

GIVING UP WORLD

[Tark-e-Dunya]



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*Tark-e-Dunya, the most misunderstood concept
and readily compared or confused with
'Ruhbaniyat', is defined and explained
contrastingly clear and showing its undeniability
as farz from fountain head, Quran and Sunnah*

GIVING UP WORLD

[*Tark-e-Dunya*]

Understanding the Mahdavi concept of Giving up World [*tark-e-Dunya*] is very essential. Ordinarily, people translate *Tark-e-dunya* as *rahbaniat* [monkery or monkhood] that is common among the Christians and Jews. Hence, at the first sight, people are prone to think that the Mahdavi *Tark-e-dunya* too is monkhood. But this translation is wrong and repugnant to the tenets of Islam. In Islam, monkhood has been forbidden and *Tark-e-dunya* has been commended and commanded.

The word *dunya* [world] is used in comparison with *aakhirat* [Hereafter], or *deen* [religion]. In Quran too, examples of similar use of the word are available. Allah says, “*These are they whose works shall come to nought¹ in this world, and in the next, there shall be none to help them.*”² Again Allah says, “*Who had made of their religion but a sport and a pastime and enticed themselves in the life of the world.*”³ In the first Verse [above], the word, ‘*dunya*’ is used in comparison with the *aakhirat* [Hereafter] and in the second Verse it has come in comparison with *deen* [religion]. When the term, *dunya-o-aakhirat*, is used *dunya* means the time before the death and when the expression, *din-o-dunya* is used, *dunya* means all those affairs which are not related to *deen* or religion. In effect, all matters interdicted by religion are called *dunya*. From the point of view of this meaning, *tark-e-dunya* means giving up all those things the religion has interdicted. And that is sheer religion and sheer Islam.

In most of the Quranic Verses and the Traditions of Prophet^{SLM}, *dunya* has been clearly condemned, people have been instructed to escape it and the punishment for violating these instructions has been prescribed as Hell. Hence, it becomes necessary for all Muslims and *mumins* to avoid what has been so severely interdicted by Allah and His Prophet^{SLM}. Not only this, the term, *tark-e-dunya*, has been used and it has been eulogized. We quote some Traditions, as examples, below:

[a] “Leave the world to the people of the world.”

[b] “Giving up world is more bitter than aloe [*elwa*]⁴ and it is more difficult than wielding a sword. Only the person whom Allah gives the guidance [*taufiq*] can give up the world, as He gives the courage to the martyrs.”

¹ ‘Nought’ is UK English; in US English the word is spelt as ‘naught’. Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary [OALD], New Delhi, 11th impression 2002 AD.

² Quran, S. 3: 22 SAL.

³ Quran, S. 7: 52 SAL.

⁴ A very bitter powder of the stem of a tropical plant used in medicines.

[c] “Paradise is for him, before whom both *dunya* and *aakhirat* are presented and who accepts the *aakhirat* and gives up the world. And Hell is for him, who gave up the *aakhirat* and accepted the world.”⁵

This shows that *tark-e-dunya* has a very high position in Islam. Some people translate *rahbaniat* [monk-hood] as *tark-e-dunya* because of their ignorance; there is no monk-hood in Islam. The apparent difference between *rahbaniat* and *tark-e-dunya* is that in *rahbaniat* [monk-hood] the natural powers are suspended or rendered useless or senseless like castration, et cetera. Contrary to this, using the natural powers in a legitimate manner, giving priority to religion and *aakhirat*, engaging in worship and service to the religion are not called monk-hood in Islamic terminology. It is called *zuhd* [abstinence]. Imam Ghazali^{RA} defines *zuhd* as “to incline towards the Hereafter and to abandon the world or turning towards Allah Most High after deserting the world; this is a very high degree of *zuhd*.”⁶

Many virtues of *zuhd* have been explained in the Traditions. “When Allah wants the good of any of his servants, He guides him to *zuhd-fid-dunya* [abstention from the world] and a strong inclination towards *aakhirat*.”⁷ “An abstinent believer [*mumin-e-zahid*] is superior to everybody.”⁸

This shows that abstinence from the world is sheer Islam and this is a high rank of the *mumin*. The saints and the righteous have remained in the same rank. And the people of knowledge [*ahl-e-ilm*] will admit that abstinence from the world and giving up the world [*zuhd-fid-dunya* and *tark-e-dunya*] are one and the same. Hence, it is not correct to say that *tark-e-dunya* is monk-hood or [something] against Islam.

