

# TRUST IN ALLAH

*[Tawakkul]*



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*Tawakkul, one of the tenets of Mahdaviat, explaining its grade level and how it's essentially tied to one's Iman, forms the subject of this paper excerpted from the book Tauzihat.*

# TRUST IN ALLAH<sup>1</sup>

## [*Tawakkul*]

Allah says, “*They alone are believers whose hearts thrill with the thought of Allah whenever His name is mentioned, and whose faith in Him increases as His Revelations are recited and who place **implicit trust in their Lord**, who observe the [prescribed] prayers, and give to others out of what We have provided them with. Such indeed are the true believers, their due places of honour lie with their Lord as well as His Forgiveness, and generous means of sustenance.*”<sup>2</sup>

In this Verse, Allah has counted *Tawakkul* [Trust in Allah] as among the attributes of the believers [*muminin*]. And for the elucidation of perfect Faith [*kamal-e-iman*], He has used the expression, ‘*humul-Mu’-minuuna haqqaa*’ [indeed are the true believers]. There are grades of Trust in Allah. They are directly related to the grades of Faith. As the grades of the knowledge of Divine Unity and Faith go on improving, the luminosity of Certainty will go on increasing. And this is the basis of the improvement in the grades of Trust in Allah. And every believer will achieve the higher grades of *Tawakkul* in proportion to his grades of Faith. It is for this reason that Allah has used the expression, ‘*lahum dara-jaatun ‘inda Rabbihim*’ [their due places of honour lie with their Lord].

Allah further says, “...*And when thou art resolved on any course, [go ahead] and trust in Allah, for Allah loveth those who lay their trust [in Him].*”<sup>3</sup> He also says, “*And lay your trust in Allah if indeed ye are men of faith.*”<sup>4</sup> And there are many more Quranic Verses that prove the importance and emphasis on Trust in Allah. When Allah has laid down Trust in Him as a condition of Faith, Trust becomes obligatory for every *mumin*, irrespective of how small in grade it is, because the commandments, on which the achievement of Faith depends, must essentially be obeyed. It is for this reason that Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has said that *tawakkul* is obligatory for every *mumin*.

Besides, Allah has often made it clear that He alone is the real Cherisher who provides sustenance. Some of the Quranic Verses on this point are:

- ▶ “*Lo! Allah! He it is that giveth livelihood, the Lord of unbreakable might.*”<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ “*There is no moving creature on earth but its sustenance dependeth on Allah.*”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Arabic original expression is *TAWAKKUL*.

<sup>2</sup> Quran, S. 8: 2-4 SAL.

<sup>3</sup> Quran, S. 3: 159 SAL.

<sup>4</sup> Quran, S. 5: 23 SAL.

<sup>5</sup> Quran, S. 51: 58 MMP.

<sup>6</sup> Quran, S 11: 6 AYA.

As Allah has described with importance His attribute of being the Creator, He has also tried to create a definite certainty about His being the Provider of sustenance in the hearts of the believers. And this is the reality too.

Iqbal says: *“Who fosters the seed in the soil? Who raises the clouds from the waves of the oceans? Who dragged the suitable wind from the East? Whose is this dust; Whose is the Luminosity of the Sun? Who has filled the purse of the wheat plant with pearls? Who has taught the seasons the habit of revolutions?”*

In short, Allah Most High alone is the Cherisher and Sustainer and Trust in Him alone is obligatory. One can act upon this in accordance with one’s strength of Faith and the luminosity of Certainty. The initial stage is Trust in Allah with effort and effects. With the improvement in Divine Love, remembrance and meditation, there would be improvement in the grades of Trust in Allah. Then a stage will come where the eye discards the effects and rests on One who causes things to be done --- Allah! The highest grade of Trust in Allah is where one assigns all his personal affairs to Allah, resigns to the will of Allah and relinquishes all his authority [*be-ikhtiar ho jana*] to Allah. Allah has commanded Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup>: *“The Lord of the East and the West! There is none worthy of worship except Him. Take Him then for thy Protector.”*<sup>7</sup>

The biographical Traditions of Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup> stand witness to his devotion to the worship of Allah Most High, to religious exercises and to propagate the religion. His time was not spent in trade, agriculture and service etcetera to eke a living.

The special companions of Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup> and the *As-hab-as-Suffah* followed the example set by him. The saints and the virtuous too followed this path. Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> also made it obligatory on his followers under the Command of Allah and guided them to its highest ranks.

