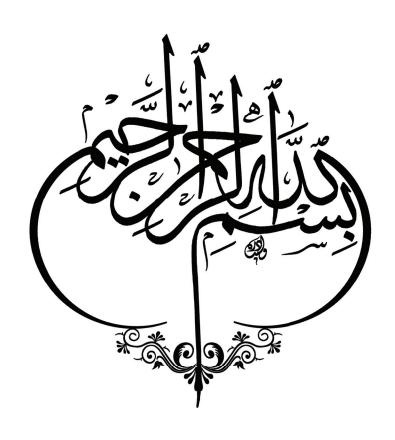


FROM THE LENS OF NOBLE QUR'AN
& VARIOUS ZIYARATS

PART 2
GUIDANCE



REFLECT 14



Acknowledgements

We would like to initiate this section by expressing our sincere gratitude to the Almighty Alláh (swt), the Source of all guidance, as well as to our beloved Imam Al-Mahdi (a), whose prayers enabled us to complete this small effort. We thank our Aimma (a), espically Imam Ali Naqi al-Hadi (a) who gifted his Shias with Ziyarat al Ghadeer and Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera. These works are not only critical to our heritage but are valuable for our existence to remain on Sirat ul Mustageem.

Like any other project, this was a result of the collaborative effort of many individuals. Without their help and support this book wouldn't have come into existence. The following individuals deserve to be highlighted here.

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We would like to request our readers to recite a surah Fateha for the marhomeen of our team members and especially for Marhoom Syed Misbah ur Raza Naqvi and Marhoom Syed Akhter Ali Moosavi.

Comments and Feedback

A great deal of attention was paid in the citation of verses from the Noble Qur'an. However, we encourage our readers to provide feedback incase they find any typographical errors. Please write your feedback to our email address that is listed below.

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Photos & Calligraphy

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Cover Image

The cover image is taken from NASA's most powerful observatory **JWST.** It shows the deepest portion of the observable universe known as **'Carina Nebula'**, an area where stars and planets were born 13.4 billion years ago, is surrounded by DUST.



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The Father of Dust



Reflect 14



In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ...

"O mankind! If you have a doubt about the Resurrection, (consider) that We created you out of dust..."

QUR'AN (22:5)





"From dust we were created, to dust we will return. May we become the source of delight for our Father of Dust."



PART 2 of 5: GUIDANCE

The Covenant

أَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ ﴿ ٤٠ ﴾

"Fulfill **My covenant [upon you]** that I will fulfill your covenant [from Me], and be afraid of [only] Me."

र्जेंट रजेंट र्जेंट र्ज

SURAH AL-BAQARAH, VERSE: 40

"So Alláh (swt) asked them, 'Am I not your Lord?' All of them replied, 'Why not!' Then Alláh (swt) asked, 'Is Muhammad not My messenger?' They all replied, 'Indeed, he is.'

Then He (swt) asked, 'Is **Ali** not the chief and the ruler of the believers?' So all the creatures refused and were arrogant of your wilayāh. They disobeyed except for some few people and they are very few and it is they, who are on the right hand."

-Hayat Al-Qulub Vol.3 Muhammad Baqir Majlisi "The Divine
Revelation did
declare your
commissioned
leadership, and
the Messenger
made a covenant
with the people
(that they would
be under your
leadership)."

-Ziyarat al Ghadeer



PART 2 of 5: GUIDANCE

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Prolouge

"What blame would people place upon me if I were to name you as 'Abu Turab'. You are my brother, and my Vizier and my Caliph among my family. You will fulfill my debts and my responsibilities. The one who loves you during my life-time, I shall judge Paradise for him, and the one who loves you after my lifetime, Alláh (swt) would seal the security, and the faith for him..."

-Prophet Muhammad (s)

he Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (a), is known by numerous different epithets. Whether they are present in the Noble Qur'an, were given to him by Rasulullah (s) or even chosen by himself, all are testimonials to his phenomenal personality. These titles not only reflect the multiple dynamics of his unmatched characteristics, but they also unveil secrets of his life.

The title "Father of Dust", also known as "Abu Turab", is a thought provoking title that was gifted to Amirul Momineen (a) by Rasulullah (s). It is not only the most elegant and noble title of Imam Ali (a) but was also amongst his favorites. While tying it up with one of the integral elements, which our Creator has used for His creation, the Prophet (s) has indicated the mysterious virtues of Imam Ali (a). This also reflects the immense love and trust in their relationship. Similar to how the farmer carefully cultivates the land before sowing the seed, Rasulullah's (s) diligent guidance throughout Imam Ali's (a) life, prepared him to carry all the essential knowledge to lead the Ummah after him (s). However, it is clear that Rasulullah (s) knew how many would misunderstand the merits of Amirul Momineen (a) through this name.