Hence, the Sufi researchers have treated *tark-e-dunya* and *zuhd-fid-dunya* as obligatory [*farz*] and compulsory. All the details about this are available in the books of their writings and biography. And that is why the *tark-e-dunya* and its connotations are very popular among the eminent scholars of the manifest knowledge. But they have treated it as desirable [*mustahab*]. We have already explained the genuine reasons for this that the imams and the religious directors were busy in their efforts of explaining the issues of worship and other affairs and they did not do any hair-splitting in the matters of Divine Love and its concomitants, even though, according to their accepted principles, it is obligatory to give up all those things and deeds, the retribution for which has been decreed as Hell. Quran has clearly stated, “*To those who choose the life of the present with all its false glamour, Our way is to deal out in full measure in this very world what they deserve for their deeds, and they shall not in the least be deprived of what they merited. These are they for whom in the next world they shall have nothing but Fire. All that they had willfully wrought in this world shall come to naught, and all that they had done shall go to waste.*”⁹ The word, *man-kana* [those who], in the Arabic text of this Verse is common to all those desirous of the world, whether believers or non-believers. Other Quranic Verses say, “*So, for them who have been inordinate [in their living], And preferred the life of this world [to the life of the Hereafter], For them surely there is Hell*

⁵ All the three Traditions have been quoted from the book *Kanz-al-Amal*.

⁶ *Ahya-al-Ulum*, by Imam Ghazali^{RA}.

⁷ *Ahya-al-Ulum*, by Imam Ghazali^{RA}.

⁸ *Ibid*.

⁹ Quran, S.11: 15 & 16 SAL.

--- that shall be their final abode. But for those who have shown deference to the majestic position of their Lord and have refrained themselves from lust [in every form], [For such] there is Paradise --- that shall be their final abode.”¹⁰ There are many more Quranic Verses in condemnation of the world. The Verses quoted above show that the retribution of Hell is clearly prescribed [for the worldly people]. Hence, its giving up is farz [obligatory].

The common claim of Hazrat Imam^{AS} is about the Vision of Allah. The purpose of his advent is to make the people attain the proximity to Allah and spiritual excellences. Hence, Allah has given us the knowledge of the obligation of this giving up [the world]. And to prove it there are the Quranic Verses too. The giving up of the world and trusting in Allah have their own peculiarities. It is very necessary to understand them and keep them in mind while arguing and explaining them. The critics of the principles of the Mahdavi community go astray because of this mistake, because the giving up of the world is related to giving up of the life of the world and its effects and chattels. And Trust in Allah is related to the causes of efforts to earn. This will be explained while discussing Trust in Allah [Tawakkul].

Imam Mahdi^{AS} has explained *Hayat-e-dunya* and *Mata'-e-Hayat-e-dunya* in the following terms: “The existence of the life of the world is *kufr* [infidelity]. That is, living with life, which is called life [*hasti* or existence] and self [*khudi*] and those items, which have been described in the Quran ‘as the life of the world’. The person who is the lover and *murid* [slave] of the love of women and children, wealth [*amwal*], cattle, commerce, cultivation, buildings, dresses, eatables and other things, is *kufr*.”¹¹

Imam Mahdi^{AS} has explained that *Hayat-e-dunya* was existence and self and *Mata-e-hayat-e-dunya* was the love for wealth, women and children. First we will discuss what is *Mata-e-hayat-e-dunya*, and then the discussion on *Hayat-e-dunya* will follow.

Allah says, “Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: women and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded [for blood and excellence]; and [wealth of] cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world’s life; but nearness to Allah is the best of the goals [to return to].”¹²

This Quranic Verse gives a clear explanation of the *Mata'-e-hayat-e-dunya*,¹³ and Imam Mahdi^{AS} too has commanded the giving up of the love for it. Being so engaged in the love of the *Mata'-e-hayat-e-dunya* to an extent where one neglects Allah is not lawful. And this is in complete conformity with the commandment of Quran where Allah has said, “O ye who believe! Let not your riches and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own.”¹⁴ This shows that Allah prohibits neglecting Him and engaging in the wealth, women, children and the belongings [*mata'*] of the world, while possessing women and sons is not prohibited.

¹⁰ Quran, S. 79: 37-41 SAL.

