



**Anecdotes from
the lives of the
ma'sumeen 14**

Author

Al-Balagh Foundation

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[Prophet Muhammad \(S\)](#)

[Lady Fatimah \(A\)](#)

[Imam Ali \(A\)](#)

[Imam Hasan \(A\)](#)

[Imam Hussein \(A\)](#)

[Imam Ali Zainul Abideen \(A\)](#)

[Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir \(A\)](#)

[Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq \(A\)](#)

[Imam Musa Al-Kadhim \(A\)](#)

[Imam Ali Ar-Ridha \(A\)](#)

[Imam Muhammad At-Taqi \(A\)](#)

[Imam Ali An-Naqi \(A\)](#)

[Imam Hasan Al-Askari \(A\)](#)

[Imam Muhammad Al-Mahdi \(A\)](#)

Prophet Muhammad (S)

One day Prophet Muhammad (S) and his followers went on a journey. After travelling for a long time they got tired, so they stopped for a rest.

They decided to make a small camp and cook some food.

One of the men said that he would go and kill a lamb so that they could cook it.

Another man said that he would remove the skin of the lamb before it was cooked.

Another said that he would light the fire and cook the meat.

Each one of the men said that he would do a certain job so that the work could be done quickly and fairly.

The Prophet (S) then said that he would collect and bring the firewood from the forest.



All the men told him that there was no need for him to do anything at all. They would do all the work.

The Prophet (S) told them that he knew that they could do the work, but Allah does not like for a person to sit and let other people do all the work.

The Prophet (S) also explained to them that although he was their Prophet he did not like to get special treatment from them. This is because Allah does not like a person to think that he is better than other people.

When we sit back and let other people do the work, it makes us lazy. We should all share in any work that needs to be done, so that it can be done quickly and easily.

The Holy Prophet (S) was sitting in the mosque in Madina giving a talk to some of his followers while they were waiting for Salaat time to set in.

A rich man wearing expensive clothes came and sat in front of the Holy Prophet (S) to listen to his talk.

Meanwhile another man who had also come to listen to the Holy Prophet (S) sat down beside

the rich man.

The second man was not rich, in fact he was quite poor. The old and torn clothes he was wearing showed just how poor he was.

The rich man did not like for the poor man to sit next to him. He pulled his nice, new, expensive clothes closer to himself, so that they would not be touched by the dirty, old, torn clothes of the poor man.

The Holy Prophet (S) noticed what the rich man had done and was upset and disappointed. He asked the rich man why he had done this? Was it because he thought that some of his wealth might go to the poor man, or was it because he thought some of the poverty of the poor man might come to him.

The rich man, who was not a bad person, realised what he had done was wrong and was truly sorry.

To make up for his mistake and to show how sorry he was, the rich man after apologising to the poor man, offered him half of all his wealth.

The poor man told the rich man that he accepted his apology and forgave him, but did not want half of his wealth as he did not want to get something without having worked for it.

Moral:

In the eyes of Allah how rich or poor a person is makes no difference. The person who is closest to Allah is the one who obeys Him in every action.

Prophet Muhammad (S) was a very kind person and he never got angry even when people were very naughty.

There was one old woman who was very bad. She used to throw rubbish on the Holy Prophet (S) whenever he passed her house.

Prophet Muhammad (S) used to have to pass her house every morning when he went to the mosque and every morning this naughty old woman used to throw her rubbish on him but he never ever got angry with her.

One day when the Holy Prophet (S) was passing the old woman's house, she did not throw rubbish on him. He stopped and asked the old woman's neighbour if she was all right because

she was not there to throw rubbish on him.

The neighbour told him that the old woman was not well and she was in bed. So the Holy Prophet (S) went to see the old woman because it is good to go and see people who are not well and ask them if they need anything.

When the old woman saw the Holy Prophet (S), she thought he had come to tell her off and she said "why did you wait until I was ill to tell me off, why didn't you come when I was well and strong?" Prophet Muhammad (S) told the old woman that he had not come to tell her off but to see and look after her because she was not well and Allah tells us to look after people who are not well.

The old woman was so surprised that the Holy Prophet (S) was being so kind to her after she had been so mean to him, that she decided from then on to listen to him and she became a Muslim.

One day Prophet Muhammad (S) was on a journey and very tired, so he sat down under a tree to rest.

A bad man seeing that the Holy Prophet (S) was alone thought it was a good time to kill him quickly and quietly. He went towards the Holy Prophet (S) with his sword out in front of him.

He asked the Holy Prophet (S): "Tell me who can help you now?"

"Allah," answered the Holy Prophet (S) calmly.

When the bad man saw how calm and sure the Holy Prophet (S) was that Allah would help him, he became frightened and the sword fell from his hand.

Prophet Muhammad (S) picked up the sword and asked: "Now you tell me who is there to save you?"

"No-one" answered the man.

"No, you are wrong, the same Allah will help you also," said the Holy Prophet (S) and then he let the man go.

When the man heard this he became a Muslim.

Lady Fatimah (A)

Bibi Fatimah Zahra (A.S.) was born to Bibi Khadija (A) and the Prophet (S). Before her birth, the Prophet (S) had had two sons, Qasim and Tahir, but both boys had died when they were babies.

The Prophet (S) had started teaching the message of Islam and had made many enemies. As a result, some of the unbelievers began to make fun of him at the death of his sons, calling him "Abtar".

The word Abtar means an animal who has no tail - and was meant to say that the Prophet (S) was tail-less because he had no children to carry on his family.

Thus, when Bibi Fatimah (A) was born, the following Sura of the Holy Qur'an was revealed:

"In the Name of Allah, the most Kind, the most Merciful. Verily (O Muhammad), We have given you Kauthar. So pray to your Lord and give sacrifice. Verily, your enemies will be Abtar."

Surah al-Kauthar, (108:1-3)

When the Holy Prophet (S) was asked what Kauthar meant, he replied that it was a stream in heaven and the man who would give water from that stream to the believers was Imam Ali (A).

He then said that Kawthar also meant abundance, and the birth of Bibi Fatimah (A) signified that, through her, his descendants would be in abundance.

The promise of Allah was certainly true because today, there are countless descendants of the Prophet (S), (Sayyids) while there is nobody who claims to be a descendant of the Quraish. Thus the enemies of the Holy Prophet (S) were those who became truly "Abtar".