¹ Ilal al-sharayi' (Volume:1, Ch:125, Hadith:4)

Dust (*Turab*) has played a powerful role in the existence of the vast universe, including mankind. Its significance is shown in the creation of Adam (a) and in the reference to the Day of Judgement. Both encapsulate the concepts around wilayāh (the concept of Divine leadership).

Similar to Imam Ali (a), this element also has many different names. Some would call it clay in the creation of Adam (a) and others would long to be a dust particle on the Day of Judgement. Whereas in between these two events, it changes its form to be recognized as soil, a crucial asset to sustain life on Earth. This book will highlight some of these various phrases to assist in understanding parts of Imam Ali's (a) complex personality.

Sheikh al-Sadooq in his book Ilal al-sharayi', explains the merits of the name "Abu Turab". He reports that once Abayah ibn Rab'i asked Ibn Abbas as to why the Holy Prophet (s) addressed Ali ibn Abi Talib (a) as "Abu Turab"?

He replied, "Because Ali (a) is the master of the Earth and Alláh's proof upon its inhabitants after him (s). Through Ali (a) is its survival and due to him (a) is its stability." Ibn Abbas further explained, "I have heard from the Holy Prophet (s) that on the Last Day, upon seeing the reward and benevolence prepared for Shias of Ali (a) by God Almighty, the infidel will say: 'O! I wish I were dust!' i.e I wish I was one of the Shias of Ali (a)." These words of the Prophet (s) are in reference to the following verse:

'And the disbeliever will say: Oh, I wish that I were dust!'
(Surah An-Naba, Verse, 40)

The infidels would long to come under the protection of Imam Ali (a) on that Day of Judgement and would feel like orphans. However, nothing will benefit them then, as they had rejected their spiritual father during the time that they had spent on earth.

Before discerning the connection of this title with Imam Ali (a) one must perceive the relationship of the farmer with his land. In the context of the Abu Turab, Imam Ali (a) was continuously and carefully trained by the Holy Prophet (s) to receive such divine duties.

As arable land goes through the process of tillage by the farmer, Imam Ali (a) was showered with divine knowledge and guidance of the Holy Prophet (s) that enabled him to receive and protect the seed of religion on the *Day of Ghadeer*. This process of protection and giving life to the religion is tied with the system of wilayāh that initiates with Imam Ali (a).

Indeed the true secret behind the meaning of "Father of Dust" lies with Alláh (swt) and the Masomeen (a), but perhaps Rasulullah (s) wanted to remind us about our pledge and connection to the Father of Dust. We often forget that the pledge we had given—when Alláh (swt) created our souls (7:172)—is being tested the moment we gain life within our dusty frames till we return to our dusty final abodes.

Perhaps he (s) wanted us to understand that accepting the wilayāh of Amirul Momineen (a) will give humans a purpose and meaning in their life. A life in which humans embark on a straight path to reach the peak of servitude.

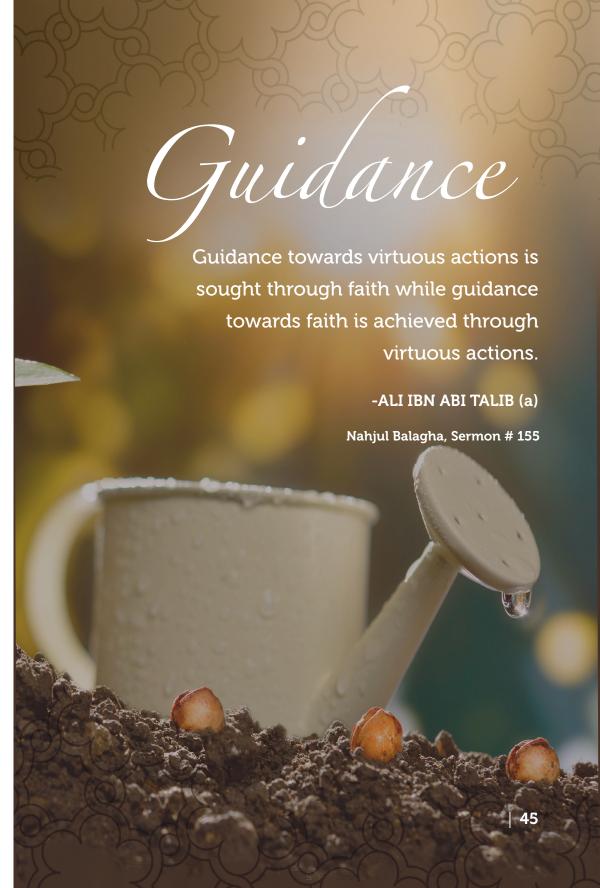
In this life we are given the opportunity to become incredible individuals by unlocking our potential. However, without embracing the wilayāh, can we truly come under the guardianship of the Father of Dust?