Iqbal says; *“Seek that indigence [faqr], if you have the courage; the faqr the root of which is from Hijaz. This faqr produces the glory of Allah’s freedom from want in man. From it are lighted the eyes of the intellect without the mascara of Avicenña<sup>8</sup> and Razi.<sup>9</sup> The believer’s affluence is in this [faqr]. Seek it from Allah.”*

The intricate difference between *halal* and *halal-e-tayyib*, *vis-à-vis* Trust in Allah, Hazrat Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has shown in Parable 73, which says: Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has said, *“Whatever a servant [of Allah] gets by his efforts and in accordance with Shariat is halal [permitted]. But it is not halal-e-tayyib. Halal-e-tayyib is that which comes voluntarily and unsolicited [be-ikhtiar]. There is accountability for halal and there is no accountability for halal-e-tayyib. Allah says, “Whenever Zachariahs visited Mary at the sanctuary, he found food kept beside her. He asked, ‘O Mary! Whence comes this to thee?’ She said, ‘It is from Allah, for Allah giveth sustenance to whosoever He willeth without measure.’”*<sup>10</sup> Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup> has said, ‘There is accountability for the

<sup>7</sup> Quran, S. 73: 9 SAL.

<sup>8</sup> Avicenña is Bu Ali Sina or Ibn Sina or Sheikh ar-Rais.

<sup>9</sup> Razi is Imam Fakhruddin Razi<sup>RA</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Quran, S. 3: 37 SAL.

permitted. There is chastisement for the prohibited. The chastely permitted is without measure and accountability.”<sup>11</sup>

Please also note Parable 74, which in translation reads, “Allah Most High is narrated to have sent something. The companions said, ‘This is *halal-e-tayyib*.’ Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> said, ‘This is just *halal*, not *halal-e-tayyib*. It was known for the last two or three days that he was to send it.’ Further, he said, *taiyyun* [fixed periodical income] was accursed.”<sup>12</sup>

And in Parable 146, the condition for *Tawakkul* is explained: “Eat what you get all of a sudden without any anticipation, because *Tawakkul* [Trust in Allah] is based on [the element of] *baghta* [surprise].”<sup>13</sup> That which comes all of a sudden is endowed with the highest station [or position] of Trust in Allah.

It is proved from the Quranic Verses and the Prophetic Traditions that Allah has created *halal* thing to test [the people]. Allah says, “*That which is on earth We have made but as a glittering show for the earth, in order that we may test them --- as to which of them are best in conduct. Verily what is on earth We shall make but as dust and dry soil [without growth or herbage].*”<sup>14</sup> It is for this reason that *halal* cannot be understood as not liable to be accounted. One would be asked to account for it. “The *halal* part of the world has to be accounted for and the *haram* part of the world is the cause of chastisement.”<sup>15</sup>

According to a tradition, Hazrat Umar<sup>RZ</sup> [Second Caliph of Islam] felt thirsty one day. Honey and cold water was presented to him. He kept it in his hand and did not drink it. He said, “First, get me be absolved of the accountability of this. Whether the world is big or small, *halal* and *haram* both are accursed, except that which helps in piety and abstinence, because the world is not that contemptible.” This shows that a *mumin* needs satisfaction of the heart in the stage of *Tawakkul* for piety, abstinence and purification of *nafs* [self].

Iqbal says: “*The same is the glance which is acquainted with halal [permitted] and haram [prohibited]. The same is the heart, which knows halal and haram.*”

Please see Parable 147.<sup>16</sup> It says: “Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Ilahdad Shair<sup>RZ</sup> is narrated to have offered some money to Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>. The Imam<sup>AS</sup> asked him to ‘keep it with you.’ He kept it with him in trust. Some time later, the Imam<sup>AS</sup> asked him to return the money. The Miyan<sup>RZ</sup> returned it immediately. The Imam<sup>AS</sup> distributed the amount as *sawaiyat*. In spite of this, the Miyan<sup>RZ</sup> used to say, “I am a carrion-eater [*murdar-khwar*] among the group of *fugara*.””

From the amount that was with him in trust Bandagi Ilahdad Shair<sup>RZ</sup> also got his share at the time of *sawaiyat*. On the basis of that, he thought that his *Tawakkul* and *tazkia-e-nafs* could have been damaged, because it is possible that a thought might have occurred to him before *sawaiyat* that he too would get his share when the *sawaiyat* was to be distributed in due course. Hence, these words that “I am a *murdar-khwar* [or carrion-

<sup>11</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, pages 51-52.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, page 52.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pages 94-96.

<sup>14</sup> Quran. S. 18: 7-8 AYA.

<sup>15</sup> Excerpted from the book, *Kohl al-Jawahir*, by Hazrat Syed Nusrat<sup>RA</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Of *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*.

eater] among the group of *fuqara*” came on his tongue in extreme care for his *taqwa* [piety]. A parable in *Insaf Nama* supports this contention.

“Miyān Fareed<sup>RZ</sup> quotes Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> as saying, ‘If a seeker of Allah is sitting in his room [*hujra*] and hears the footsteps of somebody and if the thought crosses his mind that somebody might have brought *futuh* [donations], it is not *Tawakkul* [Trust in Allah].’<sup>17</sup> From this point of view, the deed of Hazrat Iahdad Shair<sup>RZ</sup> was in perfect obedience to the teachings of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>.

