort to arrive at its fruition. However, it is very important to be always conscious that whilst it is necessary to work and strive towards achieving our goals, these goals can only be achieved if Allah (swt) wills and desires it to be so. If our goals are not in alignment with the divine path of Allah (swt) and they are not achieved, we should be grateful to Allah (swt) for His mercy in protecting us from falling into sin and vice. It is a tribute to Allah's (swt) vast mercy and grace, that He sometimes deters us from the unrighteous goals we seek and protects us from the evil pitfalls that lie unrecognised in our path.

Allah (swt) has commanded both the jinn and humankind to worship Him [Qur'an 51:56]. We can worship Allah (swt) in a multitude of ways and he often facilitates our efforts in attaining His proximity and reward. For example, if a person intends to give charity but does not have the financial means to do so, Allah (swt) still accepts and counts this charitable action amongst his good deeds. Any good action that is performed in service of Allah (swt) and for His pleasure is an act of worship and helps us to draw closer to Him. If Allah (swt) commands us to worship Him and seek to understand and draw nearer to Him, has he provided us with the direction, guidance and details of how to do so? Had he not done so, the very wisdom of God would be open to question. Indeed, those who desire to devote their lives to Allah's (swt) pleasure and proximity should look to the clear teachings and inspirational examples of the Infallibles (as) to enable and facilitate their efforts to attain spiritual perfection. Moreover, as Imam al-Sajjad (as) clarifies in the Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful, Allah (swt) is always watching over and guiding His servants in their struggle to reach Him:

***'Wouldst Thou make me have need for my like?
But I hold fast to Thy cord!
O He through whose mercy the strivers reach
felicity and through whose vengeance the seekers
of forgiveness are not made wretched!
How should I forget Thee, while Thou art my
constant watcher?'***

We may not be fully aware or conscious of the extent to which we have been inundated by His grace and blessings. However, when we awaken to the awareness that we are totally dependent upon His immense love and grace and continually enjoying His innumerable blessings, we turn towards Him in submission and seek His support and help in all challenging matters. Although we transgress against Allah (swt) and displease Him, due to His extensive mercy, He still guides us towards repentance and reform and rekindles our hope in His protection and help in removing the darkness and difficulties we often invite into our lives.

In the Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful, Imam al-Sajjad (as) explores the following attributes of Allah (swt):

- mercy
- compassion
- love
- generosity

He also explores the following attributes of hopeful servants of Allah (swt) who receive His love and mercy:

- iman (faith)
- tawakkul (trust/reliance)
- humility
- ignorance
- awareness

Hope in Allah (swt) is a gift and blessing granted to us by Him. It is this hope that motivates us to continuously turn to Him, thereby increasing our faith and belief in Allah's (swt) love and divinity. Through this beautiful supplication of Imam al-Sajjad (as), we realise that it is impossible to have true hope in Allah (swt) without iman, tawakkul, and humility. Faith in Allah (swt) based on knowledge and awareness and

trust in His will and wisdom, are the foundations upon which a believer nurtures his hope in Allah (swt). It is the strength of hope, shaped and directed by faith, humility and trust in Allah (swt), that guides and motivates a believer to seek and reach perfection.

The teachings and advice of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) are timeless and applicable in all eras, whether it be during the period when the Holy Prophet first proclaimed his message of Islam in Makkah, when Imam Ali's (as) right of caliphate was usurped, or during the lifetimes of the holy Imams (as). No doubt, the Ahl al-Bayt's (as) faith and hope in Allah (swt) throughout their challenging and difficult lives, inspires us to strengthen our hope and trust in Allah (swt) amidst our challenges today. In a world where oppression, fear, and hatred are rampant, there is extensive animosity directed towards pious and God-conscious people. In our current era, we do not have the opportunity to communicate with our Imam (af) as believers in the past were able to do. Hence, we must refer to the lives of the Infallibles (as) to extract lessons of hope that can be derived from their actions and example. Thereafter, we can wisely and insightfully apply these lessons to the challenges of our time.

