

What can we do to win the contentment of the Imam of the Time (AS)?

The Group of Mahdavidism

The inquirer: Ali Falahati

Response:

My dear friend, if you want to win the gratification of the Imam of the Time (May God Hasten His Appearance) and subsequently win God's satisfaction, the best thing you can do is what follows in a nutshell.

Do whatsoever God has commanded you and forbid whatsoever He has prohibited you from.

However, there are other responsibilities that Shias ought to shoulder during the Concealment of the Imam of the Time (AS). We try to discuss some of them in brief through a number of narratives.

1. Recognition of Imam and Imamah

A. Need for recognition of Imam

عَنْ الْفَضِيلِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) يَقُولُ : مَنْ مَاتَ وَ لَيْسَ لَهُ إِمَامٌ فَمَوْتُهُ مِيتَةٌ جَاهِلِيَّةٌ
وَلَا يُعْذَرُ النَّاسُ حَتَّى يَعْرِفُوا إِمَامَهُمْ وَ مَنْ مَاتَ وَ هُوَ عَارِفٌ لِإِمَامِهِ لَا يَضُرُّهُ تَقَدُّمُ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ أَوْ
تَأَخُّرُهُ وَ مَنْ مَاتَ عَارِفًا لِإِمَامِهِ كَانَ كَمَنْ هُوَ مَعَ الْقَائِمِ فِي فَسْطَاطِهِ

Al-Mahasin, 155 'Anhu al-Bahar, vol. 23, p. 77, H. 6.

Fudeil said that he heard Hazrat Abu Ja'far (AS) stating, "Whoever dies without recognizing his Imam of the time dies the death of the time of ignorance. No excuse will be accepted from anyone for his failure to recognize the Imam. He who dies with recognizing his Imam, he will be

immune from any harm either he dies before the Imam's appearance or after it. If one dies while he has recognized his Imam, he dies like the one who was together with Qaim (May God Hasten His Appearance) in his tent.

عَنْ سَلْمَةَ بْنِ عَطَا عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع قَالَ خَرَجَ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ ع عَلَى أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ذَكَرَهُ مَا خَلَقَ الْعِبَادَ إِلَّا لِيَعْرِفُوهُ فَإِذَا عَرَفُوهُ عَبَدُوهُ فَإِذَا عَبَدُوهُ اسْتَعْنَوْا بِعِبَادَتِهِ عَنْ عِبَادَةِ مَا سِوَاهُ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَ أُمِّي فَمَا مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَ عَرَفَةُ أَهْلِ كُلِّ زَمَانٍ إِمَامَهُمُ الَّذِي يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِمْ طَاعَتَهُ

‘Ilal al-Sharayi’, p. 9, ‘Anhu al-Bahar, vol. 5, p. 312, H. 1

Silmat Ibn ‘Ata has quoted Hazrat Sadiq (AS) as stating, “Hazrat Imam Hussein (AS) told his companions, ‘O my companions! God has created mankind to get to know Him. When they recognized Him, they would worship Him. When they got to worship Him, they would then give up worshipping others.’ A man asked him, ‘O son of the Holy Prophet! May my parents be sacrificed for you! What is the meaning of the recognition of God?’ The Hazrat replied, ‘It is in fact tantamount to the recognition of ones’ Imam of the time.’

Right after the narrative, late Sheikh Saduq (God Bless Him) has said,

يعني بذلك أن يعلم أهل كل زمان زمان أن الله هو الذي لا يخليهم في كل زمان من إمام معصوم فمن عبد ربا لم يقم لهم الحجة فإتما عبد غير الله عز و جل

‘Ilal al-Sharayi’, p. 9.

People of any time should be aware that God has not left them alone on their own on the earth empty of an infallible Imam. The one who worships a God, who has failed to appoint a Hujjat for people, has not indeed worshiped a real God. He has, as a matter of fact, worshipped someone else.

