

The Muslim's Pledge of Allegiance

دُعَاءُ الْعَهْدِ

Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq is reported to have said: Anyone who recites the following pledge for forty mornings will be a helper to Imam al-Mahdī. And if the person dies before the Imam's advent, God will raise him from his grave so that he may serve his Imam. Furthermore, for each word he reads of this supplication, God will grant him the reward of one thousand good deeds and erase one thousand sins. The supplication is as follows:

Part I:

In God's name, beneficent to all creation, merciful forever to the believing nation.	بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.
O God! Bless Muḥammad's soul, and rain down peace on his household.	اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ.
O God! O Lord of the splendid light!	اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ الثُّورِ الْعَظِيمِ.
O Lord with his throne at a lofty height!	وَرَبَّ الْكُرْسِيِّ الرَّفِيعِ.
O Lord who makes the sea to swell!	وَرَبَّ الْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ.
O revealer of the Torah, Psalms, and Evangel!	وَمُنْزِلَ التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالزَّبُورِ.
O Lord of the cool shade and the sun hot as hell!	وَرَبَّ الظِّلِّ وَالْحَرُورِ.
O you who sent down the Qur'ān filled with right!	وَمُنْزِلَ الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ.
O Lord of the angels fashioned of light,	وَرَبَّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ،
and of prophets and emissaries endowed with insight!	وَالْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ.

Insights:

- When we say God is *rabb*, we mean that he is a lord and master who provides all that his subjects need (material, spiritual, educational, emotional, etc.) and manages their affairs so that they can live as he wants them to live.
- What is the significance of the particular parts of creation that are named here as the subjects of the Lord God?
 - Lord of light:** in Qur'ān, we are told that "God is the light of the skies and earth" (24:35). This probably means that he is the source of existence. Like a singular light in the darkness of nothingness, God Almighty illuminates all creation by willing it into being.

- **Lord of the throne:** God's throne is a symbol of his kingdom. Like a king who sits on his throne to rule over his dominion, God Almighty is the king of kings who figuratively sits on his throne and rules over all of creation.
- **Lord of the sea, the sun, and the shade:** Perhaps the Imam mentions these three parts of the world in which to remind us that God is its Lord.
- **Revealer of scripture:** Not only does God provide for our material needs, he also provides guidance through scripture.
- **Lord of the angels, prophets, and messengers:** These are the servants God uses to exercise his lordship over us and provide for our needs. The angels manage the workings of the universe and the prophets and messengers provide guidance and leadership.

Part II:

O God! I beg you by your countenance bright,	اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِوَجْهِكَ الْكَرِيمِ.
and by its brilliant, light-giving light,	وَبِنُورِ وَجْهِكَ الْمُنِيرِ.
and your kingdom unbound by time finite.	وَمُلْكِكَ الْقَدِيمِ.
O Living who all things does ever sustain!	يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ.
I beg and implore you by your name, by whose light earth and sky illumined remain,	أَسْأَلُكَ بِاسْمِكَ الَّذِي أَشْرَقَتْ بِهِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُونَ.
which does the ancients and those till the end maintain.	وَبِاسْمِكَ الَّذِي يَصْلَحُ بِهِ الْأَوَّلُونَ وَالْآخِرُونَ.
O Living who was, before all life, alive!	يَا حَيًّا قَبْلَ كُلِّ حَيٍّ.
O Living who will be, after all death, alive!	وَيَا حَيًّا بَعْدَ كُلِّ حَيٍّ.
O Living who was, without another, alive!	وَيَا حَيًّا حِينَ لَا حَيٍّ.
O Giver of life to those who have died; and of death to those who yet survive!	يَا مُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَى وَمُمِيتَ الْأَحْيَاءِ.
O Living other than whom there's no god alive!	يَا حَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

Insights:

- Before we ask God for anything, we must first praise him to show him that we recognize how great he is and how lowly we are, how much we need him and how little he needs us.