We pray this book, with the blessings of Alláh, will help us in reaching closeness to "Abu Turab" so we come under his protection in this world and the Hereafter.

-Reflect 14 18th Dulhijjah, 1443 AH.

"Rejoice therefore in the pledge which you have made; and that is the mighty achievement."

- Ziyarat al Ghadeer



Guidance

Once a seed is sowed in the soil, it goes through the process of germination during which certain factors (Oxygen, Heat, Water and Temperature) need to be maintained. Some are controlled within the soil, whereas the other factors are dependent on divine intervention for a successful process.

While being the Father of Dust, Amirul Momineen (a) held on to the trust of Alláh and under the care of divine guidance he strategized his position after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s). Similarly, soil maintains an optimal temperature that aids the seed to ground its roots.

Once Imam Ali's (a) rightful leadership was denied by the people, he became the only source of guidance for all. Aside from being the leader of the Ummah, an Imam is also a guide for all of Alláh's creation. It is the responsibility of the Imam to remain approachable on all occasions and direct the creation towards the straight path. The Imam remains in constant actions and maintains the optimal surroundings to protect the religion at all times.

To many, it seems that in the span of 25 years after the Prophet (s), Imam Ali (a) sat quietly and didn't showcase any activities for the religion. In reality, it was him who was continuously maintaining, guiding and protecting the seed of religion. Those who were sitting on the pulpits also knew that without the immense guidance of Amirul Momineen (a), the religion would crumble because of their deeds. Hence, it was always the door of Imam Ali (a) that they resorted to for guidance, at times of their difficulties.

In the Noble Qur'an, the Almighty Alláh (swt) has referred to Amirul Momineen (a) as His straight path, the rightly guided and as the source through which He channels His divine guidance to those who seek.

"Peace be upon the directors of right quidance,...the leaders, the guides of the pious ones. Our Lord, cause not our hearts to stray after You have quided us."

-Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera



Quranic Reference

at a Glance

Surah & Verse

Words

Meaning

Al-Fatiha:6	الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ	The Straight Path
		The straight Fair
Al-Baqarah:2	الْكِتَابُ	The Book
Al-Baqarah:38	هُدَايَ	My Guidance
An-Nisa: 174	نُورًا مُّبِينًا	A Clear Light
Al-Maidah:13	الْكَلِمَ	The Words
Al-An'am:90	أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ	They are the ones whom Alláh has guided.
Al-An'am:122	نُورًا	A Light
Al-An'am:153	صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا	My Straight Path
Taha: 126	آیَاتُنَا	Our Signs
Taha: 127	بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ	The Signs of his Lord.
Taha: 135	أَصْحَابُ الصِّرَاطِ السَّوِيّ وَمَن اهْتَدَىٰ	The possessors of the right path, and who is [rightly] guided.'
Al-Mu'minun:10	الْوَارِثُونَ	The Inheritors
Al-Mu'minun:11	الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ	Who shall inherit paradise.
An-Nur:54	تُطِيعُوهُ	If you obey him.

The Straight Path of Alláh



Guide us to the straight path. (6)

Surah Al-Fatiha, Verse: 6

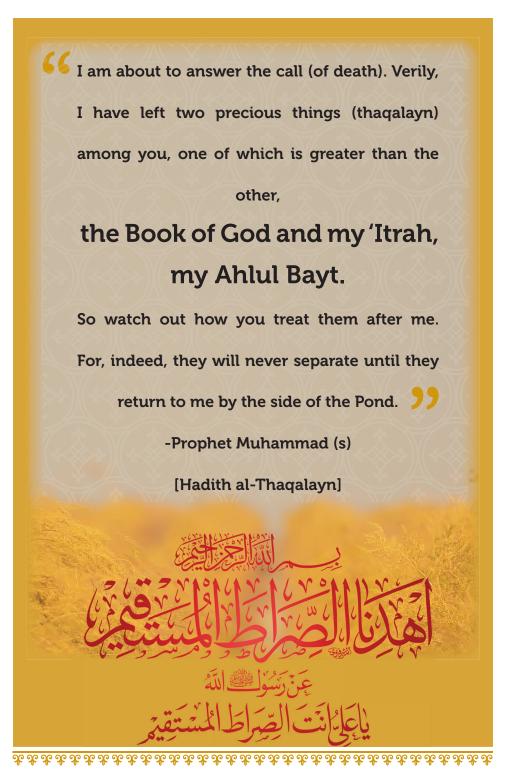
The Noble Qur'an not only begins with the introduction of the Almighty, but also mentions a beautiful dua that is presented in the verse above. This verse indicates that there will always remain a path of guidance for humanity. It is for us to take initiative to be guided, and follow that straight path to reap the benefits from the light of Divine guidance. The Holy Prophet (s) had directed us in his last sermon as to who is qualified for the leadership and who should people adhere to after him.