However, Hazrat Muhammad Sa’adatullah Khan<sup>RA</sup> has expressed his opinion about the word *murdar-khwar*. He says, “It is possible that this is a calligraphic error and the real word could be *mard-arkh-dar*. He [Hazrat Iahdad Shair<sup>RZ</sup>] might have claimed that ‘I had the privilege of being the accountant of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>,’ as the word, *arkh*, means accounts.” *Mard-arkh-dar* means the person who keeps the accounts. *Wallahu A’lam* [And Allah knows best].

Iqbal says: “*He alone is the rightful leader [imam] of the time; who makes you detest the existing and present; who makes life more difficult for you by showing you the countenance of the Friend in the mirror of death; who enlivens your blood by making you realize your losses; [and] by sharpening you by the whetstone of indigence into a sword!*”

In short, the way Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> made the difference clear between *halal* and *halal-e-tayyib* and how meticulously he and his followers followed and put into practice his commandments will be seen from the following parables. Parable 148: Sheikh Sadruddin Sindhi<sup>RZ</sup> is narrated to leave bread loaves in the *hujras* of the *fuqara* around midnight in a manner that nobody could know who had given the bread. This went on for two nights. The seekers of Allah fretfully complained to the Imam<sup>AS</sup>, “Miranjeo! Robbery is taking place.” The Imam<sup>AS</sup> asked, “What is happening?” They told him what was happening during the previous two nights. They said, “Somebody places the bread loaves in our *hujras* by extending his hand. It cannot be known who that person is.” Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> said, “Do not trouble the seekers of Allah so that their heart does not incline towards *ghair-Allah* [things other than Allah].”<sup>18</sup>

The *fuqara* were indigent and starving. Despite this, they felt aggrieved by the incognito help they were getting and they complained to the Imam<sup>AS</sup> fretfully. This is evidence and proof that the *fuqara* strictly observed the interdiction that they should not be inclined to cast their sights on things other than Allah as a condition of *halal-e-tayyib*. They had the strength in full measure to protect themselves from falling into the pitfall.

In the teachings of *Tawakkul*, great importance is given to avoiding asking [*sawal*]. We have already discussed this while dealing with *Tark-e-Dunya* under the Quranic Verse, “...*He who knoweth them not, taketh them for well-to-do folk because of their bearing of self-respect...*”<sup>19</sup> It has been explained that even in a state of distress, when *haram* too can be treated as *halal*, the Imam<sup>AS</sup> has tried his best to awaken the shrewdness of a

<sup>17</sup> *Insaf Nama*, by Hazrat Vali bin Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup>, Urdu translation, Hyderabad, 1407 AH/1987 AD, Chapter 6, page 140; English translation, Bangalore, 2001 AD, Chapter 6.1, page 107.

<sup>18</sup> *Naqliyat Miyān Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, pages 96-97.

<sup>19</sup> Quran [S. 2: 273 SAL].

*mumin* [not to seek help from anybody other than Allah]. Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has said that if a person, who trusts in Allah, is in a condition of distress, he may eat *murdar* [prohibited] but he should not ask [for it from anybody other than Allah].<sup>20</sup>

The people, who had an occasion to visit Khorasan [Iran and Afghanistan] in this 14<sup>th</sup> Century [AH],<sup>21</sup> when journey is so easy, can very well imagine how difficult it could have been to travel in that country some 450 years ago. Besides, how did a large group of people with their families, and not one person, in a state of indigence and starvation, without provisions and other essential things, continued their journey uninterrupted? They sometimes ate the leaves of wild trees to satisfy their hunger. One can gauge the sublime courage of the companions of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> from the following incident.

Hazrat Miyan Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup>, who had many wounds on his feet, sat down on the way [to Khorasan] to clean his wounds. The caravan of the companions of the Imam<sup>AS</sup> was passing. When the Imam<sup>AS</sup> came near him, Miyan Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup> asked him, "Miranji! When will the most difficult time, which is to befall the group of the Imam<sup>AS</sup>, come?" The Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, "This is that time. By the grace of Allah, you are too magnanimous to realize it."