¹¹ *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid^{RZ}*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed Syed Mahmud^{RA} Tashrifullahi, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, pages 41-42; *Insaaf Nama*, by Hazrat Vali Bin Yusuf^{RZ}, Persian-Urdu, Hyderabad, 1407 AH/1987 AD, Chapter 5, page 52; *Insaaf Nama*, English translation, Bangalore, 2001 AD, page 47.

¹² Quran, S.3: 14 AYA.

¹³ *Mata'-e-hayat-e-dunya* means the necessities of the life of the world like chattel, possessions, properties, goods, wares, commodities, merchandise, furniture, implements, utensils, baggage, etc.

¹⁴ Quran, S.63: 9 AYA.

A companion told Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, “My wife and children trouble me. I will separate them if you permit me.” The Imam^{AS} told him, “Take them to the Paradise with their hands in yours. Do not separate them. Allah Most High will give you great rewards. Be patient with them. This is great work.”¹⁵ It is for this reason that one cannot infer monk-hood from the teachings of Imam Mahdi^{AS} as these are in consonance with the Verses of the Quran, because in monk-hood there is an interdiction on natural desires like marriage, et cetera. The purpose of the [Mahdavi] teachings is to limit the natural and intentional desires in the way of Allah [*fii sabii-lillaahi*], as Allah has said, “[Give in charity] to the poor that are engaged in the cause of Allah [or in social and moral uplift of their people] and are hindered thereby from going about the world [to earn their living]. He who knoweth them not, taketh them for well-to-do folk because of their bearing of self-respect; thou wouldst know by their visage; they ask not of men with importunity;”¹⁶ This Verse is in favour of the *As-hab-as-Suffah*. Some people say that these *as-hab* were sick and handicapped. It is possible that some of them might have been sick or handicapped but the whole group of these people was not so afflicted, because one of their specialties described is that they used to participate in *jihad*, which Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} used to send them to.¹⁷ Had they been handicapped they would not have been able to participate in the *sarya* or *jihad*. The term, ‘*uhsiru fii sabii-lillahi*, means that they used to make their powers, intentions and deeds subservient to the commandments of Allah Most High, and the term, *laa yas-tatii-uunna...* means that this group did not indulge in earning, commerce and other economic activities. And the term, *zarban-fil-‘arz*, means moving about and earning [a livelihood]. Imam Razi^{RA} writes, “They abstained from earning and commerce because of their preoccupation with the good of religion and *jihad*.” And at another place, he writes, “All of them were so devotedly busy in obedience to and worship of Allah, that they did not engage in any activities of earning and commerce and confined themselves to His obedience alone.”

This shows that for the propagation of the religion and meeting the Desired [Divine Beloved], one had necessarily to give up the love of the goods and valuables of the world. This is the reason why no one can produce any evidence of the Prophet^{SLM} engaging in earning and commerce for a long time after he staked his claim to Prophethood and apostleship. He had devoted himself for the service of the religion, worship and devotional exercises. He was engaged in this service day in and day out. There are a number of incidents of the starvation in the household of the Prophet^{SLM} reported in the books of his Traditions and biographies. Had he wished, what are the facilities and comforts he could not have obtained? This too shows that this starvation was voluntary; it was not because of distress. The *As-hab-as-suffah* and the respected saints too followed this way.

This, however, does not mean that the believer [*mumin*] never had the permission to earn or that earning was illegal. The *mumin* is permitted to pursue legitimate earnings according to the Quranic Verses and Traditions. Imam Mahdi^{AS} too has not decreed earning as absolutely prohibited without reference to the stages of legitimacy. Please note Parable 18. It says: “The *ulama* asked, ‘You say *kasab* [earning] is taboo [*haram*].’ The

¹⁵ *Naqliyat Miyan Syed Alam^{RA}*, Hyderabad, 1376 AH, page 11.

¹⁶ Quran, S. 2: 273 SAL.

¹⁷ *Tafsir-e-Kabir; Kashshaaf; Mua’lim; et cetera.*

Imam^{AS} said, ‘Earning is permitted to a *mumin* [believer]. One should become a *mumin*. Think over Quran [and find out] who is called a *mumin*.’¹⁸

This is the reason why there are two groups, *fugara* [indigents] and *kasibin* [earners], among the Mahdavis from the advent of Imam Mahdi^{AS} till now. But there are differences between the [various] ranks of *suluk* [usage or treatment in Sufi orders]. As the Love for Allah increases, the love for the world decreases. So much so that the seekers’ performance of the Obligations of Sainthood becomes perfect and they enter the group of the *fugara* because the Obligations of Sainthood are compulsory for all.