In respect to this verse, Abu Basir narrates from Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) who said,

"It refers to the path and knowledge of the Imam."

Abu Basir also said, "My father related to me from Hammad, from Imam Sadiq (a) that 'The straight path' refers to The Commander of the Faithful (a)."

It is also mentioned in Bihar al-Anwar, (v. 24, p.11, no. 3) that Imam Jafar al-Sadig (a) had said, "There are two paths, a path in this world and a path in the Hereafter. As for the path that is in this world, it is the Imam towards whom obedience is obligatory; he who knows him in this world and follows his guidance will pass the path, which is a bridge over hell in the Hereafter; and he who does not know him in this world, his foot will stumble over the path in the Hereafter, so it falls in the fire of hell."



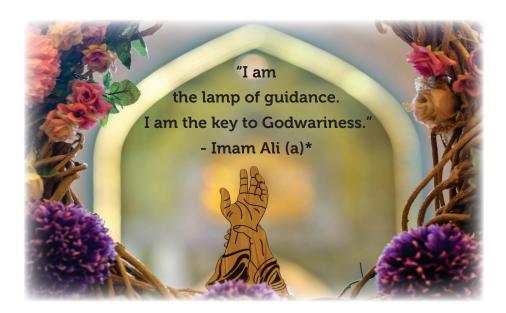
Guidance for the Godwary

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَبْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢﴾

This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Alláh

Surah Al-Bagarah, Verse: 2

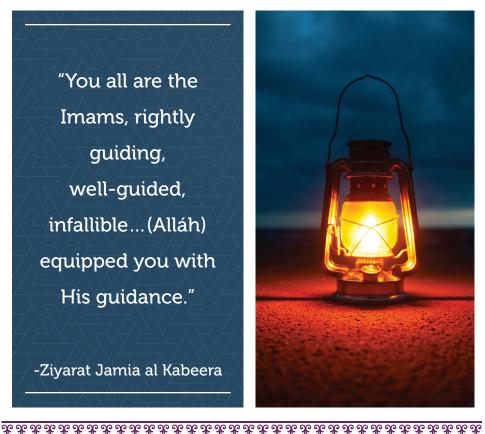
Alláh (swt) has concealed many of His divine secrets within the Noble Qur'an. This book carries the prescription to cure the darkness of ignorance. Although anyone can seek benefits from this book, the secrets of this book can only be unlocked with the right key. This key is Godwariness. Those who are Godwary, remain conscious about the Creator in all of their actions and adhere to their pledges-this pledge was reminded, delivered and renewed on the Day of Ghadeer. Therefore, once the lock is opened, the divine guidance seeps through this book and rests in those hearts that are purified with the wilayah of Amirul Momineen (a)—for he (a) is the medium of guidance for creation.



Al-Ayyashi reported from some of his companions from Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) who explained this verse in the following words, "Ali's Book, in which there is no doubt, is a guidance to the Godwary." He added,

"The Godwary are our Shi'a, our partisans, who believe in the Unseen, establish prayer, spend what we have provided them with, and disseminate what we have taught them."

"You all are the Imams, rightly guiding, well-guided, infallible...(Alláh) equipped you with His guidance." -Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera



Divine Counselor

ُ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

"And when quidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows" My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."

Surah Al-Bagarah, Verse: 38

It is reported in Tafsir Al-Ayyashi from Jabir who said, "I asked Abu Ja'far (a) about the inward commentary of the above verse. Imam Muhmmad Bagir (a) replied,

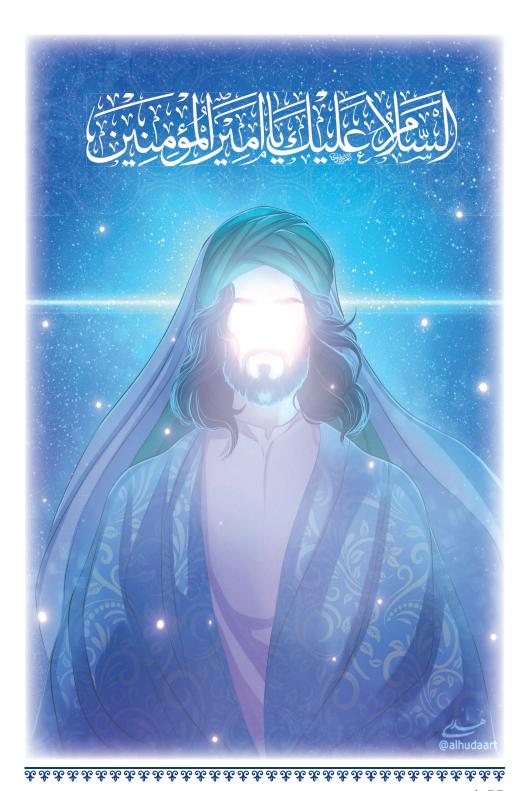
'Guidance refers to Imam Ali (a)."

