

## Sadaqah For the Safety of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.)

In today's world of science and technology, doctors have found solutions to numerous diseases which were once considered as incurable and fatal. Inventions of sophisticated devices and formulation of new life saving drugs have helped them in their cause. Yet, we find Muslims who say that a person's life and sustenance can be increased and calamities averted merely by giving alms.

Sadaqah is derived from the word Sadq i.e. to be righteous, truthful, alms-giving. We will focus our attention on its third meaning i.e. alms-giving and discuss about it. While going through the pages of history - which are full of incidents about the benefits of giving alms - one incident stands apart.

It is narrated that once Hazrat Isa (a.s.) was passing by a house along with his companions. Celebrations were going on in that house on the occasion of a marriage. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) pointed out to his companions that tomorrow, (the people of) this house will be aggrieved. On the morrow, the companions of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) informed him that nothing like what he had predicted had occurred in that house. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) decided to visit that house and find out the reason due to which the calamity was averted. On inquiry, the newly married bride of the house spoke about the events of the previous night. She said that last night she had given bread to a beggar who had come to their house. After knowing this Hazrat Isa (a.s.) lifted the bed and they saw that there was a snake with a bread in its mouth. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) showed them that the alms which was given in the form of bread by the bride had saved them from death.

The traditions of the infallibles (a.s.) too speak about the advantages of giving alms. Discussing all of them is beyond the scope of this article. We will restrict our discussion in reviewing only a few of them. It has been narrated from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that giving of alms prolongs one's life and saves a person from seventy types of difficulties at the time of death. **(Man la Yahzorohul Faqih p 34 H. No. 1729)**

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says, **'Allah will keep away all the difficulties which descend from the sky in the daytime, if one gives alms early in the morning. And Allah will keep away all the difficulties which will descend from the sky in the night, if one gives alms in the early hours of night.'** **(Ibid., H. No. 1733)**

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, **"In order to be exon-erated of your sins and be included under the grace and love of Allah, give alms and observe the bonds of relationship."** **(Ghurarul Hekam by Abdul Waahid Aamudi)**

A tradition from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) summarises all the benefits of giving alms. He (s.a.w) says, **'There is no god except Allah, giving**

**alms saves a person from sickness, plague, fire, drowning, falling and madness."** Then Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) counted seventy difficulties from which a person can be saved by giving alms. **(Man la Yahzorohul Faqih, p 35, H. No. 1734)**

Now that we are familiar with the benefits and effects of giving alms, the question which comes to our mind is "How can the giving of alms by us be the cause of safety of our last Imam, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.)?" All human relations, actions, etc. are based on the natural instincts of love and attachment. This attachment and love may be for worldly gains or for the hereafter. Islam, the last and the perfect religion of Allah is based on attachment. Thus we find in Quran: **"And those who believe, love Allah the most."** **(Baqarah: 165).**

The point to be noted here is that when a person shows interest or love towards something, then he will show his love and attachment for everything related to that particular thing. We see in our daily lives that if a person is interested in a particular field of study, engineering for instance, he will not only be interested in the area of his specialization but he will also be interested in all those areas which are related to it. On the basis of the above principle, we know that the most esteemed and honored from among the creatures, in front of Allah, the Almighty, are the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.). We see in a tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that he said, **"The faith of no one is acceptable to Allah except for him who loves me more than himself, my family more than his family, my descendants more than his own descendants and myself more than his own self."**

It is crystal clear from this tradition that a true Muslim is filled with the love of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and his descendants and especially in the present age, with the love of our beloved master, Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.). Also we see a tradition from Imam Mahdi (a.s.) who relates from his father, Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.): **"O my son know that the hearts of the obedient and sincere people will turn to you as birds turn to their nests."** **(Kamaluddin, p. 448)**

But, only verbal claim that we love the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and our Imam (a.s.) is no proof. Rather, the proof of our love lies in our behavior, manners, dealings, etc. It is but natural that a lover likes the safety and security of the one whom he loves. A person can protect his beloved in two ways, directly or indirectly. Directly means himself protecting and indirectly means by arranging some protection for the beloved. In our age where it is not possible for us to physically see whether our beloved master, Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is protected or not (because of the barrier of occultation) there is no need to lose heart as we can always take the indirect way i.e. giving alms for his safety. A tradition from Ameerul Momineen Ali (a.s.) says (a.s.), **"Giving alms dispels calamity."**

When we go through the books of history, we realize that the great scholars of Islam have devoted a lot of pages on this topic. One such scholar is Sayyid Ibne Ta'oos (r.a.). He is one of the great Shiite personalities of 7th century hijri. He writes in his will to his son regarding the responsibilities towards Imam (a.s.) that, **"Give priority to Imam's need before asking your request. Donate alms and charity for his**

***glorious being before you do for your own self or for your family and offer supplications for him before remembering yours. In short, in all your good and recommended deeds, give priority to his pious and precious being because this attracts the attention of Imam (a.s.) towards you and will increase his generosity and kindness upon you."***

At this juncture, one question might intrigue you and that is, "Does Imam (a.s.), who is having all the blessings, knowledge and kindness of Allah need the alms of a few pennies given by us?"

The answer is certainly not. But as we have seen in the foregoing paragraphs, that when you love someone, that love should be manifested in your behavior, dealings and manners. By giving money in charity, we are manifesting our love towards our Imam (a.s.) and fulfilling the condition of the tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w) that says, **"The faith of no one is acceptable to Allah except for him who loves me more than himself....."** And also we have to keep this point in mind that Imam-e- Zamana (a.s.) himself says, "Pray more for my early reappearance. Indeed, in it there is salvation for you."

We find that there are many supplications which have been narrated by our Imams (a.s.) to pray for Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in the time of occultation. For more details about invocations refer to the book of Mafateeh-ul-Jinan by Shaykh Abbas Qummi. We also see that Imam (a.s.) himself has asked us to pray for his early reappearance though he is in no need of our invocations. It (reciting invocation) is a sign and manifestation of our love towards him.

Now, after understanding why alms should be given for the safety of Imam (a.s.), the question which arises is **"What should we do with money collected as alms? "** **The reply to this lies in a tradition from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) who says 'If a person is not near and cannot send his gifts to us, then he should give it to our pious Shias. He will get the same reward of giving it to us..."** **(Man la yahzorohul faqih)**

In the end we pray to Allah, the Almighty, to increase our grace and provide us opportunities so that we can manifest our love towards Imam al-Muntazar al-Mahdi (a.s.) by giving alms for his safety and performing only those deeds which bring us closer