

MAULUD

**The First Ever Biography
of
Hazrat Syed Muhammad
Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}**

**Bandagi Miyan Hazrat
Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ}**

**English Translation by
Hazrat *Faqir* Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi**



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English Translation by: Hazrat Faqir Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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

Jamiat-e-Mahdavia, Bangalore is pleased to publish the English translation of Moulud, the first ever biography of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}.

This book, originally in Persian, was written by Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ}, the son of Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, the fourth khalifa of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. Its Urdu translation has been widely available in the community. Hazrat Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi Saheb has now translated this book into English.

Jamiat-e-Mahdavia, Bangalore since its inception in 1982, has operated out of the Jamat Khana at Matadahalli, R T Nagar, Bangalore to serve the religious needs of the Mahdavia Community in Bangalore. However, it is only recently that Jamiat-e-Mahdavia has started contributing to the publication of Mahdavia literature. This is the second book being published by us. The first book which we published was the English translation of Afzal Mu'jizat Al Mahdi (Supreme Miracles of Mahdi^{AS}) by Hazrat Syed Qasim Mujtahid-e-Giroh^{RA}. We plan to publish more books in the future, Insha Allah.

This book is published with contributions from the descendants of Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} who wanted to present this English translation of the book written by their grandfather, Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ}, to the Mahdavia world. May Allah reward them for their efforts and may He bless them with *Iman - Ameen*.

January 1, 2007

Syed Amjad
Secretary,
Jamiat-e-Mahdavia, Bangalore

FOREWORD

Maulud Sharif is the first biography ever written of Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi al-Mau'ood^{AS}.

The author, Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ} was the son of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, a very close companion of the Imam^{AS}.

Hazrat Abdur Rahman^{RZ} was born in Farah in Afghanistan a few months before the demise of the Imam^{AS}. His father brought him up and meticulously educated him despite the most trying and adverse conditions prevailing at the time. It is difficult to imagine them now because we are living in a materialistic atmosphere shorn of all spirituality and piety—norms that were strictly adhered to during those times.

An instance of how Hazrat Shah Nizam^{RZ} trained his son is to be found in the books of *naqliat* [narratives].

One day, Hazrat Shah Nizam^{RZ} and Hazrat Malik Ma'roof^{RZ} were sitting in the mosque after the *zuhr* prayers. The Shah^{RZ} told the Malik^{RZ}, “Give your daughter in marriage to Miyan Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ}.” The Malik^{RZ} agreed to the proposal. Then the Shah^{RZ} told Hazrat Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ}, “Your marriage will take place this evening. Take two *tinkas* [local coins] from the money in the niche of the *hujra* [room]. Buy some soap, wash your clothes and those of the bride and bring them back.” He did as told. Later in the evening, the *nikah* ceremony was performed. The Shah^{RZ} and the son went to the house of Hazrat Malik Ma'roof^{RZ} and took the bride, who was of tender age, to their home. The next morning the news of the marriage spread. The Shah^{RZ}'s *murids* brought some clothes, some food and cash. The Shah^{RZ} distributed everything as *sawaiyath* among the inmates of the *daira*. Three days went by. The couple had been starving. In the morning on the fourth day, Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ} went out to answer the call of nature. While returning, he found some grains of wheat on the

way where the carts carrying the corn of wheat had passed. He collected them and brought home. Hazrat Shah Nizam^{RZ} was sitting in the *Jama'at Khana*. The Shah^{RZ} asked the son what it was. He told the details. The Shah^{RZ} said, “Go and throw the grains where they were lying.” When Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ} returned after throwing away the grains, the Shah^{RZ} said, “O Miyan Abdur Rahman! In the earlier days, such a thing was allowed for the *awlia-Allah*. But in the era of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, it is not allowed. That is why I asked you to throw the grains at the place where you had picked them.” A *pahr* [about three hours] later, Raje Muradi and Raje Soon [sisters of King Mahmood Begadha of Gujarat] sent bread, sweets, fruits and other eatables. The Shah^{RZ} said. “Allah has sent this. Distribute it as *sawaiyath*. This bounty is for the newly married couple.”

This narrative shows that the *murshid* of the *daira* was in abject penury. The donations that were received were distributed equally among the inmates of the *daira*, despite the fact that the son and daughter-in-law of the *murshid* were starving for the previous three days. The grains that were brought did not belong to anybody. Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ} collected them, as they were lying there unclaimed. Their collection and bringing were worldly economic activity that marred the trust in Allah [*tawakkul*]. A *faqir* has to trust in Allah and he can take what is offered to him unsolicited and without asking for it. Here, this rule had been violated. As such, the Shah^{RZ} asked his son to return the grain to where it was lying. The son acted upon the orders of his father who was his *murshid* too.

Such was the training the Shah^{RZ} imparted to his son.

Compare this with our own conditions and see if we, in the present circumstances, can subject ourselves to such strict discipline, piety and truthfulness in an effort to live our lives to win the pleasure of Allah. Can we?

The answer would be a flat ‘No’.

The result was that Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ} became a *hafiz* of Quran and an accomplished scholar with good command over the Arabic and Persian languages. He had an inimitable style of writing. He has collected all the information about the life of the Imam^{AS} from his companions and compiled his biography. This is the most authentic account of the life of the Imam^{AS}. All other biographies were written much later on the basis of what the authors had heard from the *mushids* of later generations. A careful study of this book will give a correct perspective of the conditions prevailing during the period of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi al-Mau'ood^{AS}.

—Faqr Syed Khalilulla

Bangalore,
January 1, 2007

PREFACE

On a cool January day this year, the telephone rang around noon. I picked up the receiver. To my pleasant surprise it was Hazrat Faqr Abul Fatah Syed Nusrat, son of the great Mahdavi scholar, As'ad-ul-Ulama Hazrat Abu Sayeed Syed Mahmood^{RA}, from Chicago. I have never met him. But he appeared to be familiar.

Among other things, he asked me to translate the *Maulud Sharif* into English. I had read it many times. And every time I read it, I enjoyed reading it. It is short, concise, crisp and to the point. Its author is Bandagi Miyan Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ}. His is a unique style. He uses Quranic phrases in such a way that they appear to be coined for his writings. And they hide in themselves deep meanings. When one reads the text and realizes the Quranic connotations of the phrases, one enjoys the depth of the meaning of his writings.

I had just finished the first draft of my analysis of the book *Sainthood and Revelatory Discourse* by Dr David Emmanuel Singh a couple of days earlier and had a couple of weeks at hand to take some rest. I decided to implement the suggestion to translate *Maulud Sharif* instead of lazing and relaxing. The exercise was interesting and rewarding. I enjoyed every moment of it.

The book traces the biography from the birth of the Imam^{AS}, takes us through his childhood, his school days, his memorizing the whole of the Quran at the age of seven, his acquiring the mastery of all the religious sciences, including the *hadis*, *fiqh*, the schools of the *mazhabs* of the four *Imams*, the *zahiri ilm*, scholastic theology, and other branches of knowledge by the time he was 12. He was so brilliant in his learning and exposition of the nuances and intricacies of the written and spoken word that the scholars of Jaunpur and Danapur unanimously conferred on him the title, *Asad al-Ulama* [Lion among the Learned] at the same age. He showed

his martial skills on the battlefield in a war between the king of Jaunpur, Sultan Husain Sharqi, and that of Gaur in Bangal, Rai Dalpat, and won the day for the Sultan. Then he started his life long migratory journey of over 16,000 kms through land and ocean to propagate the religion of Allah and explain the purport of the word of the Supreme Being [*Kalamullah*] in accordance with His commands revealed to him directly without the medium of an Angel day after day. He covered parts of north and west India, came as far down south as Bijapur [in Karnataka] and sailed to Arabia for the obligatory pilgrimage to Makkah, returned to India and covering the north west regions went to Khorasan and Afghanistan. His last camp was the city of Farah *Mubarak*. There he breathed his last after accomplishing his divine mission of imparting the knowledge of the Ultimate Truth to the earthly humans, raising them from the most humiliating depths of the *Nasut* to the dizzying heights of *Lahut*. And Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ} has skillfully painted the picture of so precious a life with his characteristic aplomb. May Allah be pleased with him! May He guide us to the straight path of the virtuous on whom He has bestowed His Grace; and not of those who earn His anger nor of those who go astray! *Ameen!*

—Faqir Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi

Bangalore,
January 1, 2007.

List of Abbreviations:

| | |
|-----|---|
| SLM | <i>Sall Allahu Alahi-o-Sallam</i> |
| AS | <i>Alaihis Salam</i> |
| RZ | <i>Razi Allahu Anhu/Anha/Anhum</i> |
| RH | <i>Rahmatullahi Alaih</i> |
| MMP | Translation of Quran by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall |
| AYA | “The Glorious Quran”, English Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali |
| AMD | <i>Tafsirul Quran</i> by Abdul Majid Daryabadi |

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hazrat Malik Sulaiman^{RA 1} writes:

A son was born in the house of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam *Darya-e-Wahda-Asham*^{RZ 2} (one who drinks ocean of unity) at Farah Mubarak, in Afghanistan. Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} was informed of it. He went to the house of the Shah^{RZ}. In accordance with the practice of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, the Imam^{AS} performed the ritual of pronouncing the *azan* and *iqamat* in the ears of the newborn. He named the baby as Abd ar-Rahman

The mother of the child could not nurse it, as she was weak due to hunger and penury. Hazrat Shah^{RZ} took the baby and placed it at the feet of the Imam^{AS}. The child started suckling the big toe of his foot. When the child was satisfied, the father took it home. Whenever the child started crying the Shah^{RZ} used to take it to the Imam^{AS} and leave it at his feet. This became a daily routine. One day, the Shah^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “*Khundkar!*”³ Abdur Rahman does not suckle. He is content with the bounty of the *Khundkar*.” The Imam^{AS} replied, “Why would he drink milk? He drinks *nur* (light, divine luminosity).” This went on for nearly two years.

Hazrat Shah Nizam^{RZ} initiated Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ} into the Saintly Order of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. He remained in the company of his father, the Shah^{RZ}.

¹ The author of *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani*, a manuscript.

² Later, to become the fourth of *Khalifa* of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}.

³ *Khundkar* means teacher or a respected elderly person, and usually the *murids* address their *murshid* as *Khundkar*.

The Imam^{AS} showered great love and benevolence on Miyan Abdur Rahman^{RZ}. Based on this, the companions of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} addressed the junior Shah, as a *Muhajir-e-Mahdi*^{AS}. They gave him an equal share of *sawaiyyat* as befits a full-fledged companion of the Imam^{AS}.

Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ} was a *hafiz* (he who memorises the whole of Quran) and had a good command over Arabic and Persian. He has written this *Maulud* in chaste Persian, with a liberal sprinkling of Arabic. The members of the Mahdavia community have great respect for him and this book.

He had met Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} too. He was around 32 when his father, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, the fourth Khalifa of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, died.⁴

Hazrat Syed Dilawar Goray Miyan^{RA 5} adds: Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ} wrote this *Maulud* during the period of the companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. This is the first biography of the Imam^{AS}. It is a major source of information about the Imam^{AS} and his times. It is being copied generation after generation until this day. It has reached us through the virtuous (*sadiqin*).

Of late, some members of our community have distorted the commandments of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}, as the Jews and Christians had distorted the Old and New Testaments in the past. In view of the recent distortions, we are presenting the original *Maulud*, with its (Urdu) translation. Hence, we respectfully submit that it is the first duty of the readers to consider all material that is contrary to this *Maulud* as the insinuations of the Devil — (Hazrat) Syed Dilawar Goray Miyan^{RA}.

⁴ *Tarikh-e-Sulaimani*, a manuscript, *Gulshan* 8, *Chaman* 2, as quoted in the introduction of *Maulud*, p.2.

⁵ The translator of the *Maulud* into Urdu.

INTRODUCTION

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

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds Who has guided us to the Straight way. Had He not guided us, we would never have become the guided. And I begin His praises with the name of Allah; whose is the Kingdom in the Heavens and the Earth. He is All-Powerful. Salutations to His *Habib* (Friend) Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, his descendants, companions^{RZ}, their descendants and wives. Salutations also to his (Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}'s) *Tab-e-Huda* (Follower in Guidance), who is the Lord of the Era and the inheritor of the Prophet of Allah, the Merciful, the Master of the knowledge of the Book (Quran) and the knowledge of the *iman* (Faith), the Knower of the knowledge of the (Divine) Realities and one who explains His Pleasure. Salutations also to his descendants, companions^{RZ} and their descendants and wives and all those who follow the Guidance of the Imam^{AS} until the Day of Judgement, that is, on the Truthful, the Martyrs. These people are the best of friends of the Apostles of Allah in Paradise. This is the Grace and Bounty of Allah. Verily, Allah is the Knower, the Wise. *This is what We rehearse unto thee of the Signs and the Message of Wisdom.*⁶

BIRTH

Hazrat Bibi Aamina^{RA}, the mother of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} was a pious, virtuous woman of a pure nature, a sincere worshipper who performed *sajdas* (prostrations), observed fasts, was a perfect follower of the path of *Shariat*, and avoided the wrongful path of the

⁶ Quran, S. 3: 58 AYA.

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astray. She also performed *karamaat* (wonder works). She was also a learned woman. She used to fast during the day and spend her nights in remembrance of Allah.

One day very early in the morning, she fell in a reverie and saw that the moon, or, according to another report, the sun descended from the heavens, entered her garments and went out of her sleeve. The higher it rose the brighter it became. She fell unconscious and fell into a *jazbah-e-Haq* (divine absorption). Her brother, Qayyam al-Mulk, was informed. He too was learned man, a pious and perfect follower of *Shariat*. When he came and saw his sister, he said, "There is nothing to be sorry about it. This is a divine absorption." Sometime later, she recovered. The Malik asked her for details. When she gave the details, he said, "It appears that Allah Most High will cause through you the birth of the Seal of the Saints (*Khatam al-Awlia*)." Then, he touched her feet, and said, "O! My sister! You have made our seven generations proud. But the condition is that you do not share this information with others, friends or foes."

In short, four months later, she used to hear voices that said, "This is Mahdi Mau'ood." At the end of the period, she gave birth to a son on a Monday, in the year 847 AH in Jaunpur (now in Uttar Pradesh, India). The Seal of Prophets, Hazrat Muhammad^{SLM} too was born on Monday. The Prophet^{SLM} has said, "I was born on Monday. I like to eat one day and remain hungry the next. I will be called on Monday and I will die on Monday."

All the idols fell on their faces on the day of the birth of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} and an unknown angel, announced loudly, "*Truth has (now) arrived, and Falsehood perished: For Falshood is (by its nature) bound to perish.*"⁷

⁷ Quran, S. 17: 81 AYA.

Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said, “Mahdi is from me, will follow in my footsteps and will not err.”

Hazrat Miyan Daniyal^{RZ}, who was the *afzal-e-zaman* and *murshid-e-dauran* (superior of the time and spiritual guide of the age), heard the angel’s voice of the *arrival of the Truth* and later came to know that the idols in the temples had fallen facedown. He realised that an esteemed person was born on that day. Then he was in search of what had happened. He got the information that Allah had in His infinite Grace and Mercy bestowed a son to Hazrat Miran Syed Abdullah^{RA}. In his reply the Shaikh^{RZ} said, “This is a good day, the day of the birth of the Promised Mahdi and the birth of the Promised Mahdi was the testimony to the previous *khalifas of Allah*.” The Shaikh^{RZ} called Miran Syed Abdullah^{RA} and asked for the details about the child. The Miran^{RA} said, “When the child was delivered, it was free of blood and filth. On the night of the birth, the lamps in the houses in the town went out and people were running hither and thither in a strange manifestation (of light)⁸ as the lamp that had been lighted by the lamp of the *Vilayat-e-Muhammadi* (Sainthood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}), was born.

Allah has said, “*Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose Oil is well-neigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it; Light upon Light! Allah doth guide*

⁸ On the night of the birth of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}, the whole of Jaunpur was flooded in a manifestation-like light, which covered the buildings, the trees and stones around. People were astounded to see this strange light and ran helter skelter. The lamps had gone out and would not light until the morning. This was a miracle of the birth of the Promised Mahdi^{AS}.

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whom He will to His light: Allah doth set forth Parables for men; and Allah doth know all things.”⁹

Allah further says: “*But Allah will choose for His special Mercy whom He will--for Allah is Lord of Grace abounding.”¹⁰* Here *His special Mercy* is the Prophet-hood and the Sainthood. And the two of them, that is, the Seal of Prophet-hood and the Seal of Sainthood are equal at all times, in all places, in all words, deeds and situations (*ahwal*).

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} narrates that Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “Even as I was delivered into this world, Allah commanded, ‘*He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent: and He has full knowledge of all things.*’”¹¹ He further said, “At that time itself, Allah imparted the teachings of all the four (heavenly) Books.¹² If this *banda* (servant) were to recite the Torah (Old Testament), people would be amazed and would ask, ‘How do you know?’ Then they would think that Hazrat Musa^{AS} (Moses) had reappeared. However, this *banda* has assimilated it. If this *banda* were to recite the *Bible*, people would have said, ‘The Masih^{AS} ibn Maryam^{AS} is manifested again.’ Similarly, if this *banda* were to recite the *Psalms of David*, people would have said, ‘It is David.’ If this *banda* were to recite the Quran, the people would have said, ‘This distinguished person (*mard-e-aziz*) is Hazrat Muhammad Rasoolallah^{SLM} that has manifested again.’ People would have succumbed to doubts. They would have started to affirm the *nabuwat*, but this *banda* has assimilated it also by the Grace of Allah, because Allah has sent this *banda* to bear the burden of the *Vilayat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.”

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has said, “Allah Most High tells me, ‘O Syed Muhammad! We have created you specifically to bear the

⁹ Quran, S. 24: 35 AYA.

¹⁰ Quran, S. 2: 105 AYA.

¹¹ Quran, S. 57: 3 AYA.

¹² The four (heavenly) books are the *Psalms of David, Torah, Bible and Quran*.

burden of the Sainthood (*Vilayat*) of Our *Habib* (Friend, that is, Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}). Hence, we make you to perfectly perform the *aadab* (etiquette) of the *Shariat*. This is Our Favour and Mercy upon you.”

Further, it is narrated that Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has said, “Allah Most High has given me all that He had given to Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. Whatever He has given me; He had given it to Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. He had neither given it to anybody before Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, nor will He give it to anybody after me.”

In short, Hazrat Syed Abdullah^{RA} told Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ}, “When the child was born, it had covered the private parts of its body with its palms. When the child was clothed, it would withdraw its hands from its private parts. When the child was unclothed, it would place its hands as before to cover its private parts. The crying of this august baby was not like that of other babies. The voice of the baby would attract the attention of the listeners.”

The *Shaikh al-Islam* (Daniyal^{RZ}) then asked, “How have you named the baby?” Hazrat Syed Abdullah^{RA} said, “Last night I dreamt that Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has arrived. He told me, ‘I have named the child after me.’ Accordingly, I have named the child as Miran Syed Muhammad.”

Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said, “Mahdi is from me. His name will be my name. His father’s name would be like my father’s name. His mother’s name would be like my mother’s name.”

Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} asked, “How is his appearance and complexion?” Hazrat Syed Abdullah^{RA} said, “He is of wheatish complexion. He has a bright forehead, raised nose and joined brows.” Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said, “Mahdi is from me. He would have a bright forehead, raised nose and joined brows.”

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Hazrat Shaikh^{RZ} congratulated Hazrat Syed Abdullah^{RA} and said good-bye.

However, during its childhood, it manifested so many miracles that the *‘arifeen* (saints) said with certainty, “There are great secrets in this child. Many people would be eagerly waiting for the secrets to manifest. Verily, this child will distribute unknown treasures. In addition, this downpour of the Mercy will convert the evils of the Created (*makhluq*) into eternal Cure.”

A tradition of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} says: “He (Mahdi) will fill the earth with justice as it would be filled with injustice and oppression.” This will manifest itself with his *dawat* (call). Furthermore, he would open the hearts of the people of the Arab and *Ajam*¹³ (Arab and non-Arab countries).¹⁴

¹³ *Ajam* means non-Arab countries.

¹⁴ Hazrat Bandagi Abdul Malik Sujawandi^{RA} has written: Besides, the Tradition reported by Ali ibn Hazli, who quoted his father as saying, “I entered the presence of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} in a situation where the soul of the Prophet^{SLM} had been taken away. Hazrat Bibi Fatima^{RZ} was standing near the head of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM}. The Tradition is long. Towards the end of the Tradition, Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} is quoted as having said, ‘O Fatima! By the *zath* of God who sent me with the Truth, the Mahdi of this *ummah* (community) is from you (that is, from Fatima^{RZ}). That would be when the mischief of the world would manifest and the paths severed. They would plunder each other. Neither the elders have mercy on the younger ones or the younger ones any respect for the elders. Then Allah Most High will send a person who will conquer the forts of *zalalat* (going astray).’ (For details of *husun az-zalalat*, see *Muqaddima Siraj Al-Absar*, p. 842.) He will open the closed hearts. He will establish *din* during the Last Era as I (Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}) did during the early period (of Islam). Abu Naim Isfahani in the matter of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has reported this Hadis with suitable authorities

PERSONALITY

Now, let us listen to the details of the appearance of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. The face and life of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} was like those of the Seal of Prophet-hood. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has stated, “If Hazrat Prophet Ibrahim Khaleelullah^{AS} (Abraham), Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and this *banda* (servant) had lived during one and the same period, nobody would have been able to distinguish one from the other from among us.”

The details of the appearance of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}: His face was bright. His curly hair was of medium length. The head was large, the forehead broad. His eyes were like those of the *Bani Israil*. They were big and brilliant. The pupils were black. The white of the eyes was spotless with a reddish tinge. His eyebrows were jointed and eyelashes long. His beard was thick. His cheeks were bright, the nose raised and the ears of medium size. The neck was medium; the limbs were long, the shoulders wide, the palms of the hand strong and the fingers long. The right cheek sported a black beauty spot.

There was the Seal of Sainthood on his right shoulder. The chest, the thighs and the shins were medium, the feet well balanced, the bones large and the organs were soft.

His body permeated the fragrance of roses, the saliva of his mouth was like musk and *ambergris* and his limbs were very fragrant as if he had just used perfumes.

He had a pleasant appearance, which was a cause of comfort. He had a dignified face.

He was a good conversationalist. His voice was soft. He was very eloquent; one would not get tired of listening to him. He used to weep much and laugh little. His majestic talk would be full of wisdom. He had vast knowledge. His company was fascinating and delightful.

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His religion would bestow faith (*iman*) from Allah. He used to be smiling always. He was very kind. Bravery was writ large on his face. The face exhibited his generosity. He was true to his word. His deeds were like those of the Prophet^{SLM}. His situation was in conformity with the Quran. In addition, the miracle was that he appeared to be taller than the tallest, while standing and sitting among them. His shoulders appeared to be higher than those of the others. He used to sleep little and talk little. He would meet people scarcely. The sins of those who met him were washed away.

He used to give profuse sermons on Quran. He would forgive the sinners. He used to hide the shortcomings of others. Wherever he went, good fortune would follow his feet. His anger was scarce. He would soon become happy. He would listen to others with rapt attention and in reply say only what was right. He used to support the religion of Allah and the practice of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. He would demolish all innovations, habits and customs. In this respect, he was not like the other saints who took a lenient view and distinguished between the good and the bad innovations (*bid'aat*).