In another parable, it is stated that the Imam<sup>AS</sup> climbed a hillock on his way to Khorasan and looked at the group of people following him. Among them were the women, children and the old, weak and sick people. He was greatly affected by their condition. He then supplicated to Allah, "O Allah! You are present and seeing! You are the Omniscient and the Knowing! You know fully well the state of this servant [of Yours] and these people. This servant has not taken any of their most loved things from them in his possession. Nor has he promised them to provide them with wealth and money, which could have compelled them to undergo such [unbearable] difficulties. If they have any right over me, it is that I can show them the path of Divine Love to You and Your gnosis [*ma'rifat*]." At the same time, a command of Allah arrived, "O Syed Muhammad! I have forgiven all their sins, small and big. Give them the glad tidings of Faith [*iman*]." The Imam<sup>AS</sup> then gave the good news of Faith to all his companions.<sup>22</sup>

In short, after the confirmed claim [*dawa-e-muakkad*] of the Imam<sup>AS</sup>, there were frequent periods of great distress and testing times. Many sacred lives were martyred. But no incident of permission being sought or granted for seeking [alms or charity] has been reported in the books of parables. The Imam<sup>AS</sup> not only forbade asking but he also unequivocally prohibited them from presenting a face that would imply asking. Hence, all the parables that are found in respect of the Trust in Allah emphatically pronounce this aspect of *tawakkul*. The following specialties of *Tawakkul* are obvious:

[1] The donations brought repeatedly by the same person were treated as *tayyun* [fixed periodical income] and were rejected.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Shawahid-al-Vilayat*, by Hazrat Syed Burhanuddin<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad, 1379 AH, Chapter 33, page 448.

<sup>21</sup> The book *Tauzihat* was written during the last Century. The present Century AH is the 15<sup>th</sup> one, when this translation is being done.

<sup>22</sup> *Hashia Insaaf Nama*, Hazrat Vali bin Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, page 24

<sup>23</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, parable 135, page 87.



[2] The donations sent to the *daira* were rejected if the amounts were specified with the names of recipients. <sup>24</sup>

[3] If a person from the *daira* went to the house of a rich man and if the rich man gave him or sent through him any donation in cash or kind to the *daira*, that donation was not treated as *futuh* [or donation], and the head of the *daira* was instructed to reject it. <sup>25</sup>

[4] If some rich man wanted to send donations or the amount of *ushr* [tithe] requested that a *faqir* should be sent with him to fetch it, the request used to be rejected and the *fuqara* were forbidden from going with such a person. <sup>26</sup>

[5] If somebody offered something because of his relationship with someone in the *daira* and the purpose of the offering was not for the sake of Allah, such a donation was not accepted. <sup>27</sup>

[6] Purchasing something from a Mahdavi trader, with the hope that he would give the required thing at a concessionary rate or more in quantity, was prohibited. Some of the *fuqara* brought buttermilk [*chhachh*] from outside the *daira* and it was thrown away along with its containers. <sup>28</sup>

[7] The expectation and waiting for the *futuh* was treated as a hindrance in Trust of Allah [*Tawakkul*]. <sup>29</sup>

[8] Whatever Allah gave must be spent. No effort should be made to hoard it. <sup>30</sup> When Bibi Ilaahdati <sup>RZ</sup>, wife of Imam Mahdi <sup>AS</sup>, died, a *tinka* [a golden coin] was found in her effects. The Imam <sup>AS</sup> ordered that it should be heated and she be branded with it on the forehead. “The Prophet <sup>SLM</sup> had done the same thing,” said the Imam <sup>AS</sup>. When this news reached Miyan Syed Salamullah <sup>RZ</sup>, brother of the Bibi <sup>RZ</sup>, who was supervising the digging of her grave, he came running and told the Imam <sup>AS</sup> on oath that the gold coin did not belong to the Bibi <sup>RZ</sup> but it belonged to Bibi Fatima <sup>RZ</sup>. Then the Imam <sup>AS</sup> said, “Give it to whom it belonged.” <sup>31</sup>

Allah Most High says, “*They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings [O Muhammad] of a painful doom, On the day when it will [all] be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks and their backs will be branded therewith [and it will be said unto them]: Here is that which ye hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what ye used to hoard.*” <sup>32</sup>

There are many Traditions of the Prophet <sup>SLM</sup> on this subject. He has said, “Brand the person who dies leaving gold and silver.” A person died and a *dinar* [coin] was found in his pocket. The Prophet <sup>SLM</sup> said, “Brand him once.” Another person died and there were two *dinars* with him. The Prophet <sup>SLM</sup> said, “Brand him twice.”

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, Parables 149, 150 and 151, pages 97-98.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, Parables 72 and 153, pages 51 and 99.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, Parables 152 to 156, pages 98 to 100.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, Parable 157, page 101.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, Parable 76, pages 53-54.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, Parable 71, page 51.

<sup>30</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid* <sup>RZ</sup>, Parable 136, pages 87-88.

<sup>31</sup> *Hashia Insaaf Nama*, Hazrat Vali bin Yusuf <sup>RZ</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, page 69.

<sup>32</sup> Quran, S. 9: 34-35 MMP.

Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has guided [his followers] towards the highest rank of Trust in Allah [*Tawakkul*]. The believers who have reached the station of *Lahut* [Divine Presence] think that any food other than *halal-e-tayyib* [chastely permitted] as *haram* [prohibited] for them. Somebody is narrated to have asked Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, “What should one do if one cannot be patient in hunger?” The Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, “Let him die.” The questioner repeated his question. Again the Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, “Let him die.” The questioner asked a third time, “Miranji! What should he do if he does not have the strength and stamina to be patient in hunger?” The Imam<sup>AS</sup> replied, “Let him die. Let him die. Let him die.”<sup>33</sup>

This is the highest rank, after reaching which a believer accepts death, but does not allow any diminution in his Trust in Allah, as it should be.

Iqbal says, “O bird of Divinity! Death is better than the food, which curtails your flight.”

While in the teachings of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, a believer is guided to reach the highest ranks of excellence [*aliyat*]; there are other commands of a lower level of *rukhsat* [concession]. The parable says: “Somebody in a congregation of the migrant-companions is narrated to have asked Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, “What one should do if one was not patient enough to bear hunger.” The Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, “Let him go and earn a *cheetal* [or *taka*, a local coin] or two and eat....”<sup>34</sup>

Please note Parable 70. Hazrat Shah Dilawar<sup>RZ</sup> has quoted Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> as saying, “During the time of destitution, if Allah Most High were to send more charity [for the death anniversary of Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup>], the money should be used to feed the inmates of the *daira* two or three times because they are the rightful persons to benefit from *futuh* [charity]; and not the others. However, it is a different matter, if some others benefit from it.”<sup>35</sup>

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Mahmood Syedanji<sup>RA</sup> *Khatam-al-Murshidin*, grandson of Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, has issued certain commandments pertaining to *rukhsat* [concession]. The third order says: “The food sent by Allah could be eaten twice.” This shows that the concessionary command Hazrat Syedanji<sup>RA</sup> had issued was well within the parameters of the commandments of the Imam<sup>AS</sup>.

Please note Parable 64. In it Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir<sup>RZ</sup> is quoted as telling his followers, “The people of the lust [*nafs*] always seek orders to serve.” Then again he

<sup>33</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Parable 59, page 44.

<sup>34</sup> *Hashia Insaf Nama*, Vali bin Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, page 44. The Parable continues, “But if he earns a *taka* one day, he would be tempted to earn more the next day. The Imam<sup>AS</sup> again said, ‘*Shariat* permits earning and trade. But the intention of the person indulging in earning and trade should be to continue to remain capable of worshipping, religious acts and abstaining from interdictions. But he should not become a victim of greed and defalcation.’ He also said, ‘If the earner does not have this as his objective, he would be tempted to become proud and begin to amass abundance of wealth. He would fully engage himself in profiteering and eating. But if he does not engage in earning and fully engages himself in learning the knowledge of *Shariat*, *Uzlat* and *Khilwat* [seclusion], and if the objective of all this is the achievement of worldliness, his abode [in the Hereafter] would certainly be Hell forever.’”

<sup>35</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, pages 50-51.



said, “We have kept a cart and two bullocks so that the brothers of the *daira* do not have to go begging when they need it.”<sup>36</sup>

This shows that even in the orders under the *rukhsat* [concession] category, there is no scope for asking for anything. And how could it be, as after the confirmed claim [*dawa-e-muakkida*] also there is no precedent of allowing any asking [or begging] even in a state of distress. In short, the mention of *ta'ffuf* in Quran for a *faqir* [indigent] has been affirmed as essential for the *faqir* to follow.

The act of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Mahmood Syedanji *Khatam-al-Murshidin*<sup>RZ</sup> manifests another aspect of *Tawakkul* and it is this: The *fuqara* of the *daira* were not accustomed to going to the houses of the earners [*kasibin*]. They were invited to a feast in a manner that they remained at their residences at the *daira* and the food was sent to them. Whatever remained after the *fuqara* finished their meals was sent back to the host. But if the food was sent without such specification, absolutely in the name of Allah, it was used as deemed fit or was distributed among the indigent people as *sawaiyat*.

The gist of the parable is that a person invited Hazrat Syedanji<sup>RZ</sup> for a feast and sent the food to his house. Hazrat Syedanji<sup>RZ</sup> and his nephew Syed Abdul Hai sat down for the meal. His daughter Aaji Bibi sat down beside them waving a fan [because it was sultry]. But soon she fainted. Hazrat Syedanji<sup>RZ</sup> tried to revive her. His wife told him, “Why do you not allow a morsel through her throat?”<sup>37</sup> She is starving for the last three days.” The Hazrat<sup>RZ</sup> said, “Had there been a morsel in her throat, I would have taken it out. I want her welfare in the Hereafter. All the inmates of the *daira* will be blessed with the blessings of the Allah from the starvation of this child. And this child too will be able to eat only then.” He returned the leftover eatables to the house of the host.<sup>38</sup>

After this, the author of *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani* writes that this parable shows that the invitation was only for Hazrat Syedanji<sup>RZ</sup> and his nephew. Then how could he allow other people to eat the food? This also shows that the deeds of Hazrat Syedanji<sup>RZ</sup> were of an extraordinarily high caliber of excellence [*'aliat*] despite the trying circumstances. It is also to be pondered over, “How could he eat when all the members of the family, including the daughter, were starving?” This is an extreme example of perfect emulation of the Prophet<sup>SLM</sup>. The food for the feast had come only for the Hazrat<sup>RZ</sup> [and his nephew]. So he ate it. But he did not allow the paternal love to impede the emulation of the *Sunnat*

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, page 47.

