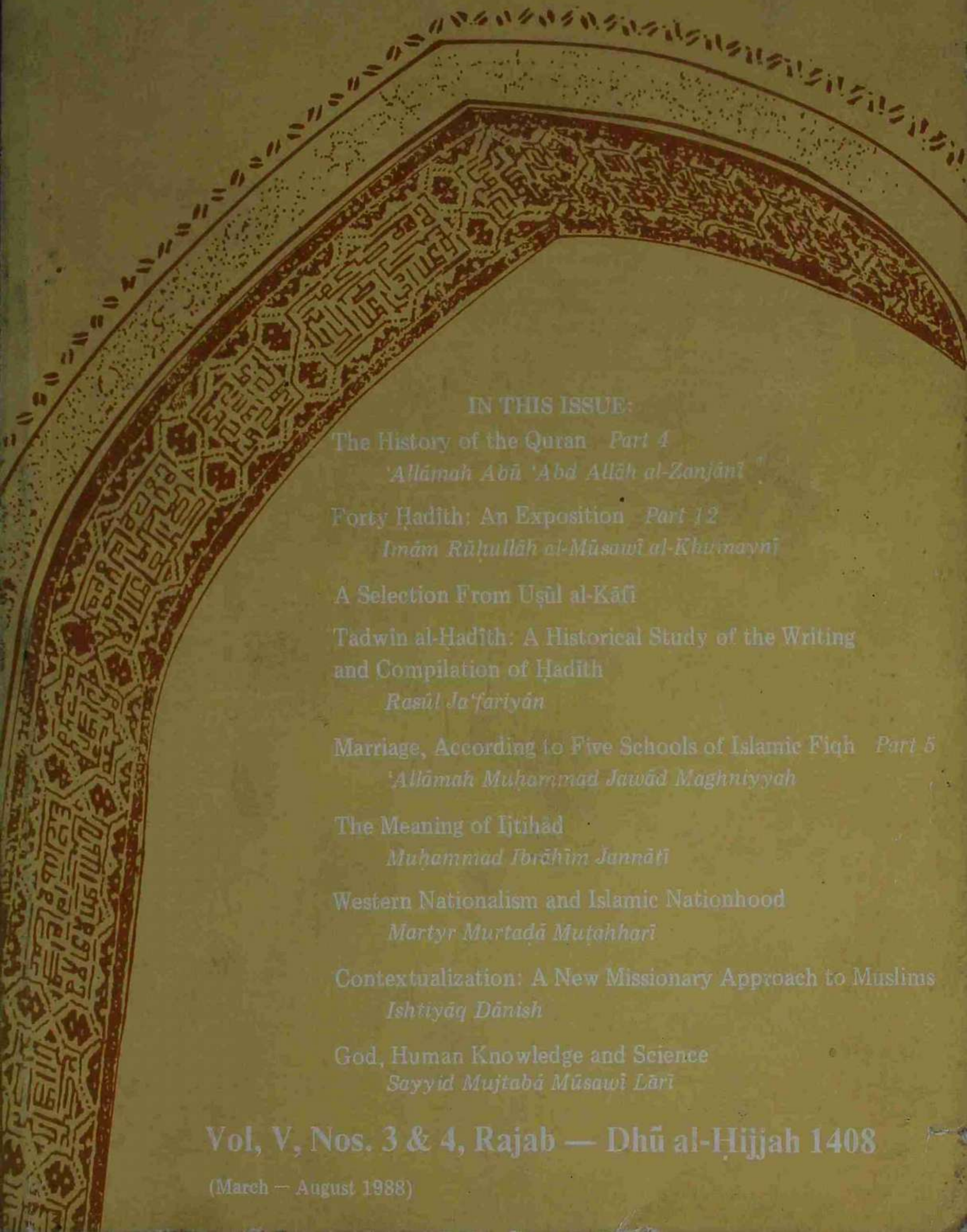
AL-TAWḤĪD

A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Thought and Culture



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Vol, V, Nos. 3 & 4, Rajab — Dhū al-Ḥijjah 1408

(March — August 1988)

قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِى اَنْشَاَهَا اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ ★ الَّذِى
جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّجَرِ الاَخْضَرِ نَاراً فَاِذَا اَنْتُمْ مِنْهُ تُوقِدُونَ ★ اَوَلَيْسَ
الَّذِى خَلَقَ السَّمٰوَاتِ وَالاَرْضَ بِقَادِرٍ عَلٰى اَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ بَلٰى وَهُوَ
الخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ ★ اِنَّمَا اَمْرُهُ اِذَا اَرَادَ شَيْئاً اَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ★
فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِى بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَاِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ★

(And he [who denies transcendence] has struck for Us a similitude and forgotten his creation; he says, 'Who shall quicken the bones when they are decayed?') Say: 'He shall quicken them, who originated them the first time; He knows all creation; who has made for you out of the green tree fire and lo, from it you kindle.' Is not He, who created the heavens and earth, able to create the like of them? Yes indeed; He is the All-creator, the All-knowing. His command, when He desires a thing, is to say to it 'Be,' and it is. So glory be to Him, in whose hand is the dominion of everything, and unto whom you shall be returned. (36: 78 — 83)

Martyr Mahliqā Qarā'ī was one of the 290 people aboard the Iranian passenger plane shot down, in a premeditated, provocative move aimed to expand the dimensions of the war in the Persian Gulf, by the U.S. government over the Persian Gulf in Iranian air space and over Iranian waters. She had placed these verses, written in her own hand, under the glass of her desk at *al-Tawḥīd* office. These holy verses represent a calm and eloquent reply to the pagan tyrants, whose plots, crimes and atrocities against the world's oppressed are rooted in their materialist world view. Blind to the metaphysical and the eschatological truths, the pagans fail not only to behold the transcendental world but are also blind to the meaning of the life principle, which is a living sign of the Living God. May God's peace and mercy be upon her and all the martyrs of humanity, who enjoy a higher and everlasting life in Divine Proximity. And may His wrath seize His enemies and the degraders and destroyers of life, and save humanity from their infernal, insatiable lust for destructiveness.

— **Editor**

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AN APOLOGY

Due to certain problems in the way of the timely publication of *al-Tawḥīd*, the delay steadily accumulated over the last five years since the inception of the journal. We apologize to our readers for the past delays, hoping that we shall be able to publish the journal on time in future.

Nos. 3 and 4 of this volume are being published together in an attempt to make up for the accumulated delay. We hope that the readers will accept our apology for the delays of the past and for the reduced pages and fewer number of articles in this double issue.

— **Editor**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of Allāh,
the Merciful and the Compassionate

Al-Tawḥid is a quarterly journal of Islamic thought and culture, published in Rabi' al-'Awwal, Jamādī al-Thānī, Ramadān and Dhū al-Ḥijjah

Scholars and writers from all over the world are invited to contribute to this journal

Manuscripts should be sent typed double-spaced on one side of the sheet. References and notes should be listed at the end of the article and should contain complete bibliographical information.

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Editorial

The conflict between good and evil, between *ḥaqq* and *bāṭil*, is at least as old as human history. In various forms and on different planes and scales such a conflict has been a perpetual aspect of man's life upon earth. It goes on deep inside the individual soul as well as between individuals, between groups, between groups and institutions, and, sometimes though rarely, involves nations and states.

Within the individual it takes the form of a struggle for freedom from the bondage of desire, lust, inner indignities and worldly attachments. On the social level it takes the form of struggle against injustice, inequality, superstition, idolatry, falsehood, oppression, slavery, domination, aggression and exploitation.

For human beings in their constant search for betterment, upliftment, edification and perfection, their attitude towards this conflict and their role in this struggle is of vital importance. For, no matter where this conflict may occur and on what scale, its outcome is of significant relevance to their condition and destiny as individuals, groups and nations. Moreover, it is characteristic of such conflicts that no one can remain neutral with regard to them; for neutrality means the denial of active support to forces fighting evil, and hence amounts to lending passive support to evil forces.

Nor, according to the teachings of Islam, are the universe and its Creator neutral and indifferent to conflicts between good and evil. God, according to Islam, is the greatest patron of the forces of good and *ḥaqq*, which in their most sublimated form are called by the Quran '*Ḥizb Allāh*', the Party of God. God is not only interested in and is partial to such struggles, the Quran pictures Him as being the director and leader of the ongoing conflict against evil. Human beings participating in that struggle on the side of good are depicted, symbolically, as helpers of God, although God is above being in need of any creature's help:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوٓا۟ أَنصَارَ ٱللَّهِ ...