In short, one of the specialties of the *As-hab-as-Suffah* as described in the above-mentioned Quranic Verse is that they could not indulge in earning and commerce. The term, “*Yahsabuhumul-jaahilu ‘agniayaaa-‘a minat-ta-‘affuf*”, means that they bore the attribute of contentment [*istighna*]. The ignorant people thought them to be well-to-do folk. The word, ‘*ta-‘affuf*’, means avoiding asking. And their peculiarity is that they do not exhibit their indigence and needs to ask for help from anybody other than Allah.

Iqbal says: “*Do not be self-respecting; indigence is the wrath of Allah. It is the beginning of the riches, if you are a man of Honour.*” The *Khulafa-e-Rashidah* [pious caliphs] were posted as the Emir al-Muminin [Commander of the Faithful]. But see the condition of their riches.

In short, Imam Mahdi^{AS} too has decreed asking as prohibited [*haram*], which is the specialty of the *fugara*. This is in perfect consonance with the Quranic term, ‘*ta-‘affuf*’. The Imam^{AS} said, “Whatever you desire, desire it from Allah.” Extending the palm of *sawal* [asking] is too obvious! The indigents of the Imam^{AS} did not give an inkling of their need by their condition. They were overcautious. Explicit examples of this situation are there in the parables relating to *Tawakkul* and orders pertaining to the *daira*. These are the examples of the voluntary indigence. But in a condition of distress [*iztirar*] too, when *haram* [prohibited] is allowed as *halal* [permitted], the Imam^{AS} tried to awaken the conscience of the *fugara* to keep within the limits of emulation and obedience of the injunctions in the way of Allah [*fii sabii-lillahi*]. Here, some effort to earn was allowed.

Iqbal says, “*That indigent man is superior to [emperors like] Dara and Sikandar; his indigence smells of Asad-Allah [the Lion of Allah].*”¹⁹

Somebody is narrated to have asked Imam Mahdi^{AS}, “What should a *faqir* do if he could not trust in Allah Most High [*Tawakkul*] and is about to die?” The Imam^{AS} said,²⁰ “He should go and earn a *cheetal* or two and eat [from the proceeds].... Again the

¹⁸ *Naqliat Miyan Abdur Rashid^{RZ}*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed^{RA}, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, page 11.

¹⁹ *Asad-Allah* is the Title of Hazrat Ali^{RZ}, the fourth Caliph of Islam and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. He is the leader of the Saints of Islam.

²⁰ *Insaf Nama*, by Harat Vali bin Yusuf^{RZ}, Urdu translation, Hyderabad, 1407 AH/1987 AD, Chapter 5, page 57; English translation, Bangalore, 2001 AD, Chapter. 5, page 50. The text of the parable [in translation] is as follows: It is narrated that Imam Mahdi^{AS} was asked what one should do if one could not endure hunger. He said one should work and earn a wage of a couple of *cheetals* [a local coin] and eat. Later, he said it would be much better if he asks for food from his companions in the *daira*. For, if one earns the wages of a *cheetal* one day, one would be tempted to earn two *cheetals* the next day.

Imam^{AS} said, “If one works and earns one *cheetal* one day, he would like to earn two *cheetal* the next day. He should be cautious. He should not be greedy. He should not demand [desire] for more. Then, Allah Most High says, “*But if one is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, --- then is he guiltless, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*”²¹ Further details will follow in the explanations on *Tawakkul* [Trust in Allah].

The Arabic term, ‘*Ta’-rifuhum-bi-siimaa-hum*’, in the Quranic Verse,²² means “you will recognize them by the luminous [*nurani*] marks on their foreheads. They do not belong to the group of those who beg importunately of all and sundry.”²³ The term, *laa yas-’aluu-nannaasa ‘il-haafaa’* means they do not ask with importunity.²⁴ The manifest signs are the same that they emulate [*taqlid*] in their following of the Commandments of Allah Most High, and the Seals [Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and Imam Mahdi^{AS}] in their worship, religious exercises, rectitude and guidance, style of living, dress and behaviour. In fact, the important specialty of a *faqir* is that the Luminosity of Certainty is manifest in him. And recognizing any *faqir* from that situation [*haisiat*] is not easy for everybody. It is for this reason that Imam Muhiyuddin ibn Arabi^{RA} has said in the exegesis of this Quranic Verse, “All those knowledgeable people [*arifin*] are the *fuqara* or the people of Allah. Allah alone knows them. And he, who is one of them, too can recognize them.”