BENEFACTION

Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} has said, “Allah Most High has kept no good deed (*hasanah*) concealed from His *mahbub* (beloved). Which good deed is there that Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has not performed? He was *mushtari* (planet Jupiter) in favour of the seekers of Allah. He was *mirrikh* (planet Mars) in case of His opponents. His *zath* was the garden of bravery and a bouquet from the flower garden of Prophet-hood. His *nutq* (word) was the divine speech. His commandment was the divine and pristine commandment. His heart was the treasure of the secrets of Quran. His body was the bearer of the divine Trust (*amanat*). His conversation was the panacea for the aching hearts in the divine Love (*muhabbat*). His words were affection and love for

the sorrowful and separated persons. His discourses were for the entire Creation (*khalayaq*). His call (*dawat*) was for the rejection of all relationships ('*alaiq*).¹⁵ Obedience to him was obligatory on the humans and the *jinn* (spirit or genii). His discourse (*bayan*) was a commandment for his supporters and opponents alike. His existence was illuminating. His blessed title was the equal of Muhammad Mahmood^{SLM} (the praised and the commendable) because he is the perfect follower (*tabe'-e-taam*) of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. He had been sent for all, the special and the ordinary. His talk was sweet. His voice was soft. He was the friend (*munis*), a sympathiser of the orphans. He respected the indigents (*fuqara*), clashed against the foolish, visited the sick and consoled them. His chest was a treasure of Allah. His heart was the house of Allah. His soul was the secret of Allah. His colour was the colour of Allah. His hair was halter for the *fuqara*. His body odour was the fresh whiff of the morning air. His face was the very appearance of a heart-ravisher.

His height was like the slim and tall cypress tree of the unseen gardens. His forehead was brighter and more brilliant than the sun. His support (*mahmil*) is the Blessed Allah, the Best of Creators.¹⁶ His call (*Dawat*) is the Most Just of the Judges.¹⁷ His temperament was the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.¹⁸ The morning smiles with the *nur* (luminosity) of his face. The worldly monarchs who draw the bounty of the perfume from *musk* and *ambergris* are the beggars of his street. The East and the West are tied with one of his hairs. All the

¹⁵ His call (*dawat*) was for the abandoning the relationships, giving up the effort to eke out a livelihood and remain in perfect dependence on God who bestowed sustenance.

¹⁶ Quran, S. 23: 14 MMP. The Quranic Verse says: "... So blessed be Allah, the best of Creators."

¹⁷ Quran, S. 11: 45 MMP. The Verse says, "...Surely Thy promise is the Truth and Thou art the Most Just of the Judges."

¹⁸ Quran, S. 12: 92 MMP. The Verse reads. "...He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."

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crowned princes of the immanence come to him with *sadaqat* (Truth). The definition of his group is "Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him."¹⁹ A beautiful flower of his bouquet is "he who has come from his Lord with a clear proof."²⁰ The Quranic Verse, "Say thou: 'This is my way: I do invite unto Allah...I and whoever follows me,'"²¹ is associated with Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. The Quranic Verse, "...God will be All-sufficient for thee..." is the glad tidings for the Imam^{AS}.²² The term '*ulil-'albaab*' is the glad tidings for the group of Hazrat Imam^{AS}.²³

¹⁹ Quran, S. 5: 54 MMP. The Verse says, "O ye who believe! Whoso of you becometh a renegade from his religion (know that in his stead) Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him, humble toward believers, stern toward disbelievers, striving in the way of Allah and fearing not the blame of any blamer..."

²⁰ Quran, S. 11: 17 MMP. The Verse reads, "Is he (to be counted equal with them) who relieth on a clear proof from his Lord, and a witness from Him reciteth it, and before it was the Book of Moses, an example and a mercy? Such believe therein, and whoso disbelieveth therein of the clans, the Fire is his appointed place. So be not thou in doubt concerning it. Lo! It is the Truth from thy Lord; but most of mankind believe not."

²¹ Quran, S. 12: 108 AYA. The verse says: Say thou (O Prophet): "This is my way: I do invite unto Allah — on evidence clear as seeing with one's eyes, — I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah! And never will I join gods with Allah!"

²² Quran, S. 8: 64 MMP. The Verse says, "O Prophet! Allah is sufficient for thee and those who follow thee of the believers". Here the term 'follows' is interpreted as the 'perfect following (*tabe'-e-taam*)'.

²³ Quran, S. 3: 190-191 MMP. The Verse says, "...The men of understanding. Such as remember Allah, standing, sitting and reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say): Our Lord! Thou created not this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Preserve us from the doom of Fire." It is narrated that Hazrat Imam^{AS} has said, "Allah has told me that '*ulil albaab*' means only your group. (Please see *Anwar-al-'uyun*, by Hazrat Syed Qasim Mujtahid Giroh^{RA}). It is obvious from this divine commandment as related by Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}, *Muradullah* that the attribute of the group of the

All the leaders (*nuqaba*) and nobles (*shurafa*) draw their shares from the *khirman* (barn or produce) of the Imam^{AS}. The *qutb*²⁴ and the *Ghous*²⁵ are the *mu'tamadin* (trustworthies). The *abdal*²⁶ and *autad*²⁷ are the *mu'taqidin* (devotees) of the Imam^{AS}. All *awlia-Allah* (saints of Allah) draw their *faiz* (bounty) from the *Vilayat* of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}, which is the *Vilayat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}'s saying, "I am from the *nur* (light) of Allah," is its *qiwwam* (essence). His call (*dawat*) of *zikh-e-dawam* (perpetual remembrance of Allah) is on the entire *makhluq* (humankind). His generosity is for the whole of humanity. His *sawaiyyat* (equal distribution of what Allah gives without asking) is for all the *fuqara*, irrespective of whether they are special or ordinary. The perfect emulation of the Seal of Prophet-hood, Hazrat Muhammad^{SLM}, is for Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} alone. Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} is his name. His *munkir* (he who denies the Mahdi^{AS}) will be humbled. *O Allah! Make me live in this community. Make me die in this community. In addition, on the Day of Resurrection, judge me with the Islamic Testification and tasdiq (of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}).*²⁸

Imam^{AS} is to remain in the remembrance of Allah standing, sitting and reclining, that is, always.

²⁴ A title or degree of rank among religious mendicant, a lord, a chief. — *Urdu English Dictionary*, p.547.

²⁵ A title of Muslim saints who spend most of their time in God-worship and it is commonly believed that they are so engrossed in worship that their head and limbs fall asunder. — *Urdu English Dictionary*, p. 519.

²⁶ *Abdal* means saints not known to the public moving from place to place occasionally, in the interest of divine administration. — *Urdu English Dictionary*, p. 26.

²⁷ *Autad* are a body of saints whose number at one time in the world is just four. — *Urdu English Dictionary*, p. 83.

²⁸ This is a supplication recited by the Mahdawis.

FIRST WORDS

When the time for the Imam^{AS} to talk arrived, the first words he uttered were, "Mahdi Mau'ood has come." Sometimes, he used to recite these words.

One day, Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} asked Hazrat Miran Syed Abdullah^{RA}, "Is Miran Syed Muhammad happy?" Miran Syed Abdullah^{RA} said, "Yes." Again, the Shaikh^{RZ} asked, "How is the *chal* (character) of Hazrat Miran Syed Muhammad?" In reply, Hazrat Syed Abdullah^{RA} said, "His word and deed appear to be in conformity of the *Shariat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. We cannot describe his condition but strange attributes appear in his *zath* (essence). Sometimes we see something like a seal on his back. We do not see his excrements, though we try to see them."

It came to the mind of Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} that this was the time for the appearance of Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} and that this child could certainly be Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. He congratulated Hazrat Miran Syed Abdullah^{RA} and took leave of him.

The Shaikh^{RZ} had a *khanqah* in the city of Jaunpur where people used to learn. Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA}, elder brother of Hazrat Miran Syed Muhammad^{AS}, was a student of this school. One day, the Shaikh^{RZ} asked Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} to bring Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} to the school. Accordingly, Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} started to go to the school with his younger brother, Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. When they reached near the school, the Shaikh^{RZ} got up from his seat and came a few steps to welcome Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}, took him to the school and made him sit on his own seat. Then he sat down near the seat. The Shaikh^{RZ} treated him with great hospitality and respect. He went bare-foot for some distance to give him a respectful send off. The Shaikh^{RZ} was so happy at the visit of the Imam^{AS} as if he had seen the *zath-e-anwar* (i.e., *Khuda* or God).

TASMIAH KHWANI

When the time for schooling came and the Imam^{AS} became four years, four months and four days old, Hazrat Miran Syed Abdullah^{RA} arranged for a feast and sent word to Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ}, “Today is the *tasmiah khwani* of Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. Please come and make Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} recite the *bismillah*.²⁹ The Shaikh^{RZ} came to the house of Hazrat Syed Abdullah^{RA}. The child was made to sit on a stage. The Shaikh^{RZ} himself stood beside the stage. All the guests, including the *ulama*, *fuqaha*, *atqia*,³⁰ and nobles of the king’s court, stood around the stage. Around the same time, Hazrat Khizr^{AS} too arrived. However, nobody among the guests noticed or recognised Hazrat Khizr^{AS}. However, Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} recognised him and stood up to receive him respectfully. Everybody was perplexed at this and wondered whom Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} had honoured. Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} went into a *muraqabah* (meditation). When he raised his head, he saw that Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} was among the guests. He invited the Khwaja^{AS} very respectfully to come near. Both the Shaikh^{RZ} and the Khwaja^{AS} made Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} sit on the stage. They sat on the ground. Hazrat Khwaja Ilyas^{AS}, Hazrat Prophet Esa^{AS} (Jesus) and Prophet Idris^{AS} too arrived there at the command of Allah Most High. When the time to recite the *Bismillah* arrived, the Shaikh^{RZ} requested Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} to perform the ritual. Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} said, “You perform the ritual. Allah Most High has specifically sent me. (He had commanded that) My *Habib* (friend) recites the *Bismillah* and you say *Ameen* (amen). (The *Ameen* is said at the end of the *Fatiha*.)”

²⁹ *Tasmiah khwani* is the ceremony to mark the beginning of the education of a child. A respected elderly person or a *murshid* makes the child recite *Bismillah* and the first chapter of Quran, *Fatiha*.

³⁰ Devout God-fearing people.

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Accordingly, Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} helped Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} recite the *Bismillah* and *Fatiha*. Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} said *Ameen* in aloud voice.

Then Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} was sent to the school of Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ}, who was an *alim billah* (who had received his knowledge from Allah), the teacher of *Shariat* and a *murshid* of *Tariqat*. Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} sat in the school.

Whenever Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} came to the school to learn the *zahiri ilm* (the manifest knowledge), the Shaikh^{RZ} used to give great respect to the Imam^{AS} and prevailed upon all others to respect to him. This made Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} a little jealous of his younger brother, Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. He thought Hazrat Shaikh^{RZ} did not give him the respect he gave to his younger brother.

Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} came to meet Hazrat Shaikh^{RZ} as usual. After he departed, the Shaikh^{RZ}, as a test, asked Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA}, who the visitor was. Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} said he did not know. Then he asked the same question to Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. He said, “That was Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS}.” Hazrat Shaikh^{RZ} consolingly told Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA}, “This brother of yours is a great man. You are not aware of the greatness Allah has bestowed on him. Allah willing, you will come to know of it.” It was now that Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} realised the greatness of his younger brother. After that, Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} began to give more respect to Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}.

EDUCATION

When Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} recited one section (*ruku'*) of the Quran, Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} would read a whole part

(*juz*) of the Book.³¹ He committed to memory the whole of Quran by the time he was seven years. After that, when the Shaikh^{RZ} explained a part of any book, the Imam^{AS} would explain the whole of the book with questions and answers and the purport and the sum total of the knowledge in it.

When the Imam^{AS} reached the age of twelve years, he had mastered all branches of religious knowledge. Whenever a difficult issue was encountered, all the *ulama* of the school got their unsolved issues solved by the Imam^{AS}.

It is narrated that two *ulama* were entangled in solving a difficult issue for over six months. No *alim* could solve their problem. One day the Imam^{AS} asked them what had perplexed them. They said, “Miranji! For a long time we wanted and we were in search, but our difficulties were not solved by any *alim*.” They read out their problems at the instance of Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. Immediately, Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} solved their problem.

Even Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} got his problems solved by the Imam^{AS}. Because of this, all the *ulama* unanimously conferred the title *Asad al-Ulama* (Lion among the Learned) on Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}.

In short, from the day Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} went to sit in the school of Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ}, Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} regularly visited it every Thursday and asked a few questions of Hazrat Imam^{AS} as a test. When the Shaikh^{RZ} could not solve them, he would ask Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} would solve them in one answer.

³¹ The Quran consists of 30 parts (*juz*) and 114 chapters (*surahs*). *Ruku'* is a section of the part or the chapter.

TRUST OF THE PROPHET^{SLM}

When the Imam^{AS} reached the age of twelve years, seeing the time to be opportune, Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} thought of handing over the Trust of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} to Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}. He told Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ}, “You and Hazrat Mahdi^{AS} should come to the mosque, called Khokhri Masjid, which was in the jungle. The place is good. The river is flowing. Like the Gardens of the Paradise! That was the *saqi* (cup-bearer) serving the wine of Divine Love to the seekers in their spiritual exercises. It is the healer of the open and bright hearts.”

Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} went near the Khokhri Masjid with Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS} and Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA}. Here, Hazrat Khwaja, Khizr^{AS} asked some questions of Hazrat Shaikh^{RZ}. He did not answer them. Then he asked the questions of Hazrat Imam^{AS}. In one reply, he solved all the issues. Then Hazrat Khizr^{AS} sat with Hazrat Imam^{AS} and handed over the Trust Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had left with him to be given to Hazrat Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. Hazrat Khizr^{AS} said, “This is the burden of the trust. Allah says, ‘*We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but man undertook it: — he was indeed unjust and foolish.*’³² All is given to you.”

Then the Khwaja^{AS} respectfully said, “Allah Most High has commanded that you should give religious instruction (*talqin*) to the people from this Trust of your ancestor, Hazrat Prophet Muhammad Mustafa^{SLM}. This is the burden of *zikh-e-Khafi* (hidden remembrance of Allah). It was in trust with us. We have conveyed it to you. Something should be bestowed on the person who bore the burden of the Trust.”

³² Quran, S. 33: 72 AYA.

After this, Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} gave the religious instruction (*talqin*) to Hazrat Khwaja^{AS}. Then the Khwaja^{AS} came out of the seclusion and told Hazrat Shaikh^{RZ}, “This *zath* is Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. I have affirmed and confirmed (*tasdiq*) his being Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. I have received the *talqin* also. You also perform the *tasdiq* and receive *talqin*.” The Shaikh^{RZ} did as told. Then, Hazrat Syed Ahmad^{RA} followed suit.

When Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} handed over the Trust of his *Vilayat* to Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS}, he moistened a date with his saliva and gave it to Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} and said, “Give this to the Imam *Aakhir az-Zaman* (Leader of the Last Era, that is, Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}.)” The trust also was to be handed to the Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}.

It is narrated that Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} handed over the date to Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} when he was alone with the Imam^{AS} at the time of handing over the Trust of the Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} to him at the Khokhri Masjid. The Khwaja^{AS} had preserved the date in his headgear. He told the Imam^{AS}, “This is the *paskhurda* (sacred left-over) of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. Please take it.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Yes.” Then the Khwaja^{AS} told the Imam^{AS}, “Allah's command for you is that whenever a person comes to you with the desire to become your *murid* (disciple), instruct him in *zikh-e-khafi* (hidden remembrance of Allah).”

MARRIAGE

Some time after this, the engagement of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} with his paternal uncle, Hazrat Miyan Syed Jalaluddin^{RA}'s daughter, Hazrat Bibi Iahditi^{RZ} was announced. Subsequently, the marriage took place.

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Meanwhile, Hazrat Shaikh Daniyal^{RZ} called the Imam^{AS} as *Syed al-Awliya* (the Chief of the Saints). The fame of the Imam^{AS} as the saint became widespread.

In short, after a considerable time, the king of Jaunpur, Sultan Husain Sharqi, who was in the rank of a perfect saint and *Amir-e-'adil* (just ruler), had great respect for the Imam^{AS}. So much so, that it was difficult for him to live without meeting the Imam^{AS}. He had received the *tarbiat* and *talqin* from Hazrat Imam^{AS}. The king was not given to fighting the infidels without the guidance and company of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. He had achieved great spiritual ranks by his religious exercises. He would not fight a war without first ascertaining the opinion of the soul of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. He fought seven wars with the (prophetical) sanction. First Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} would get the inspiration from the soul of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, and then the sultan would get the information.

During a sermon one day, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “Being subservient to a Muslim monarch is permitted. Being subservient to an infidel is not permitted.” The Sultan, who was present during the sermon, became annoyed, as he was the feudatory chieftain subject to a non-Muslim king.

The king respectfully told the Imam^{AS}, “Whatever the Hazrat^{AS} has said is true. However, we are disappointed because the non-Muslim monarch is powerful and can destroy all the Muslims. But if now your eminence were to help us, I will never submit to the non-Muslim king.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah will help His religion.”

With the hope that Allah will help His religion, the king offered a few lakh (hundred thousand) *tinkas* (local coins) to the Imam^{AS} for preparing for the war and said, “Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} too had accepted such money for the *ghazis* (people who fought a religious war and survived).” The king also deployed some virtuous people to serve the Imam^{AS}.

One day the blessed soul of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} informed Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}, "We have given the region of Gaur (in Bengal) to you." Subsequently, Sultan Husain Sharqi too got the information that he would conquer the region of Gaur. Immediately the Sultan came to Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} and told him, "I have seen Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} in a dream. He said, 'The conquest of Gaur has been given to you.'" The Imam^{AS} replied, "We too have been informed that we would conquer the region of Gaur."

After this, Hazrat Imam^{AS} and the Sultan marched towards Gaur. The monarch of Gaur, Dalpat, travelled a long distance (of seventy leagues) and fought the war. He had an army of three hundred thousand trained soldiers and mounted fighters. They had always emerged victorious. They fought so vigorously that the army of the Sultan was defeated. However, Hazrat Imam^{AS} steadfastly continued to remain on the battlefield with his 313 people.

Meanwhile, the Sultan repeatedly sent word to the Imam^{AS} that the enemy had defeated him and that the Imam^{AS} too should retreat. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, "Today the victory is ours, God willing. Wait for some time."

When the flag of the kingdom of the Raja Dalpat appeared, the Imam^{AS} recited the Quranic Verse, "*Nasrum-minallaahi wa fat-hun-qariib*"³³ He spurred his horse. When they advanced, a white brave elephant with a huge golden chain in its trunk came forward and attacked. It was routing the Sultan's army. The Imam^{AS} said *Bismillah* and fired an arrow. The arrow pierced the forehead of the elephant, which turned, fell and died.

³³ Quran, S. 61: 13 AYA. The verse means, "...*Help from Allah and a speedy victory...*"

VICTORY

Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}, along with the devotees of the Truth, those joined with the *zath-e-mutlaq* (the absolute essence, that is, God) and the slayers of the infidels went ahead to defeat the army of Rai Dalpat. This was in accordance with the Quranic Verse, "...*But those who were convinced that they must meet Allah, said, 'How oft, by Allah's will, hath a small force vanquished a big one? Allah is with those who steadfastly persevere.'*"³⁴ They recited the supplication: "Our Lord! Bestow on us endurance, make our foothold sure, and give us help against the disbelieving folk."³⁵ They defeated the army of Rai Dalpat by the command of the Lord. In addition, Hazrat Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} killed the infidels. "Some among them did not favour some others among them. Neither did a big one turn towards the small one, nor did the small one turn to the big one."

By that time, Rai Dalpat who had reached the fort turned and came face to face with Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}. He attacked Hazrat Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} with his sword. The sword came down on the neck of the horse but it did not hurt it. Hazrat Imam^{AS} drew his sword from its sheath and brought it down on his (Dalpat's) shoulder. Rai Dalpat fell in two pieces in such a manner that his heart was exposed. The heart too was cut into two pieces. Allah says, "*Then the people who committed wrong were cut off completely. And all praise is to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.*"³⁶

The image of the deity he worshipped was manifest on the heart of Rai Dalpat. He uttered the name of his deity as he breathed his last. When the Imam^{AS} saw the image of the idol on Rai Dalpat's heart, and he heard the voice of Dalpat, the

³⁴ Quran, S. 2: 249 AYA.

³⁵ Quran, S. 2: 250 MMP.

³⁶ Quran, S. 6: 45 AMD.

door of understanding the delicate questions opened on the immanence (*batin*) of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, which was lighted by the brightness of the proximity of the eternal divinity of God. At that time, the Imam^{AS} experienced a trance: “If the effect of falsehood was so strong, what would be the effect of the Truth on the heart of the believer (*mumin*)?”

Meanwhile, the command of Allah Most High arrived, “We did not bring you into existence to ride the steed and live in worldly splendour. Instead, We have created you specifically for our *zath* (essence, nature). Allah says, “*And I have prepared thee for Myself (for service).*”³⁷

On the divine command, the Imam^{AS} who was riding the horse, dismounted from it.

When all this information, including that the Imam^{AS} had become unconscious, reached the Sultan, he came and found that the Imam^{AS} was resting on the ground. At that time, all the five *ul’ul ‘azm* prophets³⁸ actually helped the Imam^{AS} to his feet; while outwardly the Sultan was seen helping the Imam^{AS} to his palanquin. The Sultan presented the flag of his kingdom to the Imam^{AS} and said, “This Victory is of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}.”

UNAWARENESS

At that time, the Imam^{AS} was so unconscious that he knew nothing of this world. This situation continued for seven years. However, he used to perform the daily ritual prayers (*namaz*)

³⁷ Quran, S. 20: 41 AYA.

³⁸ *Ul-ul ‘azm* (determined, resolute] prophets are Hazrat Adam^{AS}, Hazrat Nuh^{AS} (Noah), Hazrat Ibrahim^{AS}, Hazrat Musa^{AS} and Hazrat Esa^{AS} (Jesus), who actually helped Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} to his feet. Manifestly, the Sultan helped the Imam^{AS} to his palanquin.

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and fasting (*roza*). He had no consciousness of the *sunnat* and *wajib* prayers. He was conscious of only the *farz* (obligatory) ritual prayers, which he performed without fail.

However, despite this unconscious, the Imam^{AS} returned the few hundred thousand *tinkas* (local coins) the Sultan had provided for the war preparations and were lying un-spent, and said, “We do not need this money now.”

It is said that the Sultan had deployed fifteen hundred mounted soldiers for the service and security of the Imam^{AS}. However, another *rivayat* says that 313 soldiers were deployed. Each of them had two swords.

It occurred to the Sultan that the amount he had sent for war preparations to the Imam^{AS} was meagre and was not compatible with the dignity of the Imam^{AS}. Hence, he sent a decree submitting the *jagir* of seven big and prosperous towns to the Imam^{AS} through *Qazi* Muhammad Ali. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} became annoyed and returned it. The *Qazi* returned and told the Sultan, “Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} did not pay any attention to me. He is probably annoyed because you did not go in person.” Immediately, the Sultan went to the Imam^{AS} with the intention to offer his kingdom to the Imam^{AS} if he so wished.