- What is the “face of God”?
 - Certainly God Almighty has no physical body and no face. Nonetheless, we use the word “face” to refer to God himself or to his honor and dignity. Find the following verses in the Qur’ān and reflect on the usage of *wajh Allah* of “the face of God” in each:
 - 2:115
 - 2:272
 - 30:38
 - 30:39
 - 55:27
 - 92:20
- What role does the “name of God” play in illuminating the universe and in the betterment of people?
 - Perhaps, since God’s power, knowledge, and wisdom permeate every nook and cranny of the universe, and without these attributes no part of the universe could exist, it is as though the entire universe is enlightened by God’s attributes and names.
 - Only through the constant remembrance of God’s name can we as humans achieve the full potential that we are created for.
- God was alive since eternity, before anything else came to life, and will be alive into eternity, long after all else is dead

Part III:

O God! Convey to our Imam and our guide,	اللَّهُمَّ بَلِّغْ مَوْلَانَا الْإِمَامَ الْهَادِيَ الْمَهْدِيَّ،
who will rise to the task, which you in him did confide,	الْقَائِمَ بِأَمْرِكَ - صَلَّوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آبَائِهِ الطَّاهِرِينَ -
on my brethren’s behalf who believe by my side,	عَنْ جَمِيعِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ،
whether in the east of the earth or the west they reside,	فِي مَشَارِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبِهَا،
whether in hollows, on peaks, or by the seaside,	سَهْلِهَا وَجَبَلِهَا وَبَرِّهَا وَبَحْرِهَا،
and on my own and my parents’ behalf, your blessings in your throne’s measure from which you preside,	وَعَنِّي وَعَنْ وَالِدَيَّ مِنَ الصَّلَوَاتِ زِنَةَ عَرْشِ اللَّهِ،
and in volume to match the ink of your words, and in number as many as you alone decide,	وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ، وَمَا أَحْصَاهُ عِلْمُهُ،

as many as in your book are inscribed.	وَأَحَاطَ بِهِ كِتَابُهُ.
---	---------------------------

Insights:

- In this third section, we finally state our request to God. We ask him to convey his blessings (*ṣalāh*) to Imam al-Mahdī with extreme hyperbole. Make note of the following:
 - on behalf of how many people are we making this prayer?
 - how many blessings are we asking God to shower on him?
- Why do we pray on behalf of other people?

Part IV:

O God! I renew on this morning of mine, and on every new day that you let me abide,	اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُجَدِّدُ لَهُ فِي صَبِيحَةِ يَوْمِي هَذَا، وَ مَا عِشْتُ مِنْ أَيَّامِي،
my vow and my word and my solemnest pledge—	عَهْدًا وَ عَقْدًا وَ بَيْعَةً لَهُ فِي عُنُقِي،
I shall not renege; I shall never hedge.	لَا أَحُولُ عَنْهَا وَ لَا أَزُولُ أَبَدًا.

Insights:

- In this section, we renew our pledge to the Imam of our time.
- About this pledge:
 - What does it mean to pledge allegiance?
 - What kinds of duties do we have to someone to whom we pledge our allegiance?
 - What kinds of sacrifices should we be ready to make for him?
 - How can we be sure we will keep our commitment when the time comes to make those sacrifices?

Part V:

O God! Make me his helper and friend,	اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنْ أَنْصَارِهِ وَ أَعْوَانِهِ،
to risk my own life to his life defend,	وَ الذَّائِبِينَ عَنْهُ،
to rush to his side, to his needs attend,	وَ الْمُسَارِعِينَ إِلَيْهِ فِي قَضَاءِ حَوَائِجِهِ،
to his every command I willingly bend,	وَ الْمُتَمَثِّلِينَ لِأَوَامِرِهِ،
to support his cause till the bitter end,	وَ الْمُحَامِلِينَ عَنْهُ،
to be first to let my neck to his will extend,	وَ السَّابِقِينَ إِلَى إِرَادَتِهِ،

to the station of martyrdom let my soul ascend.	وَالْمُسْتَشْهَدِينَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ.
---	---------------------------------------