O believers! Be you God's Helpers!....(61:14)

This Divine cry represents the essence of the Islamic message and faith. O believers, it calls out to them, if you believe in God *as He is*, never be on the side of evil! Don't be neutral in conflicts between good and evil! Be active helpers of God and *ḥaqq*! By helping *Ḥaqq* (*al-Ḥaqq*=God; *ḥaqq*=truth or righteousness), you will be doing a vital

service to yourselves; for the victory of *ḥaqq* is of vital importance for your life and destiny:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تَنصُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾

O believers! If you help God, He will help you and make your feet steady. (47:7)

According to Islam, the main purpose of all the prophets was to invite human beings to take part in this great struggle against evil. One cannot join the ranks of God's Party without recognizing and knowing the true God; hence the Islamic emphasis on monotheism (*tawḥīd*). Islam views human history as a continuous conflict in which God-sent prophets play the role of leaders and guides of those who struggle against *bāṭil* and evil, a conflict in which the ultimate victory belongs to God, *al-Ḥaqq:*

كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا۠ وَرُسُلِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢١﴾

God has decreed: 'I shall assuredly be the victor, I and My Messengers.' Surely God is All-strong, All-mighty. (58:21)

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِۦ رُسُلَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

Never imagine that God will fail in His promise to His Messengers; surely God is All-mighty, Vengeful (i.e. avenges the wrongs done to believers and oppressed human beings). (14:47)

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَٰفِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ...

And never consider God to be heedless of what the unjust do....(14:42)

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مُعْجِزِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ . . .

Think not the unbelievers able to frustrate God in earth....(24:57)

Although all struggles that have been waged throughout human history for freedom, justice and truth, or against aggression, unjust domination, oppression, exploitation, superstition and tyranny have been waged for some good cause and against forces of evil and tyranny, such struggles usually do not produce a radical polarization in which each of the two sides comes to represent either absolute good or absolute evil. Their case is similar to that of two disputants in a lawsuit; one of them stands on the side of justice, although their dispute is settled not

through legal but political or military means. Their difference, usually, pertains only to the matter under dispute and they are more or less similar in all other respects.

However, there have been conflicts in human history—which we may call 'sacred conflicts'—such as those led by Divine prophets and messengers, in which a gradual process of polarization leads to a sharp, black-and-white contrast between the characters of the contestants: one of them becomes the representative and embodiment of absolute goodness, while the other comes to represent and embody absolute evil. This is because the party on the right side of the conflict represents not only good; it represents God, who is absolute goodness. The other party, on the evil side of the conflict, opposes not only a just and truthful cause, it stands in opposition to God and hence comes to represent absolute evil. As the conflict proceeds, it also deepens, producing far-reaching changes in the characters of the opponents. The sacred conflict produces spiritual and moral edification, sublimity, dignity and exaltation in the party which fights on the side of God. In the other, it produces abasement, moral disintegration and bankruptcy, ultimately bringing about its defeat, disgrace and destruction.

It is in the context of such a view of social conflict that the Islamic Revolution of Iran should be viewed. It was led by a leader and staged by a people who see their movement as the continuation of the movement of Divine prophets and emissaries. In this sense, therefore, the Islamic Revolution is the most significant event to have occurred in the last fourteen hundred years since the emergence of the Prophet Muḥammad (S).

We may note the following points which characterize the emergence of sacred movement and sacred conflicts, which inevitably follow in the wake of its emergence, and the nature of the opposition that it has to face.

1. Whereas every movement that stands for a just cause often upholds that cause on account of its moral validity and legitimacy, as well as for the sake of the collective benefit and good of a group, it does not become a 'sacred' movement as long as its struggle is not based on and inspired by the motive to obey God and to fulfil the duty to Him. The sacred movement possesses in addition to its righteousness the alchemic element of a God-inspired motivation. Such movements, as well as the conflicts associated with them, whenever they occur in history, become part of the religious heritage of mankind. A movement lacking the element of devotion to the Divine may become a part of national history and legacy, but it lacks the crucial Divine charisma which sanctifies persons, events and movements, and imparts to them 'religious' significance.

2. Although sacred movements are rare in human history, they

carry within themselves immeasurably great power and energy that cause great upheavals in human society, a power that is not comparable to that of any other terrestrial phenomenon. This is because such movements relate on the one hand to God and His creative power, and, on the other, have the capacity to move something which resides deep within the core of human nature and man's heart.

3. The sacred movement attracts adherents from diverse backgrounds, uniting them together in spite of their apparent diversity. As a result, it brings about the breakdown of old loyalties and allegiances and causes a new loyalty and allegiance to take their place. It causes different kinds of spiritually and morally untainted elements to fuse together to join the 'Party of God'. It repels some elements which appeared formerly to be closer to the sacred movement in terms of superficial identities, and attracts many elements which previously appeared to be distant.

Examples of such a phenomenon are known to those familiar with the history of the Holy Prophet's ministry.

4. The sacred movement also brings about a coagulation, if not a fusion, among the diverse elements of evil, near and distant, which, in spite of their diversity and contradictions, come together to constitute a united front against the Party of God. Their contradictory loyalties and allegiances do not stand in the way of a new coalition and a new allegiance aimed to resist and destroy the sacred movement. The coalition of mutually hostile Arab tribes who came together to launch attacks against the Prophet (S) and his followers is an obvious example of this.

This profound process of polarization, started by the emergence of the sacred movement, results in a process of redistributive transfer accompanied by a breakdown of previous loyalties and identities, both among those groups which are closely related to the sacred movement in terms of superficial identities and among those that are distant and initially unrelated. The Quran refers to such a process of polarization and separation in its following verses:

لَمْ يَكُنِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنفَكِّينَ حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَةُ ﴿١﴾ رَسُولٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
يَتْلُوا۟ صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً ﴿٢﴾ فِيهَا كُتُبٌ قَيِّمَةٌ ﴿٣﴾ وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ
ٱلْبَيِّنَةُ ﴿٤﴾

The unbelievers of the People of the Book and the pagans did not separate (from the rest of their groups) until the Proof was given them: an apostle from God, reading sanctified pages....Nor did the People of the Book disagree among themselves until the Proof was given them. (98: 1—4)

مَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبِ . . .

God will not leave the believers in the state in which you are, till He shall distinguish the corrupt from the good....(3:179)

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّى بَعْضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

And thus do We make some of the wrongdoers friends of others (or, give some of them power over others) because of what they have earned (i.e. because of what they have done).(6:129)

It is to this process of separation occurring around the sacred movement which Jesus Christ (A) refers to in the following passage of Matthew (10:34—37):

> Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world. No, I did not come to bring peace, but a sword (i.e. to produce a conflict). I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family. Whoever loves his father or mother more than me is not fit to be my disciple; whoever loves his son or daughter more than me is not fit to be my disciple.

5. The united front formed by the forces of *kufr* and *bāṭil* against the forces of *īmān* and *ḥaqq*, since it feels endangered by the sacred movement, cannot refrain from attacking it. It resorts to all kinds of conspiracies, plots, atrocities and crimes to stop its growth and to destroy it. Those who belong to it do not abide by any code, norm or convention in their ruthless war against the sacred movement and its followers. But their unscrupulous crimes and atrocities only serve to strengthen the sacred movement and to make its followers more determined and steadfast. The Quran refers to this in the following verses:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

Those who say, 'Our Lord is God', and thereafter are steadfast, there shall be no fear upon them neither shall they grieve. (46:13)

ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِلَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَصَابَهُمُ ٱلْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَٰنًا وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا ٱللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ ٱلْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾

And those who answered God and the Messenger after wounds had smitten them—to all those of them who did good and feared God, shall be a mighty

wage; those to whom the people said, 'All men have gathered against you, therefore fear them;' but it (i.e. intimidation) increased them in faith, and they said, 'God is sufficient for us (in our defence); an excellent Guardian is He.' (3:172—173).