This Surah in the Holy Qur'an is thus a reference to Bibi Fatimah (A).

Moral:

You should never think that you have more than someone else, because there might come a time when that person has more than you. Remember it is through the blessing of Allah that you have what you have.

Once when Imam Hasan (A) and Imam Husain (A) were children they both fell ill. Their parents

Imam Ali (A) and Bibi Fatimah (A) were very sad to see them ill.

When the Holy Prophet (S) found out about the illness he suggested that both his daughter Bibi Fatimah (A) and his cousin and son-in-law Imam Ali (A) should keep Nazr.

Nazr is a promise that you make to Allah. Something that you will do extra for the pleasure of Allah if your wish comes true.

Imam Ali (A) and Bibi Fatimah (A) made a nazr that they would fast three days upon the recovery of their children.

Allah accepted their nazr and both Imam Hasan (A) and Imam Husain (A) recovered from their illness.

Their parents decided to fast the next day to fulfil their nazr and when the children came to know of this they also decided to fast. Their maid Bibi Fizza, who loved the children very much also decided to fast.

On the first day of the fasting, Bibi Fatimah prepared 5 loaves of bread to break their fast with.

In the evening when the time for Salaat set in they all prayed then sat down to break their fast. Just as they were about to eat their loaves of bread there was a knock on the door. There stood a poor man asking for something to eat.

All of them, one by one gave their loaf of bread to the beggar. And had just water instead.

The next day all of them again fasted. Again they were to break their fast with a loaf of bread each which had been baked that morning.

And again as they were about to eat their loaf there was a knock on the door. This time it was an orphan asking for food.

Although they themselves were two days hungry they all happily gave their loaf of bread to the orphan and again slept without any food.

On the third day of their fast as they sat down to break their fast, a prisoner knocked at the door asking for food.

Although by now the family were very hungry as they had not eaten for three days, they again gave away their loaves.

Sura Ad-Dahr in the Holy Qur'an was revealed in praise of the sacrifice made by this family.

Moral:

1. Nazr is very powerful.
2. Always think of others before yourself.
3. It is not how much you give to others that is important but the intention with which you give:
i.e. "Qurbatan Ilallah" which means to get closer to Allah.

Bibi Fatima az-Zahra (A) used to work very hard in her house. Her father our Holy Prophet, Prophet Muhammad (S) could see how hard she worked.

So one day he told her that he was going to give her something that would be better than a helper or anything else in the world.

Do you know what he gave her?

He gave her Tasbeeh.

He told her that after every Salaat she should say:

Allahu Akbar - 34 times

Alhamdulillah - 33 times

Subhanallah - 33 times

This is what we call the Tasbeeh of Bibi Fatima az-Zahra (A)

The Salaat is like a beautiful flower and the Tasbeeh of Bibi Fatima (A) gives that beautiful flower a beautiful smell.

So after every Salaat we should say the Tasbeeh of Bibi Fatima az-Zahra (A) because we want our Salaat to be like a beautiful flower with a beautiful smell.

Once an old poor man came to the house of Bibi Fatima (A) and asked her for help.

Bibi Fatima (A) had nothing to give to the old man except the necklace that her cousin had given to her. She took it off and gave it to the old man, telling him to sell the necklace and use the money.

A man called Ammar who was a friend of the Holy Prophet (S) bought the necklace from the old man and gave him:- some food, some clothes, a horse and some money.

Ammar then sent his servant to the house of the Holy Prophet (S) and told him to tell the Holy Prophet (S) that he had sent the necklace and the servant as a gift.

When the Holy Prophet (S) heard this, he sent the servant and the necklace to Bibi Fatima (A) as a gift. Bibi Fatima (A) thanked the servant for bringing the necklace and gave him his freedom.

What a special necklace! It provided food, clothes, a horse, money, freed a man, and finally came back to its owner!

Moral:

You should give whatever you have to people who need it and Allah will give you more in return.

Imam Ali (A)

In the time of the Prophet (S) the idol worshippers of Makka were very angry with him. They wanted to kill him.

Allah had told the Prophet (S) about the plan of the idol worshippers to murder him and so he decided to move to Madina.

The idol worshippers chose 40 of their bravest men and told them to go to the Prophet's (S) house and kill him.

That night the Prophet (S) left for Madina, but before he left he asked Imam Ali (A) if he would sleep in his bed so that the idol worshippers outside would think that he, the Prophet (S) was there.

Imam Ali (A) was very happy to do this for the Prophet (S). In fact Imam Ali (A) said that the best sleep that he had ever had was on that night.

When the killers came into the Prophet's (S) house and pulled off the blanket they saw Imam Ali (A) there, and so they left angrily.

Moral:

1. When you do something purely for Islam, then Allah helps you.
2. Everyone can plan but only what Allah wants will happen.

In the battle of Khandaq, the Muslims dug a ditch around themselves for their defence, so that the enemy could not get across.

A man from the enemy side called Amr bin Abdawud who was known for his strength, courage and art of fighting managed to get across the ditch.

All the Muslims were terrified to fight him and only Imam Ali (A) came forward to fight this man.

There was a fierce fight until at last Imam Ali (A) threw Amr down onto the ground and mounted his chest ready to kill him.

Just as Imam Ali (A) was about to kill this enemy of Islam, he spat on the face of our Imam (A).

Everybody was certain that because of this insult, Amr would meet his death even faster still, but to their amazement, Imam Ali (A) moved from Amr's chest and walked away.

Amr attacked Imam (A) again and after a short while, Imam (A) again overpowered Amr and killed him.

After the battle was over people asked Imam Ali (A) the reason why he had spared Amr's life when he had first overpowered him.

To which Imam (A) replied that if he had killed him then it would have not been only for the sake of Allah but also for the satisfaction of his anger and so he let him free.

Then Imam (A) controlled his anger and killed Amr purely for the sake of Allah.

Moral:

Although your intention may be pure to begin with it can very easily change so always make sure you do things for the sake of Allah only.

Fatima binte Asad (the mother of Imam Ali) went to the Ka'ba and prayed to Allah that the baby she was going to have would be born safely.