Insights:

- In this section, we move past our pledge of allegiance and pray that God make us among Imam al-Mahdī's companions and supporters. Then we list the kinds of things we hope to be able to do for the Imam:
 - we hope to be willing to risk our lives to defend his.
 - we hope to be ready to mobilize rapidly when he demands our help
 - we hope to be obedient to him.
 - we hope to be able to protect him.
 - to hope to rush to do what he wants
 - to hope to achieve martyrdom

Part VI:

O God! If death were to part him and me—	اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ حَالَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُ الْمَوْتُ،
death, which is your sovereign decree—	الَّذِي جَعَلْتَهُ عَلَى عِبَادِكَ حُتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا،
in my funeral shroud, from my grave, raise me,	فَاخْرِجْنِي مِنْ قَبْرِي مُؤْتَرَرًا كَفَنِي،
sword's hilt in my hand, pike to strike ready,	شَاهِرًا سَيْفِي، مُجَرِّدًا قَنَاتِي،
to answer his call, to join his army, with rural and urban citizenry.	مُتَلَبِّيًا دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِي فِي الْحَاضِرِ وَالْبَادِي.

Insights:

- We have no way of knowing when God will allow the Imam to reappear. We pray that it will be soon, but it may not occur until long after our deaths. If we are sincere and committed to helping the Imam, and if we show that commitment by reciting this supplication for forty consecutive mornings, then Imam al-Ṣādiq has guaranteed that God will raise us from the grave to participate in his revolution. Remember that Imam al-Ṣādiq told us before teaching us this supplication, “If the person dies before the Imam's advent, God will raise him from his grave so that he may serve his Imam.”

Part VII:

O God! Give a glimpse of his beautiful face,	اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنِي الطَّلْعَةَ الرَّشِيدَةَ،
his resplendence, which is worthy of praise.	وَالْعُرَّةَ الْحَمِيدَةَ.
Bring a glint to my eyes with a glance at his grace.	وَ اكْحُلْ نَاطِرِي بِنَظَرَةٍ مِنْ عَيْنِهِ.

Hasten his advent from his hiding place.	وَ عَجِّلْ فَرَجَهُ، وَ سَهِّلْ مَخْرَجَهُ،
Make way for him, and let me keep pace with his pace.	وَ أَوْسِعْ مِنْهُجَهُ، وَ اسْلُكْ بِي مَحَجَّتَهُ،
Let him do what he wills, newfound power embrace.	وَ أَنْفِذْ أَمْرَهُ، وَ اشْدُدْ أَرْزَهُ،
Rebuild by his hand the ruin and waste.	وَ اْعْمِرِ اللَّهُمَّ بِهِ بِلَادَكَ،
Revive by his hand hearts diseased by disgrace,	وَ أَحْيِ بِهِ عِبَادَكَ،
for you have said, and what you say is true: “Ruin is coming by land and by sea, by virtue of what we as people do.”	فَإِنَّكَ قُلْتَ - وَ قَوْلُكَ الْحَقُّ - ﴿ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ﴾.
So empower, O God, your chosen one,	فَاطْظَهِّرِ اللَّهُمَّ لَنَا وَلِيِّكَ،
the son of the daughter of your chosen one,	وَ ابْنِ بِنْتِ نَبِيِّكَ،
whose name is the name of the chosen one,	الْمُسَمَّى بِاسْمِ رَسُولِكَ.
so his hands rip all falsehood to shreds,	حَتَّى لَا يَظْفَرَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا مَرْقَهُ،
and in place of that falsehood he puts truth instead.	وَ يُحِقِّ الْحَقَّ وَ يُحَقِّقُهُ.
Let the wronged and oppressed take refuge in him.	وَ اجْعَلْهُ اللَّهُمَّ مَفْزَعًا لِمَظْلُومِ عِبَادِكَ.
Let those with no succor find succor in him,	وَ نَاصِرًا لِمَنْ لَا يَجِدُ لَهُ نَاصِرًا غَيْرَكَ.
Let laws since abandoned find new life through him.	وَ مُجَدِّدًا لِمَا عُطِّلَ مِنْ أَحْكَامِ كِتَابِكَ.
Let the banner of faith rise once more through him. Let the Prophet's example be modeled by him.	وَ مُشِيدًا لِمَا وَرَدَ مِنْ أَعْلَامِ دِينِكَ، وَ سُنَنِ نَبِيِّكَ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ.
And guard him against those who want ill for him.	وَ اجْعَلْهُ اللَّهُمَّ مِمَّنْ حَصَّنَتْهُ مِنْ بَأْسِ الْمُعْتَدِينَ.