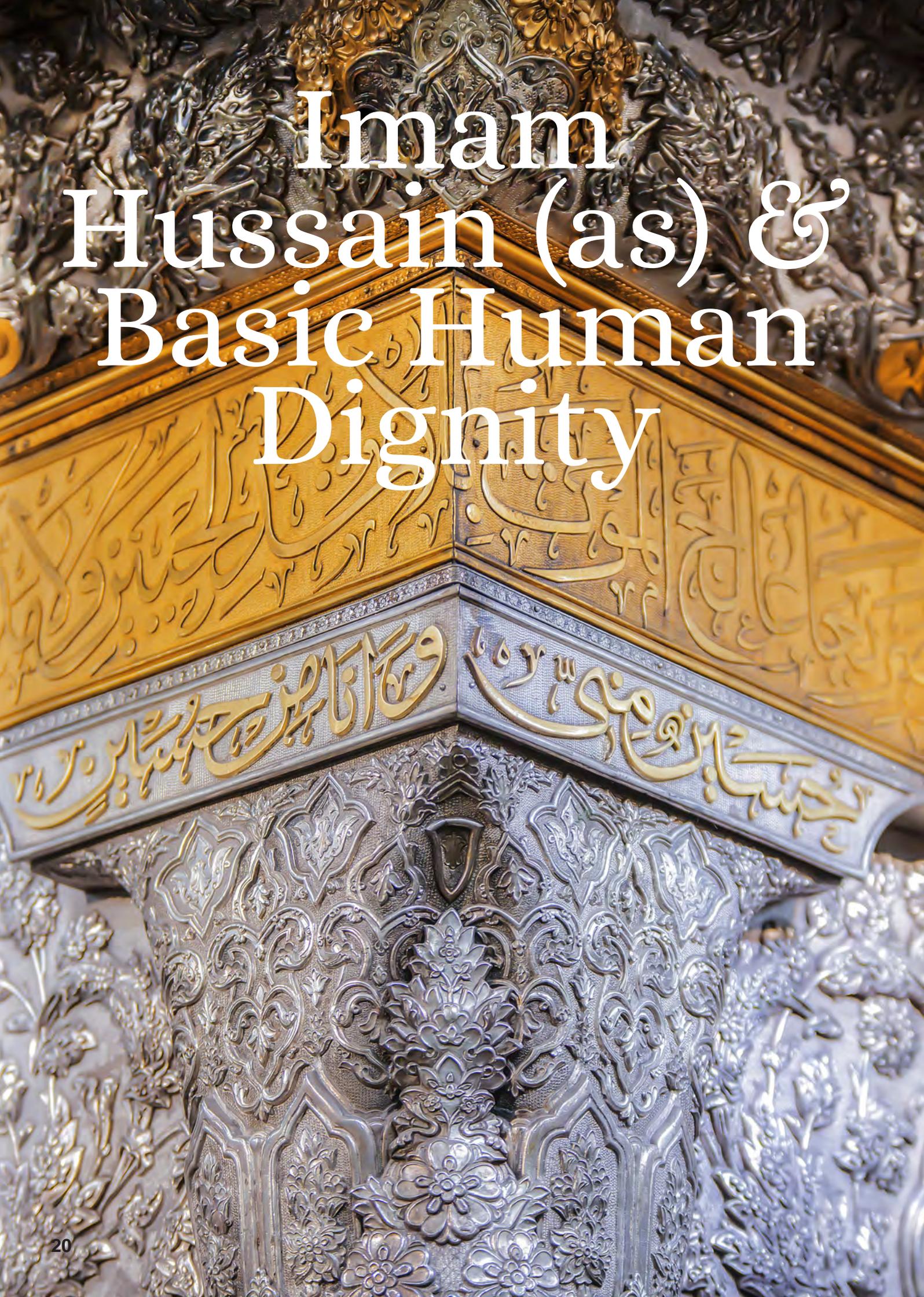
As we endeavour to counter the ever-increasing dilemmas and challenges of a secular, post-modern age in preparation for the reappearance of Imam al-Mahdi (af), we raise our hands to our Lord and plead with all our hearts and sincerity:

'I ask Thee by Thy generosity to show kindness towards me through Thy gift, with that which will gladden my eye, through hope in Thee with that which will give serenity to my soul, and through certainty with that which will make easy for me the afflictions of this world, lift from my insight the veils of blindness!