And it is this opposite outcome of intimidation and persecution to which Jesus refers in his following statement:

Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires. (Matthew 5:10)

The ruthless and unscrupulous war waged by the united front of *kufr* not only makes the sacred movement more determined and steadfast in the pursuit of its goals, it also serves to make its followers militant and battle-seen warriors, in addition to further purifying, exalting and sublimating their spirit and character. On the other hand, the atrocities and crimes of the opponents, lead to increasing disintegration in their moral character, finally resulting in absolute bankruptcy and destruction:

وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَٰنًا وَكُفْرًا ۖ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

...And what has been sent down to thee from thy Lord will surely increase many of them in aggression and unbelief; so grieve not for unbelievers.(5:68)

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ مَّا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا ﴿٤٢﴾ ٱسْتِكْبَارًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَكْرَ ٱلسَّيِّئِ ۚ وَلَا يَحِيقُ ٱلْمَكْرُ ٱلسَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِۦ ۚ...

...But when a warner came to them, it increased them only in aversion, waxing proud in earth, and devising evil, but evil devising encompasses only those who do it....(35:42—43)

...وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا مَقْتًا ۖ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٣٩﴾

...Their kufr increases the disbelievers only in hate in God's sight; their kufr increases the disbelievers only in loss.(35:39)

6. In order to influence the process of polarization and the separation following it, and to stop it from moving in a direction favourable to the sacred movement, its opponents resort to an unscrupulous propaganda campaign in order to conceal and distort its realities and that of the conflict. They scoff the movement's claim to sanctity and project it as an evil and harmful phenomenon before uninformed public opinion. But under the strain of perpetual lies, one followed by another, as well as due to their own atrocities and crimes against the movement, their

propaganda ultimately breaks down. Curtains rise from the face of facts and masks are removed from the hideous faces of the criminals. This results in the processes of polarization and separation proceeding to their logical completion in favour of the sacred movement.

Such a propaganda was launched against movements of all prophets and many many examples of it can be cited from the Quran. Also Jesus, in Matthew 5:11, refers to it in the following words:

> Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of lies against you because you are my followers....this is how the prophets who lived before you (i.e. me) were persecuted.

7. Those who lead the united front of *kufr* and those who belong to it, although surprised and baffled by the unique character of the conflict, refuse to acknowledge the sanctity of the sacred movement. The threat posed by the sacred movement to their domination and interests is too serious for them to allow any such acknowledgement. Blinded by greed, pride, and lust for domination, they are willing to fight to the end, which is their ultimate destruction. Having exerted their criminal talents to their utmost, having staked huge amounts of resources in the conflict, their lies and their crimes exposed, and the masks removed from their faces, defeat and regret cut their hearts into pieces. As if that were not enough, Divine wrath then seizes them by the forelock and hurls them into the hell of ignominy and destruction:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ
حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ لِيَمِيزَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنَ
ٱلطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ ٱلْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُۥ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُۥ جَمِيعًا فَيَجْعَلَهُۥ فِى جَهَنَّمَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

The unbelievers expend their wealth to bar (men) from God's way. They will expend it, then it will become an anguish for them, then they will be defeated. And the unbelievers will be gathered into hell, that God may separate the wicked from the good, and place the wicked upon one another, and so heap them up all together, and put them in hell; those are the losers.(8:36—37)

This scenario is not based on fantasy; it is affirmed not only by the Quran but by all truly sacred scriptures. Parts of it have been confirmed by the contemporary reality that has been taking shape since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and parts of it will be fulfilled, *inshā' Allāh*, much earlier than many people think.

All the various kinds of movements which occurred during recent centuries in various countries of the world were based on secular

ideologies, such as nationalism, liberalism, socialism or communism. None of them gave rise to the above-mentioned process of polarization such as was triggered by the Islamic Revolution of Iran. As to its opponents, it united different kinds of forces belonging to every conceivable kind of background: progressives and reactionaries, monarchists and liberals, capitalists and socialists, democratic and totalitarian regimes, bishops and rabbis, pundits and mullas, leftists, rightists and centrists, freethinkers and bigots, atheists and holy skull-caps... in short every conceivable kind of character present in the gallery of current history. Similarly, despite the twenty-four-hour hostile propaganda raging throughout the world in every living language, the Revolution's friends and adherents continue to emerge, from every geographical and ideological corner of the world. Their numbers will certainly swell with the approaching collapse of this propaganda machinery.

The propaganda aimed to distort and dicredit the Sacred Revolution in various ways depends on the target groups. To Christians and secular-minded people it was introduced as a revolution of narrow-minded fanatics, the 'Islamic fundamentalists'. To Muslims, it was projected as a client of Israeli arms. To Sunnis it was introduced as a purely Shî'i phenomenon and a revolution of the enemies of the Prophet's Companions. To Shî'is it was projected as an Iranian heresy irreverent to 'Alî (A) and al-Ḥusayn (A). To Arabs it was projected as an anti-Arab force. Socialists were told that it was obscurantist, reactionary and retrogressive. It was based on violence and terrorism, on theocratic despotism, on expansionism inspired by dreams of Persian imperialism. Facts were concealed, realities were distorted or inverted. Propaganda, chemical weapons, bombs, missiles and clerical *fatwās* were directed to eradicate what was called the greatest threat to world 'peace'.

Soon after the miraculous victory of the Islamic Revolution, the rival superpowers began their conspiracies and plots to deprive the Revolution of its sacred character and to bring it within their control and in their orbit. A blind and ruthless campaign of terrorism was launched through the agency of foreign controlled groups to assassinate not only eminent thinkers and intellectuals, ministers and parliamentarians, officials and clergymen, but even ordinary individuals belonging to all kinds of professions: shopkeepers, guards, government employees, farmers, factory workers, mosque administrators... and so on. (On the other side of the border the Iraqi Ba'thist regime was engaged as ruthlessly in a parallel purge). The terrorists who fled the country were readily granted asylum and protection as well as respectability, under the label: 'opposition to the Iranian regime.' When all the plots, conspiracies, crimes and atrocities failed to divert the course of the Islamic Republic, Saddam, the Ba'thist dictator and blood-thirsty imperialist lackey, was selected due to his stupidity and servility, his ambition and criminal

disposition, to launch an attack against the Sacred Revolution.

Like the Russian-made "Al-Ḥusayn Missiles", which Saddam has been pelting on Iranian cities in the hopeless hope of delivering himself from the arms of justice, he called his aggression against the Islamic Republic the Arab "Qādisiyyah". The warlord of the Qādisiyyah never dreamed then that in due course he will be running on his knees from capital to capital begging for 'peace' and a ceasefire.

However, the Ba'thist aggression and Saddam's crimes put the imperialist media and governments, as well as their international fora, in a very difficult and compromising position. With each of his crimes, whether it was his use of chemical weapons, or bombardment of civilian areas and attacks on civil aviation and shipping in the Persian Gulf, they have impotently watched the world-wide credibility of their media and institutions erode irreparably. Since the victory of the Revolution and especially since the Iraqi aggression their news agencies and media have been burdened with the destructive task of having to lie to the world day after day, year after year, for eight long years. Their Security Council has been burdened with the disastrous duty of having to stand openly for the support of a well-known aggressor and of having to defend a perpetual perpetrator of the most serious kind of war crimes.

As the war wore on, the billions of reactionary Arab petrodollars, Russian military equipment and armaments, Western and Eastern propaganda and diplomatic support, U.S. and Zionist intelligence assistance, U.S. satellites and Saudi AWACS, huge amounts of direct or indirect credits granted to the Iraqi regime by governments of all description from Britain and France to India and Japan, trade sanctions, *de facto* arms embargo, conferences, pamphlets and *fatwās* of mercenary mullas, the merciless massacre of pilgrims in Makkah, the supposedly intimidating presence of the U.S. armada in the Persian Gulf, attacks on merchantile shipping and Iranian oil facilities in the Gulf, the conspiracy to bring down oil prices, air and missile attacks on civilian areas, extensive use of chemical weapons even against civilians—these and thousands of other conspiracies and crimes that have continued and still continue against the sacred revolution of Iran have not only failed to bring the Islamic Republic to its knees, they have served only to proclaim the strength of the determination of the Muslim people of Iran, show the sublime and exalted character of this sacred movement, and reveal the wretched and ugly nature of its enemies, the enemies of God. And thank God that every crime and conspiracy against Islam and Muslims, and every lie and insult hurled at them, has been useful in forwarding the cause of this sacred movement and in adding to the regret and the loss of its enemies. And, in the words of the Prophet (S), thanks to God for choosing our enemies out of fools.