Here, this point too is worth keeping in mind that Allah has said, “*But Allah is free of all wants, and it is ye that are needy.*”²⁵ In this Verse, the word, *ul-Fuqaraaaa*, is common and, by virtue of being in need [of bounty] of Allah Most High, every human being comes under the purview of this Verse. But the term, *Lil-fuqaraaaa*, in the Verse, “*Lil-fuqaraaaa-‘illazina ‘uhsiruu fii Sabii-lillaahi....*”²⁶ is special and, hence, everybody cannot be counted in this group, simply because he is in need.

This short explanation shows that the teachings of Imam Mahdi^{AS} about the giving up of the love of the wealth of the life of the world is completely in consonance with the Quran and *Hadis*. The Parable 69 clearly states, “It is narrated that Imam Mahdi^{AS} used always to say, ‘Make over your *zath* to Allah Most High. Do not engage yourself with anybody and do not desire anything except the *zath* of Allah Most High. Do not be in need of anything from the people [*makhluq*]....”². The famous group, *As-hab-as-Suffah* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had all these attributes. This parable also Quotes the Quranic

²¹ Quran, S. 2: 173 AYA. *Insaf Nama*, Urdu translation, Hyderabad, 1407 AH/1987 AD, Chapter. 5, pages 58-59; English translation, Bangalore, 2001 AD, Chapter 5, page 51.

²² Quran, S. 2: 273 AYA.

²³ The translation of the Arabic term is “*They beg not importunately from all and sundry.*”

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Quran, S. 47: 38 AYA.

²⁶ Quran, S. 2: 273. The translation of this Verse is: “[*Give in charity*] to the poor who are engaged in the cause of Allah...and are hindered thereby....”

Verse, “And who is better in faith than he who resigneth himself to Allah and doth good to others and followeth the faith of Abraham, the staunch in faith?”²⁷

Imam Mahdi^{AS} was not content at imparting the teaching of giving up the love for the wealth of the life of the world but he also stressed that a *mumin* should not expect the rewards of the Hereafter. He has exemplified a seeker of the world as a female, the seeker of the Hereafter as an impotent person and the seeker of Allah with a He-man. On one occasion the Imam^{AS} said, “Whatever you want, seek it from Allah, if you want water, salt or firewood, seek it from Allah.” This is *rukhsat* [permitted]. But *‘aliat* [excellence] is: “If all the eight Heavens are given to you, do not become happy over them. But in seeking the Truth [*Haq*], go ahead. Be lofty in courage. Keep your heart associated with Allah. As long as you are the sphinx of the nearby mountain, fly to the [unknown] heights.”

If the worship and religious exercises are conditioned by the fear of the Hell or the eagerness for the Heaven, it is, in one way or the other, for *ghair-Allah* [other than Allah]. Hence, the center of the fear or eagerness of the *mumin* should always be nothing other than the desire to see Allah, because the Paradise is only in the Vision [*didar*] of Allah.

Iqbal says: “*O preacher! You achieve your objective [only] by perfect giving up [tark]. When you have given up the world, give up the Hereafter also! It is not trade; it is worshipping Allah. O ignorant fellow! Give up the desire of the [divine] rewards too.*”

The Center of Mahdaviat is the *zath* [nature, essence] of Allah. There is no scope for the centrality of anything other than Allah in the teachings of the Imam^{AS} from the point of view of the religion.

Iqbal says; “*If you have tied your heart to Allahus Samad,*²⁸ [*compared to Allah*] *everything matters little!*”

In short, this is also the meaning and the purport of the giving up of the wealth of the life of the world; there should be no love for it [the world] and no neglect of Allah.

The first part of *tark-e-dunya*, according to the explanation of Imam Mahdi^{AS}, is the life of the world. He has given its meaning as giving up the existence [*hasti*] and self [*khudi*]. In other words, the manifest exposition of *tark-e-dunya* is the giving up of the love of the wealth of the life of the world. We have explained that aspect of the issue. The esoteric aspect of *tark-e-dunya* is the giving up of the existence [*hasti*] and self [*khudi*].