And here is the way late ‘Allame Majlisi has explained the narrative.

لعله (عليه السلام) إنما فسر معرفة الله بمعرفة الإمام لبيان أن معرفة الله لا يحصل إلا من جهة الإمام أو لاشتراط الانتفاع بمعرفته تعالى بمعرفته عليه السلام و لما ذكره الصدوق رحمه الله أيضا وجه

The Imam (AS) who considered the recognition of God tantamount to the recognition of Imam might have meant that the recognition of God is only possible through the recognition of the Imam of the time as a prerequisite. If one recognizes God without recognizing his Imam of the time, his former recognition is useless and worthless per se. And what Saduq has said in its explanation needs to be taken into account.

Al-Bihar, vol. 23, p. 83

B. Imam, the manifestation of God's Asma al-Husna (most beautiful names)

Late Sheikh Koleini (God Bless Him) has cited the following narrative in his Kafi.

عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عليه السلام) فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ- « وَ لِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا » قَالَ نَحْنُ وَ اللَّهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى الَّتِي لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ عَمَلًا إِلَّا بِمَعْرِفَتِنَا
Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 143.

With regard to God Almighty's remark that 'God possesses beautiful names so call upon Him with those names,' the Hazrat stated, "I swear by God that we are God's most beautiful names. He will not accept any deed from any of His servants unless they recognize us."

فقال علي عليه السلام: «... فلما يدخل الجنة إلّا من عرفنا و عرفناه»

No one will see the light of the Heaven except the one who recognizes us and we recognize him as well.

C. Imam's scientific mastery over all universal affairs:

فَأَنَا يُحِيطُ عَلِمْنَا بِأَبْنَائِكُمْ وَ لَا يَعْرُبُ عَنَّا شَيْءٌ مِنْ أَخْبَارِكُمْ

Bihar, vol. 53, p. 175

We are well aware of all your affairs. Nothing is hidden from our sights.

Late Koleini (God Bless Him) has quoted another narrative from Imam Sadiq (AS) as stating,

إِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي النَّارِ وَ أَعْلَمُ مَا كَانَ
وَ مَا يَكُونُ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَكَثَ هُنَيْئَةً فَرَأَى أَنَّ ذَلِكَ كَبُرَ عَلَى مَنْ سَمِعَهُ مِنْهُ فَقَالَ عَلِمْتُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ يَقُولُ فِيهِ تَبْيَانُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 261.

“Truly, I am aware of whatever exists in the skies and on the earth. I know what is going on in the Hell and the Heaven. I am well aware of what existed before and whatever does exist now.” The Hazrat hesitated for a moment and when he found out that his remarks looked incredible for the audience, he added, ‘What I said was all taken from God Almighty’s holy book. God Almighty has stated that it clarifies all things.

2. Waiting for Imam’s reappearance

The second duty that Shias should carry out during the Concealment period is waiting for reappearance. Imam Sajjad (AS) has told Abu Khalid Kabuli,

يَا أَبَا خَالِدٍ إِنَّ أَهْلَ زَمَانٍ غَيَّبْتَهُ الْقَائِلُونَ بِإِمَامَتِهِ الْمُتَنظِّرُونَ لِظُهُورِهِ أَفْضَلُ أَهْلِ كَلِّ زَمَانٍ لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ
تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ أَعْطَاهُمْ مِنَ الْعُقُولِ وَ النِّفَاهِمِ وَ الْمَعْرِفَةِ مَا صَارَتْ بِهِ الْعَيْبَةُ عِنْدَهُمْ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْمَشَاهِدَةِ وَ
جَعَلَهُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص بِالسَّيْفِ أَوْلِيكَ الْمُخْلِصُونَ حَقًّا وَ
شَيَعَتُنَا صِدْقًا وَ الدُّعَاةُ إِلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ سِرًّا وَ جَهْرًا وَ قَالَ (عليه السلام) ائْتِنَارُ الْفَرَجِ مِنْ أَعْظَمِ الْفَرَجِ

Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 52, p. 122.

