



## Did the recitation of **Dua al-Faraj** only start after the Islamic Revolution in Iran?

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In the Name of Allah, Compassionate to all, Merciful to the believers.

O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and his benevolent and pure progeny.

There is a question that is being posed, that The Dua for Imam Sahibul 'Asr wal Zaman (May Allah (SWT) hasten his reappearance), the Dua that is well-known among Imami Shi'as and reads:

اللَّهُمَّ كُنْ لَوْلِيَّكَ الْحُجَّةَ ابْنَ الْحَسَنِ  
صَلِّوَاتِكَ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آبَائِهِ  
فِي هَذِهِ السَّاعَةِ وَفِي كُلِّ سَاعَةٍ  
وَلِيًّا وَحَافِظًا وَقَائِدًا وَنَاصِرًا وَدَلِيلًا وَعَيْنًا  
حَتَّى تُسَكِّنَهُ أَرْضَكَ طَوْعًا  
وَتُمَتِّعَهُ فِيهَا طَوِيلًا

*O Allah, be, for Your representative, the Hujjat (Divinely-Appointed proof), son of Al-Hassan (al-'Askari),*

*May Your blessings be on him and his forefathers,  
in this hour and in every hour,*

*a guardian, a protector (from earthly & heavenly afflictions),  
a leader, a helper, a guide, and an eye.*

*until You make him live (& established) on the earth, in obedience  
(to You, to execute Your Will),*

*and cause him to live in it for a long time  
(with the godly government on the whole of earth).*

That this Dua only became well-known and famous after the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran, some say. And as a result there is no guarantee or evidence to support the authenticity of this Dua, which would enable us to give a theological basis to it, that there is an Imam and that our relationship with him is based on a relationship of interaction with him through supplicating to Allah (SWT) to prolong his age and preserve and guard him.



### ***What is the answer to this question?***

In the context of answering this question, it is necessary for us to [attempt to] decipher the different messages of what this question at hand might intend to convey.

The first possibility is to say that this Dua has not been narrated in the books of our early scholars or 'Ulema, and that it is a supplication that only started to spread recently, and as a result, how can we consider it to be authentic.

[To answer], if this is what is intended by the question, then it is wrong; because this Dua has been mentioned by *Shaykh al-Kulayni in al-Kafi, volume four, page 162*. He says, that one should repeat this Dua on the 23rd night of the month of Ramadan, standing, sitting, in ruku', in sujud, in all states, and in fact throughout the entire month, whenever one can, and whenever they remember.

[He then explains that] after praising Allah (SWT), and reciting Salawaat on the Holy Prophet, you recite *Allahumma kunli waliyyik....*

It is well known that al-Kafi was written between the fourth and the fifth century, close to the [beginning of the] Ghayba (occultation) of the Imam (May Allah (SWT) hasten his reappearance), and that Shaykh al-Kulayni, the author of al-Kafi, (May Allah (SWT) have mercy on him), lived in the time of the special deputies of Imam al-Mahdi. In other words, he lived in the time of the lesser occultation during the time of the third deputy and was his contemporary.

Similarly, Shaykh al-Tusi who lived seventy or eighty years after Al-Kafi was written, also mentions this Dua [in his book] *Tahdhibul ahkaam, in volume 3, page number 102*.

Sayyed Ibn Tawus of the seventh century, mentions this Dua in his book *al-Iqbal, volume 1, page number 85*.

So, based on this, this Dua has been mentioned in most reputable and reliable books by Shi'a scholars; this Dua has been reported from the early times.



On the other hand, if the question regarding the authenticity of this Dua is with respect to its name, meaning how can we know for sure that the one who we are supplicating for with this *Dua is actually Imam al-Mahdi, Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al-‘Askari (a)*, and as a result say that it refers to him – [if this is the intended question] then the answer would be that:

*When Shaykh al-Kulayni (May Allah have mercy on him) narrated this Dua in al-Kafi, he wrote: “Allahumma kun liwaliyyik – O Allah be for your representative...” – he put two lines and did not mention the name [of the Imam] explicitly.*

But, it is the same al-Kulayni who mentions many narrations in al-Kafi to prove the fact that *Imam al-Hujjah, Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al-‘Askari (a)* was already born. At that, when the author himself, in the chapter of praying for the current Imam, mentions [the Dua] (O Allah be for your representative...) – [we understand] that the Dua refers to the existence of an Imam during the time of al-Kulayni, and establishes his presence.

In another chapter, he cites authentic narrations that prove the *birth of Imam al-Mahdi, Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al-‘Askari (a)*, and the fact that he exists.