However, he found that the Imam^{AS} was not interested in anything worldly. The situation was entirely different. The sultan recited the quartet:

*What would the person who has achieved you do with
the jan (soul, life)? /
What would he do with the wife, children and luggage?
You bestow both worlds by making one a lover of God /
What would your lover do by taking both worlds?*

After this, the Imam^{AS} would recover his consciousness for an hour or less, once a month or two, and then he would relapse into the same condition. On one such occasion, his wife Hazrat Bibi Iahditi^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “Miranji! Many years have passed. No nutrition has gone into your body. What would be the condition?” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said in reply, “The

nutrition, which nourishes the soul, has become the food for the body too.” Having said that, the Imam^{AS} became unconscious again.

Quite some time later, the Imam^{AS} regained his consciousness and the Bibi^{RZ} said, “What is this situation that you remain unconscious and cannot bear it?” The Imam^{AS} said, “The manifestations of the *zath* of Allah Most High occur continuously that even if a drop from this deep ocean of Divinity were given to a *kamil Vali* or an apostle, he would never regain consciousness for the whole of his life. Allah tells me, ‘since We have made you the Seal of the Sainthood (*Vilayat*) of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, We make you say the *farz namaz*. This is Our Grace and Benevolence on you.’” Then again, the Imam^{AS} relapsed into unconsciousness.

Seven years later, the Imam^{AS} regained consciousness and asked his wife to bring drinking water at the time of ‘*isha* (night) prayers. The Bibi^{RZ} was very happy at the turn of events. However, when she returned, she found him unconscious. She stood with the glass of water in her hand until the morning. After regaining consciousness in the morning, he asked, “Did you bring the water now?” The Bibi^{RZ} said, “I brought the water at the time of ‘*isha* and am standing with it until now.” Then the Imam^{AS} asked her to bring water for ablutions. She brought it. Until then, the Bibi^{RZ} used to help him in performing the *wazu* (ablutions). However, on that day, he performed the *wazu* on his own. The Imam^{AS} said the ritual prayers for thanksgiving and supplicated, “O Allah! As this woman has provided comfort to me by her service to me, You make her comfortable in Your August Presence.” Then again, he said, “The Bibi^{RZ} will get three shares of *faiz* from us.”

NEXT FIVE YEARS

After a period of seven years when the Imam^{AS} was in unconsciousness except for the brief periods of awareness for

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the performance of the ritual prayers (*namaz*), a period of five years followed when the Imam^{AS} used to be in a state of awareness at times and unawareness at other times (that is, *sahu* and *sukr*). The period of *sahu* was one when the Imam^{AS} was in the obedience and worship of God. *Sukr* was the period when the Imam^{AS} was unaware of his own *zath* and near and dear ones.

During these five years, the quantity of food that went into the body of the Imam^{AS} was calculated and it was found that the quantity of food items, like food grains, *ghee* (butter oil), meat and other things that the Imam^{AS} consumed was around seventeen *seers*.³⁹

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} has reported that when somebody told the Imam^{AS} the quantity of food Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had consumed during the period of 23 years of his *dawat* (call) was around twenty *seers*, the Imam^{AS} replied, “The quantity of our food should be less than that of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.”

SHAH DILAWAR^{RZ}

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} was the nephew (sister’s son) of Rai Dalpat, the ruler of Gaur. The Sultan’s soldiers captured him after the Rai’s defeat. The Sultan gave him to his sister as her servant. The Sultan’s sister Salima Khatoon brought him up as her own child. However, Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} continued to be in a state of *jazbah* (unawareness). This unawareness was because he had seen Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} at the battlefield. When Salima Khatoon did not see any worldly wisdom in Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}, she assigned him the work of grazing the sheep. The story is long. What the eyes have seen needs no explanation. Despite this, the

³⁹ A *seer* is of 80 tolas, whereas a kilogram was of around 84 tolas.

necessary details are that she sent Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} to the Imam of the Era, that is, the Imam^{AS}. She also sent word, “Allah has sent this to you. Please accept him.”

The Khatoon was a competent mystic. She had been initiated into the Order of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. She had come to know that the Shah^{RZ} was capable of serving the Imam Mahdi^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} was performing the *wazu* (ablutions) for the *zuhr* (afternoon) ritual prayers (*namaz*). He had reached the stage of *masah* (an operation of purifying before the ritual prayers, wiping the head), when Shah Dilawar^{RZ} arrived. The Imam^{AS} said, “He is not Dilawar but he is Shah Dilawar. We have accepted him. Allah Most High too has accepted him.”

Then, the Imam^{AS} performed the *dogana tahiyat al-wazu*,⁴⁰ called Hazrat Shah Dilawar^{RZ} and instructed him in *zikh-e-khafi* (hidden remembrance of Allah). The Imam^{AS} held the right hand of the Shah^{RZ} and said thrice, “Become the *murid* (disciple) of Allah. Say, ‘*la ilaha hoon nahin.*’” Then the Imam^{AS} placed his hand above that of the Shah^{RZ} and said, “Become the purport (*murad*) of Allah, and say, ‘*Illa Llah toon hai.*’” These two breaths of the Imam^{AS} enlightened the Shah^{RZ}. Everything between the Empyrean and the nether regions of the earth became visible to the Shah^{RZ}, as a grain of mustard on the palm of his hand. Then the Shah^{RZ} went into a *jazbah* (divine unawareness). They shifted him to a *hujra* (room) and made him stay there.

MIGRATION

After this, Allah’s command arrived, “O Syed Muhammad! Migrate for Our sake and go for the Hajj of *Ka’abatullah* (the house of Allah at Makkah). (At *Ka’abatullah*, your call

⁴⁰ A unit of prayer of two *rak’aat* (cycles) of thanksgiving *namaz* after the ablutions and before the regular ritual prayers.

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(*dawat*) will manifest.” Based on this, the Imam^{AS} started his *Hijrat* (migration).

The Sultan of Jaunpur came to Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} and respectfully said, “All this country and kingdom is yours. Your Eminence should remain here as our guardian.” At this, the Imam^{AS} recited this quartet:

*O Allah! The heart should remain tied to a place
That the jan (soul) should be liberated from this tie
It should not be that the heart is tied to a place
That the jan (soul) is destroyed by this tie.*

Then, the Sultan offered, “I too will accompany you so that I am forgiven from my minor sins.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} gave him the glad tidings (*bisharat*) of *Iman* (Faith) and said, “Your coming (with me) will result in the infidels gaining an advantage over Islam, and there will be great dissensions among the Muslims.” The Imam^{AS} departed on his life-long migratory journey from Jaunpur.

The names of those who accompanied the Imam^{AS} are: Qazi Ali Muhammad; Miyan Abu Bakr, the son-in-law of the Imam^{AS}; Miyan Syed Karimullah; Miyan Syed Salamullah; Miyan Syed Ghani; Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar; Miyan Jamal; Miyan Qutb; Miyan Ladh (*Pesh Imam* of the *namaz*); Miyan Haji Muhammad; Miyan Shaikh Bhik; Miyan Tahir and Miyan Bhil^{RZ}. They were all the seekers of Allah and who had joined the *zath* of Allah. (May Allah be pleased with them)

At every camp (*manzil*) people in large number came to the Imam^{AS}, became his disciples (*murids*), gave up the trifling worldly enjoyment,⁴¹ became the seekers of the Vision of Allah and accompanied Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}.

⁴¹ Quran, S. 4: 77 AMD. The Verse says: “...Say thou, trifling is the enjoyment of this world...”

DANAPUR

The Imam^{AS} reached Danapur, his first stop after the migration started. At this place, Hazrat Bibi Ilahti^{RZ}, wife of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, experienced a reverie and heard an unknown voice, which said, “We have made your husband, Syed Muhammad, the Mahdi Mau’ood. He will bear the burden of the *Vilayat* (Sainthood) of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and is the Seal of the *Vilayat* of the Prophet^{SLM}. He is the lord of the Time and Our *khalifa* (Vice-regent). Confirm and affirm (*tasdiq*) him as such. His *inkar* (disavowal) is Our *inkar* and My *inkar* is his *inkar*. Confirming and affirming him is an obligation on both the worlds. His *zath* is the Mercy of the Worlds.”

The Bibi^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS} all that she had seen and heard. Confirming the details of the incident as correct, the Imam^{AS} said, “At all times, this *banda* receives the commandment of Allah that We have made you the Mahdi Mau’ood. Its manifestation depends on the (right) time. When the time comes, it will manifest.”

The Bibi^{RZ} touched the feet the Imam^{AS} and said, “Miranji! Please forgive all the mistakes I have made in your service and bear witness that in your presence I have confirmed and affirmed (*tasdiq*) you as the Mahdi. When the time of (making) your claim comes, it will manifest.”

Be it known that as Hazrat Bibi Ilahti^{RZ} has performed the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, Hazrat Khadijathul Kubra^{RZ} (the first wife of the Prophet^{SLM}) had performed the *tasdiq* of the *nabuwat* (Prophethood) of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.

In short, all the migrant companions of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} received the information from Allah, “We have made your *murshid*, Syed Muhammad, the Promised Mahdi. Perform his *tasdiq*.” Accordingly, the migrant companions would come in

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ones and twos and tell the Imam^{AS} what they had learnt. The Imam^{AS} would listen to them patiently and then say, “Yes. It is true. Your information is correct. It will happen that way. This is a time-bound event. Be attentive to work (that is, be in the remembrance of Allah).” Then the Imam^{AS} recited the couplet:

*The work is time-bound, it will not happen in a hurry/
When the time comes all of a sudden, the closed pomegranate opens.*

Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, the fortunate son of the pair, overheard all that had transpired between Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} and Hazrat Bibi^{RZ}, including the *tasdiq* of the Imam^{AS} by the Bibi^{RZ}. (It may be recalled that after the death of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}, the companions, particularly including Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, had called him *Sani-e-Mahdi*[the Second Mahdi]. This was in accordance with the Commandment of Allah, “... *the second of the two; when they were in the cave....*”⁴² Somebody asked, “How do you call him *Sani-e-*

⁴² Quran, S. 9: 40 MMP. In a footnote, MMP says, “The Prophet and Abu Bakr during the flight from Mecca to al-Madinah.” However, Abdul Majid Daryabadi (AMD) has this to add: Out of Makkah, he (Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}) felt lonely and helpless, having only one companion with him. One among the tiny group was the Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} himself. His single companion was no other than the first Caliph, Abu Bakr^{RZ}. The ‘second of the two’ became one of the most honoured titles, ‘His life attained its apogee when Muhammad chose him to accompany him on the flight from Mecca, and his self-sacrificing friendship was rewarded by his name being immortalised in the Quran as “the second of the two.” (EI. I. P. 81). The cave was in Mount Thaur to the south-east of Makkah, where the two fugitives lay hidden for three days to avoid the very close search of their enemies bent on capturing them and well skilled in tracking. They had narrowly escaped detection and with the help of some miracles. ‘They crept in the shade of evening through a black window, and escaped unobserved from the southern suburb. Pursuing their way, south, and climbing in the dark up the bare and rugged ascent, they reached at last the lofty peak of Mount Thaur, distant about a hour and a half from the city, and took refuge in a cave

Mahdi?” Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} said, “The purport of *Sani-e-Mahdi* is *sani-e-Asnain* (the Second of the Two)”.

Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} was twelve then (that is, at Danapur). He was standing outside the tent of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. When the voice of the talk between the Imam^{AS} and his wife^{RZ} reached his ears, the *Siddiq-e-Vilayat* or Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, he became unconscious and fell down. Immediately, a command of Allah arrived. According to it, the Imam^{AS} came out of the tent and saw that Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} was immersed in the *Jazbah-e-Haq* [divine ecstasy]. The Imam^{AS} carried him into the tent and said, “Bibi! See that the heart, body and all his flesh, skin, bones and every hair of his body have become *illa Llah*.⁴³”

Then, Hazrat Imam^{AS} gave him the support of his knee, took the hand of the Bibi^{RZ} into his own hand, placed it on his chest and then on the chest of Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} and said thrice, “Whatever Allah has placed in this chest, He has also placed in the chest of Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}.” Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had said, “Whatever Allah has placed in my chest, He has placed the same thing in the chest of Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}.”

Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} regained his senses some two or three *pahr* (six or nine hours) later, and said, “I confirm and affirm (perform *tasdiq* of) the Mahdihood of Hazrat Miran Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. When the time of (manifesting) the claim of the Mahdiat arrives, it will manifest.”

near the summit.’ (Muir, op. cit. p. 138). *Tafsir al-Quran*, Vol. II, by Abdul Majid Daryabadi [AMD] pp. 234-235.

⁴³ Part of the *Kalima: La ilaha illa Llah*. It means ‘but God.’

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Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ}, who was near the tent, had heard all the details of the reverie of Hazrat Bibi Ilahditi^{RZ}, and the conversation between Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} and others. As the Imam^{AS} emerged (from the tent) for the *zuhr* ritual prayers (*namaz*), Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} approached him, touched his feet, and said, “This *banda* (servant) too performs your *tasdiq*. When the time of the claim of the Mahdihood arrives, the Truth will manifest.”

REVIVING THE DEAD

Arriving at Danapur, the Imam^{AS} stayed there for some time. He sent two of his companions, Hazrat Miyan Shaikh Bhik^{RZ} and Hazrat Miyan Shaikh Bhil^{RZ}, to the city of Danapur for shopping.

Earlier, the Imam^{AS} had said that Hazrat Miyan Shaikh Bhik^{RZ} was the *qa'im muqam* (successor) of Hazrat Prophet Esa^{AS} (Jesus). What he meant was that if Hazrat Shaikh Bhik^{RZ} were to progress beyond the station of Jesus, he would be taken away (that is, he would die).

Hazrat Miyan Bhik^{RZ} and Hazrat Miyan Bhil^{RZ} had gone to the city on the orders of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. They saw that a large number of men and women were wailing. Hazrat Miyan Bhik^{RZ} asked why they were lamenting. They said, “Our leader was a respected elderly person. He died.” Hazrat Miyan Bhik^{RZ} said, “Let me see.” Seeing the body, Hazrat Miyan Bhik^{RZ} said, “He is not dead.” Taking the hand of the body he said, “Get up.” The body rose and came back to life. All the people turned to the Shaikh^{RZ}. The Shaikh^{RZ} ran away from the people and came to the Imam^{AS}. The people followed him. Then, the Imam^{AS} said, “Drive away these ignorant people. They refer the created *banda*, full of faults, as the god.” They cleared the people.

After this, the Imam^{AS} asked Shaikh^{RZ} about the matter. The Shaikh^{RZ} said, “It is all known to the *Khundkar*.”⁴⁴ Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “*Shariat* is that you tell it.” Then, the Shaikh^{RZ} related the whole story. The Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “You have slandered yourself.” The Imam^{AS} was greatly annoyed, expressed the intention of a three-day fast and engaged himself in worship (*ibadat*). Expecting the supplications to be answered, he prayed, “O Allah! Protect my followers from the evil of *karamat* (minor wonder-works). After three days and three nights, the commandment of Allah arrived, “We have freed your followers from the evil of the *karamat*. We had not freed the followers of any apostles and saints from the evil of *karamat*. The station of the evil of *karamat* is very small.”

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} had fallen into the *jazbah* of the *Haqq*. His condition was so serious that he could not firmly place his feet on the ground because of the continuous divine manifestations. The Imam^{AS} left Shah Dilawar^{RZ} at the mosque of Duraj, proceeded from there towards and arrived at the city of Chanderi.

It became well known in the city that a perfect and eminent saint, who explained the *Shariat* and *Haqiqat* very eloquently like the Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, had arrived. Daily over five to six thousand people gathered to listen to the sermons of the Imam^{AS}. Most of them fell into the divine *Jazbah* after listening to the *bayan* of Quran, the bounty of the *dawat* (call) and drinking the sanctified leftover (*pashkurda*) of the Imam^{AS}. The good advice of the Imam^{AS} too had its effect on the people.

There were 18 *mashayakheen* in the city. They were scared that their popularity, pomp, pageantry and dignity would suffer if the Imam^{AS} were to continue to stay there. In jealousy and

⁴⁴ *Khundkar* is a form of addressing respected elderly people, including the *murshid*. It is derived from Persian word *Akhund* or *akhun*, which means teacher. —*Fairoz Al-Lughat*, p. 13.

hostility, they sent some men to expel the Imam^{AS} from the city. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} told them, “Allah has commanded me also to proceed further from here.”

However, the miscreants again argued with the Imam^{AS}. Then the *mashayakheen* sent a larger group of miscreants, demanding to know when the Imam^{AS} was leaving. They threatened to create trouble. Then, in accordance with command of Allah, the Imam^{AS} stood up and said, “See! Who will be the target of the trouble? The Imam^{AS} left the city at night and camped at a distance of about a mile from the city. Two of the companions of the Imam^{AS} who had given their clothes to the washerman remained in the city overnight.

They came to the Imam^{AS} the next day. The Imam^{AS} asked them, “What were the trouble and the light last night in the city?” They said, “It was the effect of the displeasure of your eminence!” Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, “Nobody would be troubled by the people of Allah. Our people will not become the scorpions and snakes. Allah says, ‘*Whatever misfortune happens to you is because of the things your hands have wrought, and for many (of them) He grants forgiveness.*’”⁴⁵

FIRE IN CHANDERI

The story of the fire and violence at Chanderi the previous night was: A drinking bash resulted in a quarrel between the sons of the *mashayakheen* and the Government officials. One son of a *mashayakh* killed the son of an official. The local ruler caused the death and destruction in the city. The houses of the *mashayakheen* were set on fire. Their women were disgraced, arrested and herded into an open space.

The next camp of the Imam^{AS} was Chapaneer near Vadodara (in Gujarat). Here the Imam^{AS} stayed for eighteen months. At

⁴⁵ Quran, S. 42: 30 AYA.

this place, the wife of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, Hazrat Bibi Ilahditi^{RZ}, died on the 3rd of Zil-Hajja (the twelfth month of Muslim Calendar) leaving behind her three-month son, Ajmal^{RZ}. Hazrat Bibi Budhan^{RZ} informed the Imam^{AS} that a gold *tinka* (local coin) was found lying on the bed of Hazrat Bibi Ilahditi^{RZ}. The Imam^{AS} ordered, “Bring it so that the forehead of the Bibi^{RZ} can be branded after heating it because the Bibi^{RZ} had claimed to have trust in God (*tawakkul*).” Bibi^{RZ}’s brother, Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ}, heard about the command of the Imam^{AS} and ran to him. He told the Imam^{AS}, “I say it on oath that the *tinka* did not belong to Bibi Ilahditi^{RZ}. It was owned by Hazrat Bibi Fatima^{RZ}, her daughter.”

Then, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “I knew that the Bibi^{RZ} possessed nothing except Allah Most High. However, under the *Shariat* of Hazrat Rasool-Allah^{SLM}, it was necessary to order the branding her forehead with the red-hot *tinka* to protect her from being branded in the Hereafter.” The Bibi^{RZ}’s last rites were performed and she was laid to eternal rest at the foot of the Dongri Mountains in Chapaneer. These days there is no sign of the grave of the Bibi^{RZ}. Hence, when one goes to offer prayers and blessing at her defunct *mazar*, the practice is to stand in front of the *Ek-minar* mosque facing the mountains and recite *Fatiha* and *darood* in the name of the Bibi^{RZ}. This mosque is about a mile away from the mausoleum of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}.

SHAH NIZAM^{RZ}

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} *Darya-e-Wahdat-Asham*^{RZ} was the king of the kingdom of Jais from among the descendants of Hazrat Nizamuddin Awlia^{RA} 46, now in Uttar

⁴⁶ *Maulud* by Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ}.(Urdu), Hyderabad, 1368 AH, p. 42.

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Pradesh in India.⁴⁷ He gave up his kingdom and monarchy at the age of eighteen and set in search of Allah Most High. He went to Mecca, performed the Hajj and went to many eminent *ulama* and preceptors to become their disciple (*murid*). The preceptors he met expressed their inability to make him their disciple. They told him that the time of the appearance of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} was near and that he alone could make him his *murid*. In this desire, he went to many places and persons, finally came to and stayed at Chapaneer.

Here, he got the information that Hazrat Syed Muhammad^{AS}, a perfect saint, had arrived. He hurried to meet the Imam^{AS}. Allah’s command to the Imam^{AS} too arrived, “Our *banda* (servant) is coming! Welcome him.” Accordingly, the Imam^{AS} went alone to welcome him. When Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Nizam^{RZ} came within the sight of the Imam^{AS}, he (the Imam^{AS}) recited the couplet:

*Manifest beauty is nothing/
O brother! Bring the beauty of sirat (character).*

In reply, Hazrat Shah Nizam^{RZ} said:

*Wherever I throw a glance, I see the face of the Friend.
The fault is his who does not have the eyes (to see the Friend,
i.e., God).*

The Imam^{AS} sat down under the shade of a wall and told the Shah^{RZ}, “O Miyan Nizam! Perform the *zikh* of Allah.” The Shah^{RZ} said, “I have come with the same intention to become your *murid*.” Then the Imam^{AS} instructed the Shah^{RZ} in hidden remembrance of Allah (*talqin-e-zikh-e-khafi*). The Shah^{RZ} fell

⁴⁷ *Maulud* by Hazrat Shah Abdur Rahman^{RZ} says that Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} was from among the descendants of Hazrat Nizamuddin Awlia^{RA}, whose mausoleum is in Delhi. This is not correct. He was actually among the descendants of Hazrat Ganj Shakar^{RA}, whose mausoleum is in Lahore, in Pakistan. Hazrat Ganj Shakar^{RA} is a descendant of Hazrat Umar^{RZ}, second Caliph of Islam. Please see the *shajra* in possession of the children of the late Shahabuddin Fauzdar, MLC, Karnataka.

into a *Jazbah-e-Haq* and lost consciousness. He was then taken to a *hujra* (room). The Imam^{AS} then said, “Miyan Nizam^{RZ} is not in his existence (*wajud*). The oil, the wick and the lamp were all ready and this *banda* lighted it from the lamp of the Sainthood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. The Shah^{RZ} remained in the state of unawareness for three days and three nights. When the Imam^{AS} decided to proceed further to Mando, he went to the Shah^{RZ} and said, *Salam Alaika*. The Shah^{RZ} recovered his consciousness and accompanied the Imam^{AS} to Mando.

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When Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} reached Mando, his reputation had preceded him. Sultan Ghiasuddin was a perfect saint and a just ruler. He too got the information. He sent a trust-worthy person to Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} with a humble request, saying, “I would have personally come to meet your eminence. However, my son, Nasiruddin, has imprisoned me. He rules the kingdom himself. He tells me to spend as much as I like. But do not go out of the house.” Impressed by his humility and lamentations, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} sent Miyan Abu Bakr^{RZ} and Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} to the Sultan. When these two eminent persons reached the palace, the Sultan got the entire passage from the main door to his seat, paved with a best silk carpet. He also installed a veil between his seat and the chairs of the visitors because the feet of the Sultan were in heavy golden chains and because of them, he could not stand up to welcome them. When the two emissaries of the Imam^{AS} took their seats, the veil was removed. The Sultan kissed the hands of the visitors. He gifted a large quantity of silver, gold and other things as *sadaqa* (charity). He enquired about the details of the morals and habits of the Imam^{AS}. He, finally said, “The person of these morals and habits cannot be anybody other than the Promised Mahdi (Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}).”

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In short, all those qualities of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} that are proved to be in the Imam^{AS} had manifested in the *zath* (essence, nature) of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. It was finally known that when the time for staking the claim of his being the Mahdi Mau’ood arrives, it would manifest. Verily, this was the *zath* of the *Khalifathullah*.