And every crime committed by the enemies against this sacred movement has given its followers greater dignity, moral sublimity, and spiritual exaltation than ever. On the other hand, each of these crimes has degraded and abased the enemies, sinking them deeper and deeper into the depths of moral and spiritual blindness and bankruptcy and disgracing them further in the eyes of all aware and conscientious human beings all over the world. Does this leave any doubt as to which of the parties is victorious and which is destined to face defeat, ignominy and destruction?

The heroic resistance of Muslims in Iran, Palestine and Afghanistan against the forces of *kufr* and evil, will go down in history as the vanguard of a glorious upheaval at the dawn of a new unprecedented era in the history of man: the golden age of man's spiritual awakening. The blind and the deaf who wish to impose an unjust peace upon Iran, or those who sit down to negotiate the destinies of the Muslims of Palestine, Afghanistan and Lebanon, have not understood the meaning of the new times. Times have changed, souls have awakened, and hearts have been opened to receive Divine blessings. Great numbers of human beings have awakened, and hearts have been opened to receive the Divine message of Salvation. Great numbers of human beings have awakened to their authentic humanness and their God-given dignity as human beings. How can men of dignity allow their fate to be settled by some criminals and gangsters in the capitals of the East or the West, merely because they have been allowed or even helped by slumbering nations to climb into high offices in broad daylight? Human dignity is neither negotiable nor can it be surrendered at gunpoint. Unfortunately, criminals and gangsters cannot understand this point.

To be sure, the sacred Islamic struggle which is waging on the borders of Iran and Iraq, or in Afghanistan, Palestine and Lebanon, is the greatest blessing of God for all the nations of the world. Had this struggle, whose main benefit lies in exposing the evil nature of the super-criminals and their lackeys and the fraudulent character of their mass communication media, failed to take place, it is difficult to imagine the hell into which the superpowers—to be further armed with high technology in the fields of lasers, space weapons, computer and information technology—would have cast the whole world, especially the people of the Third World. Something much much worse than the 1984-scenario of George Orwell would have been in store for the oppressed and exploited nations of the world in the coming decades.

Moreover, the Revolution in Iran, the events of the imposed Iran-Iraq war, the Islamic Revolution of Palestine, as well as the heroic resistance in Afghanistan, have quashed the myth of the invulnerability of the superpowers and their satellites. They have shown that aside from the pageantry of military hardware, the superpowers, in purely human

terms, are soft targets indeed for men of faith. That unscrupulous zest for crime is itself no advantage, even in political and military terms, is a lesson that they will never learn. Yet, however great it may be, it is not greater than the Muslim's love of martyrdom.

Tehran,
Rajab, 1408.

The Holocaust in the Persian Gulf:

We stated above that the pagan tyrants in their war against the Sacred Movement are not averse to committing any kind of atrocity and crime no matter how ghastly, and on July 3, 1988, the U. S. set a new record in the history of crime against God and humanity by ordering its warship to shoot down the Iran Air Airbus passenger plane over the Persian Gulf. The plane, which contained 274 passengers and 16 members of the crew (of them 57 children under 12, 9 infants under 2, and 52 women), was on a regular international flight from Bandar Abbas to Dubai. It was exploded in midair at 2000 feet by two missiles fired from the most sophisticated warship in the world. It was shot in Iranian air-space and over Iranian waters by the naval forces of a country on the other side of the globe.

That the most sophisticated modern arms and electronic technology should have been used to commit the most barbarous of crimes against innocent, defenseless people is an eloquent fact in itself: it reveals the hideous state of a degenerate civilization at the lowest point of its descent. It is not very important that some arch-criminal in some Black House should have the power to kill as many innocent people as he may want; what is significant is that a bunch of gangsters should have the audacity to publicly offer absurd pretexts to justify their crime and that such pretexts should appear as logical and proper to their nations. As such the horrendous crime committed by the Black House and the Pentagon becomes a crime of the nations, for had they not been as degenerate as they are no criminal in high office would have dared to explode hundreds of innocent human beings in midair and then come out with a bunch of lies and explanations as ghastly as the crime itself.

Among the martyrs of this great tragedy was Sayyidah Mahliqā Qarā'ī, whose translations are familiar to the readers of *al-Tawḥīd*. She was travelling to India via Dubai on a vacation to see her husband, her mother, sisters and her dear sons as well as many many relatives and friends who happily awaited Mahliqā's arrival.

At *al-Tawḥīd*, far from her home and relatives, she had put up

with loneliness and hardship to serve the cause of Islam and to assist the cause of the Lord and His creatures, and her Lord in His infinite mercy dressed her in the magnificent robes of martyrdom. While her sacred body disappeared in the waters of the Gulf, and her family and friends, her home and her empty chair and desk at *al-Tawḥīd* office mourned for her, she took her deserved place by the side of her Imam and ancestor, the Doyen of the Martyrs, al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī (A), and joined the glorious caravan of the martyrs of the way of God and humanity. While her murderers and those of her innocent companions sank deeper into the depths of the hell of ignominy and crime, she ascended to the heights of genuine humanness and into the Proximity of her Lord. What a splendid destiny she has attained and what ignominious end awaits the murderers! — those who ordered and carried out the crime as well as those who acquitted the murderers and accepted their pretexts! All the oceans of the world cannot wipe out the stains of blood on the hands and the faces of the criminals at whose head, fittingly, stands the president of the United States of America.

Throughout the two months when about two hundred Iraqi missiles rained upon Tehran she remained in the city without allowing the terror created by Saddam to disturb her daily routine of office and home work in the least. She was not unnerved at having to live absolutely alone in her Tehran apartment when nearly all the neighbourhood was empty of people and there were few lit windows to be seen at nights and an ocean of darkness and silence surrounded her, a silence which was broken every few hours by the ugly roar and the resounding blast of the Russian-made missiles. It was during those days that she wrote these words to her anxious husband who had been sending her letters and telegrams to come back home: *"You talk of cease-fire after being in Iran for three years and having seen everything through your own eyes. You should be ashamed. Your feelings hurt me.*

"Strange are the ways of the world. Iran is being subjected to extreme atrocities. All sorts of excesses are being perpetrated and yet the entire world is looking on as a mute spectator. The students and teachers of the Muslim University, Aligarh, should have protested, had they cared even the least for the destiny of Muslims.

"I am well here under the rain of missiles and bombings. I prefer to die here in this country today to live for a hundred years. During Nawrūz (Iranian New Year) holidays many went away to Mashhad and the Caspian, but they are gradually returning. Saddam continues to rain missiles. Four missiles fell yesterday morning (April 13, 1988) and three in the evening. Two came this morning. These so-called super-powers and the pleasure-sunk Arabs want to terrify the Iranian people by this raining of missiles and to compel the people to revolt against the government. But all this will not happen. Saddam has experimented

with raining six and eight missiles at a time during the Friday prayers. Yet the people attend the Jumu'ah congregations with the same fervour. Some even come wearing shrouds. America and Russia, and even the Non-aligned countries, want Iran to lay down arms and accept a humiliating armistice, fearing the missiles. Other Muslims too fear raising their heads. They want to see the Palestinian calmed down, all Muslims quietened, and then to ask: 'What happened to all those martyrdom-seeking Iranians? Why this quiet?' To say, 'They fought for eight years, but did they not succumb to the missiles?' They want Muslims to lose all hope of freedom, to become kāfirs after turning into seculars, to completely cut themselves off from Islam. This is what this war is aimed at.

"The future generations would never pardon the Muslims who today are mute spectators of these happenings. History would shake them, holding their collars, and ask: 'Where were you then? Tell, where were you then? Speak, where were you then?'

"God would have nothing but 'adhāb in store for them. Their descendants would be slaves.