She was standing near the wall opposite the door of the Ka'ba, praying to Allah when suddenly there was a crack in the wall near her. The crack became bigger and bigger until it was big enough for Fatima binte Asad to go through it and enter the Ka'ba.

When Fatima binte Asad had entered the Ka'ba, the crack began to get smaller and smaller. This crack is still there to this day on the wall of the Ka'ba.

Some people who had been near the Ka'ba saw what had happened and started telling other people. Now these people wanted to see what was happening inside the Ka'ba, so they went and got the keys of the door of the Ka'ba. But the door would not open.

Prophet Muhammad (S) had been away when all this happened. When he came back from his trip and went to the Ka'ba, the lock on the door of the Ka'ba fell open all on its own and Fatima binte Asad came out holding her new little baby - Imam Ali (A).

When Prophet Muhammad (S) held Imam Ali (A), he opened his eyes for the first time. So the first thing Imam Ali (A) ever saw was the face of Prophet Muhammad (S).

Imam Ali (A) is the only person ever to be born in the Ka'ba.

One day our 1st Imam, Imam Ali (A) went to the market with his servant, Qambar. There he bought 2 shirts, one which was really nice and expensive and the other which was not as nice.

When Imam Ali (A) returned home he gave the better shirt to Qambar and kept the other one for himself.

Qambar told Imam Ali (A) that it would look better if he wore the nicer shirt as he was the leader of the Muslims while Qambar himself was only a servant.

Imam Ali (A) answered that Qambar should wear the nicer shirt because he was younger and so it would suit him better; but more importantly Imam (A) told him that he was a guide for the Muslims and so had to set a good example for them by leading a simple life.

Moral:

1. You should always give away the nicer thing.
2. You should be happy with a few simple things and not want so many things.

Imam Hasan (A)

Once a maid of our 2nd Imam, Imam Hasan (A) dropped a hot bowl of soup on Imam (A).

She was very scared because she thought the Imam (A) would be angry and punish her.

She immediately recited the Ayah: "Those who control (their) anger.."

Imam Hasan (A) smiled and said he was not angry.

Then she recited the next part of the Ayah: "And are forgiving towards people.."

Imam Hasan (A) said he had forgiven her.

She then finished the Ayah: "Allah loves those who do good.."

Imam Hasan (A) told her she was free.

The above Ayah is from the Holy Qur'an: Surah Aali Imraan (3), verse 134.

Moral:

The Holy Qur'an is not just there to read but to learn from and act upon. It is the word of Allah and teaches us everything we need to know if only we understood it.

Once a follower of Mu'awiyah came to Madina. When he saw our 2nd Imam, Imam Hasan (A) he started to shout names and use foul language at the Imam (A), because Mu'awiyah had told him horrible things about Imam (A).

The followers of Imam Hasan (A) wanted to punish the man for what he had said but Imam (A) told them to leave him alone.

Imam Hasan (A) then turned to the man and greeted him with "Salaam" after which Imam asked the man if he would like to come to his house for food and a rest as he had just come from a long trip.

When the man saw the Akhlaq of Imam (A), he realised that what Mu'awiyah had told him about the Imam (A) was untrue and he felt very ashamed of how he had spoken.

The man asked Imam (A) for forgiveness. Thereafter, whenever he heard anyone saying anything against Imam Hasan (A) he would correct them.

Moral:

1. Never get angry at someone when they are angry - It takes two people to start a fight.
2. No matter how other people act you should always have perfect akhlaq.
3. Never believe bad things about other people that you have heard.

One day our 2nd Imam, Imam Hasan (A) was eating when a dog came and stood in front of him, looking at him hungrily.

Imam Hasan (A) gave some of his food to the dog, who ate it up and again looked up at him, so Imam (A) threw another little bit of food to the dog.

A man who was passing by came forward to shoo the dog away, so that Imam (A) could eat in peace.

Imam Hasan (A) told the man to leave the dog alone as Allah had made the dog just as He has made all of us and loves the animals just as He loves us all.

Moral:

Be kind to animals as they also have been made by Allah and are loved by Allah just as we all are.

Our 2nd Imam, Imam Hasan (A) was always very kind to the poor.

One day, Imam Hasan (A) was walking down the road when he came across some poor people sitting on the ground eating their food, which was dry bread.

When the poor people saw Imam Hasan (A), they asked him to join them. Imam (A) sat down on the ground and ate the dry bread with them.

When they had finished Imam (A) got up to leave but before he went he thanked the poor people for sharing their food with him and asked them all to come to his house for food They accepted. When the poor people arrived at Imam Hasan's (A) house they were given the finest food and the greatest respect by Imam (A).

Moral:

1. If someone gives you something, take it saying thank you even if you do not really want it.
2. Always try to give people more than they give you.

Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A)

Once a man who claimed to be a friend of our 4th Imam, Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) came to him and told him that so and so had been saying horrible things about him.

Imam (A) replied that he had not heard anything and would not have if the man had not told him. Imam (A) then continued that the person who had said the horrible things was as if he had shot an arrow and missed the target but the man who had told him was as if he had picked up the fallen arrow and hit the target (Imam (A)) with it.

Allah does not like the habit of spreading scandal and gossip even if it be true.

In the time of Prophet Musa (A), once there was a severe drought. For months there had been no rain.

The people prayed and prayed but no rain came. When Prophet Musa (A) went to mount Sinai to pray, Allah revealed to him that amongst his people there was someone who spreading scandal and because of this person Allah had not let it rain. Prophet Musa (A) asked Allah who this person was so that he could tell him off for what he had done.

Allah replied that did Prophet Musa (A) want Him to do what He had forbidden for others. (i.e. talk about others).

Moral:

Do not talk about other people when they are not there even if what you say is true.

At the time of our 4th Imam, Imam Zainul Abideen (A) it was very difficult for Imam (A) to teach Islam to the people. This was because Yazid's men used to keep a close watch on Imam's (A) movements.

Imam Zainul Abideen (A) had seen his father, Imam Husain (A), and other loyal friends and family

die for the sake of Islam.

Imam Zainul Abideen (A) decided that the best way to teach people about Islam, was by prayers (Du'a). As a result, we have today a beautiful collection of his Du'a in a book called: "Al-Sahifat al-kamilat al-Sajjadiyya" - The complete book of Al-Sajjad, (Imam Zainul Abideen (A) was also known as al-Sajjad).