***By Thy mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful.'***

The Whispered Prayer of the Hopeful



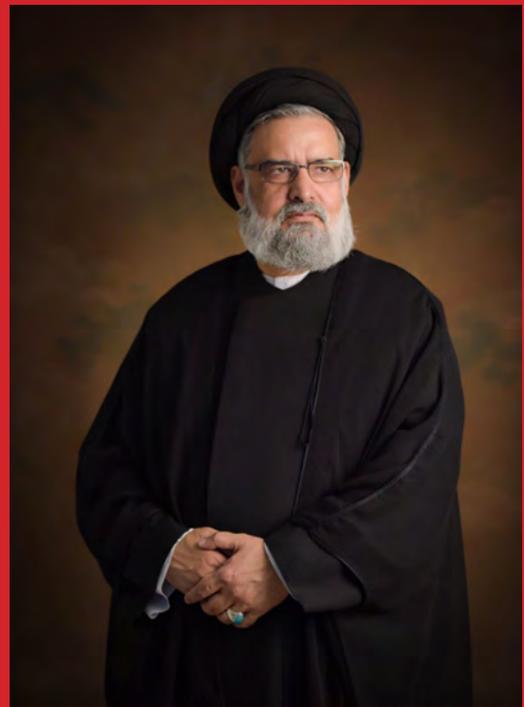


Imam Hussain (as) & Basic Human Dignity

In the desert of Karbala, Imam Hussain bin Ali (as) was given an ultimatum: to either pledge his allegiance to Yazid bin Muawiyah or lose his life. Imam Hussain (as) decisively chose an honourable death over a life of disgrace under the tyrant, Yazid. He said, 'By Allah, I will not give my hand [in allegiance] and surrender like a disgraced person nor will I surrender like the surrendering of a slave.'¹. At another point, he said, 'Verily, the bastard son of a bastard [Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad] has placed me between a rock and a hard place: between drawing the sword and disgrace, whilst disgrace is indeed, far from us.'²

Prior to the Battle of Karbala, Yazid's army blocked Imam Hussain's (as) caravan from all access to the nearby Alqama River. Finally, after three days of thirst, on the tenth of Muharram, 61 AH (10 October 680 CE), Imam Hussain (as), his family, and his followers (just over a 100 people) faced Yazid's army of at least 30,000 soldiers in a challenging day of battle. During the brutal and uneven conflict, Imam al-Husayn (as) and his followers opted to die courageously, rather than give in to Yazid's demand for allegiance. No male member from Imam Hussain's (as) friends or family in Karbala, except his son Imam Ali Zayn al-Abidin (as), was spared; even Imam Hussain's (as) six month old infant son was killed. This tragic day has since been known in Muslim history as the day of Ashura.

For the past fourteen centuries, Imam Hussain's (as) stand on the day of Ashura has served as an inspiration for people from various walks of life. One aspect of his movement was his call to uphold basic human values of justice, truth, and the freedom to make ethical choices. Through the nobility and moral integrity of his actions leading up to, and on the day of Ashura, Imam al-Husayn (as) underscored the importance of preserving one's own dignity and the dignity of one's enemies, even in a state of war.



Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi started his career in Islamic studies at the age of fifteen in the traditional Islamic seminary in Qum after studying Arabic and Farsi with his respected father and other scholars. He studied in Qum for ten years and attended the kharij lessons of Ayatullah Wahid Khurasani. Thereafter, he moved to Vancouver where he served the Shia community and completed a Masters degree in History at the Simon Fraser University. From 1991 until the current time he is based in Toronto where he serves as the resident scholar at the Ja'ffari Islamic Centre. He has written a number of articles and books which have been translated into a variety of languages.



By Allah, I will not give my hand [in allegiance] and surrender like a disgraced person nor will I surrender like the surrendering of a slave

In more recent times, unparalleled advances in science and technology, have enabled human beings to perpetuate crimes of indignity and injustice on an unprecedented scale. In spite of the establishment of the Geneva Convention that stipulates stringent conditions for the humane treatment of enemies and prisoners of war, individuals and societies continue to violate the principles of human dignity. Examples of widespread violation of basic rights to dignity, security, food, shelter, and personal freedom, are found all around the globe, perpetuated by people from varying economic, religious and ideological contexts and backgrounds. In times of war, respect for the life, security and dignity of civilian women and children, is often disregarded. During the conflicts of the past century, Christian Americans in Vietnam, Shinto Japanese in China, Buddhists in Burma, Taliban Muslims in Afghanistan, ISIS soldiers in Iraq and Syria, Christian Serbians in Yugoslavia, and the Hutus in Rwanda, all attacked the non-combatant women and children of their enemies. Women and children caught in the crossfire of conflict, have been looted, injured, killed, raped and made homeless refugees.