Then, the Sultan bade them farewell, and sent with them sixty *qantars*⁴⁸ full of silver and gold, a rosary of pearls worth one crore (ten million) *Mahmudis* (local coins). He sent these donations (*futuh*) to Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} saying, “A beggar like me submits three entreaties before a generous person (*Khuda Bakhsh*) like you. Allah says, “...*Nor repulse the petitioner (unheard)*...”⁴⁹ My first entreaty is for the death of an oppressed (*mazlum maut*); the second, martyrdom (*shahadat*) and the third the charity (*sadaqa*) of the share of Sainthood, the *mahdiat*.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said thrice, “All the three entreaties are accepted.”

GENEROSITY

A large number of people followed the gifts of the Sultan to the Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} distributed all the pieces of gold that were in the gifts among the people. He had said, “The seekers of these things were the same people (*bazaari log*).” The Imam^{AS} gave the pearl rosary to *daffalis* (tambourine players). The rosary is said to be worth one *crore* (10 million) *mahmoodis* (local coins). The Imam^{AS} did not even touch it with his hand. He used the tip of his walking stick to lift the rosary and hand it over to them. Hazrat Miyan Salamullah^{RZ}

⁴⁸ The word *qantar* has been used in Quran also. S. 4: 20. There it is used in the sense large quantity of goods. ---*Muqaddima Siraj al-Absar*. P.87. *Arabic English Dictionary* gives its spelling as *kantar*, and its meaning as a varying weight of 100 *ratl*. In Egypt, it is equal to 44.93 kg. In Tunisia, 53.9 kg. In Syria, 256.4 kg.

⁴⁹ Quran, S. 93: 10 AYA.

told the Imam^{AS}, “Miranji! This rosary is priceless.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} retorted, “Allah says... ‘Say (unto them, O Muhammad): the comfort of this world is scant’”⁵⁰ and you say that this rosary is priceless!”

After the crowd dispersed, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}: “Miranji! Some of it has remained.” The Imam^{AS} said, “It would have been better if you had not saved it. All right! Distribute it as *sawaiyyat* (in equal shares among the inmates of the *daira*.)” When they opened the *qantar*, they found it full of silver. All its contents were distributed.

When the Imam^{AS} emerged from his *hujra* (room), he found that most of the inmates of the *daira* had gone for shopping. Only a few were present for the ‘*Asr* ritual prayers (*namaz*). Seeing this, the Imam^{AS} said, “Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ}! Where are the brothers? This thing prevents the people from worship (*ibadat*), congregation and companionship of this *banda* of Allah. Who knows how great would have been the disobedience if all the *qantars* of gold had been distributed among them?”

MIRAN AJMAL^{RZ}

Around this time, the age of Hazrat Miyan Syed Ajmal^{RZ}, second son of Hazrat Imam^{AS} and Hazrat Bibi Ilahtiti^{RZ}, was eighteen months. He was very handsome with a bright forehead. Hazrat Imam^{AS} gauged his spiritual ranks and nearness (to the *zath*), and said, “*Ajmal* has come to *Jamal*.” Hence, he named him Ajmal. The Imam^{AS} used to say often, “How can this be? The two at the same place? Hence, one of the two would not be there.”

⁵⁰ Quran, S. 4: 77 MMP.

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Then, the time of the death of Hazrat Syed Ajmal^{RZ} arrived. The crescent moon of Rabi’ al-Awwal was sighted and the first of the month dawned. The Imam^{AS} arranged a dinner for the inmates of the *daira* on the 2nd of the Rabi’ al-Awwal, the death anniversary of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. When the time for siesta arrived, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} assigned the task of supervising the dinner preparations to Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, his first son. Miyan Syed Mahmood^{RZ} had taken Miyan Syed Ajmal^{RZ} in his hands and was walking near the vessels, in which the meals were being cooked. Miyan Syed Ajmal^{RZ} moved swiftly in the hands of Miyan Syed Mahmood^{RZ} and fell into the fires. He died instantly.

Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} was grief-stricken. He went into the *hujra*, bolted it from inside and cried. Hearing the sad news, the Imam^{AS} went to the *hujra* of Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}. He called Bandagi Miran^{RZ} and said, “Why are you so sorry? Had Miyan Ajmal^{RZ} lived, he would have reached your station. Allah Most High has not created anybody for your station.” He repeated these words thrice and consoled him (Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}).

The funeral of Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Ajmal^{RZ} was held on the 2nd of Rabi’al-Awwal. After it, the Imam^{AS} said in accordance with the command of Allah, “Allah Most High has forgiven the sins of all those buried here (the burial ground). Allah has said, ‘If ye would count up the favours of Allah, never would ye be able to number them: for Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.’”⁵¹ Allah has forgiven all from Adam^{AS} to the moment of the end of the world.” Hazrat Imam^{AS} also said, “*Subhan Allah!* Among the people, Allah has forgiven; there were 360 *huffaz* (who had committed to memory the whole of Quran).”

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} is quoted as saying that Hazrat Ajmal^{RZ} had answered the four questions of *Munkir Nakir* (angels who

⁵¹ Quran, S. 16: 18 AYA.

interrogate the dead in the grave) and then sprinted to the Empyrean of the Lord where he got hold of its pillar. Addressing God, he said, “O Allah! Your commandment at sempiternity and eternity was that You would mark the *hashr* of Syed Ajmal^{RZ} among the congregation of *fuqara*. Who are my *ijma*’?” Allah commanded, “Your *ijma*’ is those who were buried and were being punished. All of them have been forgiven.”

BURHANPUR

Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} proceeded from Mando to a place called Burhanpur. There the chief minister was Hazrat Miyan Iahdad Hameed^{RZ}. He gave up the world, became a seeker of Allah and accompanied the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} camped there for a night and then proceeded to Daulatabad. Here, the Imam^{AS} stayed for a week. He disclosed the ranks of the Saints buried there. From the mausoleum of Syed as-Sadaat Hazrat Syed Raju^{RA} to the mausoleum of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Arif^{RA}, Hazrat Imam^{AS} walked on his toes. He could not place his foot comfortably on the ground.

Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} asked, “Miranji! Why are you walking like this? You do not ride the steed.” The Imam^{AS} replied, “The saints, buried in this place are so greatly accomplished that among their ranks their perfection is manifest like the sun. There are no differences between each other’s ranks.”

The people there used to call Hazrat Syed Muhammad Arif^{RA} as Shaikh Mumman^{RA}. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “He is a Syed (a descendant of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}). One should call him Hazrat Syed Muhammad Arif^{RA}.” The Imam^{AS} recited the *Fatiha* and other supplications usually recited at the grave of the eminent departed souls. He sat at the head of the grave for

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over an hour. Later, after the dawn, he said the two *rak’aat* (cycles) of prayers and left.

Here, the Imam^{AS} dropped his saliva in a well near the mausoleum of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Arif^{RA}. Its water was very salty and bitter. It became sweet.

AHMADNAGAR

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} proceeded to Ahmadnagar from Daulatabad. They were laying the foundation of this city. Nizam ul-Mulk was the king of this country. Information reached him that a *zath* of bounty and blessings has arrived here. The king came to meet Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. He had a secret desire in his heart. That was the desire of a son, as he had no son. The Imam^{AS} gave him advice and counsel. He also gave the *paskhurda* (sanctified leftover) of beetle leaf and nuts, which he was chewing. After this, his queen became pregnant. Subsequently, the Imam^{AS} left Ahmadnagar. Later, a child was born to her. It was named Burhan Nizam al-Mulk.

BIDAR

The ruler of Bidar (now in north Karnataka, India) saw in a dream that a big lion entered the city from one gate and went out through the other. Hazrat Shaikh Mumman Tawakkuli^{RA}, who was a virtuous and pious man, interpreted the dream in this way, “A perfect *Vali* (saint) who would be like Hazrat Ali^{RZ},⁵² would come (to the city) in a short while.” Accordingly, Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} arrived in the city of Bidar some time later. The *ulama* and *mashayakheen* of the place studied the character of the Imam^{AS} and began to tell each other, “Probably, this is the

⁵² The fourth Khalifa of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and Islam Hazrat Ali^{RZ}.

zath of the Promised Mahdi.” Earlier, wherever the Imam^{AS} went, people flocked to him and after receiving his *faiz* they used to say that this was the *zath* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. So much so, that when the disciples of the Imam^{AS} went into the *muraqabah* (meditation), they often heard an unknown voice telling them, “We have made your *Murshid* Syed Muhammad the Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} (Promised Mahdi). Affirm and confirm him as such (perform *tasdiq*).” All the matters, discussed or experienced among the *murids*, were told to the Imam^{AS}. In turn, the Imam^{AS} told them, “Go! Keep yourself engaged in your work (that is, *ziker*). Whatever Allah wills, He will manifest it.”

MUHR-E-VILAYAT

Miyan Shaikh Mumman Tawakkuli^{RZ}, who was famous for his worship (*ibadat*) and piety, who often helped the Imam^{AS} in performing the *wazu*, who used to collect water from washing the feet of the Imam^{AS} and drank it, had received divine inspiration bordering on certainty, that this was the Promised Mahdi^{AS}. One day he requested the Imam^{AS} to place his foot on his (Tawakkuli^{RZ},s) head (that is, visit his house). The Imam^{AS} smiled at it and went to the room of Hazrat Tawakkuli^{RZ}. Then, with great respect, the Shaikh^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “Hot water is ready. It would be a great honour for me if you take a bath here.” The Imam^{AS} agreed to it. When he (Imam^{AS}) removed his clothes for a bath, the Shaikh^{RZ} saw the Seal of Sainthood (*Vilayat*) on the right shoulder of the Imam^{AS}. The Shaikh^{RZ} kissed it. Then he touched the feet of the Imam^{AS} and said, “The purpose of giving you this trouble was to see the *Muhr-e-Vilayat* (Seal of Sainthood). As there was the *Muhr-e-Nabuwat* on the shoulder of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, there should be the *Muhr-e-Vilayat* on your shoulder.”

In the city of Nahruwala, Hazrat Miyan Yusuf Suhait^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “This *banda* is certain that this *zath* is the *Mahdi-e-*

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Mau’ood Aakhir az-Zaman (the Promised Mahdi of the Last Era). But there is a difficulty. I desire to see the *Muhr-e-Vilayat*.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} showed the *Muhr-e-Vilayat* to Miyan Yusuf Suhait^{RZ} after removing his clothes from his body to remove his misgiving. Miyan Suhait^{RZ} had fallen into the *jazbah* immediately after that. After recovering his senses, Hazrat Miyan Suhait^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “Let the Hazrat perform the *dawat*. Otherwise, I will publicly announce to the Creation of God (that is, the people) that this is the Promised Mahdi^{AS}.” Hazrat Imam^{AS} put his sanctified leftover water in the mouth of Miyan Suhait^{RZ}. His enthusiasm of divine Love subsided. A second time, it emerged and that resulted in his death.

In Bidar, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} married a woman. The reason was that after the death of Hazrat Bibi Ilahti^{RZ}, the burden of all the work relating to Imam Mahdi^{AS} fell on the shoulders of Hazrat Bibi Badhanji^{RZ}, the elder daughter of Hazrat Imam^{AS}. It was difficult for Bibi Badhanji^{RZ} to bear the burden of the household responsibilities. However, the woman who was married to the Imam^{AS} refused to accompany him. Hence, the Imam^{AS} sent Hazrat Shah Nizam^{RZ} with the message that if she were to accompany, it would be better. Otherwise, she would be divorced. She accepted the second alternative and continued to live at Bidar.

When the Imam^{AS} departed from Bidar, some eminent learned religious personalities came to him. Among them, was Qazi Alauddin^{RZ} who was a steadfast scholar and a virtuous man. The second was Maulana Zia^{RZ}, whom the Imam^{AS} called ‘*Ashiq-Allah* (devotee of Allah), and Shaikh Babu^{RZ} and Qazi Abdul Wahid Junnairy^{RZ} had heard the unknown voice, which said, “the Promised Mahdi^{AS} has manifested.” These *ulama* gave up their posts of jurists and came to the Imam^{AS} at Bidar. Hazrat Shaikh Mumman Tawakkuli^{RA} also accompanied Hazrat Imam^{AS}.

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} left behind Hazrat Shaikh Mumman Tawakkuli^{RA} at the Iram village because of his old age and

infirmity and proceeded on his journey. The Imam^{AS} told him, “Your purpose has been achieved. You stay here. We are close to you, and you are close to us.” Then the Imam^{AS} recited a couplet:

*If you are from us, you are with us even if you are in Yemen,
If you are not from us, you are not with us; you are in Yemen.*

The Imam^{AS} left the Shaikh^{RZ} at Bidar after reciting the couplet. His mausoleum (*mazar*) is there in Bidar.

After the departure of Hazrat Imam^{AS}, the Shaikh^{RZ} told his *murids*, “On the Day of Resurrection, Allah Most High will ask, “O Mumman! What present have you brought to Our August Presence?” Then, I will say, “O Allah! I have brought these two eyes with which I have seen the *zath* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} and his *Muhr-e-Vilayat* and knew it to be true.”

The Shaikh^{RZ} further told his *murids*, “When you hear that Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has staked his claim to be Imam Mahdi^{AS} at Makkah, go to him immediately and confirm and affirm him. That is obligatory on the whole world. However, if you do not perform his *tasdiq*, I do not have the strength to explain what harm will befall you because of your not performing the *tasdiq* of the Imam^{AS}. You will suffer the retribution of not performing his *tasdiq*.”

MAULANA ZIA^{RZ}

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} departed from the city of Bidar. About two days later, the *murids* of Maulana Zia^{RZ} came to the Imam^{AS} and beseeched him with great humility by saying; “Many people get their sustenance through the *maulana*. Please send him with us.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “Take him away!” The *maulana* requested the Imam^{AS} to forgive him and said, “There is no life for me without your *deedar* (seeing, vision).” The Imam^{AS} told him, “Go for the sake of these people. Allah Most High will not keep you away from us.”

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After this, the *murids* of the *maulana* made him sit in a palanquin. When they saw that the *maulana* was in a state of divine elation and arrogance, they shackled his hands and legs in heavy chains and imprisoned him in his house. A week later, the *maulana* rose and stood in an enthusiasm of divine Love and knocked at the door forcefully. Both the door and the chains broke into pieces. The *maulana* ran from his *murids* in the same condition and came to the august presence of the Imam^{AS}. His *murids* again came to the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} told them, “Earlier, we sent the *maulana* with you for your sake. Now he has come to us for the sake of Allah. And we will help him for the sake of Allah.” Listening to this, they returned unsuccessful.

GULBARGA

Then, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} started his journey towards Makkah for the Hajj pilgrimage. On the way, the soul of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz^{RA} intercepted him and requested him to place his feet on his head (that is, of Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA}) to improve his ranks. Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA} told the Imam^{AS}, “This is because, I had committed a mistake. I had claimed to be Mahdi for three *pahr* (nine hours). I returned to the Truth after gaining consciousness. However, I am ashamed. I will not get rid of this shame unless you place your feet on my head.”

On the insistence of Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA}, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} turned towards Gulbarga. Somebody told the Imam^{AS}, “This is not the road to the Ocean. It goes to Gulbarga.” The Imam^{AS} said, “I know. I am going (to Gulbarga) because of the insistence of Hazrat Syed Muhammad (Gesudaraz^{RA}).” Then, the Imam^{AS} asked Hazrat Miyan Bhik^{RZ}, “Do you see anything?” Miyan Bhik^{RZ} said, “By the *sadaqa* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, I see that Hazrat Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz^{RA} is wearing a *kurta* of *Sharbati* (light orange) colour and a green cap and going with the bridle of the horse of the Imam^{AS} in his

hand.” In this manner, the Imam^{AS} reached the door of the mausoleum of Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA} in Gulbarga.

The Imam^{AS} was wearing his footwear while going towards the mausoleum. There, the *khadims* (servants) of the *dargahs* told the Imam^{AS}, “He is the Vali of Allah. The Hazrat should remove his footwear.” The Imam^{AS} retorted, “Should I listen to you or to your *pir* (preceptor, that is, Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA})?” It is said that the door of the mausoleum was locked. It opened on its own. When the Imam^{AS} entered the mausoleum, the door closed on its own. For two *pahr* (six hours), the people outside the mausoleum heard two persons talking inside. The door opened after two *pahr*.

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} came out of the mausoleum and said, “We know how to respect the saints of Allah. However, Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA} insisted that the dust of my footwear should fall on his grave. And that he would be forgiven.”

The Imam^{AS} left the mausoleum of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz^{RA} and went to the mausoleum of Shaikh Sirajuddin^{RA}, where the Imam^{AS} stayed for a whole week. The children of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz^{RA} offered to feast the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* (servant) of Allah has taken leave of Hazrat Makhdoom Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz^{RA} to go. There is no need of a feast.”

Miyan Chand Muhajir^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “This is the grave of the son of Hazrat Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz^{RA}. His name is Shaikh Maktu. Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA} had won his salvation for him.” The Imam^{AS} said, “It was shown like that to comfort Hazrat Gesudaraz^{RA}. But he will be in eternal retribution across the wall. He will never be forgiven.”

VOYAGE TO MAKKAH

The Imam^{AS} then came to Bijapur, where he camped for some time at the *Ek-kangura* (one-turret) mosque. Then he left the

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place. It was at this time the Imam^{AS} said, “The ground is hard and the people are unfortunate (*zamin sakht o aadmi bad-bakht*).”

From Bijapur the Imam^{AS} went to Dabhol port. There he saw that the pilgrims were embarking the ship. At that time, the Imam^{AS} recited the couplets:

O pilgrims of the Hajj! Where are you, where are you?

Your Beloved is here: Come here! Come here!

Those who are the seekers of Allah Most High: Come here!

Those who do not seek Allah: Don't come! Don't come!

Then the Imam^{AS}, with his seventy companions who were the seekers of Allah Most High and who had seen Allah, boarded the ship. After a few days of journey, a storm broke out. A giant fish, which looked like a mountain, appeared. Hazrat Imam^{AS} came to the side of the ship and looked at the fish. The fish too brought its head thrice above the level of water and looked at the Imam^{AS}. Then the Imam^{AS} gestured the fish with his hand to go away. Some people say that the Imam^{AS} put his saliva in the ocean. The fish swallowed it and went away.

Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} asked the Imam^{AS}, “What was this?” The Imam^{AS} said, “This fish was born behind the seventh ocean. Allah Most High had promised it that He would show it the Seal of the Sainthood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. Hence, the fish came to the appointed place to see us.” It is stated that this was the fish, which had protected prophet Yunus (Jonah) in its bosom. Hence, Allah Most High had told it, “You had protected Our *banda* (servant). Hence, We will show you the Seal of the Sainthood of Our Prophet (Muhammad^{SLM}).”

The ship reached the port of Aden. The Imam^{AS} stayed there for three days. His group again embarked the ship. When the ship reached the place of *ihram*,⁵³ the Imam^{AS} and his companions

⁵³ *Ihram* is the state of ritual consecration of the Mecca pilgrim (during which the pilgrim, wearing two seamless woollen or linen sheets, usually white, neither combs nor shaves, and observes sexual

performed the ritual. The Imam^{AS} said, “We have performed the ritual of *ihram*, whether somebody calls us a *hajji* or a *ghazi* (is immaterial).”

KA’ABA WITH ITS LORD

When the Imam^{AS} joined the circumambulation of the *Ka’aba*, he asked Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, “You had come to the *Ka’aba* earlier also, what had you seen?” The Shah^{RZ} said, “Then I had seen the *Ka’aba* without its Lord; now I see it with its Lord.” Then again, the Imam^{AS} asked, “Are you seeing anything?” The Shah^{RZ} replied, “Yes! The *Ka’aba* is circumambulating our *Khundkar* (that is, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}) and pointing to him, it is saying, “*So let them worship the Lord of this House.*”⁵⁴

After this, one day, which was a Monday, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, under a command of Allah Most High, standing between the *maqam*, *rukn* and *Hajar-e-Aswad* amongst a gathering of people, in a loud voice first recited the tradition [*hadis*] of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and then made the claim of *mahdaviat* saying, “He who follows me is a *mumin* (believer).”

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, Qazi Alauddin^{RZ} and an Arab stood up and in a loud voice affirmed the Imam^{AS}, saying, “We follow you!” It is said that the Arab was Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS}. According to another narrative, he was the Imam of the Shafei *musalla*.⁵⁵

continence); garments of Mecca pilgrim. — *Arabic English Dictionary*, p. 172.

⁵⁴ Quran, S. 106: 3 MMP.

⁵⁵ *Musalla* means prayer mat. In those days, each of the four *Maslaks* (Hanafi, Shafei, Maliki, Hanbali) had a *Musalla* in Kaa’ba and people prayed behind the Imam of their *Maslak*. This practice was abolished in

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After this, the Imam^{AS} asked, “How many witnesses are needed?” Qazi Alauddin^{RZ} said, “Two.”

Then the Imam^{AS} returned to his camp. The people started telling each other, “This person has said a great thing like Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. Now we should debate!” Some others said, “Nobody raised any objection when the claim was made! Now also nobody can raise any objection.”

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} then went to meet (*ziarat*) at the graves of Hazrat Adam^{AS} and Hazrat Bibi Hawwa^{AS} (Eve). The soul of Adam^{AS} embraced the Imam^{AS} with great pleasure and said, “We were waiting for your arrival. The religion was wilting. Customs and innovations (*rusum* and *bid’aat*) had manifested. O Pillar of religion! O Crown of the religion! It is good that you have come. You have brought light and purity with you.”

Hazrat Bibi Hawwa^{AS} (Eve) also embraced the Imam^{AS} and said, “O the fruit of my heart! O the comfort of my eyes! O leader of the religion!” She cried with happiness. When the Imam Mahdi^{AS} returned, his companions asked him, “Why has your back become wet?” Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, “This is because of the tears of happiness of Hazrat Bibi Hawwa^{AS}.”

Then the Imam^{AS} went for the *ziarat* of Prophet Ibrahim^{AS} (Abraham). The soul of Hazrat Ibrahim^{AS} too was very happy. It told the Imam^{AS}, “We were waiting for you. Custom, habit, innovation and going astray (*zalalat*) had become rampant in Islam. Your coming is good. You have given strength to our heart.”

HUNGER

Some days later, there was great hunger and distress among the companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Miyan Syed

early 20th Century after the Saudi family rose to power in Arabia and a single *Musalla* came into being.

Salamullah^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “All the companions are in distress.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “What would you do?” Miyan Salamullah^{RZ} said, “If you allow us, we will look for what is permitted after distress.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Do not beseech (or beg)!”

Hazrat Miyan Salamullah^{RZ} went to the marketplace. About the same time, the Sheriff of Makkah too came there. The Miyan^{RZ} asked him, “Do you have *haq-Allah* (that is the right of Allah)?” He said, “Yes.” Then, the Miyan^{RZ} said, “Many *fuqara* (indigents) are in distress.” The Sheriff gave him five hundred *ibrahimis* (local coins). The Miyan^{RZ} came back to the Imam^{AS} and said, “Allah Most High has given something.” The Imam^{AS} said, “This is not given by Allah. It is what you desired from Allah.” The Miyan^{RZ} prepared broth and distributed among the *fuqara* because their throats had become dry for want of food. They had been hungry for seven or eight days.

Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “Hazrat^{AS} is hungry for many days. For you too, we will bring something.” However, the Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* is *mutawakkil* (trusting in and depending on Allah). You are in distress. I am not!” Then again, the Imam^{AS} said, “Know it for certain! This *banda* is not in need of things that humans need. But, one has to follow the *Shariat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.” Similarly, some seven or nine months were spent in hunger.