An extract from a du'a for Sunday (the 1st verse) from AL- Sahifat al-kamilat al-Sajjadiyya:

In the name of Allah, the most Kind and the most Merciful. In the name of Allah from whom I hope for nothing but bounty, and from whom I fear nothing but justice! I rely only upon His word, and I cling only to His cord!

Just in these few lines Imam (A) is teaching us so much: He is teaching us that only Allah is the provider. He is teaching us that we should not fear Allah as He is the most forgiving and the most Merciful but at the same time He is also the Most Just and it is this justice that we should fear. There was once a man who was a very religious man and because he was so sure of himself he always used to pray to Allah to judge him on Justice, (we are told always to pray to Allah to judge us with His mercy).

When this man died he saw a scale which was being weighted down with all his good actions. The angels then brought an apple which they put on the other side of the scale and the scale came down on the side of the apple.

The man did not understand how a single apple could outdo all his good actions. He was then told that, that apple was one that he had tasted in the market without the permission of the shop owner. Because the man had insisted that Allah judge him on justice, Allah did not intervene with His mercy.

Imam Zainul Abideen (A) then finished the 1st verse with the lesson that we should only rely on Allah and attach ourselves to Him alone.

Moral:

1. We should always ask Allah to judge us with His mercy.
2. We should try to read the du'as from Al-Sahifat al-Kamilat al-Sajjadiyya, as there is so much to learn from them.

Our 4th Imam, Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A), was a very kind and patient person. He usually never got angry and he always had a smile on his face.

One day when Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) was walking down the street with a few of his friends, he saw an old man carrying a heavy load while his son walked next to him.

Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) lost his smile and became red with anger. All his friends were very surprised to see Imam (A) in this way, as they had never seen him angry.

They asked Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) what had happened to make him so angry. Imam (A) replied that he was angry to see a son walk with his father letting him carry a heavy load and not helping.

Moral:

You should always help your parents, even when they do not ask you to. For example, you can tidy up your toys after you have finished playing with them.

Our 4th Imam, Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) always remembered the saying of the Holy Prophet (S): that if a Muslim did not think of the needs of his Muslim brothers then he was not a Muslim.

This is why when it was dark in the night and all the people were sleeping, Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) would get up, put some food in a sack and carry it on his shoulders to the houses of the poor people.

When Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) went out at night it was dark and everyone was be sleeping but Imam (A) would cover his face just in case anyone was up, so that no one could recognise him.

Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) looked after about 100 families like this without them even knowing who it was that was helping them.

It was only when Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) died and the people no longer received the food that they found out it must have been Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) who had helped them all that time.

Moral:

When you do something good you should not tell everyone because Allah can see and He is the one who will give you Thawaab for what you have done. In fact Allah says that He will give you more Thawaab if you do good and do not tell everyone.

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It was only when Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) died and the people no longer received the food that they found out it must have been Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) who had helped them all that time.

Moral:

When you do something good you should not tell everyone because Allah can see and He is the one who will give you Thawaab for what you have done. In fact Allah says that He will give you more Thawaab if you do good and do not tell everyone.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (A)

Once a Christian asked our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) how it could possibly be true

what the Imam (A) had said about the fruits of Heaven not reducing when they were eaten.

Imam (A) told him not only was it true but he could give him an example of something being used and not reducing, which was present in this world.

Imam (A) then continued that when a candle is used to light other candles, even as many as a hundred thousand other candles, the light of the original candle will not get any less.

Moral:

Just because you do not understand something in Islam does not mean it is wrong. Allah gave us Islam and our knowledge can not compare with His.

In the time of our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) there lived a man called Jabir bin Abdullah.

Jabir was a pious man who was alive at the time of the Holy Prophet (S).

One day the Holy Prophet (S) told Jabir that he would be alive to see the Prophet's great great grandson Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A). The Holy Prophet (S) asked Jabir to give Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) salaams from his great great grandfather, the Holy Prophet(S).

The Holy Prophet (S) passed away and Jabir remained alive for a long time just as the Prophet (S) had told him.

One day Jabir who was now a very old man, was visiting the house of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) when he came across a small child.

Jabir asked Imam Zainul Abideen (A) who the child was. When Imam (A) replied that the child was his son Muhammad al-Baqir who was to be the next Imam, Jabir was so happy that he began to cry.

At last Jabir could give the message that he had been carrying with him for so many years.

Jabir turned to face Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) and told him that his great great grandfather had asked him to pass his salaams to Imam (A).

Moral:

If you are given something to look after or pass to someone else (no matter how small) then look

after it well as you are accountable for it.

In the time of our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) the Muslims were using Roman coins for money. The King of Rome decided that he was going to make new Roman coins which would have written on them things that were against Islam.

The Muslim king Waleed did not know what to do because they needed to use the coins for money but at the same time they did not want to use coins which had things against Islam written on them.

Waleed decide to ask our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) what he should do. Imam (A) told him that he should also make new coins which the Muslims could use from then on.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir told him that the coins should have on one side "La ilaha illallah" and on the other side "Muhammadur rasulullah".

Waleed agreed that this was an excellent idea and the coins were made.

Moral:

We should learn what our Imams (A) have taught us. They always know what to do.

It was a very hot day and our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) was working hard on his farm.

A man was walking past and when he saw Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) looking so hot and tired from all the hard work he had done, he told the Imam that he should not work so hard and rest instead.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) answered that he was working so hard, so that he can look after his family, and not have to ask anyone for help.

Allah likes for us to work hard and do things for ourselves.

Moral:

You should always try hard to do something by yourself and only when you have tried and can not do it you should ask for help.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (A)

In the time of our 6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) there lived a young man called Zakariyya who had converted from Christianity to Islam.

When Zakariyya went to Haj, he stopped at Madina to visit Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A). On meeting the Imam (A), Zakariyya asked him how he should behave towards his father, mother and other family members who were still Christians.

Imam (A) replied that Islam is a religion of mercy and kindness to all that has been created by Allah. Also Islam holds the rights of parents very highly.

Imam (A) then advised the man to be even more kinder and more helpful to his mother than he had ever been.