Therefore, it is natural to conclude that this Dua applies to and is in harmony with these narrations, and that [the words] “so and so” [in Arabic *fulan ibn fulan*, which were used by Shaykh al-Kulayni in his version of the Dua], [it is natural to conclude that he] who is referred to in the Dua is Imam al-Mahdi, Muhammad ibn al-Hassan (May Allah hasten his reappearance), because as you know there were conditions of *taqiyya (dissimulation)* and immense fear for the life of the Imam (aj) during the time of the lesser occultation.

In other words, this Dua existed among Shi’as from the time of the lesser occultation, during which the Abbasids were looking for the Imam (aj), his residence and location in order to reach him [and eliminate him]; as a result, it is only natural that in the Dua, he is referred to [by agnomen or by saying] *fulan bin fulan* in Arabic, which means “so and so” – [as is the case with Shaykh al-Kulayni’s] version.



That period was a time of fear, surveillance and of pursuing *Imam Sahebul-‘Asr wal-Zaman* (May Allah (SWT) hasten his reappearance), and because this Dua is recited during the month of Ramadan by all Shi’as, in all mosques and centres, it was natural for them to take the conditions of taqiyya (dissimulation) into account and to refer to Imam Sahebul ‘Asr wal-Zaman with the words “*fulan bin fulan*”, “*so and so*”. This also applies to other books [of Duas of the time] as well.

However, Sayyed ibn Tawus, in his book *al-Iqbal* - in which he quotes Shaykh al-Tusi, who in turn relies on the books *al-Kafi* of al-Kulayni and his book “*Man laa yahdharuhul-faqih*” for many of his narrations – Sayyed ibn Tawus himself actually mentions the name of the Imam (aj), because the conditions of taqiyya [in his time] had ended.

Thereat, he mentioned the name in the way in which we find it in the book *al-Iqbal* “*Allahumma kunli waliyyikal-hujjati bnil-hassan...*” (O Allah be for your representative, the proof, the son of al-Hasan...). Similarly, his name is then mentioned by *al-Kaf’ami* in his [Dua] book *al-Misbaah*, and by all those who came after that time, who all explicitly mentioned his name as the conditions that called for taqiyya had ended.

If, on the another hand, the question refers to how and why we pray for an Imam that Allah (SWT) protects and keeps him safe [anyway], [considering the fact that] he is an infallible Imam, and Allah (SWT) has already taken it upon himself to protect him, so there is no need for our prayers, because they are only vain talk that are not needed – [if this is what the question intends] - then the answer would be two fold; one part to falsify this argument and the second to present a more accurate understanding of this matter.

Firstly, there is no disagreement amongst the Muslims that all of them pray for the Holy Prophet (saw), and all of them recite in *Salatul Janaza* (*Allahumma Salli ‘ala Muhammadin wa Aali Muhammad, wa baarik ‘ala Muhammadin wa Aali Muhammad, warham Muhammadan wa aala Muhammad, wa tahannan ‘ala Muhammadin wa aali Muhammad*) – meaning:



*“O Allah, exalt Muhammad and his progeny, and bless Muhammad and his progeny, and have mercy on Muhammad and his progeny, and be Compassionate towards Muhammad and his progeny”.*

[I ask] does the Prophet (saw) need this Dua for mercy over him, whereas the Qur’an has described him *as a mercy for all the worlds*? It says: *“And we did not send you except as a mercy to the worlds”.*

So does the Prophet (saw) need the Duas of the Muslims in all of their prayers in which they say *“O Allah have mercy on Muhammad and his progeny”*?

[Based upon that], which of the two cases is clearer? That of the Holy Prophet (saw) or that of Imam Muhammad ibn al-Hassan [al-Mahdi] (May Allah (SWT) hasten his reappearance)? We pray for the Prophet (saw), so why can’t we pray for Imam Saahebul ‘Asr wal-Zaman?!

**[This was the falsification of the argument presented in the question].**

As for [the second part of the answer, in which we] present a more accurate understanding of the matter, [we emphasize that] what is intended [by reciting this Dua] is [to pray for] the elevation of status [of the Imam (aj)]. In other words, Allah (SWT) has already taken it upon himself to shower the Prophet (saw) with compassion, blessings and mercy, however we pray for Allah (SWT) to grant him the highest degree of mercy, compassion and virtue. And, in the same way, we pray for Imam Saahebul Asr wal-Zaman, to be blessed with the highest degree of Divine protection, the longest of lives, and the loftiest degree of support, backing and success – May Allah (SWT) hasten his reappearance.

And in fact, this is a prayer for us, before him, because when we supplicate to Allah (SWT) to guard and support him, we are actually praying for ourselves, and for us to benefit from even a small amount of the blessings of his existence, life, supplications and prayers. What we intend with this Dua is for a connection to be formed between us and him [through reciting it], and this would lead to his blessings and spiritual effusions to reach us – ***May Allah (SWT) hasten his reappearance.***