“O Abu Khalid! The people of his time who believe in his Imamate and leadership keep waiting for his reappearance. They are the best of people of all times because God has granted them some kind of especial wisdom and

understanding that concealment is similar to observation. Before God, these people are the same as those who used to fight alongside with the Holy Prophet (PBUH) with their swords against his enemies. They are our true devotees because they encourage people towards God’s religion overtly and covertly.” Then the Hazrat went on saying that waiting for appearance was the best kind of faraj (relief).

3. Praying for Hazrat

The Imam of the Time (May God Hasten His Appearance) has stated himself at the end of his well-known letter,

وَ أَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ بِتَعْجِيلِ الْفَرَجِ

Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 52, p. 92, H. 7

Pray a lot to God to hasten my appearance.

In his Kamal al-Din, late Sheikh Saduq has quoted Ahmad Ibn Ishaq, quoting Imam Hassan ‘Askari (AS) as stating,

وَاللَّهِ لَيَغِيبَنَّ غَيْبَةً لَا يَنْجُو فِيهَا مِنَ التَّهْلُكَةِ إِلَّا مَنْ يُثَبِّتُهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْقَوْلِ بِإِمَامَتِهِ وَوَقَّعَهُ لِلدُّعَاءِ بِتَعْجِيلِ فَرَجِهِ .

Kamal al-Din, p. 384 and Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 52, p. 25, H. 16.

I swear by God he (Hazrat Qaim (AS)) will conceal from sights in a way that no one will be able to flee from misguidance except the one who has been steadfast in his faith in his Imam of the time and also the one who has been highly successful in praying God to hasten his reappearance.

4. Grief and sense of loneliness in the occultation of the Hazrat

عَنْ سَدِيرِ الصَّيْرَفِيِّ قَالَ دَخَلْتُ أَنَا وَ الْمُقَضَّلُ بْنُ عُمَرَ وَ أَبُو بَصِيرٍ وَ أَبَانُ بْنُ تَغْلِبَ عَلَى مَوْلَانَا أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ جَعْفَرَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَ فَرَأَيْنَاهُ جَالِسًا عَلَى الشَّرَابِ وَ عَلَيْهِ مِسْحٌ خَيْبَرِيٌّ مُطَوَّقٌ بِلِ احْتِجَابٍ مُقَصَّرٍ الْكُمَيْنِ- وَ هُوَ يَبْكِي بُكَاءَ الْوَالِدِ التَّكْلِي ذَاتَ الْكَبِدِ الْحَرَّى قَدْ نَالَ الْحُزْنَ مِنْ وَجَنَّتِيهِ وَ شَاعَ النَّعِيرُ فِي

عَارِضِيهِ وَ أَبْلَى الدُّمُوعُ مَحْجَرِيهِ وَ هُوَ يَقُولُ سَيِّدِي غَيْبُكَ نَفَتْ رُقَادِي وَ ضَيَّقَتْ عَلَيَّ مَهَادِي وَ
 أَسْرَتْ مِنِّي رَاحَةَ فُؤَادِي سَيِّدِي غَيْبُكَ أَوْصَلَتْ مُصَابِي بِفَجَائِعِ الأَبَدِ وَ فَقَدْتُ الوَاحِدَ بَعْدَ الأِ وَ أَحَدِ يُفْنِي
 الجَمْعَ وَ العَدَدَ فَمَا أَحْسُ بِدَمْعَةٍ تَرْفِي مِنْ عَيْنِي وَ أَنِينٍ يَفْتُرُ مِنْ صَدْرِي عَن دَوَارِجِ الرَّرَايَا وَ
 سَوَالِفِ البَلَايَا إِيَّا مُثْلَ لِعَيْنِي عَن عَوَائِرِ أَعْظَمِهَا وَ أَفْظَعِهَا وَ تَرَاقِي أَشَدَّهَا وَ أَنْكَرَهُ ا وَ نَوَائِبَ
 مَخْلُوطَةٍ بِغَضَبِكَ وَ نَوَازِلَ مَعْجُونَةٍ بِسَخَطِكَ