When Zakariyya returned home, he was there even more than before for his mother. He listened to her and was kind to her and ever ready to help her. He gave her food and drink with his own hands. He washed her and her clothes and kept the house tidy. And when he was free he would sit and chat with her and cheer her up.

His mother was very surprised and asked Zakariyya what had made him become so kind towards her.

Zakariyya explained that his Imam, our 6th Imam, had told him to act in this way.

His mother wanted to know what else the religion of Islam had taught her son.

Zakariyya sat with his mother to tell her all about the teachings of Islam and when he had finished, his mother became a Muslim too.

Moral:

1. Always behave with good Akhlaq towards other people. If they can see for themselves what decent children you are then they will want to find out more about Islam.
2. Never forget the rights of your parents.

In the time of our 6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) there was once a wheat shortage in Madina.

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As a result the people of Madina were buying as much wheat as they could afford.

There were some people who were quite poor and could only afford to buy enough wheat for that day.

These people had to pay a little bit more for the wheat each day because there was less and less wheat available.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) asked his servant how much wheat they had in the house. The servant replied that they had enough to last them for several months.

Imam (A) then told the servant to take the wheat to the market and sell it all to the people.

The servant argued that if he did this then they probably would not be able to buy all the wheat back and also they would have to pay a lot more for it.

Imam (A) told him that it did not matter. He told him that after he had sold all the wheat he should only buy enough wheat for each day.

Imam (A) also told his servant that from then on the bread in his house should be made from $\frac{1}{2}$ wheat and $\frac{1}{2}$ barley.

Moral:

1. Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) did this because he did not want to live in a better manner while so many people were hungry.
2. Islam does not allow hoarding.

One day when our 6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) was walking down a street he saw that some people had thrown the food that they could not eat onto the street.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) was very sad to see this. He told the people that what they had done was very wrong because there were so many people in the world who are hungry as they have no food.

Our Holy Prophet, Prophet Muhammad (S) has told us that if you do not think about the needs of other Muslims then you are not a Muslim.

This is why Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq used to go out in the middle of the cold dark nights to give food to the poor.

Moral:

1. You should never take more than you need of anything.
2. You should always think about other people, especially Muslims, who have not got as much as you have.

One day our 6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) was sitting with a group of friends eating some grapes, when a man came and asked Imam (A) for help.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) gave the man a bunch of grapes. The man did not take the grapes and asked Imam (A) for money.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) told the man that Allah would give him that. The man started to walk away then came back and asked for the grapes. Imam (A) told him that Allah would give him that.

A little while latter another poor man came and asked Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) for help. Imam (A) gave him a bunch of grapes. The man took them and thanked Allah.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) then gave the man some money again the man thanked Allah. Imam (A) then gave the man his shirt, who took it and went away praying for Imam (A).

If the man had continued thanking Allah for what Imam (A) was giving him, then Imam (A) would have continued giving until he had nothing left to give.

Moral:

Whenever you get anything remember that although it may be from someone, Allah has wished for you to have it. So not only should you thank the person who has given it to you (Jazakallah) but also thank Allah (Alhamdulillah).

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (A)

There was a poor uneducated farmer who was very rude to our 7th Imam, Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) whenever he saw him.

No matter how rude this man was, Imam (A) never got angry and he never said anything to the man.

Imam's (A) friends wanted to punish the rude man, but Imam (A) would not allow them to. Imam (A) told them that he himself would teach this man a lesson.

One day Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) rode out to the rude man's farm where the man was working. When the man saw Imam (A) he stopped working and put his hands on his hips, ready to be abusive again.

Imam (A) dismounted, went towards the man and greeted him with a friendly, smiling face. Imam (A) then told him that he should not overwork himself and that the land he had was very good. He then asked him how much he was expecting to receive for the crop.

The farmer was amazed at Imam (A) politeness and sincerity, he waited a little then said that he was expecting to get around 200 gold pieces. Imam (A) took out a purse and gave it to the farmer telling him that in it was 300 gold pieces, more than the value of his crop. Imam (A) told the man to take the money and also to keep the crop, and that he hoped the man would receive more for it.

The farmer faced with such kind behaviour and good Akhlaq, was very ashamed of himself and asked Imam (A) for forgiveness.

After that when ever the man would see Imam (A) he would greet him very politely. The Imam's (A) friends were very surprised!

Moral:

1. Do not treat people the way they treat you but always better.
2. Give to people even if they do not act as if they deserve it.

One day when our 7th Imam, Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) was only 5 years old, Abu Hanifa asked him who is responsible for our deeds. Does man do them of his own free will or does Allah make him do them.

Imam (A) replied that there are three possibilities:

1. Allah makes man do them.
2. Both Allah and man are responsible.
3. Man does them alone.

If the first is true than Allah should be judged on the day of Qiyamat and sent to heaven or hell.

If the second is true that both Allah and man should be judged on the day of Qiyamat and sent to heaven or hell.

The only one that is true is the third one because only man will be judged on the day of Qiyamat and sent to heaven or hell, as only man alone is responsible for his actions and deeds.

Moral:

Although Allah has power over everything he allows us to do as we please so that we may be held accountable for our deeds on the day of Qiyamat.

In the time of our 7th Imam, Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) the ruler was a bad man called Haroon, who hated Imam (A).

Haroon came to Madina where Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) lived and had Imam (A) arrested and sent to a prison in Basra.

Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) stayed in this prison under the guard of a man called Yahyah.

Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) was a kind man who always talked nicely to everyone, even Yahyah who kept him in prison. Soon Yahyah felt bad for keeping such a nice person in prison.

Haroon found out and took Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) to another prison. Again Imam (A) through his kindness and politeness made the other person also feel bad.

Haroon finally had Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) killed.

Moral:

No matter how horrible someone is to you, you should always be nice to them and soon they will feel bad about how horrible they are being to you.

One day our 7th Imam, Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) passed a poor man. The Imam (A) said "Salaam" to him then talked to him for a while, asking him if everything was all right.

When Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) was going, he told the man that if there was anything that he could do for the man then he would do it.

The followers of Imam (A) had seen and heard how nice Imam (A) had been to this poor, ordinary man. They told Imam (A) that it did not look right for someone so great as Imam (A) to talk and offer his services to someone such as an that man.

Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) replied that they were forgetting that they were all servants of Allah, and that Allah has created all men equal. Also that if a person is poor today does not mean that he will stay poor all his life and the same for a rich person, so someone who needs help from you today may be the same person who will help you tomorrow.