<sup>37</sup> The nature of the food in a feast is that the invitee is given the authority to eat, but he is not made its owner. No invitee gets the authority to give it to anybody. Hence, the Hazrat<sup>RZ</sup> did not give food to his [starving] daughter, and sent the leftover food back to the host. This shows the extent to which the utilization of something belonging to somebody else is prohibited. Another instance of similar caution is reported that some dates were sent as *zakat*. Imam Husain<sup>AS</sup> [Grandson of Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup>] who was a child then took a date and put it in his mouth. Prophet Muhammad<sup>SLM</sup> saw it and removed it from the mouth of Imam Husain<sup>AS</sup>.

Similarly, when grapes were received, a *faqir*, Miyan Hyder Muhajir<sup>RZ</sup> gave a bunch of grapes to Miyan Syed Hamid<sup>RZ</sup>, son of the Imam<sup>AS</sup>. The Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, “This is in the right of the *fuqara*. Why did you give it to him?” Miyan Hyder<sup>RZ</sup> said, “Please forgive me.” The Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, “Seek the forgiveness from all the *fuqara*.” It is said that the Imam<sup>AS</sup> removed the gape from the mouth of the child who had put it in his mouth. --- Parable 141, *Naqliat Miyan Abdur Rashid*<sup>RZ</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani*, Manuscript, by Malik Sulaiman<sup>RA</sup>, Gulshan 6, Chaman 3.

of the Prophet<sup>SLM</sup>. Further, it is also obvious that the concessionary commandments he issued were for the coming generations of the followers to receive the bounty [*Faiz*] of the Imam<sup>AS</sup>, so that they could obey the orders as far as the limits of their Faith [*iman*] allow them. And if the follower's deeds are full of sincerity, they become a source of his progress in the spiritual ranks. With the grace of Allah Most High!

Iqbal says, "Everything depends on the circumstances and the stations. Every moment the seeker's time and abode are different!"

Some parables speak of the permission given to the *fuqara* to go feasting to the houses of the earners [*kasibin*]. But this is the within the limits of the *rukhsat* [concession], while excellence [*'aliat*] demands that they should not go. Please see Parable 124.<sup>39</sup> It says, "Hazrat Miyan Larh Shah<sup>RZ</sup> has narrated that Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> was returning from the *Jama' Masjid* in Khorasan. On the way was the house of a Khorasani who had invited the Imam<sup>AS</sup> many times to visit his house and every time the Imam<sup>AS</sup> rejected it by asking to be forgiven. After many entreaties, the Imam<sup>AS</sup> allowed some of his companions to go to his house. The companions went but Hazrat Miyan Shah Dilawat<sup>RZ</sup> did not go. Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah<sup>RZ</sup> did not like this and asked him, "Why did you not come with us? You have disobeyed the Imam<sup>AS</sup>." The Imam<sup>AS</sup> peeped out of his *hujra* and said, "Those who went, had gone with my permission. Those who did not go did very well."

In short, this shows that the commands of the Imam<sup>AS</sup> cover both '*aliat* and *rukhsat*. A *faqir* is allowed to follow whichever command he chooses, according to his strength or ability to endure. But priority is to follow '*aliat*. According to a parable, "Some people asked the Imam<sup>AS</sup> if *rukhsat* too was within the parameters of religion?" The Imam<sup>AS</sup> said, "Religion is *azimath* alone, [which one should always try to follow], because if [at times] one cannot follow *azimath* one can condescend to [the level of] *rukhsat*. But if a person understands that deeds according to *rukhsat* are enough, where would he find a refuge if he were to condescend from [the level of] *rukhsat*?"<sup>40</sup>

Countless followers of the Imam<sup>AS</sup> followed a high degree of excellence [*'aliat* or *azimath*] and established a precedent, which was well known about the piety, devotion, abstinence and Trust in Allah of his group. The following parable gives an indication of this reputation: "A person went to Fateh Khan [a wealthy official] and said, 'I have come from the *daira* of Hazrat Miran Syed Mahmood<sup>RZ</sup>, son of Hazrat Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>,' and tried to pretend that he was a *faqir* of the *daira*. Fateh Khan ordered his servants to give him a beating and he himself lunged to thrash him. His servants said, 'He is a *faqir*.' Fateh Khan said, 'The *fuqara* of that *daira* do not treat me even as a dog. I want that nobody should dare lie in the name of such chaste people. The *fuqara* of that *daira* will never come to my door. I am certain of it. I have the honour of going to them many times and I have seen the condition of the *fuqara* of that *daira* with my own eyes.'"<sup>41</sup> [The heads of the *daira*] have treated receiving donations from the income of close relatives

<sup>39</sup> Of *Naqliat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*.