Al-Bursi reported from Ibn 'Abbas in respect to the meaning of this verse that he said, "Guidance refers to Ali ibn Abi Talib (a). As to His words.

'Rather We have brought them their reminder', (23:71), they refer to Ali (a) too."

"Peace be upon the Imams, the heralds. the leaders. the guides."

-Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera



A Clear Light

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

O mankind, there has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light.

Surah An-Nisa, Verse: 174

In the Noble Qur'an the Almighty has referred to the Imams as the clear light in various places (2:17, 5:15,10:5, 42:52 etc). One of the characteristics of light is that it enlightens surfaces regardless of its intensity. Coincidentally, light is also a medium which is widely used by mankind to measure the distances between and within the universes. Light rays are an integral source of life for all living organisms, as is wilayāh. Additionally, the word 'Nur'—that is used in various verses in the context of transitioning from the darkness of ignorance to the light of guidance—is always mentioned in the singular form. It not only signifies its origination from Alláh, but further links the chain of wilayāh to the Creator. In relation to the light of the Prophet (s) and Ahlul Bayt (a), they are ONE light, coming from ONE source. Our first is Muhammad (a), our middle is Muhammad (a), and our last is Muhammad (a).

If one keeps these qualities of light in mind, it becomes evident that Alláh (swt) wants to remind us that our spiritual survival is linked through the Imams, and their light isn't limited to this planet alone. Their light illuminates the entirety of galaxies, those far beyond the observable universe. The Imams are the holders of the Almighty's guidance and they guide everyone during their period. However, only those who remain in the right frame of wilayāh can understand and absorb the light of guidance to enlighten their souls. As for others, although the

light reaches them, their ignorance from wilayah deflects that light and pushes them aways from the course of the straight path.

This is comparable to how soil works when the seed is planted. The soil microbes move and produce their magic to crack open the seed and bring about new life. Although, if the seed is dead inside or won't accept the process, it will never reach its true form. Similarly, those who accept Abu Turab and trust his authority will be able to utilize the guidance from the Imam of time (atf) and will gain salvation.

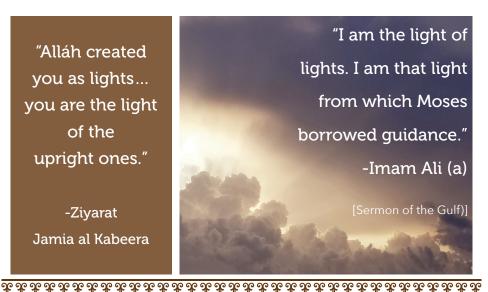
It is mentioned by Ayyashi, once Abd Alláh ibn Sulayman asked Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) about this verse. The Imam (a) reffered 'proof from your Lord' to Prophet Muhammad (a) and 'the light' to Imam Ali (a).

Ali ibn Ibrahim reported that the light is the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful (a). Then he (the Imam) said, "As for those who believe in God and hold fast to Him, He will admit them to His mercy and grace."

The Imam (a) further explained that they are those who stick to the friendship of Ali, the Commander of the Faithful and the Imams (a).

"Alláh created you as lights... you are the light of the upright ones."

> -Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera



The Forgotten Words

فَيِمَا نَقْضِهِم مِّيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَٰنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً لَــُ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ عَيْ مُواضِعِهِ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ عَ

So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They alter words from their [proper] usages and have forgotten a portion of that of which they were reminded.

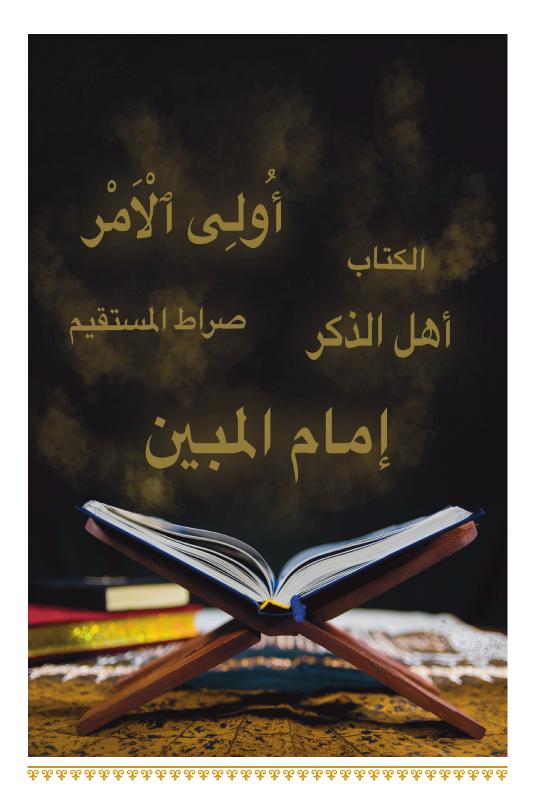
Surah Al-Maidah, Verse: 13

It has been made clear in the Noble Qur'an that those who have broken their covenants would never be able to understand or receive the guidance of God as He (swt) has closed their hearts. This concept has been repeated many times in the Book. An example of which can be found in (63:3) which refers to the Munafiquen. The Almighty says,

"That is because they believed, and then they disbelieved; so their hearts were sealed over, and they do not understand (63:3)."