"Long live the youth, their parents, their children, who are laying down their lives for the sake of Islam. They are the flowers and the embellishment of the earth, the salt of the soil. They would hold their heads high before God and the Holy Prophet (S). Their names would go down in history in golden letters, and generation after generation people would pray for them and their children and spell durūd on their names. They are the standard-bearers of the Dīn of God and His Prophet (S), the moving spirit of the martyrdom of al-'Imām al-Ḥusayn (A)." (April 14, 1988)

In an earlier letter to her husband, Martyr Mahliqā Qarā'ī had written: "*...When Gorbachev and Reagan were playing the drama in Geneva, of talks for nuclear disarmament, every child and even the most illiterate in Iran knew that a conspiracy was being hatched to pressure Iran with regard to the Afghan issue. And the war of missiles followed the summit....*"

Her grandfather, Sayyid Muḥammad Riḍā Ḥamzawī, known as Āqā Buzurg Shīrāzī, had come from Shiraz and settled at Hyderabad, Deccan, where he taught Persian at the Nizam's College. An enemy of British colonialism, he returned, or was sent back to Iran, where he became one of the martyrs of the massacre at the Gawhar Shād Mosque in Mashhad that took place at the orders of Riḍā Khān, a British stooge.

Her father, Sayyid Muḥammad Qulī Khān, was an able mathematician who taught at the College of Education, Osmania University. Born in 1942 at Hyderabad, Mahliqā grew up there and completed her high school and college education, taking her bachelor's degree in science (1963) from the Women's College, O.U. After her marriage with Dr.

Waḥid Akhtar, an eminent Urdu poet and critic, in 1962, she went to live at Aligarh, where her husband was a lecturer at the Muslim University. From Aligarh she took her M.A. in English literature (1975) and went on to do her doctorate. However, she did not complete her M.Phil, but took a diploma in painting, which had always been of great interest to her. In May 1983, she came to Iran and joined *al-Tawḥīd*, for which she has translated four books and a good number of articles. All who knew her, will always remember her as a sincere, committed and affectionate human being, and as a woman of exemplary courage and indefatigable strength.

We offer our condolences to Dr. Waḥid Akhtar, Martyr Mahliqā's husband, her mother, her sons, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn and Muḥsin, her brother and sisters and all her relatives, friends and colleagues and above all to the Twelfth Imam (A); for what was dear Mahliqā except a radiant leaf of the glorious tree of the *Wilāyah* of the Ahl al-Bayt *alayhumassalam*? We congratulate Imām Khumaynī, the great leader of the sacred Islamic Revolution, for possessing such followers and supporters, and to Islam for having raised such daughters and sons. We offer our condolences to all the bereaved families of the martyrs whose mutilated bodies and limbs, prophesying the imminent fall of a satanic and destructive civilization and its evil symptoms, the superpowers, were scattered over the waters of the Persian Gulf on the morning of Sunday, the third of July.

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنقَلَبٍ يَنقَلِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٧﴾

The oppressors will surely know with what overturning they shall be overturned. (26:227)

Tehran.
20 Dhū al-Qa'dah, 1408,

The History of the Qur'ān *Part 4*

by 'Allāmah Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Zanjānī

Translated from the Persian by Martyr Mahliqā Qarā'ī

III. The Order of Sūrahs in 'Alī's Muṣḥaf:

Here we shall mention the order given to the *sūrahs* in the copies of the Quran made by some of the eminent *Ṣaḥābah* and *Tābi'ūn*, as found in ancient trustworthy sources where they touch upon issues related to the history of the Quran. The different order given to the *sūrahs* by each one of them was according to his own *ijtihād*.

In *al-Fihrist*, Ibn al-Nadīm reports from Ibn Munādī, he from al-Ḥasan ibn al-'Abbās, from 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥammād, from al-Ḥakam ibn Ẓahīr al-Sadūsī, from 'Abd Ḳhayr, that " 'Alī (A) saw ominous signs in the people at the time of the Prophet's demise. Thereupon he swore that he would not put off his mantle until he had collected the Quran. He sat at home for three days and collected the whole Quran. It was the first *muṣḥaf* of the Quran, which 'Alī (A) had collected from his memory. That *muṣḥaf* was with the family of Ja'far (R). In our own time I have seen a *muṣḥaf* of the Quran with Abū Ya'lā Ḥamzah al-Ḥasanī, upon whom be God's mercy, which had some pages missing from it. It was written in the handwriting of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A). The descendants of al-Ḥasan (A) had received it as a legacy from their ancestors."

The order of the *sūrahs* as given by this codex of the Quran was missing from the manuscript of *al-Fihrist* from which the Leipzig edition was printed (1871—72).

However, al-Ya'qūbī, [86] in the second part of his history (Brill, 1883, pp. 152—154), cites the order of the *sūrahs* in 'Alī's *muṣḥaf*. Al-Ya'qūbī states that some people have reported that 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A) collected the Quran after the demise of the Prophet (S) and, bringing it on the back of a camel, declared, " This is the Quran which I have collected." He had divided it into seven *ajzā'*, parts.

PART I (*Juz' al-Baqarah*)	PART II (*Juz' Āl 'Imrān*)	PART III (*Juz' al-Nisā'*)
1. *Al-Baqarah* (2)	1. *Āl 'Imrān* (3)	1. *Al-Nisā'* (4)
2. *Yūsuf* (12)	2. *Hūd* (11)	2. *Al-Naḥl* (16)
3. *Al-'Ankabūt* (29)	3. *Al-Ḥajj* (22)	3. *Al-Mu'minūn* (23)
4. *Al-Rūm* (30)	4. *Al-Ḥijr* (15)	4. *Yā-Sīn* (36)
5. *Luqmān* (31)	5. *Al-'Aḥzāb* (33)	5. *Al-Shūrā* (42)
6. *Ḥā-Mīm al-Sajdah* (41)	6. *Al-Dukhān* (44)	6. *Al-Wāqi'ah* (56)
7. *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51)	7. *Al-Raḥmān* (55)	7. *Al-Mulk* (67)
8. *Al-'Insān (al-Dahr)* (76)	8. *Al-Ḥāqqah* (69)	8. *Al-Muddaththir* (74)
9. *Al-Sajdah* (32)	9. *Al-Ma'ārij* (70)	9. *Al-Mā'ūn* (107)
10. *Al-Nāzi'āt* (79)	10. *'Abasa* (80)	10. *Al-Masad* (111)
11. *Al-Takwīr* (81)	11. *Al-Shams* (91)	11. *Al-'Ikhlāṣ* (112)
12. *Al-'Infiṭār* (82)	12. *Al-Qadr* (97)	12. *Al-'Aṣr* (103)
13. *Al-'Inshiqāq* (84)	13. *Al-Zilzāl* (99)	13. *Al-Qāri'ah* (101)
14. *Al-'A'lā* (87)	14. *Al-Humazah* (104)	14. *Al-Burūj* (85)
15. *Al-Bayyinah* (98)	15. *Al-Fīl* (105)	15. *Al-Tīn* (95)
	16. *Quraysh* (106)	16. *Al-Naml* (27)

PART IV (*Juz' al-Mā'idah*)	PART V (*Juz' al-'An'ām*)	PART VI (*Juz' al-'A'rāf*)
1. *Al-Mā'idah* (5)	1. *Al-'An'ām* (6)	1. *Al-'A'rāf* (7)
2. *Yūnus* (10)	2. *Al-'Isrā'* (17)	2. *Ibrāhīm* (14)
3. *Maryam* (19)	3. *Al-'Anbiyā'* (21)	3. *Al-Kahf* (18)
4. *Al-Qaṣaṣ* (28)	4. *Al-Furqān* (25)	4. *Al-Nūr* (24)
5. *Al-Shu'arā'* (26)	5. *Mūsa wa Fir'awn* ( )	5. *Ṣād* (38)
6. *Al-Zukhruf* (43)	6. *Al-Mu'min* (40)	6. *Al-Zumar* (39)
7. *Al-Ḥujurāt* (49)	7. *Al-Mujādalah* (58)	7. *Al-Jāthiyah* (45)
8. *Qāf* (50)	8. *Al-Ḥashr* (59)	8. *Muḥammad* (47)
9. *Al-Qamar* (54)	9. *Al-Jumu'ah* (62)	9. *Al-Ḥadid* (57)
10. *Al-Mumtaḥanah* (60)	10. *Al-Munāfiqūn* (63)	10. *Al-Muzzammil* (73)
11. *Al-Ṭāriq* (86)	11. *Al-Qalam* (68)	11. *Al-Qiyāmah* (75)
12. *Al-Balad* (90)	12. *Nūḥ* (71)	12. *Al-Naba'* (78)
13. *Al-'Inshirāḥ* (94)	13. *Al-Jinn* (72)	13. *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88)
14. *Al-'Ādiyāt* (100)	14. *Al-Mursalāt* (77)	14. *Al-Fajr* (89)
15. *Al-Kawthar* (108)	15. *Wal-Ḍuḥā* (93)	15. *Al-Layl* (92)
16. *Al-Kāfirūn* (109)	16. *Al-Takāthur* (102)	16. *Al-Naṣr* (110)