Some say that the Imam^{AS} stayed in *Ka’aba* for three months. Then, the Imam^{AS} intended to perform the *ziarat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} (at Madina). He gave the necessary amount of money for camels to travel to Madina.

Meanwhile, the soul of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} asked the Imam^{AS}, “O Syed Muhammad^{AS}! Go towards the towns of Gujarat. Your claim to Mahdihood will manifest in Gujarat.” Hence, the amount advanced to the camel drivers for going to Madina was taken back. The same amount was paid to the ship owners for the voyage to Gujarat.

RETURN VOYAGE

The Imam^{AS} and his companions joined the voyagers and boarded the ship bound for India. During this journey too, there was great distress for the companions of the Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “In this ship, free broth and water is supplied to the passengers. I will take them if permitted.” The Imam^{AS} said, “It is permitted if you are in distress.” Hazrat Salamullah^{RZ} said, “A long time has passed. Any kind of nourishment has not entered your body. If allowed, I will bring something for you.” The Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* is not in distress.” When the Miyan^{RZ} insisted, the Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* is *mutawakkil*.”

There were yet three days to reach the port. A storm began to gather. The inmates of the ship were in fear. The Imam^{AS} was lying on the bed. Hazrat Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} could not keep quiet. He told the Imam^{AS}, “The storm is complete.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “What should this *banda* do?” Miyan^{RZ} said, “The *Khundkar* had said, ‘The keys of the treasures of the secrets of the unknown are in my hands.’” The Imam^{AS} said, “The *Sahib* (Lord, that is, God Almighty) is only One. He has given all the keys in the hands of this slave. But should he wait for the pleasure of the Almighty or open the door on his own?”

Then, the Imam^{AS} came on the deck and looked around. The storm subsided. Then, the Imam^{AS} said, “You have known the superiority of this *banda*. The inmates of the ship in which this *banda* is sailing will never drown. The ship had to sail for three more days and three more nights to reach the port. Allah Most High had commanded it to reach the port in three hours and 45 minutes. ‘In fact, Our servant had drunk sweet water, which was brought only twice, in an ocean of bitter water during a long period. He consumed nothing other than that water.’”

The Imam^{AS} reached the port of Diu, whence he travelled to Ahmadabad.

HAJI MALI^{RZ}

At Ahmadabad, the Imam^{AS} stayed at the Taj Khan Salar mosque for eighteen months. Many people there became his devotees.

A gardener boy who had lost his father used to be in a trance always. The reason for his *jazbah* was that a polytheist had died and his wife burnt herself with the dead body of her husband. At about the same time, another person in the garb of a polytheist appeared. He is said to be Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS}. He gave a shriek. Lamenting and in great humility, he cried in supplication, “O Allah! Grant me the divine guidance to burn in the fire of Your Love so that I sacrifice my body and soul in Your Love, strive in the desire of Your Vision, drink the glass of Your Love and don the dress of Your Benevolence. This woman has knowingly sacrificed her life on the dead body of her husband. She burnt her own body into ashes in her love, which is only manifest. Similarly, if one were to sacrifice his/her life for Allah Most High Who is the creator of every thing, Who provides the sustenance and nourishment to all the living creatures, Who has always been there, Whose is the whole country, Who is One, Who has no partners, Whose is the *zath*. If one were to sacrifice his body and soul for Him, how great ranks and tastiness one would achieve? How great is the negligence! The people have become less courageous than this woman has. Fie upon them.”

Having said his piece, Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS} vanished from the eyes of the gardener boy who fell into the trance. His ancestors were polytheist and gardeners. His relatives used to ask him to water the plants. However, this boy used to sit in the shade of the trees, unaware of every thing around him and immersed in the *jazbah* of the divine Truth. His uncle and cousins would come and see him in this condition. They gave him blows to awaken him from his trance. Then they would

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rebuke him by saying, “You have wasted all the water. It did not reach any trees. If you continue to waste water like this and it does not reach the trees, we will thrash you.” When they went away after all these threats, the gardener boy would revert to his trance. This went on until finally, his uncle expelled him from the farm.

This was what the boy too wanted: to become free from the captivity and make all efforts to achieve the Vision (*deedar*) of Allah. In short, he had heard earlier that there was a House of Allah Most High, that one could see Him there and that the Vision of Allah was impossible in any house other than the House of Allah Most High. He then made up his mind to go to the blessed Makkah and took to the road to it.

After a few days’ journey, he met a holy person, as he had met earlier in the garb of a polytheist. He told the gardener boy, “I see you are perplexed. What do you want? Whom do you desire?” The boy said, “I desire my Creator. I would be in no peace until and unless I see Him.” This holy person was Hazrat Khwaja Khizr^{AS}. He said, “I will show you your Creator.” He held the hand of the boy and took him to the side of water. He then said, “Perform ablutions as I do.” Then the Khwaja^{AS} performed the ablutions and made the boy too perform them. Then he said, “Prostrate as I do.” Both performed the *dogana*.⁵⁶ Then, the Khwaja^{AS} said, “Say, There is no god but God, Muhammad is His Messenger.” The boy said, “How can I say this? My ancestors have never said such a thing.” The Khwaja^{AS} said, “If you want the Vision of God, you have to say this. Otherwise, you will never see God.” The boy was a true seeker. He said, “*La ilaha illa Llah, Muhammad Rasool Allah.*” Then the Khwaja^{AS} told him, “You continue to recite this always. Truly, you will see Allah.” The boy got hold of the garment of the Khwaja^{AS} and threatened him, “I will do what I please with you. Otherwise, Show me the God you had

⁵⁶ *Dogana* is two *rak'aat* of ritual prayer (*namaz*) performed after the ablutions.

promised earlier.” The Khwaja^{AS} told him, “If you are the true seeker (of Allah), go to Ahmadabad. There, Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} is staying at the Taj Khan Salar Mosque for some days. If you really want to see God, he alone will be able to make you see God. Otherwise, you will never see Him.” The Khwaja^{AS} disappeared after saying this.

The boy was a true seeker of Allah. He came to Ahmadabad in his eagerness with some flowers, a couple of garlands and a *sehra*.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, Allah’s command reached Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, “Our *banda* comes for Our Vision. Welcome him.” Hazrat Imam^{AS} went a few steps forward. As he cast his looks on the boy, he (the boy) stumbled, came near the Imam^{AS} and placed his forehead on the feet (of the Imam^{AS}). The Imam^{AS} lifted the head of the boy and placed it on his lap, held the hand of the boy, brought him into the mosque and initiated him in the Order (of the Mahdavis) with the instruction of *zikh-e-khafi* (hidden remembrance of Allah). When the boy uttered the words, *La ilaha illa Llah* (There is no god but Allah), as instructed by the Imam^{AS}, he achieved the unveiled Vision of *the Countenance of the Lord of Resplendent Majesty*⁵⁸ (Allah). He became unconscious and fell to the ground. Hazrat Imam^{AS} placed the garlands around his neck and the *sehra* on his head. The Imam^{AS} named the boy as Haji Mali. He continued to remain in the *jazbah* for three days and then died.

The flowers, placed on his grave at the time of burying him, were fresh for forty days and nights. When the Imam^{AS} was informed of this, he ordered that the grave to be razed. “Otherwise, people will begin to worship it.” All of a sudden, floodwaters overran washing the grave away.

⁵⁷ *Sehra* is a crown of flowers, which also covers the face partly.

⁵⁸ Quran, S. 55: 27 SAL.

HOSTILITY OF ULAMA

When the fame of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} spread throughout the city, people from all walks of life, including the wealthy, the traders, the women, the kings, the scholars and the preceptors (*mashayakheen*), came to him paying fealty to him as his disciples (*murids*), rejected the world, and became seekers of Allah’s Vision. They started living in the company of the Imam^{AS}. The superficially observing (*zahir-parast*) *mashayakheen*, unwise *ulama* and neglectful notables became jealous and raised questions about the Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Muhiyuddin Ibn Arabi^{RA} has stated in his book, *Futuhaat Makkiah*, “When Imam Mahdi^{AS} appears, his open enemies would particularly be the *ulama*.”

The question they raised was, “Is it permitted in the *Shariat* for a woman, during the life of her husband and without his permission, to marry a second husband?” The Imam^{AS} said, “It is permitted if the (first) husband is impotent. Wonder of wonders! Knowing fully well that the person is impotent, why do they marry the girl to him? Do the relatives of the girl separate her from that husband or not? Do the honest *ulama* and *mashayakheen* allow it or not? You buy a thing in the market in the belief that it is good. When there appears a defect in that thing, do you return it or not? You allow all these intricacies and leniencies in respect of this wicked world! However, if a person is a seeker of Allah and does not achieve his objective at one place, you do not allow him to go to another place for achieving it! How good is the desire for Allah? The desire for Allah has become inferior to the desire of the world!” The *ulama* and *mashayakheen* had no answer to this argument.

They approached the king of Gujarat and submitted petitions saying that “this Syed whose name is Syed Muhammad stakes great claims. He makes a number of people his *murids*. He orders them to reject the world. Most of the people have rejected the world and gone into seclusion. They are living in

the company of Syed Muhammad. All this is a defeat of the armed forces of the king. Further, Syed Muhammad has enamoured all the people. He speaks of the (divine) Realities. The rulers of the cities where the Realities are divulged encounter great risks.” The king asked, “What should be done?” They said, “Syed Muhammad should be expelled from the city and all places in the kingdom. For expulsion is more severe than killing.”

Under the influence of the *ulama*, the king sent Eitemad Khan, a noble of his court, to go to Ahmadabad from Chapaneer, the capital of Gujarat. The Khan came to Ahmadabad, presented the royal orders to the Imam^{AS} and said, “The Sultan has ordered that you should leave Ahmadabad and stay at some other place.” The Imam^{AS} replied, “The order of your king is for you. I will go when my king (Allah) orders me to go.” Again, the Imam^{AS} said, “What do these ignorant people know what is the *bayan* (discourse) of *Shariat* or what the *Haqiqat* is? This *banda* (servant) is the follower of the *Shariat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. This *banda* follows in the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. *Haqiqat* (Divine Realities) are those things, that if this *banda* were to explain them, most people do not know that they would be burnt.” After this, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} left Ahmadabad and proceeded towards Nahruvala (Patan).

SHAH NEI'MAT^{RZ}

Proceeding towards Nahruvala, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} camped at a village, Santej. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Nei'mat^{RZ} was the son of a nobleman of the Banyani tribe. He was a very clever oppressor and murderer. Many people had grievances about his bloodthirsty activities. One day, he murdered the son of a Negro. The victim's father complained to the king. Consequently, the king sent a force of seven hundred trained and experienced soldiers to arrest the murder accused. When

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Hazrat Nei'mat^{RZ} got the information, he escaped with twenty-five of his accomplices towards the Santej village. When he reached near the village, he heard the prayer call (*azan*). He said, “It is time for the *zuhr* (afternoon) prayers.” Influenced by the voice of the *muezzin*, he said, “We will stop here and say our prayers.” His companions were annoyed. They said, “Is this the time for the *namaz*? The enemy is pursuing us. We will be arrested if we perform *namaz*.” When Hazrat Nei'mat^{RZ} saw that his companions were not inclined to dismount, he himself dismounted and started the *namaz*. The pursuers came. They tried hard to identify the person saying the *namaz* but could not because his colour and that of his horse had changed. The contingent went ahead pursuing the galloping fugitives.

Completing his *namaz*, Hazrat Nei'mat^{RZ} went to the Santej village and enquired who had given the prayer call. They told him, “It is a group. Their leader is a Syed who claimed to be Mahdi at Makkah. Now Eitemad Khan has expelled the group from Ahmadabad. A member of the same group had given the prayer call.”

Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} immediately went to meet the Imam^{AS}. A companion of the Imam^{AS} was standing at the door. The Shah^{RZ} told him, “I want to see the feet of the Hazrat^{AS}.” The companion informed the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} said, “Let him come in.” When the Shah^{RZ} approached the Imam^{AS}, the latter said, “Come. Miyan Nei'mat. You are full of favours (*ni'mat*).” The Shah^{RZ} proceeded stumbling and placed his head on the feet of the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} took the head of the Shah^{RZ} in his lap. The Shah^{RZ} immediately repented (performed *taubah*), rejected the world and became a seeker of Allah. He recounted all his sins before the Imam^{AS} and asked, “There is no greater sinner than me. How can I have all my sins forgiven?” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah is Merciful, Forgiver. Get the sins against God forgiven by God. Get the sins against the people forgiven by the people.”

Accepting this advice, Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} proceeded to the people whom he had wronged seeking their forgiveness. The

first was the house of the Negro whose son he had murdered. He sent word to the Negro, “The murderer of your son has come to pay for his crime.” When the Negro came out of his house, he saw that Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} was in a different condition. He said, “You are not the Nei'mat of the past. But, O Nei'mat! You are one who has come full of *nei'mats* (gifts and good things of life). However, there is one condition. Take me to the place where you have achieved these *nei'mats*, so that I forgive you.” Then the Negro accompanied Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}.

After that, Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} went to the house of everyone whom he had wronged, and requested him to take the revenge. When they saw that Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} was a changed man, they withdrew their claims.

Then, Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} went to his own house and told its inmates, “May Allah protect you all. I will go to the Emperor of the Era (*Shah-e-Zaman* or Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}). I give her authority (*ikhtiar*) of my wife in her hands.” Then he fulfilled his other commitments and went to the Imam^{AS}.

NAHRUVALA

Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} then arrived at the city of Nahruvala. Just before entering the city, the Imam^{AS} said, “The aroma of (divine) Love comes from Nahruvala.” When he came into the city, he said, “Nahruvala is the mine of believers.”

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} returned to Hazrat Imam^{AS} at Nahruvala. Here Bibi Malkan^{RZ} was residing. She also belonged to the Banmani tribe. Her father had died.

One day, Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, (son of the Imam^{AS}), asked Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, “A person is the seeker of Allah from his childhood. Another person gives up the world (*tark-e-dunya*) and becomes the seeker of Allah. What is the difference between the two?” The Imam^{AS} said, “The

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difference is like that between the earth and the heaven. If he leaves ten in the world, he gets seventy in the Hereafter. He gets (in the Hereafter) the same as he leaves (in this world, in that proportion).

Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, armed and ready for the journey, came to the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} was performing the ablutions for the *zuhr* ritual prayers. Even before Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} could say anything, the Imam^{AS} said, “May Allah protect you! Wherever you are, remain in the remembrance of Allah. It is easy for Allah to give us a chance to meet again.” Then, Hazrat Sani-e-Mahdi^{RZ} touched the feet of the Imam^{AS} and proceeded to Chapaneer.

At Chapaneer, Miyan Syed Usman^{RZ} was among the great nobles of the king's court. Hazrat Imam^{AS} had initiated him into the Mahdavia Order. When he got the information of the arrival of Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} at Chapaneer, he came running to the Hazrat^{RZ} and arranged for all his necessities. Then, he told King Mahmud that Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} had come. The king sent Eitemadul Mulk and Azmatul Mulk to fetch the Hazrat^{RZ}. He was happy to meet the Hazrat^{RZ}. He gave the Hazrat^{RZ} a post of 40,000 *ashrafis* (local gold coins). According to another report, the post was of 60,000 *ashrafis*. Hazrat^{RZ} stayed at Chapaneer for two years. He married the daughter of Miyan Syed Usman^{RZ}.

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had given a servant-maid, Bibi Khub Kalan^{RZ}, to Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ}. She was a great devotee of the Hazrat^{RZ}. She was in peace when Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} was before her. When he disappeared from her eyes, she would become restless. One day, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had allowed Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} with all his migrant-companions to go to the house of Maulana Abdul Wahid Zaid in Ahmadabad, as the Maulana had often invited the Imam^{AS} to visit his house. While going, she had asked Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, “When is the master returning?” He said, “God willing, I will return after the *'isha* prayers.” However, Miyan Abdul Wahid prevailed upon all the guests to

stay overnight. When Bibi Khub Kalan^{RZ} saw that Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} did not return as promised, she became restless and died. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had given her the glad tidings of *iman* (Faith). Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} returned the next day to find her dead. He was overwhelmingly grieved.

After a long time, when Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} came to Chapaneer, he decided to marry. Miyan Syed Usman^{RZ} gave his daughter, Bibi Kad Bano^{RZ}, in marriage to Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ}. He told his daughter, “The two of us, husband and wife, are the slaves of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. We have given you in marriage to serve Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} to help him in performing the *wazu* (ablutions). If Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} turns his face away from you, simply get up and start serving him. Otherwise, we will never see your face again.” When, after the marriage, the bride was unveiled before her husband in the presence of her relatives, the latter found she was not pretty. He was disappointed and turned his face away from her. The bride, remembering the advice of her parents, stood up to serve her husband. Hazrat Syed Mahmood^{RZ} asked, “What is this?” The Bibi^{RZ} said, “My parents have given me to serve you. That is my duty.”

Meanwhile, a voice from Allah said, “This is a virtuous woman. Get closer to her.” He obeyed the command. Love between the couple developed to exemplary heights.

Two-and-a-half years had elapsed after Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} left Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had stayed at Nahruvala for a-year-and-a-half.

When the fame of the superiority and accomplishments of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} spread everywhere that a perfect saint like him had not appeared after Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, the preceptors of *Tariqat* and the *ulama* of *Shariat* paid fealty to him and became his devotees.

For instance, Miyan Yusuf Suhait^{RZ} was an ‘*alim* (learned person). Allah had bestowed great divine knowledge on him.

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He was a teacher of *Shariat*, a preceptor of *Tariqat* and inebriated in the knowledge of the Divine Realities, despite his utmost care for being within the limits of *Shariat*. He was widely known in Gujarat for his knowledge and good deeds. He told the Imam^{AS} once, “I hear unknown angry voices that say, “We have made (Hazrat) Syed Muhammad the promised Mahdi (Mahdi Mau’ood). Confirm and affirm (perform his *tasdiq*) him as such.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Yes! That is so. However, it depends on proper time.” Miyan Suhait^{RZ} said, “The *Khundkar* may stake his claim. I will give the proof.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “Wherefrom will you give the proof?” Miyan Suhait^{RZ} said, “Allah has opened my heart in such a way that all the Divine Books (Psalms of David, Torah, Bible and Quran) and all the prophetic traditions and the books of the learned elderly (*buzurg*) people are known to me. I will prove your Mahdihood from them all.” However, the Imam^{AS} said, “Well! Nobody can give the proof. Allah Most High alone has the power over the claim of the Mahdi. He alone can give the proof.” Miyan Suhait^{RZ} said, “This *banda* has seen the Seal of Sainthood on the right shoulder of the Imam^{AS}. I can no more control myself. I will start announcing it among the people that you are the Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah will seal your tongue.” His tongue was sealed forthwith. The Divine Love showed its perfection that he died soon after.

It will be recalled that one day Hazrat Miyan Yusuf Suhait^{RZ} told Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}, “An angry unknown voice tells me, ‘We have made Syed Muhammad the Promised Mahdi. Confirm and affirm him as such.’ Hence, please bear witness that this *banda* performs the *tasdiq* of the Mahdihood of the *Khundkar*. There is not even a shred of doubt about the Mahdihood of the *Khundkar*. However, there is one entreaty that I see the Seal of Sainthood. Allah has said in Quran, ‘*He (Ibrahim) said, ‘Yea but that my heart may set at ease...’*’⁵⁹ The Imam^{AS} removed

⁵⁹ Quran, S. 2: 260 AMD. The translation of the complete Verse is: “*And recall when Ibrahim said, ‘my Lord! Show me how Thou wilt quicken the*

his clothes from his shoulder and showed him the *Muhr-e-Vilayat* (Seal of Sainthood). Miyan Yusuf Suhait^{RZ} had said the above things under the influence of Divine Love.

When Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} arrived in the city of Nahruvala, there was a perfect *majzoob* (a Godly person, absorbed in divine meditation and not in full possession of his senses) by name Shah Ruknuddin^{RA}. He cried, “The bulwark (*hisar*) of *Shariat* is coming. Bring clothes for me!” People were astonished at this, as he never wore any clothes, but was demanding them today. The Shah^{RA} snatched a *chador* (piece of cloth) from somebody and wrapped around himself. He went a few steps towards the Imam^{AS} to welcome him. When the Imam^{AS} cast his look at him, he placed his cheek on the ground and told the Imam^{AS}, “O Hazrat! Please know that this *banda* is from your group.” However, the Imam^{AS} proceeded further without paying any attention to him.

Somebody pointed out, “This is the house of Mullah Muinuddin, a teacher in the town.” The Imam^{AS} stopped there and sent word. The Mullah, in turn, mounted a wall and sent word, “The Mullah has mounted and is not in the house.” The Imam^{AS} retorted, “The mullah is riding a *markab* (steed or anything on which one rides) that will not reach him to his destination.” Saying this, the Imam^{AS} proceeded further. He camped in a vacant mosque. Later, Mullah Muinuddin sent meals through his son with the excuse, “I was not home. Hence, this may kindly be accepted.” The Imam^{AS} did not reply. He did not accept the meals either.

After this, Shah Ruknuddin^{RA} sent bread loaves and plantains to the Imam^{AS}. Miyan Baban^{RZ} wanted to count and distribute the

dead.’ He (God) said, ‘Dost thou not believe?’ He (Ibrahim) said, ‘Yea but that my heart may rest at ease.’ He (God) said, ‘take four birds and tame them unto thee, and then put a part of them on each hill, and thereafter summon them; they will come to thee speeding. And know then that surely Allah is Mighty, Wise.’— Tafsir-ul-Quran, Vol. I, p. 181.

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bread loaves and plantains among the *fuqara* accompanying the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} said, “Shah Ruknuddin^{RA} has sent the bread and the plantains after counting them. Give everybody two plantains and one loaf of bread.” Thus, everybody got his share equally.

The *ulama* of Nahruvala, out of sheer jealousy and hostility, sent a petition to Sultan Mahmud of Gujarat, saying, “The Syed whom you had expelled from Ahmadabad has come to Patan (Nahruvala) and is taking people as his *murids* after making them abandon their *pirs* (preceptors). Hence, orders should be issued to make him go to another place from here.”

Based on this, the Sultan’s command to expel the Imam^{AS} from Patan came to Mubariz al-Mulk. He kept the orders in his sleeve and came to the Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, “*Achchhe ji achchhe!* (Well?)” The Malik said, “The Sultan’s command (has come).” The Imam^{AS} said, “Your king’s command is for you. Our King’s command is for us!” The Imam^{AS} ordered his companions to prepare for the journey as Allah’s command comes, “We will make you go further.” Again, the Imam^{AS} said, “Our camping and journey is by the command of Allah. But the faces of those who expel us will be blackened.” Hearing this, Mubariz al-Mulk stood up and went away.

SIDDIQ-E-VILAYAT^{RZ}

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, the True Devotee, the Beloved of the Absolute *Zath*, and the Martyr of the Vision of The Truth: Beyond the limits are his praises. Neither the tongue and speech can cover them nor can the pen write them. Since Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} was the Bearer of the Burden of Sainthood, Malik Bakhkhan alias Malik Barkhurdar^{RZ} had already informed him, “The kind of *zath* you wanted, has come.” Hearing this, Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} happily started to go to meet Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. He met the Imam^{AS}. He became unconscious the moment his glance fell on the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} went near Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} and recited the

Quranic Verse, “Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp; the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the Glass as it were a brilliant star: lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose Oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light...”⁶⁰

Then the Imam^{AS} took his face close to the face of Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} and gave him the breath of *zikr-e-khafi* (hidden remembrance of Allah).

When Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} recovered his senses, he said, “I did not see the Mahdi^{AS}. I saw my God.”

After this, Hazrat Malik Barkhurdar^{RZ} joined the company of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}.

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} left Nahruvala, came to Barhli and camped there.

Before this, for the previous twelve years, Allah Most High commanded Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} every day, “We have made you the Mahdi Mau’ood.” But Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} denied (*nafi karte rahay*) it. He used to say, “O Great God! This could be a lustful temptation (*nafsani waswasa*) or the existence of ‘other than Allah’ (*ma-siwallah ka wajud*)! Please protect us from it as charity of our ancestor Prophet Muhammad Mustafa^{SLM} and Hazrat Ali Murtaza^{RZ} (the fourth *Khalifa* of the Prophet^{SLM}) and Your own Grace (*fazal*) and the mischief of these devilish insinuations.”

THE DEBATE

However, after this, an angry command arrived, “You are denying the Core Truth (or essence of Truth-- ‘*ain haq*) and you

⁶⁰ Quran, S. 24: 35 AYA.

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do not know.” Then Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} respectfully said, “O Great God! I am not capable of terminating or sealing the *Vilayat*.” This debate between the worshipper and the worshipped (‘*abid-o-ma’bud*) went on for years. Then the divine command arrived, “We know more than you and knowing you to be capable We have made you the Seal of *Vilayat*.” Then, the Imam^{AS} took the other line of argument saying, “O Great God! If You intend to test me, get me skinned from the head to the foot or have me hanged alive and cut me into small pieces. I would not totter or slip. If I do, I would not be your *banda* (servant). But what is Your objective in making me stake the persistent (*muakkad*) and final claim? The person who dies on the *Shariat* before the *muakkad* claim achieves salvation (*nijat*) from the Fire of the Hell. But after this *muakkad* claim, the person who accepted me would be a *mumin* and one who disavowed me would be a *kafir*.” Then the angry divine command arrived, “Be warned! The mandate has been issued. You will be rewarded if you are patient. You will be ashamed if you are impatient! Stake the claim (if you like to), otherwise, I will make you one amongst the oppressors (*zalimon*).” Then the Imam^{AS} said, “What should this servant do now!”

THE CLAIM

After the *zuhr* (afternoon) *namaz* (ritual daily prayer), Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} announced in the congregation, “I am the Promised Mahdi, the *Khalifa* of Allah, who follows Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. He who follows me is a believer. He who disavows me is truly an infidel.”

At the time of the announcement of the *muakkad* claim the face of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had become yellow and exhibited sorrow as he made the claim of Mahdihood on the command of Allah. Some of the audience reposed faith in the Imam^{AS} and

said, “By God! This is not the face of a liar!” Some others disavowed him and said, “Truly, he is a lunatic.”

Earlier, the Imam^{AS} had intended a journey and performed curtailed (*qasr*) ritual prayer (*namaz*).

KING INVITED

At the time, the capital of the king of Gujarat was Chapaneer. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} wrote a letter to the Sultan. It read:

“Be it known that I am in all my senses; I am not unconscious. This *banda* (servant) is in health; he has no mental disquietude. He is in perfect intellect; there is no defect. Allah Most High provides sustenance; he is not indigent. This *banda* has wife and children; he is not alone. In spite of all this, we have staked the claim to be the Mahdi in accordance with the command of Allah. The *Kalam-Allah* (the Quran) and the emulation of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} are witnesses to this. You are bound to investigate; otherwise, the face of the rulers will be blackened in both worlds. This is so because if this *banda* is in the right (*haq*), you should obey him. You should try to make him understand if he is not in the right. Kill me if I do not understand. You should know that wherever I go I would invite the people on the basis of my reality (*Haqiqat*) and guide the people on that path, or, as the *ulama-e-zahir* put it, I will misguide the people.”

The officials and the *ulama* did not react to the letter. They said, “Miran Syed Muhammad is a perfect saint (*kamil Vali*). He argues on the basis of the Book of Allah and the emulation of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. We cannot oppose (argue with) him.”

The Imam^{AS} stayed at Barhli for four months and a half waiting for a reply. The announcement of the Mahdi^{AS} became well known all over the place. The *ulama* from the cities of Ahmadabad and Nahruvala and many other places came to

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enquire about the claim of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} and posed questions.

THE QUESTIONS

The *ulama* asked, (1) “You call yourself the Promised Mahdi.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “This *banda* does not say it. But Allah’s command arrives, ‘You are the Promised Mahdi and We have made you the Imam Mahdi of the Last Era.’”

(2) They asked, “The name of Imam Mahdi would be Muhammad bin Abdullah and your name is Muhammad bin Syed Khan.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Ask Allah why He made the son of Syed Khan the Mahdi. Allah Most High is Omnipotent. He does what He will.” Then again he said, “The father of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} was a polytheist (idol-worshipper). How can he be Abdullah (the servant of Allah)? Wherever Muhammad bin Abdullah is written, it is a calligraphic mistake. The correct writing is Muhammad Abdullah and Mahdi too is Abdullah.”

(3) They asked, “All the people (*makhluq*) will repose faith (*iman*) in Mahdi and none would disavow him.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “Will the believers (*muminan*) repose faith or the infidels (*kafiran*)?” The *ulama* said, “The *muminan* will repose *iman*.” The Imam^{AS} said, “The *muminan* did repose *iman*.”⁶¹

(4) They asked, as if to test the Imam^{AS}: “The Quran says, ‘*And you cannot will, unless Allah wills...*’⁶² Then what the *banda* (the servant of Allah—human being) wills should happen. There are many things that the *banda* wills but do not happen.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Any person who has even a little knowledge

⁶¹ Quran, S. 2: 285 MMP. The Verse in translation reads: “...*The believers. Each one believeth in Allah and His angels and His scriptures and His messengers—we make no distinction between any of His messengers—and they say: We hear, and obey...*”

⁶² Quran, S. 76: 30 AMD.

of the *Shariat* will not ask a question like this. The Verse means that the words and deeds of people do not occur without the will of Allah.”

(5) The *ulama* said, “You give superiority to *Vilayat* (Sainthood) over *Nabuwat* (Prophethood).” The Imam^{AS} said, “Do I give superiority to *Vilayat* over *Nabuwat* or does Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} give it? The Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said, ‘The *Vilayat* is superior to *Nabuwat*.’” The *ulama* said, “The meaning of the *hadis* is that the *Vilayat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} is superior to his *Nabuwat*.” The Imam^{AS} retorted, “When have I said that my *Vilayat* is superior to his *Nabuwat* or that I am superior to the Prophet^{SLM} or that a *Vali* is superior to a prophet? Do you know the meaning of *Nabuwat* and that of *Vilayat*?”

(6) The *ulama* said, “You say that *iman* (faith) increases and decreases. And Imam Azam (Hazrat Abu Hanifa^{RA}) says that *iman* does not increase and decrease.” In reply, Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, “Allah Most High says, ‘*They only are the (true) believers whose hearts feel fear when Allah is mentioned, and when the revelations of Allah are recited unto them they increase their faith, and who trust in their Lord.*’⁶³ Whatever Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} had said was about his own *iman*, as the *iman* of Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} was perfect. When *iman* becomes perfect, it cannot increase or decrease.”

(7) The *ulama* said, “You say that *kasab* (earning) is *haram* (prohibited).” The Imam^{AS} said, “*Kasab* is *halal* (lawful) for a *mumin*. One should think over to find out who is a *mumin* according to Quran.”

(8) The *ulama* asked, “You say that one should see Allah in this world, which is perishable.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah Most High says, ‘*But those who were blind in this world will be*

⁶³ Quran, S. 8: 2 MMP.

blind in the Hereafter, and most astray from the path.’⁶⁴ The *ulama* said, “The consensus of the *ulama* of *Sunnat-o-Jama’at* is that the purport of this Verse is seeing Allah in the *Aakhirat* (Hereafter).” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah’s promise is absolute (*mutlaq*). We also say *mutlaq*. The *Sunnat-o-Jama’at* has not said that seeing Allah is impossible or unlawful in this world. Their sayings should be properly understood as to what they have said.”

(9) The *ulama* asked, “You speak about very few Quranic Verses relating to Hope and Mercy and dilate more upon the Verses relating to Fear and Vengeance (*qahr*). The people become disappointed.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has said that your brother is one who frightens you from Allah and His Messenger. He who deceives you is not your brother.”

(10) The *ulama* asked, “You prohibit learning.” The Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* is one who follows Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. How can he prohibit a thing, which Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} has not prohibited? This *banda* says that perpetual remembrance (*zikr-e-dawam*) of Allah is obligatory (*farz*) in accordance with the commands of Allah and the Book of Allah. Anything that prevents the remembrance of Allah is *mumnu*’ (not allowed), whether it is learning, earning, developing friendship with the people, eating, sleeping or negligence. And that which causes negligence too is prohibited.”

(11) The *ulama* said, “Your people are irreverent. They have reneged from their teachers and preceptors. They are disgusted with them. They find fault with them.” The Imam^{AS} said, “You have perhaps forgotten the provisions of the *Shariat*. What are the provisions of the *Shariat* in this respect? A person gives his daughter in marriage to an impotent person. The matter remained hidden for some time. The facts came to light later. Do you separate the couple or not, according to the *Shariat*?”

⁶⁴ Quran, S. 17: 72 AYA.

You purchase some things in the belief that they are good. When a *Shara'yi* defect in the thing is discovered, do you return it or not? The religious objective has become less (significant) than the worldly objectives. Whether it (the objective) is achieved or not, one should not break the relationship (between the *murid* and the *murshid*, disciple and the preceptor). They should not become disgusted (with the preceptor). They should not seek the religious objective elsewhere. How good is the desire for the religion! How good is the desire for the Vision of Allah! How good is the desire for the Hereafter! In pursuance of the worldly desire, you allow the break up, disgust and separation between the parties. But in the desire for the religious objective all these things are not allowed. May Allah have mercy on those who do justice! Curse on those who do injustice!"

(12) The *ulama* asked, "How can we debate and discuss with you? You are not confined to any of the *mazahib* (of the four Imams^{RA}). Whatever you say, you do on the absolute basis of the Quran. We do not understand Quran. And we follow the *mazhabs* of Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA}." The Imam^{AS} replied, "Yes. I am not bound by any *mazhab*. Our religion (*mazhab*) is the Book of Allah (Quran) and the emulation of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. You remain confined to the *mazhab* (of Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA}), and tell me how do you treat a person who abandons the *mazhab* of Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} and acts against its tenets? What do the ignorant people know? The *mazhab* of Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} is his *amal* (practice) and not his *qaul* (word). The *sunnat* (practice) of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} is his *amal*, and not his *guftar* (sayings). All the matters that have been written in the books of *Fiqh* are the *guftar* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and not his *amal* (practice). The *mazhab* of Hazrat Imam Azam^{RA} is his practice. This is well-known."

(13) Then the *ulama* said, "You call Muslims *kafir* and ask them to become *mumin*." The Imam^{AS} said, "We have presented the Book of Allah. Whomsoever the Book of Allah

calls a *kafir* (infidel), we too call him *kafir*. We do not say anything on our own. We are the followers of the Book of Allah. We invite the people to know Allah's Oneness and His Greatness (*buzurgi*). Allah Most High has assigned this very task to us. The *ulama* oppose us. We do not know the reason for their opposition. It is obligatory on them to warn me if I go wrong. They should cooperate with us so that we work according to the Book of Allah and invite people to act according to the Book of Allah, as Allah Most High has said, "O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and men of authority from amongst you; then if you quarrel in aught refer to Allah and the Messenger, if you indeed believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best and the fairest interpretation."⁶⁵ The person who oversteps the limits laid down by the Book of Allah should repent (perform *tauba*). Otherwise, he is liable to be killed."

(14) The *ulama* said, "One of the signs of the Mahdi is that a sword is not effective against the Mahdi." The Imam^{AS} said, "The work of the sword is to cut. But it will not overpower the Mahdi." The Imam^{AS} recited the Quranic Verse, "Their apostles said, 'Is there a doubt about Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?'"⁶⁶ The Imam^{AS} continued, "You may have doubts about this *banda*. But you have no doubts about Allah being One. The desire for Allah is obligatory (*farz-e-'ain*) on every man and woman. Come! Let us engage in the

⁶⁵ Quran, S. 4: 59 AMD. In explaining the term *Allah*, AMD says it purports to mean 'His Holy Book, the Quran'; and in respect of the term, *Messenger*, he says 'the mouthpiece of Revolution; his precepts and practices.' He also invites the readers to note "obedience to men in authority is not on a par with obedience to God and His apostle, the latter being absolute and unconditional. There is no such thing in Islam as an 'infallible Church, protected from error, and guided by Holy Ghost.' Right of deferring from those in authority implies and allows full scope of private judgement even to the humblest member of the community."—*Tafsir-ul-Quran*, Vol. I., pp. 339-340.

⁶⁶ Quran, S. 14: 10 AYA.

service of and devotion (*bandagi*) to Allah. Allah Most high will manifest the Mahdihood of this *banda* to you.”

Many people reposed faith in Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} and many others refrained from doing so.

LEARNING

One day Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} had books in his hands. The Imam^{AS} asked him, “What are those books?” The Shah^{RZ} said, “*Nuzhat al-Arwah* and *Anis al-Ghurba*.” The Imam^{AS} took the books from the hands of the Shah^{RZ} and went to the house of Hazrat Bibi Malkan^{RZ} (the wife of the Imam^{AS}). Some days later, the Imam^{AS} gave the same books back to the Shah^{RZ} and said, “Conform your *ahwal* (conditions) to those books.” The Shah^{RZ} said, “By the charity of the *Khundkar* the *ahwal* of this *banda* is better than those books. There is no need to conform my *ahwal* to them.”

After this, the Imam^{AS} gave his own copy of the Quran in the hands of the Shah^{RZ} and said, “Read.” The Shah^{RZ} said, “This *banda* has read nothing from the Quran.” The Imam^{AS} said, “First, we will read and after that you read it.” The reading of the Quran went on in this order. At that time, a companion of the Imam^{AS} with the name Ilahdadia came to relate his own reverie to the Imam^{AS}. As the Imam^{AS} cast his look at him, he rebuked the intruder and said, “Stop where you are.” Hazrat Ilahdadia^{RZ} returned bowing his head. The reading of the Quran was over by the time of the *zuhr* (afternoon) prayers. The Shah^{RZ} returned the copy of the Quran to the Imam^{AS}. The *zuhr* prayers over, the Imam^{AS} said, “Miyan Ilahdadia! When you were coming, Allah Most High was teaching the Quran to His *banda*. You would have been burnt if you had come a step further.”

TOWARDS KHORASAN

The Imam^{AS} stayed at Barhli for four months-and-a-half waiting for the reply of Sultan Mahmud of Gujarat to his letter. (It never came.) Then the command of Allah Most High arrived, “O Syed Muhammad! Proceed further. There is deficiency of knowledge in Hind. Knowledge is perfect in Khorasan. We will show you the straight path of your call (*dawat*).”

Accordingly, the Imam^{AS} proceeded further and came to Jalore. Miyan Shaikh Muhammad Kabir, Miyan Yusuf, Miyan Abdullah, Miyan Jamal, Miyan Kamal and Miyan Ashraf gave up the world, became the seekers of Allah and accompanied the Imam^{AS}.

When they proceeded from Jalore, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} stayed back for a short while to answer the call of nature. The Imam^{AS} did not look back and went ahead. Before this and after this, the Imam^{AS} did not bother about the people following him for wherever the Imam^{AS} went and whatever he did, he did openly and under the command of Allah Most High. This was why he did not pay attention to anything. Somebody said, “This path has become old. Indeed, the path is obliterated, as it is not in use. Nobody goes on this path, as there are many evils, including the increase in the population of snakes and tigers. However, the Imam^{AS} said, “Allah Most High has appointed this *banda* to go on the old path. All the snakes and the tigers have promised that there would be no trouble from them.”

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, who had remained behind became anxious and was not finding the path. All of a sudden, a stranger appeared bearing a fat sheep on his back and said, “Eat!” Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} had not eaten for the previous two or three days. He also found a burning tree and pot full of salt. There were three other persons with Bandagi Miyan^{RZ}. They all ate the whole of the sheep. Then the stranger showed the way and said, “This is the path of your caravan.” They took

the path. The grass had grown. They lost the path again. An unknown voice said, “This is Mahdi Mau’ood, the *Khalifa* of Rahman.”⁶⁷ Following this voice, the Miyan^{RZ} and his companions reached the Imam^{AS}.

BIBI NURULLAH^{RZ}

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} forgot his suckling daughter, Bibi Nurullah^{RZ} one day in the woods. He had tied a cloth to the branch of a tree. The baby was in that cloth. The Shah^{RZ} was engrossed in the remembrance of Allah and forgot to take the baby with him. They then travelled for about three or four leagues. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} reminded the Shah^{RZ}, “Where is your companion?” The Shah^{RZ} said, “It may be at the same place (where they had camped last).” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah Most High has protected it. Go and bring it back.” When the Shah^{RZ} reached the place, he saw that a big tiger was sitting under the tree. The tiger saw the Shah^{RZ} and went away with its head cast down. The Shah^{RZ} took the baby and started walking to join the caravan of the Imam^{AS}. He too heard the unknown voice, “This is Mahdi Mau’ood, the *Khalifa* of Rahman.” Guided by this unknown voice, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ} reached the Imam^{AS}.

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} used to help the Imam^{AS} in performing the *wazu* (ablutions). One day he said, “Miranji! All the drops of water that fall from your blessed beard say, “This is Mahdi Mau’ood, the *Khalifa* of Rahman.” Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, “Wherever this *banda* goes, all the Creatures and particles of the universe say the same thing. But the ears of understanding, like those of yours, are needed to listen to that.”

⁶⁷ Rahman is one of the names of Allah.

NAGAU

Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} reached Nagaur. The fame of the Imam^{AS} spread in the town. The ruler of the place was Miyan Malikjeo of the Mughal clan. He came to the Imam^{AS} along with all the *ulama* of the town to enquire and discuss the proof of the Mahdihood of the Imam^{AS}. The moment their eyes met, the Miyan^{RZ} dismounted and fell on the ground. He came running to the Imam^{AS} and fell on his feet. The Imam^{AS} held the hand of the Miyan^{RZ} and made him stand up, saying, “Come, O the Prince of *Lahut*.”⁶⁸ Then the Imam^{AS} made him sit next to him. The Miyan^{RZ} forgot all the arguments he was ready with to discuss with the Imam^{AS}. He requested the Imam^{AS}, “Please initiate me.” The Imam^{AS} instructed him in *zikr-e-khafi*. The Miyan^{RZ} rejected the world and remained in the company of the Imam^{AS}.

FOUGHT AND FALLEN

It is narrated that one day Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}, delivering his sermon (*bayan*) on Quran between the ‘*Asr* and *Maghrib* prayers explained the Quranic Verse, “...*Those who had to flee their country or were driven out of their homes and have suffered in My cause, and have fought and fallen....*”⁶⁹ Speaking in the *ajami* (non-Arab) language, he said, “The ‘who had to flee their country’ has been accomplished, the ‘driven out of their homes’ too has been accomplished and the ‘have suffered in My cause’ has also been accomplished. The ‘fought and fallen’ is yet to happen. That too will be accomplished, *Ma sha’Allah* (literally, What God wills). But this *banda* is not assigned the task of ‘fought and fallen’. This will manifest through our people.”

⁶⁸ *Lahut* = Divine Nature; Divine Presence; Divine Being. —Urdu English dictionary. p.638; Arabic English Dictionary, p.853.

⁶⁹ Quran, S. 3: 195 SAL.

After the *Maghrib* (post sunset) prayers, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} sent word to Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} through Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}, "We will give respect to the person if the *Khundkar* (Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}) reveals his identity." In reply Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, "That person is the questioner."

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} thought, "This *banda* (me) was the questioner. Hazrat Imam^{AS} has pointed to this *banda* for the burden of 'fought and fallen'." Then Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} pointed out to the Imam^{AS}, "Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} has thought that he would be the person intended for the 'fought and fallen'." Listening to this, the Imam^{AS} said, "The questioner purports to mean your *zath*. This *banda* had said it for you. Allah Most High does not ignore the capable and does not give to the non-competent.... Allah Most High has placed the burden of 'fought and fallen' on your neck. You have to keep your bones strong and bear the burden with full strength."

Leaving Nagore, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} reached a place infested with snakes. A big snake was found lying around the *daira* of the Imam^{AS}. The inmates of the *daira* wanted to go out to fetch water for ablutions in the morning. They could not find the way to go out. They told the Imam^{AS} about it. The Imam^{AS} said, "Allah Most High had promised this snake, 'We will show you the descendant of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, the Mahdi^{AS}, to you. The snake had come to see me on the basis of the divine promise. Do not go in front of it. Otherwise, it will bite you, as a snake had bitten Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{RZ},"⁷⁰

After this, the Imam^{AS} went near the snake and placed his saliva in front of it. The snake swallowed the saliva, placed its

⁷⁰ The allusion is to Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}, the first Khalifa of Islam, who had accompanied Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} during his migration from Makkah to Medina. Both had camped temporarily in a cave, where a snake had bitten Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}.

head on the ground and went away. The Imam^{AS} said, "This snake had become a Muslim before going."

Wherever the Imam^{AS} camped, a fence of copper would surround the *daira* of the Imam^{AS}. But it did not manifest on the people. One day, when the horse of Hazrat Miyan Haidar Muhajir^{RZ} broke loose from its halter and had gone away, he tried hard to go out of the *daira* in search of the horse. He saw a wall around the *daira*. He told the Imam^{AS}, "A wall appears all around." In reply, the Imam^{AS} said, "Remember Allah! Your horse will never be lost. Wherever this *banda* camps a wall surrounds the *daira*."

KAHA

Wherever there used to be no water, it would rain before Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} arrived there. Water was profusely used during the stay of the Imam^{AS}. When the Imam^S arrived at Kaha, the horses went to the cultivated lands near the *daira* within an hour. The cultivators complained to the ruler. The ruler came to the Imam^{AS} and said, "We had heard praises of the time of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} that the sheep and the tiger would graze together and children would play with snakes and scorpions. Nobody would trouble anybody else. On the contrary, your horses are grazing the cultivated lands." The Imam^{AS} said, "Take the compensation if the horses are grazing." The ruler sent his men to investigate. They found that the horses were just standing there and were eating nothing. When they reported it to the ruler, Ashraf Khan Panipati, he went to the venue to inspect the situation. He found the horses were standing with closed eyes. He returned to the Imam^{AS}, performed his *tasdiq*, was initiated into the Mahdavia Order and joined the company of the Imam^{AS}.

THATTA

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} then proceeded to the city of Thatta, the capital of Sindh (now in Pakistan). On the way, an animal, belonging to somebody in the caravan of Imam Mahdi^{AS}, fell down and was about to die. The Imam^{AS} ordered its slaughter. It was a non-Muslim state. His companions hesitated. The Imam^{AS} ordered the slaughter a second time. Hazrat Miyan Abdul Majid^{RZ} dismounted from his camel and slaughtered the animal. When the companions of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} entered the city with the beef, they pitched a tent and camped at a place.