Moral:

1. In Islam everyone is equal.
2. Allah is the giver of things, so what you may have today, someone else may have tomorrow.

Imam Ali Ar-Ridha (A)

Once when our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) was travelling through a town called Nishapur, the people of the town asked Imam (A) to tell them a hadith from the Prophet (S).

Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) told them the following hadith:

"My father Musa al-Kadhim (A) told me,
from his father Ja'far as-Sadiq (A),
from his father Muhammad al-Baqir (A),
from his father Ali Zainul Abideen (A),
from his father the martyr of Kerbala (Husain) (A),
from his father Ali ibn Abu Talib (A),
from the Holy Prophet (S).
from Jibrail,
from Allah:

"The Kalima of La ilaha illallah is My fort, and whosoever says it will enter My fort, and whosoever enters My fort is safe from My punishment."

This hadith is known as the golden chain hadith. This is because each member of the chain was a Ma'sum. The people of Nishapur began reciting the Kalima. Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) continued, that

there was one condition to the safety in this fort and that was that they had to obey and follow the Imams (A).

Moral:

Just to say something will be of no use. Only when you understand what you are saying and believe in it enough to follow it then will it be of use to you.

The king at the time of our 7th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) was Ma'mun.

Ma'mun had forced Imam (A) to take the position of his heir apparent (i.e. Imam (A) was supposed to take over as king after Ma'mun); because he wanted to be accepted by the Shias.

Although Imam (A) did not want to take this position, he made full use of it to preach Islam openly.

To show to the people how much he thought of Imam (A), Ma'mun changed the colour of his court from black to green (the colour of the Imams (A).), he also had new coins made with Imam Ali ar-Ridha's (A) name on it.

Each Imam (A) is remembered for a specific thing:

eg.4th Imam, Imam Zainul Abideen (A) - In illness.

6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) - For sustenance.

And in the same way our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) is called upon when someone is about to go on a journey.

When you go on journeys you take with you something called Imam-e-Zaamin (another name for Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A)) which is some money tied in a cloth. This tradition probably came from the time of Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) when people used to carry money with them especially because it had Imam's (A) name on it.

As Ma'mun had had coins minted with the name of Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) on them, it was very easy for the Muslims to carry the name of Imam (A) with them, especially when they went on journeys.

There is a hadith of the Prophet that when you travel you should give charity (saddqa). So is it not better to give the money of Imam-e-Zaamin before you go on your journey rather than when you get back, so that it may reach the poor quicker.

It is said that the Sura of Tawheed (Sura Ikhlas) if written and cut into two halves, one given to the

traveller and the other left at his home, will always come together again and so ensure the safe journey of the traveller.

Moral:

1. Make best use of your circumstances.
2. Give Sadaqa to avoid calamities.

Our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) is also known as Imam Zaamin (A). Zaamin means safety.

One day when Imam (A) was walking he came across a hunter who was about to kill a deer. The deer was trying to get away and when she saw Imam (A) she said something to him.

Imam asked the hunter to free the deer so that she could go and feed her little baby deer who were very hungry. Imam (A) also told the hunter that once the deer had fed her babies she would come back.

The hunter allowed the deer to go because Imam (A) had told him to, but he did not think she was coming back, so Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) waited with the hunter until the deer returned with her young ones. She asked Imam (A) to look after her babies.

The people of king Ma'mun were very angry that he had made our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A), his heir.

To show Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) that they did not respect him, the servants of Ma'mun decided that when Imam (A) came to the court they would not open the doors, or lift up the curtains for Imam (A) to pass through.

That day when Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) came to the court, the doors and curtains were opening by themselves for Imam (A) under the command of Allah.

The servants became very scared and ashamed and resumed their duty of opening the doors and curtains for Imam (A).

Moral:

No-one can do anything to you when Allah is looking after you, as Allah is the most powerful and in control of everything.

Imam Muhammad At-Taqi (A)

Our 9th Imam, Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) had an uncle called Ali ibne Jaffar, who was a very knowledgeable, pious old man. Whenever he went to the mosque, people would surround him and ask him questions.

One day Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) arrived at the mosque. When his uncle who was sitting in the middle of a large group of people saw him, he immediately got up and kissed the hand of Imam (A).

Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) asked his uncle to sit down, to which his uncle replied that he could not sit while Imam (A) was standing. When Ali ibne Jaffar returned among his friends, after Imam (A) had left, his friends told him that it was wrong for him to show so much respect to that child (Imam (A) as he was an old man and the uncle of the child.

Ali ibne Jaffar replied that he was showing respect to the child because of who he was. He continued that Imamate is an office and a station from Allah, and Allah did not deem him an old man fit and capable for the leadership of the Ummah, but considered the child capable for it. Therefore they should all obey his (Imam (A)) commands.

Moral:

1. The age of a person is not important but what kind of person they are.
2. Only Allah knows everything about everyone and therefore only Allah is allowed to judge people, and say what they do and do not deserve.

When our 9th Imam, Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) was a young man, Ma'mun had arranged a question - answer session between Imam (A) and Yahya bin Athkam, who was supposed to be the most learned of men at that time.

The court was full of people from near and far everyone wanted to see what the outcome would be.

Yahya asked the first question which was: What would be the kaffara of a person in Ihram who hunted and killed his prey?

Imam Muhammad at-Taqi answered that he would have to be given a lot more detail before he could even begin to answer the question.

For example:

1. Was the person in Ihram Baligh or not?
2. Was the person a free man or a slave?
3. Did he know the laws of sharia on hunting or not?
4. Was his Ihram for Hajj or Umra?
5. Did he hunt intentionally or not?
6. Was this the first time or one of many?
7. Did the person in Ihram hunt inside the Haram of the Ka'ba or outside.
8. Did he hunt in the day or at night?
9. Was the prey big or small?
10. Was the prey a bird or an animal?
11. Was the person sorry or not?

Yahya was shocked and did not know what to say.

Ma'mun asked Imam (A) to answer Yahya's question for all of the above conditions, which Imam (A) did.

It was then Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) to ask Yahya a question, which he did and which Yahya could not answer; so Imam (A) again gave the answer.