PART VII (*Juz' al-'Anfāl*)
1. *Al-'Anfāl* (8)
2. *Al-Barā'ah* (9)
3. *Ṭā-Hā* (20)
4. *Al-Malā'ikah* (35)
5. *Al-Ṣāffāt* (37)
6. *Al-'Aḥqāf* (46)

7. *Al-Fatḥ* (48)
8. *Al-Ṭūr* (52)
9. *Al-Najm* (53)
10. *Al-Ṣaff* (61)
11. *Al-Taghābun* (64)
12. *Al-Ṭalāq* (65)
13. *Al-Muṭaffifīn* (83)
14. & 15. *Al-Mu'awwidhatān (Al-Falaq & al-Nās)* (113 & 114)[87]

IV. The Order of Sūrahs in Ubayy's Muṣḥaf:

Ibn al-Nadīm [88] reports from al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān, who said, "I have been informed by one of our *thiqah* (trustworthy) companions that at the distance of two parasangs from Baṣrah in a village known as Qaryat al-'Anṣār, there was a compilation of the *sūrahs* in the possession of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-'Anṣārī, who showed the *muṣḥaf* to us, saying: 'This is the *muṣḥaf* of Ubayy, which we have narrated from our ancestors.' I examined it and copied from it the commencing and ending parts of the *sūrahs* and the number of the verses." The order of the *sūrahs* given by Ibn al-Nadīm's source is as follows:[89]

1. "*Al-Fātiḥah* (1)
2. *Al-Baqarah* (2)
3. *Al-Nisā'* (4)
4. *Āl 'Imrān* (3)
5. *Al-'An'ām* (6)
6. *Al-'A'rāf* (7)
7. *Al-Mā'idah* (5)
8. The one about which I am uncertain.(*sic*)
9. *Yūnus* (10)
10. *Al-'Anfāl* (8)
11. *Al-Tawbah* (9)
12. *Hūd* (11)
13. *Maryam* (19)
14. *Al-Shu'arā'* (26)
15. *Al-Ḥajj* (22)
16. *Yūsuf* (12)
17. *Al-Kahf* (18)
18. *Al-Naḥl* (16)
19. *Al-'Aḥzāb* (33)
20. *Banū Isrā'īl* (17)
21. *Al-Zumar (39)*
22. *Al-Sajdah* (32)
23. *Ṭā-Hā* (20)
24. *Al-'Anbiyā'* (21)
25. *Al-Nūr* (24)
26. *Al-Mu'minūn* (23)
27. *Al-Mu'min* (40)
28. *Al-Ra'd* (13)
29. *Ṭā-Sīn-Mīm, Al-Qaṣaṣ* (28)
30. *Ṭā-Sīn Sulaymān* (27)
31. *Saba'* (34)
32. *Al-Ṣāffāt* (37)
33. *Dāwūd* (38) (*Ṣād*)
34. *Yā-Sīn* (36)
35. *Al-Ḥijr* (15)
36. *Al-Shūrā* (42)
37. *Al-Rūm* (30)
38. *Al-Zukhruf* (43)
39. *Ḥā-Mīm al-Sajdah* (41)
40. *Ibrāhīm* (14)
41. *Al-Malā'ikah* (35)
42. *Al-Fatḥ* (48)
43. *Muḥammad (S)* (47)
44. *Al-Ḥadīd* (57)
45. *Al-Ẓihār,*[90] *(al-Mujādalah)* (58)
46. *Tabārak* (67)
47. *Al-Furqān* (25)
48. *Alif-Lām-Mīm Tanzīl* (32)
49. *Nūḥ* (71)
50. *Al-'Aḥqāf* (46)
51. *Qāf* (50)
52. *Al-Raḥmān* (55)
53. *Al-Wāqi'ah* (56)
54. *Al-Jinn* (72)
55. *Al-Najm* (53)
56. *Al-Qalam* (68)
57. *Al-Ḥāqqah* (69)
58. *Al-Ḥashr* (59)
59. *Al-Mumtaḥanah* (60)
60. *Al-Mursalāt* (77)
61. *Al-Naba'* (78)
62. *Al-'Insān (al-Dahr)* (76)
63. *Al-Balad* (90)
64. *Al-Takwīr* (81)
65. *Al-Nāzi'āt* (79)
66. *'Abasa* (80)
67. *Al-Muṭaffifīn* (83)
68. *Al-'Inshiqāq* (84)
69. *Al-Tīn* (95)
70. *Al-'Alaq* (96)
71. *Al-Ḥujurāt* (49)
72. *Al-Munāfiqūn* (63)
73. *Al-Jumu'ah* (62)
74. *Al-Nabī*
75. *Al-Fajr* (89)
76. *Al-Mulk* (67)
77. *Al-Layl* (92)

78. *Al-'Infiṭār* (82)
79. *Al-Shams* (91)
80. *Al-Burūj* (85)
81. *Al-Ṭāriq* (86)
82. *Al-'A'lā* (87)
83. *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88)
84. *'Abasa* (80)
85. *Al-Ṣaff* (61)
86. *Al-Ḍuḥā* (93)
87. *Al-'Inshirāḥ* (94)
88. *Al-Qāri'ah* (101)
89. *Al-Takāthur* (102)
90. *Al-Khal'*, 3 verses ( )
91. *Al-Jīd* (111), 6 verses
92. *Allāhuma iyyāka na'-budu* until *bil-kuffār.*
93. *Al-Lumazah* (104)
94. *Al-Zilzāl* (99)
95. *Al-'Ādiyāt* (100)
96. *Al-Fīl* (105)
97. *Al-Tīn* (95)
98. *Al-Kawthar* (108)
99. *Al-Qadr* (97)
100. *Al-Kāfirūn* (109)
101. *Al-Naṣr* (110)
102. *Abū Lahab* (111)
103. *Quraysh* (106)
104. *Al-Ṣamad* (112)
105. *Al-Falaq* (113)
106. *Al-Nās* (114)

This makes up one hundred and sixteen *sūrahs.*"

V. The Order of Sūrahs in Ibn Mas'ūd's Muṣḥaf:

Ibn al-Nadīm reports al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān to have said that he saw the *muṣhaf* of the Quran made by 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd (d.32 or 33/ 652-3 or 653-4) with the *sūrahs* of the Quran placed in the following order:[91]