In the darkness of the amoral state of contemporary international affairs, the noble example of Imam al-Husayn (as) in battle, shines more brightly than ever before.

After his companions and the male members of his family had been killed, Imam Hussain (as) faced his enemy alone. The son of 'the Lion of God' was feared by Yazid's army and they refused to fight him in one-to-one combat. Eventually, Umar ibn Sad, the commander-in-chief of Yazid's army, said to his soldiers: 'Woe to you! Do you know whom you are fighting? This is the son of the one who killed the brave warriors of the Arabs. Attack him from all sides.' Hearing this command, a group of four thousand archers surrounded Imam Hussain (as).

As he was being pierced by arrows from all sides, Imam Hussain (as) noticed that a group of Yazid's soldiers were moving towards the tents of his women and children. Bleeding, wounded and whilst a barrage of arrows continued to strike him, Imam Hussain (as) turned to his enemies and sharply rebuked them. His eloquent appeal to moral conscience and integrity finds universal resonance today, across all cultural, geographic and religious divides:

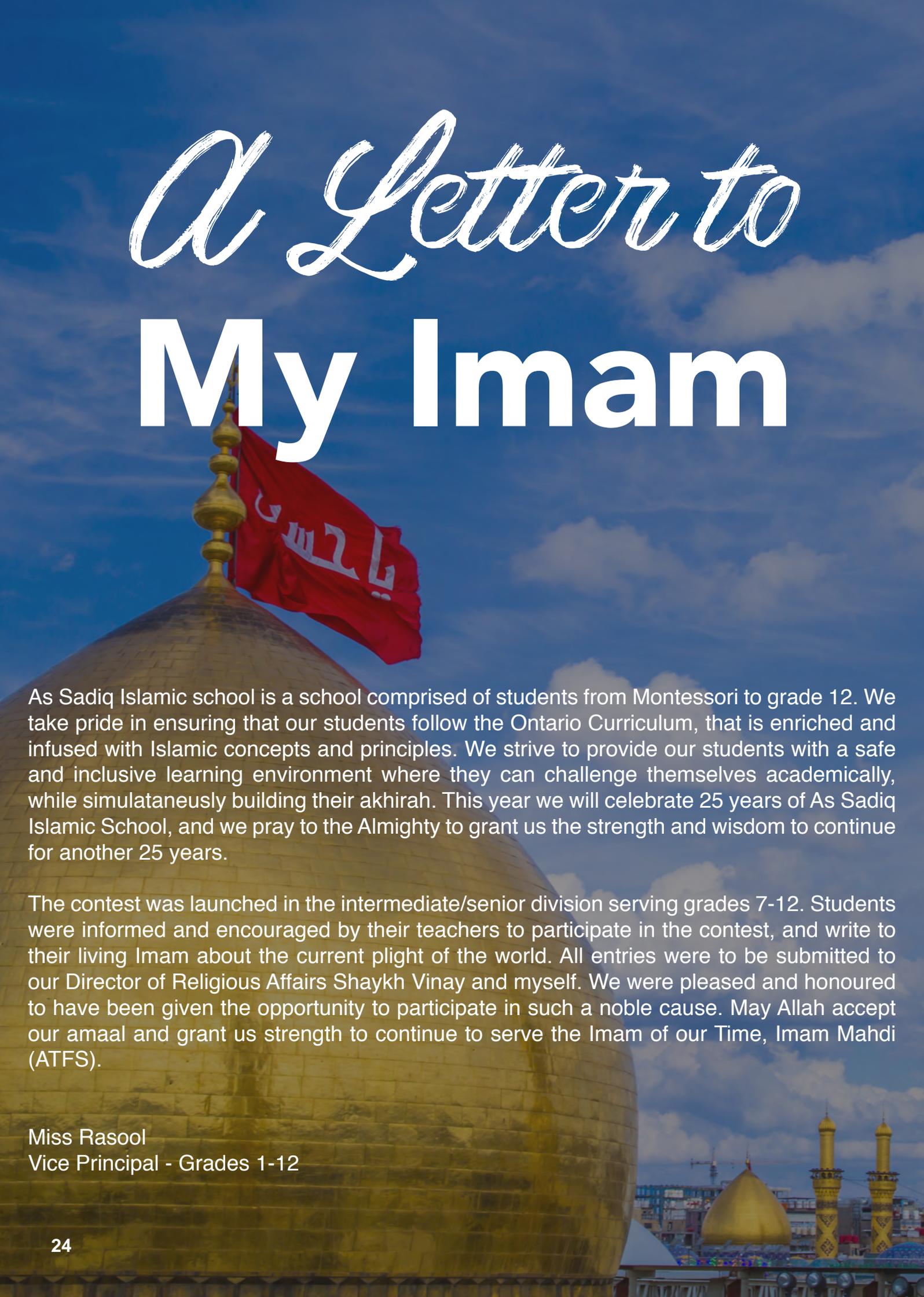
'O Followers of the family of Abu Sufyan! Woe to you! If you do not have a religion nor do you fear the Day of Judgement, then at least be free and honourable in your worldly matters! Preclude your lowly and ignorant soldiers from [attacking] my women and my family because they are not combatants.'