Iqbal says: “*The denial of existence is a miracle of the knowing heart [dil-e-aagah]. The pearl of illa Llah [except Allah] is hidden in the ocean of la [No].*”

Allah says, “...*Whoever expects to meet*²⁹ *his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner.*”³⁰

²⁷ Quran, S. 4: 134 SAL.

²⁸ *Allahus Samad* means ‘God, the Eternal, Who is free from want’.

One needs to think over that in the Quranic Verse that righteous deeds [*amal-e-salih*] have been treated as the cause of meeting [or seeing] the Lord. Hence, here righteous deeds would only be those, which are the cause of meeting [or seeing] the Lord. The affirmation and the knowledge of the Existence and Unity of Allah Most High both begin and end with abandoning of polytheism. It is easy to avoid *shirk-e-jali* [apparent polytheism] in the beginning itself. The practitioner of this is a *mumin* in *Shariat*. But it is not easy to avoid *shirk-e-khafi* [hidden polytheism]. The real *mumin* is one who continues to avoid the hidden polytheism in the progress of acquiring the knowledge of the Divine Unity [*ma'rifat-e-Tauhid*]. *Shirk-e-asbab* [polytheism of causes or worldly belongings] is included in the hidden polytheism. The glory of a real *mumin* is to become [directly] associated with the One Who creates the causes by ignoring the causes themselves. And this is the kind of *mumin* who can expect to meet [or see] Allah. The perfection of giving up polytheism is to give up self [*tark-e-khudi*]. Hence, Allah Most High caused Imam Mahdi^{AS} to explain righteous deeds [*amal-e-salih*] as giving up the world [*tark-e-dunya*]. And giving up the world means giving up existence and self [*hasti* and *khudi*]. This is the perfection of giving up polytheism. Giving up polytheism is the cause of the vision of Allah Most High [*liqaaa-e-Rab*] because Allah has explained *amal-e-salih* as “*wa laa yushrik bi-ibaadati Rabbihiiii ‘ahadaa.*”³¹ Hence, it is proved that *tark-e-dunya* [giving up world] is the cause of *liqaaa-e-Rab* [Vision of Allah]. Hence, the Imam^{AS} has made it obligatory on every man and woman in accordance with the commandment of Allah and the Quranic Verse. And for this, one has necessarily to follow the teachings of the Imam^{AS} about the company of the truthful [*sohbat-e-sadiqan*] and *zikh-e-khafi* [concealed remembrance of Allah], without which a *mumin* cannot achieve a noble life [*hayat-e-tayyiba*].

Allah says in Quran, “*To whomsoever it be, male or female, who believeth in Allah and doth what is right, will We surely give a good life and a reward worth of one’s best deeds.*”³² And the ‘good [or clean] life’ is the same as Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has stated: “Die before you die.” The Prophet^{SLM} has further said, “The world is your *nafs* [*khudi* or self] when you cause it to perish [*fana*], there is no world for you.”

A death of helplessness [*iztirari maut*] is that which is caused by illness or accidents at a specified time. Voluntary death is that when one intends or does anything for the sake of Allah alone and achieves the status of surrender and acceptance [of the will of Allah]. It is about such a believer [*mumin*] that Quran says, “Say, ‘*My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of All domains of existence. He hath no partner [whatsoever]. Thus have I been commanded to affirm and I am the first of those who have bowed to the command.*’”³³ In short, the giving up of self

²⁹ Hazrat Abu Sayeed^{RA} has translated *liqaaa-a’* as seeing or vision, and not meeting. Please also see paragraph 264 earlier in this chapter.

³⁰ Quran, S. 18: 110 AYA.

³¹ Quran, S. 18:110. The Quranic passage means, “and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner.”

³² Quran, S. 16: 97 SAL. Hazrat Abu Sayeed^{RA} defines good life [*Hayaatan-Tayyibah*] as free from polytheism [*shirk*].

³³ Quran, S. 6: 162-163 SAL.

[which is the perfection of giving up of polytheism] causes the application [*itlaqiat*] and, if Allah wills, one achieves His Vision through the *mishkat* [lamp] of the Sainthood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.

Some of the commentators of Quran interpret the good deeds [*amal-e-salih*] as *namaz* [the ritual prayers said five times a day]. From this point of view too, the *namaz*, which has been termed the *me'raj-al-muminin* [ascension of the believers to the seven Heavens, as that of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} at midnight], cannot achieve that superior rank unless one's giving up of polytheism is perfect. Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said under the teachings of *ihsan* [beneficence], "Worship Allah in a manner as if you are seeing Allah, and if you do not see Him, understand that Allah is seeing you." As perfect giving up of polytheism alone is the giving up of the self, this is called giving up the world in the Mahdavia parlance and this is the cause of the Vision of Allah.