<sup>40</sup> *Insaf Nama*, Hazrat Vali bin Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup>, Hyderabad, 1407 AH/1987 AD. Chapter 5. [This parable is not found at the place indicated.]

<sup>41</sup> *Naqliat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, Parable 130, pages 84-85.

like brothers and sons of the *fuqara* also as violating the norms of Trust in Allah. <sup>42</sup> Some other parables speak of even the *kasibin* [earners] having been rebuked and prevented from serving the *fuqara* in this manner because it would vitiate their *Tawakkul*. Such service to the *fuqara* will harm both the givers and takers instead of helping. Please see Parable 126, which elaborates this. Its last sentence is, “When a *faqir* comes to your house, do not adopt an attitude that changes his habits [for the worse].” <sup>43</sup>

“Somebody is narrated to have asked Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup>, ‘What is the thing that works as a veil between God and His servant?’ The Imam<sup>AS</sup> held a piece of bread in his hand and said, ‘This bread is the veil between Allah and His servant.’” <sup>44</sup>

The people of Bounty [*faiz*] and Delight [*zauq*] can understand the importance of this saying of the Imam<sup>AS</sup>, because it hides in itself many of the [divine] secrets. All human efforts, the personal efforts, politics and etcetera are subservient to bread. All the evils like falsehood, stealing, deceit, subterfuge, murder, war and all others are concerned with this. Had there been no need for bread, there would have been no ruler nor the ruled. Nobody would have duped and none would have been duped. It is for this reason that Allah determined it to be necessary to send Apostles and reveal Divine books, so that the humans could be guided into believing that “You have not been created only for earning your bread. Your intellect, discretion, strength and power are all great favors, Allah Most High has bestowed on you. And because of all these blessings you have achieved the lofty position as the ‘Noblest of Creations’ [*Ashraf-al-Makhluqat*]. The best and most correct use of this divine favor is that you obey His commandments and earn your daily bread too under them.”

Iqbal says, “The vegetables and fossils are subject to destiny. But a believer is subject only to the commandment of Allah.”

If you determine that bread alone is your objective and neglect the divine teachings, it would become a misuse of your intellect, potentiality and authority. All this is ingratitude. And bread becomes your [worshipped] deity. This would be a position worse than beastliness because although the beasts appear always to be in search of food, they are not neglectful of the praises and remembrance of Allah. Allah says, “*Each knoweth its prayer and praise.*” <sup>45</sup>

Every creation and invention has a purpose. For instance, think over the invention of a railway engine. It becomes known that the purpose is not to burn the fuel alone because the burning of fuel is only an assisting process and not the main purpose. If the activity of an engine were limited to the supply of coal and water, this would be against the need of inventing the engine and would result in loss.

Similarly, a human being should think that his ‘fuel’, that is, food, is only an assisting need for his survival, and that the purpose is to use his strength and potential for performing his duties towards the rights of Allah and His servants, because the performance of one’s duties to fellow humans too is worship of God as performing one’s

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, Parable 157, page 101.

<sup>43</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid*<sup>RZ</sup>, Parable 126, page 83.

<sup>44</sup> *Hashia Insaaf Nama*, Vali bin Yusuf<sup>RZ</sup>, Hyderabad, 1369 AH, pages 30-31.

<sup>45</sup> Quran, S. 24: 41 SAL.

duties towards the rights of God is. Sa'adi has said, "There is no worship of God other than the service of the people."

It is for this reason that Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has said, "Earning and business are permitted. But the peculiarity of this permission is that the intention of the earner or businessman should be to gain strength to worship, perform according to the commandments and avoid what is forbidden. He should always be afraid that he might indulge in greed and embezzlement...." <sup>46</sup>

When we ponder over the universe, the Creation of Allah, like the earth, oceans, water, wind, clouds, lightening, moon, sun and etcetera, and their *a'mal* [performances] and specialties and their mutual interaction, it becomes obvious that one of their purposes is to provide food and nourishment for the human beings. This is an accepted issue of the modern developed research and needs no further elaboration. Sa'adi says, "The clouds, the winds, the moon, the sun and the sky --- all are busy with their respective performances, so that you are provided with a piece of bread and that you do not eat it neglecting the True Benefactor, that is, Allah Most High, while they all obey Him for providing [bread to] you! And if you are not obedient to Him, this is not justice."