1. "*Al-Baqarah* (2)
2. *Al-Nisā'* (4)
3. *Āl 'Imrān* (3)
4. *Al-'A'rāf* (7)
5. *Al-'An'ām* (6)
6. *Al-Mā'idah* (5)
7. *Yūnus* (10)
8. *Al-Barā'ah* (9)
9. *Al-Naḥl* (16)
10. *Hūd* (11)
11. *Yūsuf* (12)
12. *Banū Isrā'īl* (17)
13. *Al-'Anbiyā'* (21)
14. *Al-Mu'minūn* (23)
15. *Al-Shu'arā'* (26)
16. *Al-Ṣāffāt* (37)
17. *Al-'Aḥzāb* (33)
18. *Al-Qaṣaṣ* (28)
19. *Al-Nūr* (24)
20. *Al-'Anfāl* (8)
21. *Maryam* (19)
22. *Al-'Ankabūt* (29)
23. *Al-Rūm* (30)
24. *Yā-Sīn* (36)
25. *Al-Furqān* (25)
26. *Al-Ḥajj* (22)
27. *Al-Ra'd* (13)
28. *Saba'* (34)
29. *Malā'ikah* (35)
30. *Ibrāhīm* (14)
31. *Ṣād* (38)
32. *Alladhīna Kafarū* (47)
33. *Al-Qamar* (54)
34. *Al-Zumar* (39)
35. *Al-Ḥawāmīm al-Musabbiḥāt* ( )
36. *Al-Mu'min* (40)
37. *Al-Zukhruf* (43)
38. *Al-Sajdah* (32)
39. *Al-'Aḥqāf* (46)
40. *Al-Jāthiyah* (45)
41. *Al-Dukhān* (44)
42. *Innā Fataḥnā* (48)
43. *Al-Ḥadīd* (57)
44. *Sabbaḥa* ( )
45. *Al-Ḥashr* (59)
46. *Tanzīl* (39)
47. *Al-Sajdah* (32)
48. *Qaf* (50)
49. *Al-Ṭalāq* (65)
50. *Al-Ḥujurāt* (49)
51. *Tabārakalladhi,al-Mulk* (67)
52. *Al-Taghābun* (64)
53. *Al-Munāfiqūn* (63)
54. *Al-Jumu'ah* (62)
55. *Al-Ṣaff* (61)
56. *Al-Jinn* (72)
57. *Nūḥ* (71)
58. *Al-Mujādalah* (58)
59. *Al-Mumtaḥanah* (60)
60. *Al-Taḥrīm* (66)
61. *Al-Raḥmān* (55)
62. *Al-Najm* (53)
63. *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51)
64. *Al-Ṭūr* (52)
65. *Iqtarabat al-Sā'ah* (54)
66. *Al-Ḥāqqah* (69)
67. *Al-Wāqi'ah* (56)
68. *Al-Qalam* (68)
69. *Al-Nāzi'āt* (79)
70. *Al-Ma'ārij* (70)
71. *Al-Muddaththir* (74)
72. *Al-Muzzammil* (73)
73. *Al-Muṭaffifīn* (83)
74. *'Abasa* (80)
75. *Al-'Insān* (76)
76. *Al-Qiyāmah* (75)
77. *Al-Naba'* (78)
78. *Al-Takwīr* (81)
79. *Al-'Infiṭār* (82)
80. *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88)
81. *Al-'A'lā* (87)
82. *Al-Layl* (92)
83. *Al-Fajr* (89)
84. *Al-Burūj* (85)
85. *Al-'Inshiqāq* (84)
86. *Al-'Alaq* (96)
87. *Al-Balad* (90)
88. *Al-Ḍuḥā* (93)

89. *Al-'Inshirāḥ* (94)
90. *Al-Ṭāriq* (86)
91. *Al-'Ādiyāt* (100)
92. *Al-Mā'ūn* (107)
93. *Al-Qāri'ah* (101)
94. *Al-Bayyinah* (98)
95. *Al-Shams* (91)
96. *Al-Tīn* (95)
97. *Al-Humazah* (104)
98. *Al-Fīl* (105)
99. *Quraysh* (106)
100. *Al-Takāthur* (102)
101. *Al-Qadr* (97)
102. *Al-'Aṣr* (103)
103. *Al-Naṣr* (110)
104. *Al-Kawthar* (108)
105. *Al-Kāfirūn* (109)
106. *Al-Masad* (111)
107. *Al-'Ikhlāṣ* (112)

This makes one hundred and ten *sūrahs.*"

Ibn al-Nadīm goes on to say: "According to another *riwāyah, al-Ṭūr* is mentioned before *al-Dhāriyāt.* Al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān says that Ibn Sīrīn said that 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd would not write *al-Mu'awwidhatān (i.e. al-Falaq* and *al-Nās),* nor *al-Fātiḥah.* Al-Faḍl has also reported with his *isnād* from *al-'A'mash* that he said: 'It is حمسق [92] in the reading of 'Abd Allāh.'"

Ibn al-Nadīm continues: "Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq says that he saw several *maṣāḥif* of the Quran described by their scribes as belonging to Ibn Mas'ūd; but no two copies tallied with each other and many of them were written on parchment in the *Naskhī* script. He further says that he also saw such a *muṣḥaf* which was more than two centuries old and contained *Fātiḥat al-Kitāb* also. Al-Faḍl ibn Shādhan was one of the great scholars of the Quran (*aḥad al-'a'immah fī al-Qur'ān*) and *riwāyāt.* It is for this reason that we have quoted him her."[93]

VI. The Order of Sūrahs in Ibn 'Abbās's Muṣḥaf:

We find in history and tradition that 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās, (d.68/687),[94] the illustrious Companion of the Prophet (S), had specialty in the exposition of the Quran. He had close contacts with 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A), and whatever has been reported from him in regard to the Quran is of immense value.

Ibn Ṭāwūs,[95] in his book *Sa'd al-su'ūd,* states that it is well known among Muslims that Ibn 'Abbās was a pupil of 'Alī (A). Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Rāzī writes in his *al-'Arba'īn* that "Ibn 'Abbās, the master of exegetes (*ra'īs al-mufassirīn*), was a pupil of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A)". It is for this distinction of his that we quote here the order of *sūrahs* in his *muṣḥaf,* as mentioned by al-Shahristānī in the introduction to his exegesis, and he is a trustworthy source.

1. *Al-'Alaq* (96)
2. *Al-Qalam* (68)
3. *Al-Ḍuḥā* (93)
4. *Al-Muzzammil* (73)
5. *Al-Muddaththir* (74)
6. *Al-Fātiḥah* (1)
7. *Abū Lahab* (111)
8. *Al-Takwīr* (81)
9. *Al-'A'lā* (87)
10. *Al-Layl* (92)
11. *Al-Fajr* (89)
12. *Al-'Inshirāḥ* (94)
13. *Al-Raḥmān* (55)
14. *Al-'Aṣr* (103)
15. *Al-Kawthar* (108)
16. *Al-Takāthur* (102)
17. *Al-Dīn* (107)
18. *Al-Fīl* (105)

19. *Al-Kāfirūn* (109)
20. *Al-'Ikhlāṣ* (112)
21. *Al-Najm* (53)
22. *Al-'A'mā* (80)
23. *Al-Qadr* (97)
24. *Al-Shams* (91)
25. *Al-Burūj* (85)
26. *Al-Tīn* (95)
27. *Quraysh* (106)
28. *Al-Qāri'ah* (101)
29. *Al-Qiyāmah* (75)
30. *Al-Humazah* (104)
31. *Al-Mursalāt* (77)
32. *Qāf* (50)
33. *Al-Balad* (90)
34. *Al-Ṭāriq* (86)
35. *Al-Qamar* (54)
36. *Ṣād* (38)
37. *Al-'A'rāf* (7)
38. *Al-Jinn* (72)
39. *Yā-Sīn* (36)
40. *Al-Furqān* (25)
41. *Al-Malā'ikah* (35)
42. *Maryam* (19)
43. *Ṭā-Hā* (20)
44. *Al-Shu'arā'* (20)
45. *Al-Naml* (27)
46. *Al-Qaṣaṣ* (28)
47. *Banū Isrā'īl* (17)
48. *Yūnus* (10)
49. *Hūd* (11)
50. *Yūsuf* (12)
51. *Al-Ḥijr* (15)
52. *Al-'An'ām* (6)
53. *Al-Ṣāffāt* (37)
54. *Luqmān* (31)
55. *Saba'* (34)
56. *Al-Zumar* (39)
57. *Al-Mu'min* (40)
58. *Ḥā-Mīm al-Sajdah* (41)
59. *Al-Shūrā* (42)
60. *Al-Zukhruf* (43)
61. *Al-Dukhān* (44)
62. *Al-Jāthiyah* (45)
63. *Al-'Aḥqāf* (46)
64. *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51)
65. *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88)
66. *Al-Kahf* (18)
67. *Al-Naḥl* (16)
68. *Nūḥ* (71)
69. *Ibrāhīm* (14)
70. *Al-'Anbiyā'* (21)
71. *Al-Mu'minūn* (23)
72. *Al-Ra'd* (13)
73. *Al-Ṭūr* (52)
74. *Al-Mulk* (67)
75. *Al-Ḥāqqah* (69)
76. *Al-Ma'ārij* (70)
77. *Al-Nisā'* (4)
78. *Al-Nāzi'āt* (79)
79. *Al-'Infiṭār* (82)
80. *Al-'Inshiqāq* (84)
81. *Al-Rūm* (30)
82. *Al-'Ankabūt* (29)
83. *Al-Muṭaffifīn* (83)
84. *Al-Baqarah* (2)
85. *Al-'Anfāl* (8)
86. *Āl 'Imrān* (3)
87. *Al-Ḥashr* (59)
88. *Al-'Aḥzāb* (33)
89. *Al-Nūr* (24)
90. *Al-Mumtaḥanah* (60)
91. *Al-Fatḥ* (48)
92. *Al-Nisā'* (4)
93. *Al-Zilzāl* (99)
94. *Al-Ḥajj* (22)
95. *Al-Ḥadīd* (57)
96. *Muḥammad (S)* (47)
97. *Al-'Insān* (76)
98. *Al-Ṭalāq* (65)
99. *Lam Yakun* (98)
100. *Al-Jumu'ah* (62)
101. *Al-Sajdah* (32)
102. *Al-Munāfiqūn* (63)
103. *Al-Mujādalah* (58)
104. *Al-Ḥujurāt* (49)
105. *Al-Taḥrīm* (66)
106. *Al-Taghābun* (64)
107. *Al-Ṣaff* (61)
108. *Al-Mā'idah* (5)
109. *Al-Tawbah* (9)
110. *Al-Naṣr* (110)
111. *Al-Wāqi'ah* (56)
112. *Al-'Ādiyāt* (100)
113. *Al-Falaq* (113)
114. *Al-Nās* (114)