Incidentally, a herdsman saw that beef had been brought into the city and reported it to the ruler, Jam Nanda that a large group of people had slaughtered a cow on the outskirts of the city, brought beef into the city and is camping here. Jam Nanda was a strict non-Muslim ruler and ordered the plunder of the caravan. When it became known to Darya Khan, a noble of the ruler's court, he prevented the plunder. He told the ruler, "This could have been done either by the ignorant people or by those who dominate the Muslims or who help the Muslims. Among them is a man like the *zath* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}."

Jam Nanda, with his full complement of pomp and armed forces, came in the presence of Hazrat Imam Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}, and said, "What are these ignorant people doing?" Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, under the command of Allah Most High, came a few steps towards the Jam, riding a horse with a sword on his shoulder.

When Darya Khan's eye caught the glimpse of the face of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, he fell down from his horse and was tossing about on the ground with writhing pain. The Imam^{AS} too dismounted and came to Darya Khan. He pacified Darya Khan and made him his disciple.

Returning to the Jam, Darya Khan said, "You had killed all of us. Do you know who this *Zath* is? Verily, he is the Promised

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Mahdi of the Last Era. He is the descendant of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and a perfect Saint, even if you do not believe in his Mahdihood. How can you harm him?"

Darya Khan went to his house, got a large quantity of food prepared for the group of the Imam^{AS} and sent it. The Imam^{AS} accepted his hospitality for three days. Darya Khan did his best to continue hospitality beyond the three days, but the Imam^{AS} did not accept it. He told Darya Khan, "This violates the *sunnat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, because he had not accepted any hospitality beyond three days. How can this *banda* accept hospitality beyond three days?"

In short, Jam Nanda sent the Qazi with the message asking the Imam^{AS} to go away from the city. In reply, the Imam^{AS} said, "The orders of your king are for you. When my King, Who is God, the Great and Omnipotent, orders me to go, I will go. The journey or stay of this *banda* is not beyond the command of Allah Most High. (It is under the command of Allah.)" The Qazi said, "The obedience of the *ul-ul-amr* (those in political authority) is obligatory (*lazim*)." The Imam^{AS} said, "How do you call him the *ul-ul-amr*? You are a Qazi. You know the conditions for the *ul-ul-amr*. If you prove that your king fulfils the conditions of the *ul-ul-amr*, this *banda* will go away." The Qazi said, "The *Khundkar* may kindly say." The Imam^{AS} asked, "Is the Jam just and equitable or oppressor?" The Qazi said, "Oppressor." The Imam^{AS} asked, "Does he follow the *Shariat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} or does he follow his own desires and lust?" The Qazi said, "He follows his desires. What is more, he helps the infidels to strengthen infidelity." The Imam^{AS} said, "Then how do call him *ul-ul-amr*?"

Then the Qazi said, "When a person does not allow you to stay on his property, no argument or command works against him." The Imam^{AS} said, "The king of Sindh is there for the territory of Sindh. The king of Gujarat is for Gujarat. Thus every territory has a king of its own. Please show me a small piece of land which belongs to God, where the servants of God can remain in the His worship (*bandagi*)."

The Qazi changed his argument. He said, “You want to take away somebody’s headgear (*dastar*)?” The Imam^{AS} took the headgear of the Qazi from his head and placed it on the knee (of the Imam^{AS}) and said, “O Qazi! This is called taking the *dastar*. Whose *dastar* have we taken like this?”

Then the Imam^{AS} further told the Qazi, “Tell your king to come with all his pomp and army. *Insha’Allah*, this *banda* will overpower him with the help of One God. Allah Most High has given this city to me.”

Jam Nanda ordered that none in the city should sell food grains and other necessities to the group of the Imam^{AS}. The companions informed the Imam^{AS} about this. The Imam^{AS} ordered, “Break open a shop and bring the goods (needed).” The companions did as ordered.

Then the Imam^{AS} sent Miyan Tayyab^{RZ} and Miyan Miskin^{RZ} to king Jam Nanda with the message, “We have not violated the *Shariat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. We have weighed all the things and used them. The owner of the shop does not accept the cost of those things. You are the ruler. Take it.” The emissaries of the Imam^{AS} placed the cost money of the things in front of the king and came back.

Jam Nanda then sent his slave by name ‘Aiyyaar or Dilshad to the Imam^{AS} with the message, “Such and such a garden is very spacious and has a big tank. Please go there so that I can meet you.” The Imam^{AS} said, “All right!” The Imam^{AS} boarded the ship to go to the garden. But secretly, the Jam had instructed the boatmen to drown the Imam^{AS}. They did their best but failed. When the Imam^{AS} reached the garden, he went to the palace there and occupied it. The Imam^{AS} ordered the garden to be destroyed. The companions felled some big trees. Then the Imam^{AS} returned to their camp. He ordered the digging of a trench and installation of a barbed fence.

Hazrat Malik Gowher was the in-charge of the *toshak-khana* (the building which houses the household effects and wardrobes of the wealthy people) of the Sultan of Bengal in eastern India. He intended to perform the Hajj pilgrimage and started his journey with two-and-a-half *sers*⁷¹ of *iksir*.⁷² On the way he got the information of the advent of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. He came to the Imam^{AS}, got initiated into the Mahdavi Order and remained in the august company of the Imam^{AS}.

When Jam Nanda’s confrontation with the Imam^{AS} became obvious, Hazrat Malik Gowher^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “If the *Khundkar* permits, I will raise an army of 12,000 armed horsemen in six months with ammunition and other things.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “Wherefrom would you do it?” Hazrat Malik Gowher^{RZ} said, “This *banda* has *iksir* with him.” The Imam^{AS} said, “What kind of *iksir* is it? Bring it.” When the Imam^{AS} saw the *iksir*, he said, “Beat this man and throw him out of the *daira*, because he is living with his idol in the company of this *banda*.”

The Malik^{RZ} was thrown out of the *daira*. For the next three days and nights, he was lying in the woods outside the *daira*. Miyan Abu Muhammad^{RZ} saw the condition of the Malik^{RZ} and told him, “It is time for the *namaz*. It should be performed.” The Malik^{RZ} said, “I have been rejected (*mardood*) from the threshold (*dargah*) of the *Khudawand-e-namaz* (the Lord of the *namaz*). Whose *namaz* should I perform?”

Miyan Abu Muhammad^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS} all the details about the Malik^{RZ}. The Imam^{AS} said, “If he wants to come back, he

⁷¹ *Ser* is a measure of volume, which is equal in weight approximately to 80 tolas of grains, each tola being approximately equal to 12 grams. A weight of 16 chhataks—*Urdu English Dictionary*, p. 458.

⁷² *Iksir* is a medicine said to be capable of converting other metals to gold or silver—*Urdu English Dictionary*, p. 66.

should throw the *iksir* in a well and then come here.” Accordingly, Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} threw the *iksir* into a well. But a small quantity, about the volume or weight of a grain of wheat, had fallen on the side of the well. Miyan Salamullah^{RZ} picked it up and, without informing the Imam^{AS}, heated the metal *lota* (pitcher) of water and put the *iksir* on it. And lo and behold! The copper pitcher became that of gold. He took it to the Imam^{AS} and said, “The *iksir* was like this!” The Imam^{AS} said, “I knew the *iksir* was genuine. But it was thrown into the well to test the (intensity of the) Malik^{RZ}’s desire for Allah.” After this, the pitcher was sold and the proceeds were distributed among the *fugara* of the *daira*.

The companions went to the market for shopping. At the time of ‘*Asr* (late afternoon) prayers, the Imam^{AS} came out and saw that very few of his companions were present for the *namaz*. The Imam^{AS} told Miyan Salamullah^{RZ}, “The quantity of *iksir* was very little. Because of that, the companions remained away from the sight and companionship of this *banda*, *namaz* and the *bayan* of Quran. Had all the quantity been there (and distributed), what would have been the situation (the effect on the companions)?”

SHAIKH SADRUDDIN^{RZ}

One day, Shaikh Sadruddin^{RZ} came to meet the Imam^{AS}. He was a great ‘*alim* and teacher of *Shariat*. He was sitting at his university. A person came and said, “Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} has come. Do you know? Go and perform his *tasdiq*. Otherwise, you will remain a *kafir* (infidel).” He took the hand of the Shaikh^{RZ} in his hand and started going. Presently, he disappeared.

The Shaikh^{RZ} thought it could be a devilish suggestion, which has come to his heart. Or could it be a devilish thought? All of a sudden, a voice started coming from the trees and other things, “This is Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. This is the *Khalifa* of

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Rahman.” The Shaikh^{RZ} went to the Imam^{AS} and got initiated into the Mahdavia Order.

Meanwhile, a learned person came with his son and requested the Imam^{AS}, “Please supplicate for him.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Shaikh Sadruddin^{RZ}! See, what this learned man says. If Allah commands me, we will collect *jiziyah* (a head tax collected from non-Muslims in a Muslim state).” The Imam^{AS} raised his sword and said; “Now this remains (to be done) to those who recite the Islamic testification (*kalima*). But this *banda* is not appointed for it (*jihad-e-asghar*—minor holy war). (He is appointed for the *jihad-e-akbar*—major holy war).”

At the Thatta city, eighty-four persons had died (of starvation). They had achieved the vision of Allah (*didar-e-Khuda*). With the permission of Allah, the Imam^{AS} gave them the glad tidings (*bisharat*) of the stations of the prophets: Hazrat Musa^{AS} and Hazrat Esa^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} also said, “This *banda* places them (the dead) in the grave. Their back may be soiled with the mud of the grave or not. The divine hand (*qabzah*) would lift them. Those who are ours are not (meant for) lying in the soil (grave). But those who are ours will not be the seekers of the Hereafter. (They will be the seekers of Allah).”

TRIP TO GUJARAT

Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} sent Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei’mat^{RZ}, Miyan Abdul Majid^{RZ}, Miyan Shaikh Muhammad Kabir^{RZ} and Miyan Yusuf^{RZ} to Gujarat to bring the members of their families.

Miyan Larh Shah^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “The clan of Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei’mat^{RZ} is large. They will not allow him to come back.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Miyan Nei’mat^{RZ} is a *mard-e-Rabbani* (divine man). He will not stay back.” Hazrat Shah Nei’mat^{RZ} said, “This *banda* has given the authority (*ikhthiar*) of his wife in her hands. Please do not separate this *banda* from

your service.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Go and bring those who want to come.”

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “This *banda* has no wife and children. Why do you send me?” The Imam^{AS} said, “Go. There is some objective of Allah Most High (in your going there).”

Meanwhile, Miyan Syed Salamullah^{RZ} wrote a letter to Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, son of the Imam^{AS}, and gave it to Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} came and said, “What have you written. Read.” Hazrat Miyan Salamullah^{RZ} started reading, “Why are you sitting there! Strangers have come and are reaping the harvest of their share (*bahrah*) of *Vilayat*. You are not allowed to remain away from this *zath* and the *Vilayat* of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} (that is, from Hazrat Imam^{AS}). Eighty-four persons have died at the city of Thatta. To all of them, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} has given the glad tidings of the (positions of) *ul-ul-‘azm* (resolute) prophets. Allah Most High has spread the general *dastarkhwan*⁷³ and is seeing with the *nazar* (look) of Mercy. How great and lofty is the good fortune of the person who dies here!”

After listening to this letter, Hazrat Imam^{AS} told Hazrat Miyan Salamullah^{RZ}, “Tear this letter and write another one like this: ‘Syed Muhammad is in Chapaneer and Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} is in Thatta.’” The Imam^{AS} repeated this thrice. Miyan Salamullah^{RZ} said, “Miranji! Our *Khundkar* is Miran.” The Imam^{AS} said, “If this *banda* is Miran, Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} is *Awwal Miran*.”

Sometime after the companions of the Imam^{AS} reached Gujarat, on a Friday, the Imam^{AS} addressed the congregation of the chaste women of the Paradise (women inmates of the *daira*),

⁷³ A *dastarkhwan* is a piece of cloth spread on the ground on which meal dishes are placed. —*Urdu English Dictionary*, p.354.

and said, “The person who does not take the thing Allah has given him/her does not get what he/she demands.” When the Imam^{AS} said this, all of a sudden, Hazrat Bibi Buwanji^{RZ} stood up and said, “I give in the name of Allah my *zath* in the presence of *Khundkar*.” She was from the Banmani clan. Her first husband, Malik Bakhkhan^{RZ} had died. The Imam^{AS} said, “Good!” Then she further said, “I will not demand the right of maintenance (*nan-o-nufqa*) from Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. I do not need it. But I do desire that I am raised on the Day of Resurrection as the wife of the *Khundkar* (Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}).” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} called Miyan Larh Shah^{RZ} and Qazi Habibullah^{RZ} and told them, “You bear witness that Bibi Buwanji^{RZ} has given her *zath* to this *banda* in the name of Allah.” These two eminent companions became the witnesses to the marriage. The Bibi^{RZ} too affirmed this in front of the witnesses.

RETURN TRIP

When the companions of Hazrat Imam Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} started to return to the Imam^{AS}, Bibi Raje Soon^{RZ} and Bibi Raje Muradi^{RZ}, both sisters of Sultan Mahmud Begarah of Gujarat, who had been initiated and instructed by Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, could not go to the Imam^{AS} as the king, their brother, had imprisoned them. Hence, Bibi Soon^{RZ} and Bibi Muradi^{RZ} sent through Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} and Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei’mat^{RZ}, respectively, large quantity of cash, clothes, horses and camels to Hazrat Imam^{AS}.

On the way, Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} met Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} and Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei’mat^{RZ}. The reason for this meeting was that when Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} and Hazrat Bibi Kad Bano^{RZ} were taking rest, both Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} appeared in a dream, took the hand of Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, and said, “Get up! This is not the place for you.” When he woke up he found

himself standing outside the door of his house. He told Ratni Bai, maidservant, to bring his sword and Quran. He took both the things and sat down on the threshold and sent word to his wife, Bibi Kad Bano^{RZ} to go to her father's house. "This *banda* goes to Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}." The Bibi^{RZ} sent word in reply, "This humble *bandi* is also the seeker of meeting Hazrat Imam^{AS}. Please take me with you." Hazrat^{RZ} said, "I do not have money for the expenses of the journey." The Bibi^{RZ} said, "I will tie rags around my feet and walk with you." The Hazrat^{RZ} sold all the horses and camels and other things and repaid his loans and settled the salaries of the servants. He started his journey with a palanquin for the Bibi^{RZ} to sit in. After some five or six days' journey, he met the companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}.

It is said that first Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} arrived (at Radhanpur). The next to come was Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}. The last to arrive was Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}. Somebody told Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} where Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} was camping. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} went to that place.

Before the arrival of Hazrat Bandagi Miyan^{RZ}, Hazrat Bandagi Miran^{RZ} had sent word to Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}, "Allah Most High has sent something for Hazrat Imam^{AS} through you. Send something for the expenses of the journey as you are spending from it for the expenses of the persons accompanying you." It is said that there were some forty persons accompanying Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}. According to another narrative, there were sixty persons who had rejected the world and become the seekers of Allah accompanying Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} sent word in reply, "This *banda* could not commit a breach of trust." Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} was grief-stricken at this.

It was after this that Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} arrived and sent word to Hazrat Bandagi Miran^{RZ}, "This *banda*

is standing at your door. Allow me in your presence." In reply, Hazrat Bandagi Miran^{RZ} sent word, "Please forgive this *banda*. You also go and stay where Miyan Nei'mat^{RZ} is staying."

People close to Hazrat Bandagi Miran^{RZ} told Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} that the Miran^{RZ} was unhappy with Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}. Then Hazrat Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} said in a loud voice, "Allah Most High has sent something and, further, it is the time for the 'Asr prayers. Please come." Hazrat Bandagi Miran^{RZ} came out of his residence. They embraced each other. The entire luggage on the backs of the pack animals was unloaded. After the evening prayers, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} placed the goods before Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} and said, "What a good fortune and Grace of Allah Most High! When would this *banda* have taken all the goods from Gujarat to Farah (in Afghanistan). I found the heir to all the goods and the seekers of Allah Most High here alone." Hazrat Bandagi Miran^{RZ} said, "Order the goods to be lifted from here. Spend it during the journey as you have been spending all along."

Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} said, "The *Khundkar* may reach the Imam^{AS} spending the goods at hand. If the proceeds from these goods were to be spent completely, this *banda* is present. You may sell me and (spending the proceeds) reach the Imam^{AS}." Hazrat Bandagi Miyan^{RZ} served the Bandagi Miran^{RZ} very well and reached the Imam^{AS}.

Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} sent Miyan Shaikh Muhammad Kabir^{RZ} in advance to give the glad tidings to the Imam^{AS} of the impending arrival of the caravan from Gujarat.

ARRIVAL AT FARAH

When the news of the arrival of Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} reached the Imam^{AS}, it was the turn for Hazrat Imam^{AS} to stay in the house of Bibi Buwanji^{RZ}. Seeing the Imam^{AS} very happy, she asked the Imam^{AS}, "Is the Hazrat

Mahdi^{AS} very happy at the arrival of his son?” The Imam^{AS} said, “The son is coming as being a son! Why should I not be happy?” On meeting Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} recited the couplet:

One should break away from the world for the sake of the friend!

Yes! One can break away from both worlds for the sake of the friend.

After this, Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, “This *banda* would have been killed if Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ} had not met me on the way and had not accompanied me. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} had behaved so callously with me.” Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} told him, “What is so strange about it? He is (like) your real brother. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} has brought with him those people who deserved the Mercy of Allah Most High. He has behaved with you like this! Did he not know the adage, is it the legacy of his ancestors?”

Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} was grieved and went to and stayed at an isolated mosque in the jungle. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} went there and brought Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{RZ} back to the *daira*. At that time the Imam^{AS} told Hazrat Shah Nei'mat^{AS}, “I like you whether you like me or not.”

When the Imam^{AS} departed from Thatta town, he said, “*Sindhi na-pasandi* (the people of Sindh are not liked).”

Meanwhile, Darya Khan accompanied the Imam^{AS} with his army. The Imam^{AS} said, “Darya Khan! Go back.” Darya Khan said, “I will follow you until (we reach) the boundary of Qandahar because the path is desolate.” He followed the Imam^{AS} for a distance of nine miles. Then the Imam^{AS} prevailed on him to return.

Hazrat Miyan Vali^{RZ} had remained behind. He returned after four days (and reported this incident).

Maulud

The ruler of the town called him and asked, “Whose is this great army? Where is it going?” Hazrat Miyan Vali^{RZ} told him, “This is the group of *fuqara* (indigent mendicants) and its leader is Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}.” The ruler said, “You are lying. How can a group of *fuqara* have such strong, hefty elephants in their army?”

Later, Miyan Vali^{RZ} repeated to the Imam^{AS} all that the ruler had said. The Imam^{AS} said, “Yes, it is like that. Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had a contingent of 5,000 angels as warriors with him. Similarly, this *banda* too has an army of the angels with him.”

When the group of the *fuqara* of the Imam^{AS} proceeded further, it met with a group of traders who were coming in the opposite direction. They were perplexed running in fear with pale faces. When they saw the Imam^{AS} they slowed down. They complained to the Imam^{AS}, “*Khundkar!* Please do not go on this path. We were forty. Only seven of us are alive. Others died because of the snake (bite). These snakes are like the high-way robbers on this path.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “When did this happen? How many days back?” They said, “It happened today itself about half a league away from here.” Then the Imam^{AS} asked them to accompany him. When they reached the place where the incident had taken place, the Imam^{AS} gave his sanctified leftover (*paskhurda*) to the people who were affected by the snakebite. Allah Most High neutralised the effect of the snake poison. They all recovered.

All of them performed the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, rejected the world, became the seekers of Allah and joined his company with his *fuqara*. When the night fell, the Imam^{AS} ordered, “The *naubat* (performing the *zikr* by turns) had been forgiven for tonight. All of you may go to sleep,” he said.

Around midnight, the king of the snakes came and told the Imam^{AS}, “We will clear the way if so ordered.” The Imam^{AS} replied, “It is better the travellers are not troubled.” The snake king ordered that the snakes, which had troubled the travellers, be brought before him. They were brought. He ordered that

they should be cut into pieces. The orders were obeyed. The next morning all the members of the group of the Imam^{AS} woke up safe.

QANDAHAR

The companions of the Imam^{AS} then reached Qandahar in Afghanistan. The ruler here was Mir Zunnoon. His twenty years old son, Shah Beg, was an irresponsible drunkard.

Somebody told the Imam^{AS} at Qandahar, “Miranji! The people of Khorasan are unjust and cruel and we are Hindis (Indians). Hence, we cannot talk to them in Hindi about the religion. If it is felt expedient, please keep the claim (to be Mahdi^{AS}) in abeyance for some time. When we are able to converse with them easily and these people become inclined (to be considerate) towards us, you may openly announce your claim (to be Mahdi^{AS}).” The Imam^{AS} said, “If the claim to be Mahdi is staked on the basis of your authority and power, we will be expedient. If it is made on the power of Allah Most High, *Insha Allah*, (God willing), it will be known.”

Soon the news of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} coming to Qandahar spread like wild fire that a Syed from India has arrived, he claims to be Mahdi and says that the Quran is witness to his claim. Further, he says his disavowal is infidelity (*kufr*).

All the *ulama* congregated and summoned Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} to the Jami’ Masjid. The Imam^{AS} too was preparing to go to the mosque for Friday prayers. The emissaries of the *ulama* came and asked him to come to the mosque. The Imam^{AS} said he was coming. A few moments later a larger group came and demanded, “Hurry up!” The Imam^{AS} said, “The people are performing the ablutions. We will come.” A third and a larger group came, laid their hands on the girdles and demanded to know, “When are you coming, why do you not come soon?” The Imam^{AS} started to walk bare-foot.

Maulud

Somebody cried, “Bring the footwear of the Imam^{AS}.” The Imam^{AS} replied, “There is no need! This *banda* can walk barefoot for a thousand miles for the sake of Allah.”

The companions followed the Imam^{AS}. The emissaries forbade the companions. The companions did not stop. There was a scuffle. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} was beaten. The Imam^{AS} did not react. When the Imam^{AS} reached the mosque, he did not direct his attention towards anyone. The *ulama* began to scold the Imam^{AS}. With patience and disdain, the Imam^{AS} went to the first row (*saf-e-awwal*) and sat down.

Sometime later, Shah Beg arrived. He was inebriated and was carrying bottles of liquor in his hands. Someone told the Imam^{AS}, “Shah Beg is coming. He is drunk. He is careless and mischievous.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Keep quiet! Let him come! People drunk with worldliness come to this *banda* and regain consciousness. How long will this drunkenness of the liquor last?” Shah Beg came and sat down near the Imam^{AS}. The *ulama* started to heap invectives loudly against the Imam^{AS}. Shah Beg reprimanded them and asked them to keep quiet. He said, “Let me hear what this Syed has to say! Then I will do what I please.” When silence prevailed, the Imam^{AS} started his sermon on Quran.

The Imam^{AS} spoke on three Quranic Verses. Hearing it, Shah Beg lost his composure and started crying. He said, “O Chief! This is my great mistake! By God! I did not know things were like this! Had I known, I would have come walking on my head (to pay my respects). I would not have been arrogant.” He then stood up and said, “I have been very rude. Please forgive me.” He continued these entreaties for over a *pahr* (three hours).