Moral:

To answer a fiqh question is not as easy as you may think; this is why Ulema spend years of their lives learning and researching. And why we have to do Taqlid of a Marja'.(Just like we take the advice of a doctor when we are ill, we should take the advice of a Marja' in religious affairs.)

Once when our 9th Imam, Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) was only a child, he was walking down a street, when Ma'mun and his soldiers came by. All the other children on the street ran away but Imam (A) did not.

Ma'mun stopped his coach and asked Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) why he did not run away like the others.

Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) answered that he had done nothing wrong and that the road was big enough for the both of them.

Ma'mun asked Imam (A) who he was; and Imam (A) told him. Ma'mun asked Imam (A) what he

was holding in his closed hand.

Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) knew that it was a little fish without seeing it.

Moral: You should not be scared of anything or anyone as Allah is the strongest and will look after you.

When our 9th Imam, Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) was only 9 years old, his father our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (A) was killed by the king Ma'mun.

Ma'mun decided that he would try to buy (bribe) Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) into his way of life because Imam (A) was still only a child.

Ma'mun took Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) to his palace and gave him what ever money could buy, but Imam (A) was not interested, because he knew Allah could give him much much more.

No matter how much Ma'mun gave him Imam (A) did not do anything against Allah's commands as Ma'mun wished.

Moral:

Whatever anyone gives you always remember that Allah can give you so much more but only if you are a good Muslim and do as Allah tells you.

Imam Ali An-Naqi (A)

Once in the time of our 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A), a lady came to the Khalifa, Mutawakkil and said that she was Zainab (A), the daughter of Fatimah (A), the daughter of the Prophet (S).

Mutawakkil told her that this could not be true because many years had passed since the time when Zainab (A) was alive, and the lady looked very young.

The lady answered that she was Zainab (A) and that she looked young because the Prophet (S) had passed his hand over her head and prayed for her to remain young for ever.

Mutawakkil did not know what to do so he called all the wise men and asked them. All of them

said that the lady was lying, but how were they to prove this.

No-one could think of anyway to prove that the lady was lying, so then Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) was called.

Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) told Mutawakkil to put the lady into a cage of lions and if what she said was true, then the lions would not harm her, because the wild animals do not hurt the children of Fatimah (A).

The lady said that Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) wanted to kill her and that if what he said was true then let him go into the cage first.

Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) agreed and went into a cage of lions. The lions did not harm Imam (A) instead they caressed him. Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) then came out and told the lady that now it was her turn.

The lady began to cry and said that she was sorry and that she did not mean to lie, it was only a joke.

Moral:

You should never lie (even as a joke) as you will get caught. If you do get away with it and no-one finds out remember that Allah knows and He is the one you have to go back to for your reward or punishment.

Our 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) became an Imam at the age of only 8 years old.

Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) when young, was forced to go to a famous old poet named Junaydi to be tutored.

Junaydi was a very clever man but hated the Ahlul-bayt.

The king at the time forced Imam (A) to go to Junaydi so that anything that the Imam (A) said or did in his life would be according to the teachings that he had received from Junaydi. Even if they were not people would think that they were because he had been taught by him.

After some time had passed the king asked Junaydi how the Imam (A) was doing.

To which Junaydi answered that he was no longer the teacher (Imam (A) was), but a student, and that he now understood what knowledge really was.

Moral:

1. Imams (A) have a supreme knowledge so that they are able to answer whatever question is put to them. 2. What age you are does not matter but how much you know matters. People will treat you like a child unless you can show them otherwise - through your knowledge and your Akhlaq.

In the time of our 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) the king was a bad man called Mutawakkil.

One day Mutawakkil fell very ill. The doctors could not make him better.

Mutawakkil's mother was very sad and asked Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) to help him.

Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) told her what medicine to use to make Mutawakkil better and when she used what Imam (A) had told her to use, Mutawakkil became well again.

All the doctors were very surprised.

Although Mutawakkil was a bad man, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) still helped him, because the mother had come to him for help.

Moral:

If anyone ever asks you for help you should help them even if they are not very nice.

Once in the time of our 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A), a man came to Imam (A) and told him that if Imam (A) did not help him, he would be killed.

Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) asked the man to explain. The man explained that he had been given an expensive stone by the King and told to write something on it.

The man continued that when he went to write on it, the stone broke in half and when the king would find out, he would kill the man.

Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) prayed for the man, then told the man not to worry, and that Allah would look after him.

The next day when the king came to pick up his stone, the man was shaking because he was so scared.

The king told the man that he had changed his mind and now wanted the stone broken in half, one piece for each one of his two daughters, with the writing on each half of the stone.

Moral:

No matter what trouble you are faced with always trust in Allah and ask for His help as He can make anything happen.

Imam Hasan Al-Askari (A)

In the time of our 11th Imam, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) there lived a Christian priest, who could make it rain by raising his hands up to the sky.

The Muslim king began to get worried because the Muslims' faith started to waver and if the Muslims left Islam he would have no one to rule over.

The king went to the Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) whom he had imprisoned and told him that the Muslims were losing faith in Islam because of the Christian priest.

Imam (A) told the king to arrange a gathering of all the people and the priest.

At the gathering Imam (A) asked the Christian priest to pray for rain. When the priest raised his hands to pray it began to rain. Imam (A) asked for whatever was in the priest's hand to be taken away and then told him to pray for rain again.

The priest tried and tried but he could not get it to rain.

Imam (A) then showed the people the bone that the priest was holding in his hands. Imam (A) told the people that it was a bone of a Prophet and that was what was causing it to rain and not the priest.

Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) then prayed for rain and it rained.

Moral:

When things happen that make you question your faith remember you do not know or

understand everything.

The rulers of the time of our 11th Imam, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) knew that the Imams (A) were going to be 12 in number and that the last of them was going to be the son of Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) and would finally take control of the world.

The rulers wanted to stop the 12th Imam (A) from being born, so they tried to keep Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) imprisoned for most of his life.

They had forgotten how Fir'aun had tried to stop the reign of Prophet Musa (A) by killing all the baby boys born to the Isralites, yet he himself was bringing up the one he wanted to kill.

Motamid, who was the 'Fir'aun' at the time of Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) did everything in his power to stop the birth of the 12th Imam (A).

Motamid had had Imam (A) under his watchful eye from the age of four, and imprisoned following the death of his father, the 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A).