Ali ibn Ibrahim reported about this verse that the Imam (a) said, "That is breaking the pledge of the Commander of the Faithful. About His words, 'We... made their hearts hard, they alter words from their context', Alláh (swt) has referred to those who made the Commander of the Faithful to turn away from his (rightful) place."

As for Imam Ali's (a) reference as "Words", it is also supported in another verse i.e 'And He made it a word remaining among his (Ibrahim's) descendants that they might return [to it] (43:28)', where it is referred to Imamate.



The Light of Guidance

أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا عَذَٰلِكَ النَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا عَذَٰلِكَ (٢٢١) وَيُنِنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (٢٢١)

Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and provided him a light by which he walks amongst men, be like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out? Thus to those without faith their own deeds seem pleasing.

Surah Al-An'am, Verse: 122

As recorded in al-Ayyashi, Burayd al-Ijli reported the following conversation with Imam Muhammad Baqir (a) for this verse:

Imam (a): "Do you know what the meaning of 'dead person' is?"

Burayd: "May I be your ransom! No indeed!"

Imam (a): "The dead person is the one who knows nothing, so we gave him life through this affair (i.e. our friendship and guardianship)."

Then the Imam (a) recited this verse. "...provided him with a light by which he walks amongst men" and said, "That is an Imam whom he takes as an example." Burayd further asked, "What about His words, 'Like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out?""

Imam Baqir (a) signaled by hand and said: "Like this creation that does not know the Imam (a)."

In another narration Imam Muhammad Baqir (a) said: "The dead person is one who does not recognise this authority; and **a light** is an Imam whom he can follow, meaning **Ali ibn Abi Talib (a)**."

The dead person is one who does not recognise this authority; and **a light is an Imam whom he can follow, meaning **Ali ibn Abi Talib (a)**."

The Path of Success

وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ ﴿ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

And, this is My straight path, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.

Surah Al-An'am, Verse: 153

In the narration as reported in al-Ayyashi, Imam Muhammad Bagir (a) explained to Burayd al-Iili that (My straight path) means Friendship with Ali and the executors, whereas (so follow it) refers to following Imam Ali (a) and (do not follow [other] ways) is pointed towards the friendship with so-and-so and so-and-so.

Ali ibn Ibrahim reported from Abu Basir who narrated from Imam Muhammad Bagir (a) that he (a) said: "We are the way, so he who refuses these ways has verily disbelieved." Whereas Abu Hamza al-Thumali narrated from Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) that once he asked for an explanation for this verse so the Imam (a) replied,

"It's by God, Ali. He is, by God, the path and the scale."



'The straight path is the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a).' *

-Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a)

A Supreme Sign of the Creator

قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ أَبَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيتَهَا ﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنسَىٰ ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي مَنْ أَسْرَفَ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِن بآپاتِ رَبِّهِ ءَ.. ﴿١٢٧ ﴾

[Alláh] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten." (126) And thus do We recompense he who transgressed and did not believe in the signs of his Lord...(127)

Surah Taha, Verses: 126 & 127

It is the immense mercy of the Creator through which He provided a means of guidance for the creation in the form of 12 Imams. They are the most significant manifestations of our Lord. The system of 'Imamate' that He established, after the Prophethood, is the sign of His grace and everlasting wisdom. The Almighty created this chain of guidance so no one on the Day of Judgement could bring an argument that he was left without a guide. As Alláh (swt) clearly mentioned the role of the Imam in Surah Ar-Ra'd (13:7),

"You are only a warner (Munzir) and (there is) a guide (Haad) for every people."

This verse which is revealed in the honor of Imam Ali (a), is a significant indication that there will always be a divine guide, who will carry the authority to lead and guide everyone in every era.

With reference to the above verses of Surah Taha, Abu Basir reported the following conversation from Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a), in which Imam (a) explained to him the matter of wilayah in the following way.

Imam (a): "This verse 'And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed

life...(20:124)' refers to the friendship of the

Commander of the Faithful.

Abu Basir: "What about His words: 'and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him blind'? (20:124)"

Imam (a): "He is blind (with respect to the sense of sight) in the Hereafter and is blind (with respect to the heart) in this world to the friendship of the Commander of the Faithful. He will also be perplexed on the Day of Resurrection and will ask the Almighty: 'Why have You raised me blind, though I used to see?" "

Then Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) recited the aforementioned verses (20:126-127) and said the following words.