Insights:

- In this section, we pray for Imam al-Mahdī. We pray that God hasten his return and make us his followers. Then we pray that God help him to fulfill the following tasks with which he has been entrusted:

- to rebuild what has been destroyed
- to revive people through a revival of Islam
- to destroy all falsehood
- to replace falsehood with good
- to help those who have been oppressed
- to help those who have no help
- to revive the *sharīah*, the Islamic legal system
- to reinstate those important parts of the Islamic lifestyle that have been forgotten
- to revive the *sunnah* of Prophet Muḥammad
- These tasks are not easy by any stretch. The Imam will have to work very hard, and he will need much help from his followers to accomplish them. All the while, he will have many enemies who will work against him. So in the end of this section, we pray to God to protect him against those who wish to harm him.

Part VIII:

O God! Let the Prophet delight at the sight,	اللَّهُمَّ وَسُرَّ نَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدًا - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ - بِرُؤُوسِهِ،
of him with disciples united on right.	وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُ عَلَى دَعْوَتِهِ.
Have mercy, we suffer our Prophet's demise,	وَارْحَمِ اسْتِكَانَتَنَا بَعْدَهُ.

Insights:

- When the Imam is finally able to succeed in his mission, as he undoubtedly will by the grace of God, he will have accomplished the goal for which every prophet and every divine guide has striven since the time of Adam. This victory of good over evil will certainly bring joy to every God-fearing person who ever lived, especially to his forefather, Prophet Muḥammad.
- But the joy at this thought for the believer is bitter-sweet because, while we have our Imam, we do not have our Prophet.

Part IX:

Let his grandson's presence wipe the tears from our eyes.	اللَّهُمَّ اكْشِفْ هَذِهِ الْغَمَّةَ عَنْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بِحُضُورِهِ.
Hasten his advent, and let him soon rise.	وَاعْجَلْ لَنَا ظُهُورَهُ.
Its imminence, against all odds, we surmise.	إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيداً وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيباً.

We ask you all this through your mercy, O God! O Most Merciful of those who show mercy, O God!	بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.
Hasten, my master! Hasten to come!	الْعَجَلِ الْعَجَلِ يَا مَوْلَايَ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ
Hasten, my master! Hasten to come!	الْعَجَلِ الْعَجَلِ يَا مَوْلَايَ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ
Hasten, my master! Hasten to come!	الْعَجَلِ الْعَجَلِ يَا مَوْلَايَ يَا صَاحِبَ الزَّمَانِ

Insights:

- The phrase, “*al-‘ajal*” means “We beg you for haste.” We are eager and excited for the Imam’s return. We cannot wait a moment longer. We cannot even wait long enough to speak through God to the Imam. Rather, we address the Imam directly and exclaim, “Hasten, my master! Hasten to come!” As we repeat this prayer thrice, we are instructed to slap our right thigh with each repetition as a demonstration of our eagerness to see him. May God hear our call. May the Imam hear our cry.