Iqbal says; "Your leader [*imam*] is without Presence [*full, undivided attention to the Supreme being*], your *namaz* is without pleasure; go away from such *namaz* and such an *imam*."

From the point of view of the Mahdavia system, an explanation of a different nature is necessary. As it is essential to affirm by word of mouth the Islamic confession of faith, *La ilah illa Llah*, with sincerity and honesty, to give up manifest polytheism and enter Islam, it is essential to affirm by word of mouth to enter the group of the seekers of Allah, to give up one's self and subliminal polytheism, or giving up the world. As a person will not become a Musalman formally without confessing by word of mouth, by simply following the Islamic tenets and practices, a person will not formally become a *tarik-e-dunya* by simply following and acting upon the obligations of Sainthood, without fulfilling the conditions of *tark-e-dunya*. As one is subject to the commands and interdictions in case of deficiency in beliefs and deeds after entering Islam, one becomes subjects to commands and interdictions in case of deficiency in beliefs and deeds after the affirmation of *tark-e-dunya*.

From this short discussion on the issue of giving up the world, the readers can guess how lofty is the teaching. They can also feel that some of the critics, including the author of *Hadiya-e-Mahdavia*, were wrong in understanding that *tark-e-dunya* [giving up world] was monk-hood and was against the accepted principles of *Ahl-e-Sunnat* and that earning was taboo [*haram*] among the Mahdavis. Even without the foregoing explanatory discussion, the sayings of Imam Mahdi^{AS} alone are more than enough to refute the false allegations of the critics. Take for instance Parable 62. It says, "Again, on one occasion, [Imam Mahdi^{AS}] said, 'Earning and commerce are permitted in *Shariat*, but the peculiarity of this permission is that the intention of the earner or the trader should be that he, by his earnings, sustains enough strength to worship and strictly follow the commandments and interdictions [of *Shariat*]. He should be cautious that he does not [fall into the abyss of] greed and embezzlement. If one cannot be careful in this respect, and develops pride and arrogance [of possession of things in] abundance or if he indulges in earning and eating alone, [it is bad]. But if a person does not ever work for earning and is busy in worshipping and learning the science of *Shariat* and remains in seclusion day in and day out, but his intention is just [achieving] world and world alone, then his abode for ever is Hell.'"

And now see the Parable 116. It says: “Imam Mahdi^{AS} has said, ‘Whatever the people who have migrated and come on the path of Allah, do by way of economic activity like bringing water, splitting firewood, cooking meals, lighting fire and bringing things on their backs, playing and being good to children and the wife comes under the term, good deeds, under the Quran.’”

This parable shows that the economic activity, when it is for the sake of Allah, has been included in good deeds [*amal-e-salih*]. And the readers have seen in the foregoing pages that good deeds mean giving up the world [*tark-e-dunya*]. It now becomes clear that this ‘giving up the world’ is such where the necessary economic activity is not given up. But the seekers of Allah become confined in the way of Allah, in accordance with the Quranic Verse, “*Lo! Allah hath bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden³⁴ will be theirs...*”³⁵ In the light of these lofty and clear elucidations, the objections of the critics are getting removed on their own. It is being proved that their objections are the result of their ignorance of the divine secrets of the religion.

In short, Imam Mahdi^{AS} has, under the command of Allah, imparted the teachings of a life of Divine Love, an example of which can be seen in the lives of the Prophets, including the life of the Seal of Prophet-hood, and his eminent companions and the people of the Bench [*As-hab-as-Suffah*] and the respected Saints of Allah. The companions of the Imam^{AS} and their followers have worked according to the teachings to perfection and shown that perfection can be achieved. And till the Day of Resurrection, the followers of the Imam^{AS} will continue to work to perfection by the grace of Allah Most High. Allah says: “Such is the bounty of Allah, which He bestoweth upon whom He will, and Allah is of infinite bounty.”³⁶

³⁴ Garden means Paradise. Hazrat Abu Sayeed^{RA} says Paradise means the Vision of Allah.

³⁵ Quran, S. 9: 111 MMP.

³⁶ Quran, S. 57: 21 MMP.