Allah had planned for the 12th Imam (A) to be born so an incident occurred where Motamid had to ask Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) for help to save the faith of the Muslims.

The incident was that at a time of severe draught a Christian priest was able to make it rain, which was making the Muslim people question their faith.

So Motamid had to ask Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) for help, before there were no Muslims to rule over.

Imam (A) showed how the priest was making it rain using the bone of a Prophet (A) and how Imam (A) could make it rain without the help of anything.

The Muslims were overjoyed and Motamid had no choice but to let Imam (A) free. It was during this period that the 12th Imam (A) was born.

Moral:

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, Sura Ali Imran verse 54: "And they planned, and Allah planned, and Allah is the best of planners." ie. Whatever Allah has decided no-one can change.

Once in the time of our 11th Imam, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A), there lived a man who only had a little money left.

Now this man was scared about what he was going to do when even this little bit of money finished, so he decided to hide this money by digging a hole in his garden and putting it there. The man then went to Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) and told him that he had no money and needed Imam's (A) help.

Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) gave the man a whole bag of money and told him that the Imams (A) always help anyone that asks them for help, so there had been no need for him to have lied.

Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) continued that the man should be grateful for whatever Allah has given him. Imam (A) then told him that the money that he had hidden would not be there when he would need it.

The man realised what he had done was wrong.

Later when the man needed some more money, he went to dig out the money that he had hidden and found it gone. His son had found out about it and taken it.

Exactly like Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) had said, that when he would need the money it would not be there.

Moral:

1. You should trust in Allah to look after you.
2. You should thank Allah for whatever He has given you.
3. You should never lie, as you will be found out. Even if no-one finds out, Allah knows.

Imam Muhammad Al-Mahdi (A)

There was a pious man called Syed Muhammad Jabal Amili who was travelling through the desert with a caravan of people, when he got lost.

Syed Amili searched and searched for the caravan but could not find them. It became dark as night set in. He was all alone in the hot desert, tired, hungry and frightened.

He was about to give up and prepare himself for death when he suddenly saw some water. He

went to the water drank some and then did wudhu and offered his Salaat.

After his Salaat he did not have anymore strength and lay there waiting for death.

All of a sudden he saw a person riding a horse getting closer and closer to him.

When the horse rider reached Syed Amili he said Salaam to him and asked him what the matter was. Syed Amili explained that he had lost his caravan and was hungry.

The rider asked him why then did he not eat the melons that were lying beside him. Syed Amili asked the rider not to make fun of him as he had searched all over for food.

The rider said he was not joking, and to look behind him. Syed Amili looked and there were three melons.

The rider then told him to eat one of them and to take the other two with him and pointed out the direction he was to go in. He also told Syed Amili that at about sunset he would reach a tent and from there he would be guided to his caravan.

Then the rider disappeared. Syed Amili says that that was when he realised that it was our 12th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A).

Syed Amili did as he was told and sure enough the next day at sunset he reached the tent and was directed to his caravan.

Moral:

Although we can not see our 12th Imam (A) he can see us and knows when we are in need of his help and comes to help us.

Many people ask what is the use of an Imam that can not be seen. Just as the sun is still of use to us even when it is hidden behind the clouds, Imam (A) is of benefit even when hidden.

Although we can not see our 12th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A) can see us. He is aware of our prayers, deeds actions and troubles. Any believer who truly asks him for help receives his assistance.

The ghaybat (concealment) of Imam (A) is in two stages:

1. Ghaybate sughra - minor concealment.

2. Ghaybate kubra - major concealment.

Ghaybate sughra started from after Imam (A) led the funeral prayer of his father (Imam Hasan al-Askeri (A)) until the death of his 4th deputy. All in all 68years.

Ghaybate kubra started from the death of his 4th deputy till this day.

During Ghaybate sughra although the Muslims could not see Imam (A) they could communicate with him through his deputies:

1. Uthman bin Said
2. Muhammad bin Uthman
3. Husain bin Rauh
4. Ali bin Muhammad Samry.

During Ghaybate kubra although there are no special deputies. The Mujtahids are his representatives.

There have been many examples in history of where Imam (A) has guided and helped his followers:

There once lived a great Mujtahid named Allama Majlisi. Once this Mujtahid was asked what to do with the body of a pregnant woman who had died. Should the dead woman be buried as she was or should she be cut open and the child removed, then the woman buried.

Allama decided that the woman should be buried as she was, with the child.

When the people were carrying the coffin to the grave, a horseman appeared and said that Allama had decided that the baby should be removed. This was done.

A few years later Allama Majlisi was visited by a man with a small child. The man told Allama that this was the same child that had been cut from his mother after Allama had sent the horseman telling the people that he had changed his instructions.

Allama immediately realised that the horseman must have been Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A) who had come to his help, preventing him making a grave mistake.

From that day Allama stayed in his house refusing to give anymore advise to the people, in case he made another mistake. In a few days he received a letter from Imam (A) telling him that he should not worry and should continue to guide the people. If by any chance he made a mistake

Imam (A) would come to help him rectify it.

The duties of each and every Muslim in the time of Ghatbate kubra is:

1. To be the caretakers of Islam.
2. To pray for the safety of Imam (A) and give sadaqa for his safety.
3. Ask Allah to make Imam (A) appearance soon, so that he may come and fill the world with truth and peace.
4. Whenever the name of the 12th Imam is said, you should stand, placing your right hand on your head and bow your head. You should also recite Salawaat after his name.

Moral:

The Holy Prophet (S) has said that if someone dies without knowing the Imam (A) of his time, his death is that of an unbeliever. We must therefore carry out our duties to our 12th Imam who is still alive and in Ghaybate (concealment).

As soon as our 12th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A) was born, he did Sajdah.

Soon after his birth one of the maids went to see Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A), who was lying in his cradle. The maid said "Salaam" to the Imam (A) and the Imam (A) answered her salaam.

The maid was surprised. The maid then sneezed and Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A) said from the cradle: "Yarhamukallah, it is a blessing from Allah and you can be sure to live for the next 3 days."

Moral:

1. When anyone says Salaam to you it is Wajib on you to answer and you should try to answer more than what was said to you.
2. When anyone else sneezes you should say Yarhamukallah; when you yourself sneeze you should say Alhamdulillah.