It is time to ponder. While man thinks his struggle to be the cause of earning his food, his efforts are actually confined to only those causes and means that are within his authority. But beyond this, there is no choice but to depend on Allah. For instance, ploughing the land and sowing the seeds is within the authority of the cultivator who performs those tasks to the extent he can, but the winds, the water, and the seasons are not within his authority. Hence, he is compelled to trust the nature [*qudrat*] to help him out. When this is the reality, it is not astonishing that the hearts of some of the believers [*muminin*] become so attached to nature, and the luminosity of Certainty [*yaqin*] kindles in them to an extent that they begin to Trust in Allah in all those matters also that are well within their own authority and treat such a Trust [Tawakkul] as an obligation. The specialty of *fazilat* [superiority] is that the *jazbah* [passion] for divine Love emerges from within the limits of one's own authority. Otherwise, when compelled, one is bound to turn to the nature when there is no other option.

In short, the purpose of bread is retaining strength and surviving in life. And the purpose of life and strength is the worship and remembrance of Allah so that the *batin* [immanence or innermost] opens and the Divine luminosity and manifestations are bestowed.

The loftiest concept of *Tawakkul* is that, which is manifest from the following parables:

- Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has said that *Tawakkul* for food is no *Tawakkul* at all, because Allah Most High has given his promise about food: "*There is nothing that moveth on earth, the nourishment of which doth not depend on Allah.*" <sup>47</sup> This promise is

<sup>46</sup> *Naqliyat Miyan Abdur Rashid<sup>RZ</sup>*, Urdu translation by Hazrat Abu Sayeed<sup>RA</sup>, Hyderabad 1369 AH, parable 62, page 45.

<sup>47</sup> Quran, S. 11: 6 SAL.

of Allah. You are a *mumin* if you have faith in this promise. Otherwise, you are a *kafir*.<sup>48</sup>

► Further, [the Imam<sup>AS</sup>] said, “*Tawakkul* is that, which is for the *zath* of Allah [and Trust in Allah], and one should be in the desire for Allah day and night as to when I find Him.”<sup>49</sup>

The meaning of this saying is that trusting in Allah *vis-à-vis* food too is related, in a way, to *ghair-Allah*. Hence, one should mentally give up this need too and fully engross oneself in the desire for Allah.

To retain the relationship with the *zath* of Allah, Imam Mahdi<sup>AS</sup> has made it mandatory on both the donor and the recipient to take the name of Allah and keep Him in mind while making or receiving a donation. Hence, nothing is accepted unless it is offered in the name of Allah.

Allah says, “*Lo! Thy Lord, He knoweth best who erreth from His way; and He knoweth best [who are] the rightly guided. Eat of that over which the name of Allah hath been mentioned, if you are believers in His revelations.*”<sup>50</sup> Allah further says, “*And eat not of that whereon Allah’s name hath not been mentioned, for lo! It is abomination.*”<sup>51</sup>

The commentators of Quran have specifically associated this Verse with the slaughter [*zabiha*] of animals. In other words, whenever an animal is slaughtered, it should be slaughtered in the name of Allah. Otherwise, its meat should not be eaten. This exegesis is not wrong. We too accept it. But the meaning that is general has been confined. This violates the principle; ‘a general command is valid generally without exception.’ As the word *mimma* in the Verse means ‘the thing that’ and indicates that the generality of the things is proved. From this point of view, it is obvious that anything over which the name of Allah has not been recited should not be eaten. That is why every *mumin* necessarily says *Bismillah* [In the name of Allah] before he starts eating. Since the permitted [*halal*] animals too are slaughtered for eating, it is necessary that Allah’s name should be recited at the time of slaughtering them. More so, because some people slaughter animals in the name of the idols they worship. In contrast, the teachings of Islam are that an animal can be slaughtered in the name of the Creator and in accordance with His commandments alone. The rule is that the special is included in the general. The general is not included in the special. Hence, the commandment, which is general, should always be kept as general, in such a way that if it was found necessary to include any particular commandment in it, it could be done. In short, the practice among the Mahdavis is that the donor or giver gives his donations in the name of Allah. And as long as the name of Allah is not taken, the recipient does not accept it. All the people of the manifest and the immanence can understand the good reasons for this, because it is necessary for the principle of *tawakkul* [Trust in Allah] so that the sight of both parties does not ignore the Ultimate Provider and Guarantor. Further, the giver should not become proud and the recipient should not get the feeling of humiliation among his fellow-beings.

<sup>48</sup> *Insaf Nama*, Vali bin Yusuf<sup>dz</sup>, Hyderabad, 1987 AD/ 1407 AH, Chapter 6, pages 141-142

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, page 142.

<sup>50</sup> Quran, S. 6: 118-119 MMP.

<sup>51</sup> Quran, S. 6: 122 MMP.

In short, we have discussed the highest and lowest concepts about Trust in Allah. And it all depends on each person's norms, Faith [*iman*], stamina, patience and attention to Allah. "...For Allah guides whom He will to a path that is straight."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Quran, S. 2: 213 AYA.