"The Almighty will respond to him, with the words that are mentioned in these verses, saying, 'So it is. Our signs came to you.' O Abu Basir, the signs refer to the Imams (a)."

> "Whoever is not guided by you (Ali), has never found the way to Alláh or to me."

> > - Prophet Muhammad

-Ziyarat al Ghadeer

Inheritors of Paradise

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾

It is they who will be the inheritors, (10) who shall inherit paradise and will remain in it [forever]. (11)

Surah Al-Mu'minun, Verses: 10 & 11

The guidance of the Imams is a guaranteed path to success. The Imams are the inheritors of paradise and are the most revered intermediaries between God and us. One can surely achieve paradise, by simply following their path and acting upon their guidance.

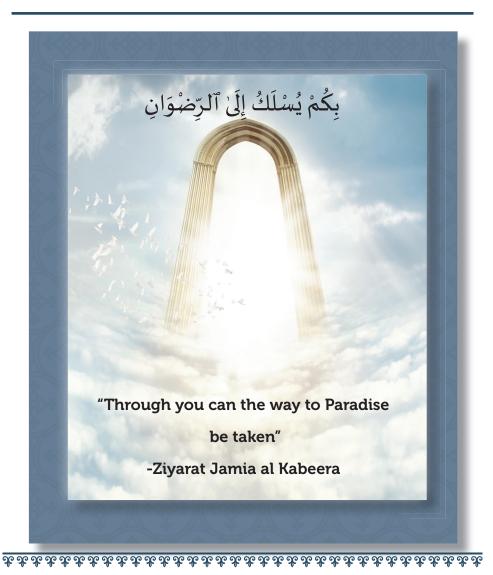
However, it is essential to know ourselves well to attain their guidance. Being the receptors of guidance requires **self control** and **the ability to adapt**. One has to negate their own thought processes for the implementation of an action, and remain humble whilst seeking help from the Divine.

Thereafter, those who sincerely seek the help from these heavenly authorities and whose hearts carry the love of the Ahlul Bayt (a), receive this guidance. To many, the guidance might not give a straightforward message. However, upon reflection, one can find a foolproof solution to his problems. This solution can safeguard him from the tricks of Satan.

Shaykh al-Tusi mentioned a narration from Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) who reported from his father (a) about the account of the birth of the Commander of the Faithful. He (a) said, "When Rasulullah (s) held Imam Ali (a) in his arms, he (a) opened his eyes, trembled with joy, laughed and sent his salutation to the Prophet (s).

Then Imam Ali (a) sought God's permission and recited the first 11 verses of Surah Al-Mu'minun. Thereafter, Rasulullah (a) said:

'O Ali! Mumineen are prosperous through you. You are, by God, their commander. You give them your knowledge, so they are conveyed for themselves. You are, by God, their guide, and through you, they are guided.""



A Shepherd of Guidance

وَإِن تُطِيعُوهُ مَّهُ تَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْبُبِينُ ﴿ ٥٤ ﴾

And **if you obey him**, you will be guided, and the Apostle's duty is only to communicate in clear terms.

Surah An-Nur, Verse: 54

Throughout his life, The Holy Prophet (s) reminded the Ummah on various occasions that the guidance of Amirul Momineen (a) is similar to his (s). The one who obeys him (a), will triumph. Similar to a shepherd, Imam Ali (a) protected and diligently guided people; especially those who were able to recognise his authority after the Prophet's (s) tragic demise.

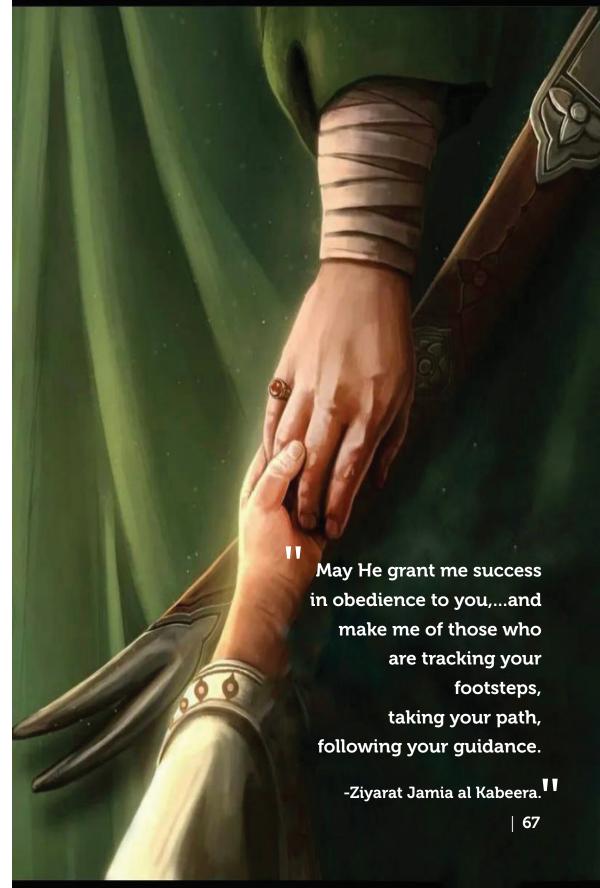
Amirul Momineen (a) never discriminated in

providing guidance to anyone who reached his doorstep. As the holder of Alláh's authority, he exercised His mercy to benefit many and kept the doors of guidance open to all.