Kamal al-Din, p. 352 and Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 51, p. 219, H. 9

Sadir Sayrafi said, “Mufaddal Ibn ‘Umar, Abu Basir, Aban Ibn Taghalib and I went to meet Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS). We saw him sitting on bare earth. He was wearing a woolen cloak with no collar and with short sleeves. He was weeping like a deeply afflicted and bereaved mother of a child from the depths of a heart that was full of mourning. Grief had appeared in the sides of his face and the change had spread on to both of his cheeks and tears were rolling on the sides of his visage, as he was saying:

“My master, your occultation has taken away my night’s sleep; it has narrowed my bed for me and has snatched away the solace from my heart.

My master, your occultation has turned my tragedies into the atrocities of eternity! The loss of one after the other perishes a crowd and a multitude. No more I feel the tear that drops from my eye and the moan that faintly leaves my chest from the places of tragedies and past calamities except that it exemplifies before my eye the greatest and cruelest of catastrophes, the most dismal and disdainful mishaps, mixed with your wrath and calamities coupled with your anger.”

Now, with Imam Sadiq (AS) shedding tear and mourning in the occultation of Hazrat Mahdi (May God Hasten His Appearance) in this way, it is

crystal-clear what our duty will be.

5. Paying allegiance

As part of the ‘Ahd Prayer quoted from Imam Sadiq (AS), the following is what we recite.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَجَدُّ لَكَ فِي صَبِيحَةِ يَوْمِي هَذَا وَمَا عَشْتُ مِنْ أَيَّامِي عَهْدًا وَبَيْعَةً لَكَ فِي عُنُقِي لَأَ أَحُولُ عَنْهَا وَلَا أَزُولُ أَبَدًا

Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 53, p. 96

O God! I renew my pledge of allegiance to my Imam at this dawn and all other dawns to come as long as I am alive. I keep my pledge of allegiance and never neglect it. I try to keep it in my mind all the time.

6. Observing piety

The most important duty on Shias’ shoulders is to observe piety. It is in fact lack of piety on the part of Shias that has constantly put off the Hazrat’s appearance for many years.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَشْيَاعَنَا وَفَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ لَطَاعَتِهِ عَلَى اجْتِمَاعِ مِنَ الْقُلُوبِ فِي الْوَفَاءِ بِالْعَهْدِ عَلَيْهِمْ لَمَّا تَأَخَّرَ عَنْهُمْ
الْيَمْنُ بِإِقَانِنَا وَتَعَجَّلَتْ لَهُمُ السَّعَادَةُ بِمُشَاهَدَتِنَا عَلَى حَقِّ الْمَعْرِفَةِ وَصِدْقِهَا مِنْهُمْ بِنَا فَمَا يَحْسِبُنَا
عَنْهُمْ إِلَّا مَا يَتَّصِلُ بِنَا مِمَّا نَكْرَهُهُ وَلَا نُؤْتِرُهُ مِنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ وَهُوَ حَسْبُنَا وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 53, p. 177 and al-Ihtijaj, vol. 2, p. 499.

If our devotees' (may Allah give them success in obeying Him) hearts are

gathered on meeting their obligation, their good fortune of meeting us would not have been delayed, and their joy of seeing us would have been expedited. And all of them are possible only with the complete recognition of us and being truthful before us. Therefore, nothing can keep us away from them unless the news coming from them to us. They sadden us. We do not expect them. Only God should be asked for help. His support is quite enough.

May God grant us the honor of meeting the Hazrat, Insha Allah (God willing)!

Good Luck

The Group Responsible for Answers to Doubts

Hazrat Wali Asr (AS) Research Institute