When Umar ibn Sad questioned, 'What do you mean, O son of Fatima?' Imam Hussain (as) replied, 'I am the one fighting you and you are fighting me, and the women have nothing to do with this. So, stop your people from targeting my family as long I am alive.'³

In his memorable speech above, Imam al-Husayn (as) called upon all people in a state of war and strife to act in accordance with their moral conscience. He advised that in the absence of a faith that motivates people to act honourably and justly, people should be guided by their innate compassion and humanity.

I wish that Imam Hussain's (as) wise statement, 'If you do not have a religion nor do you fear the Day of Judgement, then at the least be free and honourable in your worldly matters,' could be cast in stone and displayed in the main assembly hall of the United Nations Organization. It would serve as a profound point of reflection to guide humanity through the conflicts and complexities of all eras.



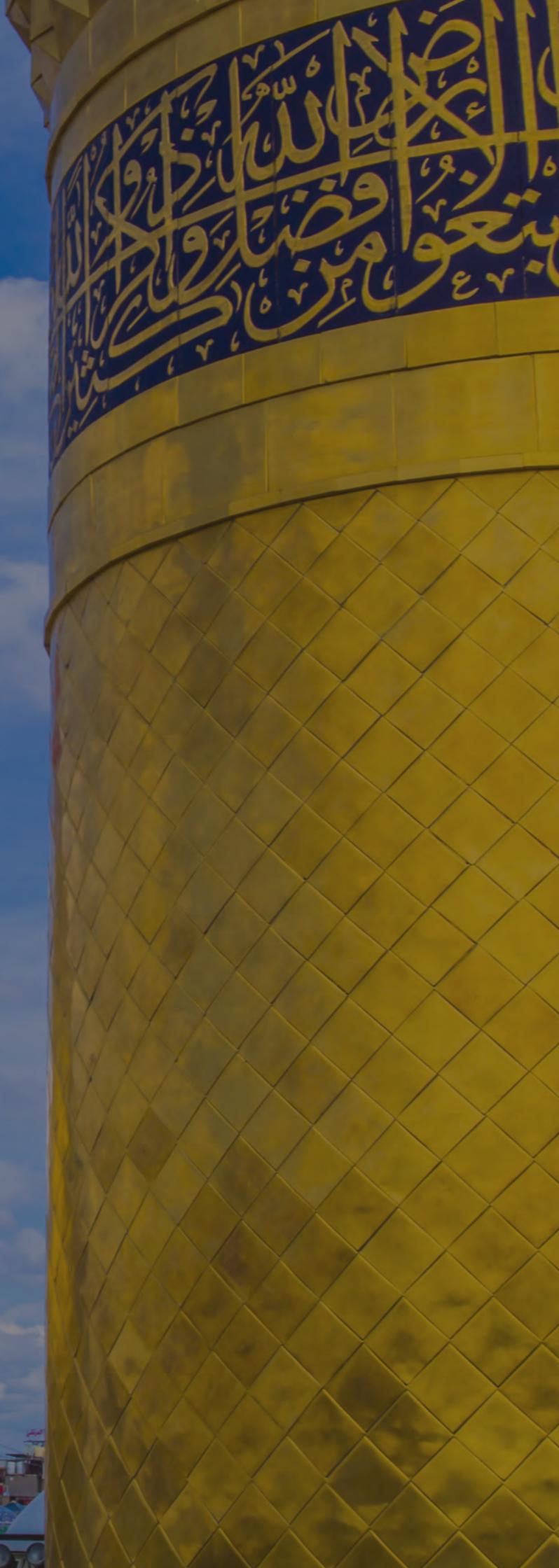


A Letter to **My Imam**

As Sadiq Islamic school is a school comprised of students from Montessori to grade 12. We take pride in ensuring that our students follow the Ontario Curriculum, that is enriched and infused with Islamic concepts and principles. We strive to provide our students with a safe and inclusive learning environment where they can challenge themselves academically, while simultaneously building their akhirah. This year we will celebrate 25 years of As Sadiq Islamic School, and we pray to the Almighty to grant us the strength and wisdom to continue for another 25 years.