In respect to this verse, Isa ibn Dawud al-Najjar reported from Imam Musa al-Kadhim (a) who narrated from his father (a) who said, "...Upon you rests, what is laid on you of the

covenants which God has taken with you in respect to Amirul Momineen Ali (a). He (swt) has made clear to you in the Qur'an concerning obedience to him (a) through His words:

'If you obey him, you will be guided.' That is, if you obey Ali (a), you will be guided."



The Rightly Guided

أُولَٰ عِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ مِفَي دَاهُمُ اقْتَدِهُ عَقُل لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا اِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

They are the ones whom Alláh has guided. So follow their guidance. Say, 'I do not ask you any recompense for it. It is just an admonition for all the nations."

'Surah Al-An'am, Verse: 90

Innately, mankind seeks guidance to gain success in the affairs of this temporary world. Attaining guidance from the correct source is the indication of willingness, patience, and focus that results in completion of the goal.

For the ease of His creation, Almighty Alláh (swt), out of His grace & immense mercy, made Muhammad (s) as the Prophet to warn and chose Ali ibn Abi Talib (a) as a guardian to guide all (13:7). He (swt) appointed them before bringing out His creation into existence to complete His argument on everyone. This guidance was present-before the existence of ignorance-and will remain till the last day.

As this divine guidance flows from the purest source, the transferring mechanism should also be impeccable and perfect in its nature. Therefore, for achieving success in eternal life, Alláh (swt) has directed us to the Amirul Momineen (a) and the Imams.

"(The Imams) are the arguments of Alláh against the inhabitants of the world, the Hereafter, and the former world."

-Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera

The veils of His guidance are only lifted through these infallible Imams-who carefully guide the creation while adhering to the will of Alláh (swt). This process of channeling the divine guidance, is protected and purified by the Creator. Through this pure chain, the success of mankind is guaranteed.

In addition, the Almighty has also made the guidance boundless to the limits of space and time, so all of His creation can benefit from it. It's the only source to strengthen our spiritual connection which ensures our prosperity for this world and the next. Therefore, true success is concealed in following the guidance of these infallibles Imams (a) which will bring and keep us on the right path.

It is recorded in Tafsir al-Ayyashi that once Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a) mentioned the above verse to a man who was directed to him (a) by Abd Alláh b. al-Hasan (al-Mahd). The man had some questions regarding Hajj. Imam (a) answered all of his questions and told him, "I am amongst those about whom God said in His book…", and then he (a) recited this verse.



"Peace be upon the Imams, directors of right guidance." -Ziyarat

Jamia al Kabeera

Possessors of the Right Path

قُلْ كُلُّ مُّتَرَبِّصٌ فَتَرَبَّصُواْ مِ فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ أَ<mark>ضْحَابُ</mark> الْصِّرَاطِ السَّوِيِّ وَمَنِ اَهْتَدَىٰ ﴿١٣٥﴾

Say, 'Everyone [of us] is waiting. So wait! Soon you will know who are the possessors of the right path, and who is [rightly] guided.'

Surah Taha, Verse: 135

Muhammad ibn al Abbas narrated from authentic sources from Imam Muhammad Baqir (a), who said, "Ali ibn Abi Talib (a) is the possessor of the right path. He is guided, who is guided to our friendship."

In another narration Isa ibn Dawud reported from Imam Musa al-Kadhim (a), who said, "I asked my father about this verse. He said, 'The path is al-Qa'im and the (rightly) guided is one who is guided to obedience toward him.' As is the case with His words mentioned in the Noble Qur'an, (20:82). The Almighty has said, 'Surely I am All-Forgiver toward him who repents, believes and acts righteously, and then is guided'. He said, 'That means guided to our friendship.'"

Since this life is created as a test for mankind, Allah (swt) has kept the door of mercy and guidance open—and provided us the free will to understand this true path. Those who ponder on the verses of the Noble Qur'an with open heart, will be guided to recognise the wilayāh of the divine leaders (i.e possessors of the Siraat). Otherwise, shame and Hellfire will reach those—on the Day of Judgement—who wouldn't have recognised their right nor truly accepted them.

"And rightly guided is he who takes shelter in you."
-Ziyarat Jamia al Kabeera