But the Imam^{AS} did not turn his attention towards Beg till he had completed his sermon on the section of Quran that includes the Verse, “*Can any of these people be compared to any one of those who rest their belief on the evidence (of their reason) vouchsafed to them by God and endorsed openly by the revelation through him (the Prophet), as well as by the book of*

*Moses, which has preceded him, which is a book of guidance and mercy? It is people such as these who have faith in it (the Quran); but if anyone from among the different sections of the people rejects it, the recompense assigned to him is Fire. So, (O Prophet!) do not thou grow apprehensive as to the result (of thy mission), for the truth (it upholds) is the very truth from thy Lord, although (at the moment) a good many people do not believe in it.”*⁷⁴

While the Imam^{AS} was delivering the sermon, he did not pay any attention to Shah Beg. Then the Imam^{AS} stood up and started to go to his camp. Shah Beg took the hand of the Imam^{AS} in his own hand walked with the Imam^{AS} until they came to the camp of the Imam^{AS}. There he touched the feet of the Imam^{AS} and went away. He sent gold, silver and fruits, fresh and dry, to the Imam^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} accepted his donations. After the third day, he did not accept any more hospitality from Shah Beg. The latter came to the Imam^{AS} with entreaties to continue to accept his hospitality. But the Imam^{AS} said, “Accepting hospitality for three days is the *sunnat* of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. I too will not accept the hospitality beyond three days.”

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} stayed at Qandahar for two more weeks and started his journey from there. Shah Beg took the saddle straps of the horse of the Imam^{AS} in his hands and walked with him for three leagues. Then the Imam^{AS} asked him to go back. He then requested the Imam^{AS} to make him his disciple. The Imam^{AS} made him sit under the shade of a tree and performed the ritual of initiation (*talqin*). Then Shah Beg returned. The names of the companions who accompanied the Imam^{AS} from Qandahar are: Miyan Muhammad Kashani, Miyan Ashraf Hansavi, Miyan Lalan Khorasani, Miyan Haji Mohammad

⁷⁴ Quran, S. 11: 17 SAL. The section (*ruku'*) starts from verse 9 of this Surat and ends at Verse 24, inclusive. The Imam^{AS} explained the whole of the section in his sermon at this time.

Ahmadabadi, Miyan Abdullah, Miyan Abdul Hashim, Miyan Abdul Qadir, Miyan Kabir Khan, Miyan Sharif, Miyan Kamal Khan and Miyan Chalak (May Allah be pleased with them all).

FARAH

When Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} arrived at Farah in Afghanistan, it became widely known, “A Syed from among the descendants of Hazrat Imam Husain^{RZ} has come and he claims to be Mahdi Mau’ood *Khalifat-ur-Rahman*. ‘It is obligatory upon all the people to perform my *tasdiq*. He who performs my *tasdiq* (affirms and confirms) is a *mumin* and he who disavows me is a *kafir* (infidel).’”

The Qazi of the city ordered the Police Chief, “Go with a crowd of people, arrest the Syed who claims to be Mahdi and all his people, big and small, who are with him and bring all of them here.”

The Police Chief sent his men. Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} was sitting with his companions outside their rooms in open space. They were all engaged in the *zikr* of Allah. The companions and others sought the permission of the Imam^{AS} to fight the intruders. The Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* is obedient to the command of Lord of Glory (*Rab-bul-Izzat*—Allah), and not to his own thinking or the expediency (*maslahat*) of others. Be patient.”

The officials took all the belongings of the *fuqara*, including even the scarves (*oorhnian*) of the women and then came to Hazrat Imam^{AS} and demanded the swords. The Imam^{AS} was the first to hand over his own sword to them. All the companions followed suit.

Sarwar Khan Sarwani was the ruler of the town and the chief of the fort. Mir Zunnoon was the chief of the town. Around midnight, Sarwani saw in a dream that Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} was standing near his head with a spear in his hand and said, “Such an outrage has occurred on my son who is the Lord of

my Sainthood in your territory!” Sarwani was overawed and in fear; he said, “I do not know. I will investigate in the morning.” Then he felt excruciating pain in his stomach and woke up.

Immediately, he called the Police Chief and told him that he had seen such a dream and was highly agonised by his stomachache. The Police Chief told him all that had happened. He arrested the Qazi and produced him before the Imam^{AS}. He sent word that the Qazi would be punished in accordance with the command of the Imam^{AS}. He also sent some equitable *ulama* to tender an apology and to inquire into the claim of Mahdiat. Through them he also requested that a list of the lost things be sent so that twice its quantity could be sent to the Imam^{AS} as compensation.

The *ulama* tendered the apology and asked for a list of the lost things. The Imam^{AS} said, “We have-not lost anything we had. We have nothing except God and we have not lost our God.”

After that, the *ulama* asked some questions. The Imam^{AS} gave suitable replies. The *ulama* returned happily.

The most learned among the *ulama* told Sarwar Khan Sarwani, their lord, “O Nawab! My knowledge is like a drop before the knowledge of the Syed, which is like an ocean.” Then the *ulama* sent all the details to Mir Zunnoon who was in Rach (near Farah) and were consulting about their next move.

Meanwhile, Zunnoon said, “First, send all the lost things to them. Then I will go to them fully armed and with all the pomp and pageantry. If they are overawed and daunted, they are liars. If they are indifferent to us, we are overawed by them and we are compelled to turn our attention to them, surely he is the Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}.” The ruler agreed with Zunnoon.

Zunnoon did as he had said. He came with his army and its band. He lashed at some of the *fuqara* or tried to intimidate them. But when he came face to face with the Imam^{AS}, he lost his composure. All of a sudden, he dismounted his horse. He tried to sit near the Imam^{AS}. None of the companions of the

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Imam^{AS} paid any attention to him. Then, the Imam^{AS} said, “Sit down wherever you find a place.” Zunnoon sat down immediately on the ground. When the Imam^{AS} started his discourse on Quran, he heard it with rapt attention. Then, the Imam^{AS} asked him to come nearer. A little later, the Imam^{AS} again asked him to come nearer. He did so.

Zunnoon told Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, “It is all right if the *Khundkar* is a literal Mahdi. If you are an *istilahi Mahdi* (that is, Mahdi in technical terms of *Shariat*), you should prove it.” The Imam^{AS} said, “To prove is for Allah Most High. This *banda* is assigned the task of *tabligh* (preaching).” Mir Zunnoon said, “*Hadis* says that the sword will not cut the Mahdi.” The Imam^{AS} replied, “The task of the sword is to cut, that of the water is to drown and that of the fire is to burn. But none will overpower the Mahdi. Try your hand!” The Imam^{AS} offered his sword to Zunnoon. Zunnoon raised his hand with the sword. It froze. His face turned green and he lost consciousness.

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} took his hand and woke him up. He tried with the sword thrice but to no avail. Then, he laid down the sword with respect and humility.

Then, a wise minister of the court, whose name was Maulana Nur Kuzagar^{RZ}, said in aloud voice, “If the Mahdi has to come, this *zath* alone is the Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. Otherwise, no Mahdi will ever come. I perform his *tasdiq*.”

Mir Zunnoon^{RZ} too said, “I too perform his *tasdiq*. I am the *musaddiq* (affirmer) of this Mahdi. I am the servant, the helper and slave of this Mahdi. Wherever necessary, I will use the sword. I will kill the opponents of the Mahdi.”

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “Use your sword against your *nafs* (lust, self, concupiscence) so that it does not lead you astray. God is the helper of the Mahdi and the Mahdavis.”

Mir Zunnoon^{RZ} got the ritual of *talqin* performed on him. Maulana Nur Kuzagar^{RZ} also got initiated. Many others performed the ritual of *tark-e-dunya* (giving up the world).

They became the seekers of Allah and achieved the Vision of Allah Most High (*didar-e-Khuda*). They all joined the company of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. Till now, the Imam^{AS} had stayed in a garden outside the city of Farah. Mir Zunnoon did his best to persuade the Imam^{AS} to come into the city. But the Imam^{AS} continued to stay outside the city till Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, Bandagi Miyan Shah Nei'mat^{RZ}, Miyan Abdul Majid^{RZ}, Miyan Abu Muhammad^{RZ}, Miyan Muhammad Kabir^{RZ} and Miyan Yusuf^{RZ} returned from their sojourn to Gujarat.

ENTERING THE CITY

The Imam^{AS} came into the city after the arrival of the companions. He founded the *daira* at the town of Rach in accordance with the needs. Allah Most High had given some houses there. The inmates of the *daira* occupied them. The Imam^{AS} was alive for two years and five months after entering the city of Farah.

(It may be recalled that) Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had sent Miyan Nizam Ghalib^{RZ} from the City of Thatta (in Sindh) to Nahruvala (in Gujarat). The reason for it was that three elderly women had told the Imam^{AS}, “Miranji! Our daughters too are the seekers of Allah Most High. They have sent word that they would come here (to be in the company of Imam^{AS}) if we were to go to them.” The Imam^{AS} permitted them. They requested, “Please send a brother with us.” The Imam^{AS} asked, “Whom should I send with you?” They said, “Miyan Nizam Ghalib^{RZ}.” Getting scent of this, Miyan Nizam Ghalib^{RZ} remained untraceable the whole day. He was afraid the Imam^{AS} would send him with the elderly women and that he would be deprived of the august company of the Imam^{AS} (till his return). Miyan Nizam Ghalib^{RZ} returned at the time of the ‘*Asr* (late afternoon) prayers. At the time of the *bayan-e-Quran*, Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, “The servants of God had run away. They

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have come back.” After the night prayers, the Imam^{AS} said, “Miyan Nizam Ghalib^{RZ}! Go. There is some divine objective in this.” Hence, the Miyan^{RZ} went to Nahruvala.

When Miyan Nizam Ghalib^{RZ} was returning from Nahruvala, both the *qazi* and *khateeb* of Nahruvala performed the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, gave up the world, abandoned their official positions and came to join the company of the Imam^{AS}. When they met the Imam Mahdi^{AS} at Farah, he said, “Such people should be called Mahdi (the guided).”

The ruler of the fort of Farah, Sarwar Khan, sent word to the Imam^{AS}, “Miranji! Please forgive the sins of this *banda*. I am in great pain. Please also give me something to cure my affliction.” In reply, the Imam^{AS} said, “We are not any *hakeem* (doctor). We do not know any medicines.” Miyan Nizam^{RZ} said, “*Khundkar* is the Mercy of the Worlds (Universe). Please help him.” After this, the Imam^{AS} gave his sanctified leftover water (*pashkurda*). The pain vanished as soon as the Khan drank it. Immediately, Sarwar Khan came to the Imam^{AS}, got initiated in the Order of the Imam^{AS} and returned. Then, he sent many things to the Imam^{AS} as gifts and donations. The Imam^{AS} accepted his offers for three days after which he rejected them.

LETTER TO SULTAN

All the *ulama-e-billah* (learned people in inspired knowledge) who had reposed faith in Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} wrote a letter to the Sultan of Haryu, Sultan Husain Shah, saying that “We have all discussed the issue of the claim of Hazrat Miran Syed Muhammad Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} for a whole year and finally came to the conclusion that this *zath* alone is the True Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} and we have performed his *tasdiq* (affirmed and confirmed him as the Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS}).”

The Sultan called four of the great *ulama* of his kingdom, namely, (1) Shaikh Ali Fayyaz, (2) Mullah Darvish Muhammad, (3) Haji Muhammad Hardo Khorasani and (4)

Abdus Samad Hamadani, and told them, “This is a great claim. It must be researched and investigated thoroughly. If he is proved to be *sadiq* (truthful), he should be obeyed.”

They said, “We too should think of it. The proof should be perfect.” Then they asked for a period of two months to address the task and said, “The library should be handed over to us for a thorough research.” After their research, they formulated four questions and started their journey to meet the Imam^{AS}. Meanwhile, they decided after consulting among themselves that when they talked to Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}, only Mullah Ali Fayyaz should speak; none else should open his mouth.

They reached Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. The Imam^{AS} was delivering the *bayan* of Quran. He had just completed the *bayan* of three Quranic Verses, when the *ulama* asked their first question, “You call yourself Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}.” The Imam^{AS} said, “I do not call myself as Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS}. But Allah tells me, ‘We have made you the Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} and you are the Mahdi Mau’ood^{AS} of the Last Era (*Aakhir az-Zaman*).”

Their second question was, “What is your *mazhab*?” The Imam^{AS} said, “Our *mazhab* is the Book of Allah and the *Sunnat* (practice) of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}.”

Their third question was, “On which *tafsir* do you base your *bayan* of Quran?” The Imam^{AS} said, “This *banda* delivers the *muradullah* (purport of Allah) in his *bayan*. The *tafsir* and all other matters that conform to the *bayan* of this *banda* are correct. All others are wrong.”

Their fourth and final question was, “You stake your claim to the Vision of Allah (*didar-e-Khuda*) and you invite the people to see God.” Hazrat Imam^{AS} explained the Quranic Verses related to the Vision of Allah in accordance with the rules of grammar and convinced the *ulama* that God can be seen in this world. Then he asked, “How many witnesses are needed for the Qazi in *Shariat*?” The *ulama* said, “Two.” The Imam^{AS} said,

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“See! Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} and Hazrat Ibrahim Khaleelulah^{AS} are standing here. You may ask them. Further, this *banda* too is a witness.”

Immediately, Mullah Ali Fayyaz^{RZ} fell into a *jazbah* and performed the *tasdiq* of the Imam^{AS}, and said, “By God! For us, this one witness is enough.” The other three *ulama* too followed suit. Three of them joined the company of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. They sent Maulana Abdus Samad^{RZ} to the Sultan and through him informed the Sultan that they had performed the *tasdiq* of the Imam^{AS}.

Sultan Husain too performed the *tasdiq* of the Imam^{AS}. He started his journey to meet Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. He sent a letter to the Imam^{AS}. It said, “Please treat this *ghulam* (slave) Husain as your own.” At the end of one day’s journey, he wrote another letter, “If I am alive, I will meet you.” At the end of every day’s journey, he would send a letter through a courier. This went on. At the end of the third day’s journey, the Sultan became ill. The fever became serious. A few days later he breathed his last.

The dead body (*janaza*) of the Sultan was divinely shown to the Imam^{AS} at Farah. He said the funeral prayers of the Sultan with the congregation of his companions.

MOUNTAINS OF GOLD

One day, Malik Gawhar^{RZ} was going with a pot of hot water along with the Imam^{AS} in a nearby forest, when all of a sudden all the mountains around became those of gold and all the pebbles in the sand in rivers became gems. The Imam^{AS} told the Malik^{RZ}, “If you want anything, please take it.” The Malik^{RZ} said, “By God! I need nothing.” The Imam^{AS} then said, “Take a handful and show it to the companions and tell them to take them if they wanted. It is permitted (*jaiz*).” All the companions said they did not need them. Then, Malik Gawhar^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS} that none of the companions paid any attention to the

gems. Hazrat Imam Mahdi Mau'ood^{AS} of the Last Era, who is the *Khalifa* of *Rahman* and the Seal of the Sainthood of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}, said, "The person who likes God does not like wealth and the person who likes wealth does not like God. Then, the Mahdi will give the wealth to whom after retrieving it from the bowels of earth? The ignorant people do not know that retrieving of the wealth from the earth and distributing it among the people is to lead them astray and it is the attribute of *Dajjal* (Anti-Christ)." ⁷⁵

One day, Miyan Abdul Wahab Panipati^{RZ} praised 'Ain al-Quzzat and told Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} that Hazrat Esa^{AS} used to revive a dead person by saying, "Rise by the command of Allah." However, 'Ain al-Quzzat used to revive a dead person by saying, "Rise by my command." Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} said, "There was nothing other than Allah in Hazrat Esa^{AS}. But in 'Ain al-Quzzat there remained some *hasti* (existence)."

Miyan Abdullah Baghdadi^{RZ} told the Imam^{AS}, "Among the Suhrawardis, one should keep some *zar* (gold or money) in his girdle for the consolation of the *nafs* (lust, self, concupiscence). But among the Chishtis, one should eat or feed others whatever Allah gives the same day and if something remains unused it should be buried in the ground." The Imam^{AS} replied, "The objective of both is good. But in the words of either, the flavour of *hasti* (existence or ego) is evident. They have not obeyed the commands of the Book of Allah or the Prophet^{SLM}."

⁷⁵ Hazrat Nawas bin Sam'an^{RZ} has quoted Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} as saying in respect of *Dajjal*, "He (*Dajjal*) would go to a people and invite them to join him. They refuse to oblige him. He would go to them again and the people would be in a famine. They would have no wealth (in kind). Ten *Dajjal* will go into a desolate place. Addressing it, he would say, 'Throw up all your hidden treasures.' The earth will throw up all the treasures. And people will follow them like the honeybees follow their head-bee. —*Mishkat*. Part IV, Urdu Translation, Chapter relating to the signs of the Day of Resurrection, pp. 240-241. Printed at Curzon Steam Press, Delhi.

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Both miserliness and prodigality are not permitted. Allah says in Quran, 'And those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging; and there is a firm station between the two.' ⁷⁶ The perfection of *darvishi* (poverty, calling of a dervish) is that one should assign oneself to God in such a manner that he retains no authority (*ikhtiar*) over himself."

LAST FRIDAY

When Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} went to the town of Rach and set his home there, he said, "There is no place, asylum, home or place to love for the Mahdavis. *Insha Allah*, those who are ours will die in penury. Mahdi and the Mahdavis will be there till the Day of Resurrection is established."

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} regularly went to the Friday prayers without fail. One day Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, son of the Imam^{AS}, came in line with the shoulder of the Imam^{AS}. Hazrat Imam^{AS} looked at his son and said, "*Bhaya*,⁷⁷ either go ahead or come behind." The narrative is very well known.

After saying his Friday prayers, the Imam^{AS} reiterated the intention (*niyat*) of saying the *witar*⁷⁸ in a loud voice. He also performed the *witar namaz*. Among the congregation were Maulana Gul^{RZ}, Maulana Mahmud^{RZ} and Maulana Abdush Shukur^{RZ}. Among them they told each other, "Verily, This *zath* is Mahdi Mau'ood. He will not come for the prayers next Friday." The prayers over, the *ulama* asked, "What is the name and the day of the birth of the *Khundkar*? When would he die?" The Imam^{AS} said, "The name of this *banda* is Syed Muhammad son of Syed Abdullah. The day of my birth, call (*dawat*) and

⁷⁶ Quran, S. 25: 67 MMP.

⁷⁷ *Bhaya* means brother.

⁷⁸ The three-*rak'at* (cycle) prayer usually said after the night prayers.

death is Monday.” All the *ulama* paid fealty to the Imam^{AS} and joined his company.

The same day, the Imam^{AS} became ill with fever. It was the turn of the house of Hazrat Bibi Malkan^{RZ} for the Imam^{AS} to stay. The next day was the turn of the Imam^{AS} to stay at the house of Hazrat Bibi Buwanji^{RZ} (the other wife). The Imam^{AS} went to her house with his hand placed on the hand of his son Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}. Bibi Buwanji^{RZ} said, “I will prepare some gruel for you. Please eat it.” The Imam^{AS} said, “The strength of *ghair-Allah* (things other than Allah) is no strength.” Then again, Hazrat Imam^{AS} said, “Poor (person) is in the refuge and peace of Allah. This *banda* has nothing.”

But Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} had sixty swords that had been lent to his migrant companions. The Imam^{AS} gestured that they be bestowed to the persons to whom they had been lent.

When it was time to go to the house of Hazrat Bibi Malkan^{RZ}, the Imam^{AS} said, “Take us to the house of Bibi Malkan.” The companions started exchanging glances as the Imam^{AS} was in a weak condition. They thought it would be better if the Imam^{AS} remained at the house of Bibi Buwanji^{RZ}. The Imam^{AS} ordered a second time to be taken to the house of Bibi Malkan^{RZ}. The companions again hesitated. Bibi Malkan^{RZ} was present there. She suggested, “It would be better if Hazrat Miran^{AS} remains here as there is a bedstead here. There is no bedstead in my house.” The Imam^{AS} said, “It is your right.” Bibi Malkan^{RZ} said, “I forego and forgive my right.” The Imam^{AS} said, “Allah will never forgive.” The companions made the Imam^{AS} sit on a bedstead and took him to the house of Bibi Malkan^{RZ}.

The Imam^{AS} took some rest and said, “We are from the group of the prophets. We are neither the inheritors of anybody nor anybody is our heir.”

It was Monday, the 19th of Zi-qa’da, 910 AH. At about one *pahr* after sunrise, Allah Most High commanded his *Habib* (friend), “O My servant! I am attentive to you. I send my

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salutations to you. Come to Me soon so that I can make you drink the *sharbat* by the hand of My Omnipotence. Exhale your breath in my remembrance (*zikr*). Come near Me to an Exalted Position.”

Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} bowed his head before the command of Allah Most High. When the Angel of Death drew the chaste and immaculate soul (from the body) of the Imam^{AS}, the Seat, the Empyrean, the earth, the skies and everything between them started shuddering.

A controversy cropped up between the residents of Farah and Rach. The people of Farah argued, “Our fort is greater and we will take (the body) to Farah.” The people of Rach said, “He breathed his last on our land. We will keep (his body) here.”

Meanwhile, Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, the son of the Imam^{AS}, sent word through Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Nizam^{RZ}, “Please do not quarrel among yourselves. This is our affair. We will lay the body to eternal rest where we like.” The controversy died down.

When the bier with the body of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} was ready, the people carried it on their shoulders. There was a vast piece of land with trees and rivulets between Farah and Rach. When they reached this place, the bier became so heavy that it could be taken no further. The bier was placed there on the ground. The owner of the land was summoned and asked to name the price of the land “so that we inter the body here.”

The owner of the land started crying and said, “I have performed the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS}. Allah has given this land to you. It is the good fortune of this land that the Imam^{AS} is being laid to rest here.” The last rites were then performed.

Hazrat Bandagi Miran Syed Mahmood^{RZ}, the first *Khalifa* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} continued his vice-regency for ten years. Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Syed Khundmir^{RZ}, the second *Khalifa*, was the vice-regent for the next ten years until his martyrdom. The third and the fourth *Khalifas* ruled for five years each.

After them, Hazrat Bandagi Miyan Shah Dilawar^{RZ} was the vice-regent for nine years. During the *khilafat* of these five Vice-Regents, thousands of people became the seekers of the Truth and met their Creator. Each one of them had Seen Allah and became the *murshid* of the Truth. O Allah! Make me live and make me die and on the Day of Judgement judge me in this group of Mahdavis by the honour of the *Kalima-e-tayyaba-e-Muhammad^{SLM}* and the *tasdiq* of Hazrat Imam Mahdi^{AS} and Your Infinite Mercy. O the Greatest of the Merciful!

(This English translation was completed on Monday, 13 February, 2006\12 Muharram, 1427 AH—Syed Ziaullah Yadullahi).

Version History

| Version No. | Date | Description | Change by |
|-------------|---------------|---|----------------------|
| 1.0 | Jan 2007 | Original Book, same as Print Edition of 2007 | - |
| 1.1 | February 2011 | Re-issued after making the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the section ‘Ka’aba with its Lord’, text has been changed as follows. - OLD TEXT: “announced after reciting the <i>hadis</i> of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM},” - NEW TEXT: “amongst a gathering of people, in a loud voice first recited the tradition [<i>hadis</i>] of | Team Khalifat hullah |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | Prophet Muhammad ^{SLM} and then made the claim of <i>mahdaviat</i> saying,” | |
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