The contest was launched in the intermediate/senior division serving grades 7-12. Students were informed and encouraged by their teachers to participate in the contest, and write to their living Imam about the current plight of the world. All entries were to be submitted to our Director of Religious Affairs Shaykh Vinay and myself. We were pleased and honoured to have been given the opportunity to participate in such a noble cause. May Allah accept our amaal and grant us strength to continue to serve the Imam of our Time, Imam Mahdi (ATFS).

Miss Rasool
Vice Principal - Grades 1-12



Peace be upon you O my Imam, may Allah bless you and the 14 Masumeen. I have waited for your reappearance, waiting for the bravest, the infallible, the truthful, and the greatest man who will bring justice to this world.

This letter is to ask for your help. Please help us, we the ummah have suffered for so long we need your help. As you know there are people in Yemen constantly dying, others in Iran facing problems, the Muslims were killed at Jumaah Salaat in New Zealand. We are all waiting for justice. Not only the Muslims but all of humanity needs you, we are waiting for a good leader and a government of truth.

We are ready for giving sacrifices, we are all trying to become better, but without your help we will not succeed. Your father said: Almighty Allah has not left the earth without a Divine Proof since the creation of Adam (a. s.) and would not leave it without a Divine Proof till the hour shall be established (Day of Judgment). This divine proof is you O Imam. Give safety to those who don't have it, and make the tests of those who love you easier. Make our communities not scared of practicing our religion openly, and without your help we will all face more problems.

O Allah I ask you to hasten the reappearance of the Qaim and have mercy upon us as you are the creator and the most generous.

May Allah bless Prophet Muhammad and his progeny.

Thank you
Raza Husain Mirza(8A)

Dear Imam Zamana,

For you to come would be a great pleasure, when you are not around there is so much pressure, to those who are being abused and accused because of their religion. Many people died in New Zealand while praying for you, they left their families and friends, when you come everyone's hearts will finally be cleansed. The long awaited peace will arrive as the fighting will cease, your presence is needed as those who are conceded will stop when they see your reappearance.

My Imam, our world is inhabited by people who turn against each other for what? Their religion, race, ethnicity, beliefs? What has our world come to, the same earth which you walked and preached on. Please walk this earth one last time, and preach our religion for others to hear. The mumineen in our world are dying, in New Zealand, in Quebec, It's like Quebec was the gas that is spread before a fire starts. The fire is New Zealand, a wildfire which will set off so many little flames that they will devour our world, and the earth will go up in smoke.

I don't know what to say, as words cannot express the longing which is burning in the throats of the Muslims who are waiting for you to appear. To soothe the smoked earth which we call home, All of us call to you in unison, shouting above the screams that bring us down, asking you to come and free us.

Love,
Your faithful servant, Sadaf Heidari

Dear Imam Mehdi(ajtf),

In our world today we are suffering. Suffering in many different ways. Our world today is corrupt, and trying to fix it does not seem to be our goal. We have been told that there will be millions of different sects and religions, and no one will be able to tell right from wrong. We have been told this, yet we tell ourselves that our world will never become this way, even though it has, because that is what our world is made up of right now. Our world is suffering physically and most importantly spiritually.

This is why I have reached out to you, because our world has flipped right from wrong, and you are the only one that can fix that. In this world there are many children and adults that are suffering and humanity should not be treated this way. We need you to show us what the path of sirat-ul-mustaqeem truly is and guide us towards that path, so we can prevent ourselves from doing such sinful acts. We need a guide, such as yourself, that is full of knowledge and wisdom and can lead us to the truth. If we want to become the true followers of Ali then we need your guidance and truth.

This letter has been written to show you, the Imam of our time how desperately we need your guidance and truth.

Sincerely your grateful follower,
Amna Ali

STEADFAST

When I trip going up the stairs of heaven... This Hussain rushes to take action
When I feel weak in my hearts' stability... This Hussain comes to set me free
When I feel lowly in the doing of my deeds... This Hussain fulfills my needs
When I have lost my sight of morals... This Hussain takes me to higher levels

Hussain stands heightened in the faces of tyrants
It doesn't matter if he is in Karbala or in the believers of today
More work can get done in his absence if we did more than pray
We must wake up to take action while conscious of Hussain's lessons

There is no forgetting the virtue Hussain gifted
He who is a Muhammad and revived morality just the same
He who is from the Prophet's blood and was still left beheaded
If I let him slip too far away from me, it's as if I let go of the Prophet

If I forget who Hussain is, aside from his standing up to oppression
I remember his diligence to his mother and the respect to his father
His defense of his sister, and the brotherhood of Hassan
Beyond this, his love for our Creator is rooted forever

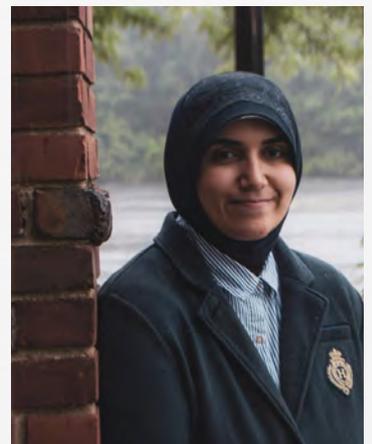
Hussain is ever-present
My prayers to him directed
My life to him, gifted
My deeds from him, blessed
My efforts are for him, my beloved

I won't let myself forget him when the oppressors of today try to hide
When they try to run away from the justice that will expose their insides
Hussain's beauty is resurrected in the quietest corners of this earth
Because not one being who fights in the way of our Lord and our faith
Is left without Hussain knowing their names.

O' Hussain

Open my heart to the call you've sent
To the call that fell on deaf ears
To the call I still don't know if I will later hear

Give me the strength to know our Mahdi
To hear him when he calls me
To support him when he needs me
To give him everything that is in my name



Written by:
FATIMA NAJDI

Q&A

This is where our contributors and editors answer your questions, so please keep sending them to alwarith@imamhussain-lib.com

Q Did Imam al-Sajjad (as) pay allegiance to Yazid?

A It is reported that after the event of al-Harrah, when Yazid's army ransacked Medina, Muslim bin Aqabah forced the people of Medina to pay allegiance by stating that they were slaves of Yazid. He ordered Imam al-Sajjad (as) to also give allegiance, but by claiming that Yazid was Imam al-Sajjad's (as) brother and relative. If we accept the authenticity of this report, it does not provide evidence that Imam al-Sajjad (as) paid allegiance to Yazid. It only details an attempt by Yazid to further subjugate the people of Medina. Furthermore, there is no doubt that even if allegiance was given, it was under duress and so the report should be considered in this light. Imam al-Sajjad's (as) compliance to Muslim bin Aqabah's order, would have served as an example that saved many people from slaughter after the event of al-Harrah.

Q Who was Dhu al-Qarnayn?

A Dhu al-Qarnayn was a righteous man whose kingdom and rule extended from the East to the West. According to some reports, he was the first king from amongst the prophets and his reign began sometime after the demise of Prophet Nuh (as). There are a range of views concerning his identity and why he was called Dhu al-Qarnayn. However, none of these views are definitive.

Q How does giving obligatory or recommended charity increase a person's wealth? It seems likely that giving charity will decrease a person's wealth.

A There are many ahadith that stress that giving charity increases a person's sustenance and wealth. The increase in wealth may not occur immediately after the charity is given. Moreover, the details of when and how an increase in wealth occurs may be elusive to the giver of charity and those around him.

A question for you to think about and discuss with your family and friends (an answer will be provided in the next issue):



**How does Islam
positively affect
humanity**



السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا شَرِيكَ الْقُرْآنِ

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْأَنْسِ وَالْجَانِّ

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا شَرِيكَ الْقُرْآنِ



السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا صَاحِبَ الْبَرَكَاتِ
السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا قَاطِعَ الْبُرْهَانِ



THE BATOOL (AS) FOUNDATION
مؤسسة البتول عليها السلام

*Please send contributions for all future issues, comments and questions to:
alwarith@imamhussain-lib.com*