VII. The order of Sūrahs in the Muṣḥaf of al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A):

Al-Shahristānī in the introduction to his exegesis gives the following order [96] of *sūrahs* in the *muṣḥaf* of al-'Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (A):

1. *Al-'Alaq* (96)
2. *Al-Qalam* (68)
3. *Al-Muzzammil* (73)
4. *Al-Muddaththir* (74)
5. *Abū Lahab* (111)
6. *Al-Takwīr* (81)
7. *Al-'A'lā* (87)
8. *Al-Layl* (92)
9. *Al-Fajr* (89)
10. *Al-Ḍuḥā* (93)
11. *Al-'Inshirāḥ* (94)
12. *Al-'Aṣr* (103)
13. *Al-'Ādiyāt* (100)
14. *Al-Kawthar* (108)
15. *Al-Takāthur* (102)
16. *Al-Dīn* (107)
17. *Al-Kāfirūn* (109)
18. *Al-Fīl* (105)
19. *Al-Falaq* (113)
20. *Al-Nās* (114)
21. *Al-'Ikhlāṣ* (112)
22. *Al-Najm* (53)
23. *Al-'A'mā* (80)
24. *Al-Qadr* (97)
25. *Al-Shams* (91)
26. *Al-Burūj* (85)
27. *Al-Tīn* (95)
28. *Quraysh* (106)
29. *Al-Qāri'ah* (101)
30. *Al-Qiyāmah* (75)
31. *Al-Humazah* (104)
32. *Al-Mursalāt* (77)
33. *Qāf* (50)
34. *Al-Balad* (90)
35. *Al-Ṭāriq* (86)
36. *Al-Qamar* (54)

37. *Ṣād* (38)
38. *Al-'A'rāf* (7)
39. *Al-Jinn* (72)
40. *Yā-Sīn* (36)
41. *Al-Furqān* (25)
42. *Al-Malā'ikah* (35)
43. *Maryam* (19)
44. *Ṭā-Hā* (20)
45. *Al-Wāqi'ah* (56)
46. *Al-Shu'arā'* (26)
47. *Al-Naml* (27)
48. *Al-Qaṣaṣ* (28)
49. *Banū Isrā'īl* (17)
50. *Yūnus* (10)
51. *Hūd* (11)
52. *Yūsuf* (12)
53. *Al-Ḥijr* (15)
54. *Al-'An'ām* (6)
55. *Al-Ṣāffāt* (37)
56. *Luqmān* (31)
57. *Saba'* (34)
58. *Al-Zumar* (39)
59. *Al-Mu'min* (40)
60. *Ḥā-Mīm al-Sajdah* (41)
61. *Al-Shūrā* (42)
62. *Al-Zukhruf* (43)
63. *Al-Dukhān* (44)
64. *Al-Jāthiyah* (45)
65. *Al-'Aḥqāf* (46)
66. *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51)
67. *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88)
68. *Al-Kahf* (18)
69. *Al-Naḥl* (16)
70. *Nūḥ* (71)
71. *Ibrāhīm* (14)
72. *Al-'Anbiyā'* (21)
73. *Al-Mu'minūn* (23)
74. *Al-Sajdah* (32)
75. *Al-Ṭūr* (52)
76. *Al-Mulk* (67)
77. *Al-Ḥāqqah* (69)
78. *Al-Ma'ārij* (70)
79. *Al-Naba'* (78)
80. *Al-Nāzi'āt* (79)
81. *Al-'Infiṭār* (82)
82. *Al-'Inshiqāq* (84)
83. *Al-Rūm* (30)
84. *Al-'Ankabūt* (29)
85. *Al-Muṭaffifīn* (83)
86. *Al-Baqarah* (2)
87. *Al-'Anfāl* (8)
88. *Āl 'Imrān* (3)
89. *Al-'Aḥzāb* (33)
90. *Al-Mumtaḥanah* (60)
91. *Al-Nisā'* (4)
92. *Al-Zilzāl* (99)
93. *Al-Ḥadīd* (57)
94. *Muḥammad* (47)
95. *Al-Ra'd* (13)
96. *Al-Raḥmān* (55)
97. *Al-'Insān* (76)
98. *Al-Ṭalāq* (65)
99. *Lam Yakun* (98)
100. *Al-Ḥashr* (59)
101. *Al-Naṣr* (110)
102. *Al-Nūr* (24)
103. *Al-Ḥajj* (22)
104. *Al-Munāfiqūn* (63)
105. *Al-Mujādalah* (58)
106. *Al-Ḥujurāt* (49)
107. *Al-Taḥrīm* (66)
108. *Al-Ṣaff* (61)
109. *Al-Jumu'ah* (62)
110. *Al-Taghābun* (64)
111. *Al-Fatḥ* (48)
112. *Al-Tawbah* (9)
113. *Al-Mā'idah* (5)

The different arrangements of *sūrahs* in the *maṣāḥif* of the *Ṣaḥābah* indicate that the order given to them depended on the *ijtihād* of the *Ṣaḥābah* and the compilers, as opposed to the order of the verses which were arranged by the command of the Prophet (S). It is apparent from the narrations that the Quran was written on pieces of palm branches, stone tablets and scapulae in the presence of the Prophet (S), and these were separate from one another, unlike the pages of the sheets of parchment of the codices written during the second and the third collecting. It is certain that the collectors and compilers of the Quran should have evolved certain signs for distinguishing the earlier *sūrahs* from the later ones, in the same way as we today use numerical alphabetical signs for this purpose.

Here it is worth mentioning that Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahristānī, quoting from *al-'Istighnā'* in the introduction to his exegesis *Mafātīḥ al-'asrār wa maṣābīḥ al-'abrār*, cites a *riwāyah* of Sa'īd ibn Jubayr and Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥārith al-Dhimārī that the Quranic verse: وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنٰكَ سَبْعاً مِنَ الْمَثَانِى 'And We have given them seven of the oft-repeated' (15:87) alludes to the seven lengthy *sūrahs*, that is: *al-Baqarah*, *Āl 'Imrān*, *al-Nisā'*, *al-Mā'idah*, *al-'An'ām*, *al-'A'rāf* and *Yūnus*. The verse, when read in the light of the *riwāyah*, indicates that the verses of these seven *sūrahs* were already arranged with the Prophet's (S) direction, so

that the fact was referred to in the verse.

VIII. The Seven Famous Qurrā':[97]

1. Nāfi' al-Madanī, ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Nu'aym al-Laythī (c. 70—169/689—785): He learnt the reading of the Quran from approximately seventy individuals from among the *Tābi'ūn*, among them Abū Ja'far Yazīd ibn al-Qa'qā', 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Hurmuz al-'A'raj, Yazīd ibn Rūmān, Muslim ibn Jundab, and Shaybah ibn Naṣṣāḥ. Al-'A'raj was taught by 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurayrah, and Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurayrah had learnt the *qirā'ah* of the Quran from Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and Ubayy had learnt from the Prophet (S).

...Originally from Iṣfahān,...he was an authority in *qirā'ah* at Madīnah and its leading teacher of *qirā'ah*. After the era of the *Tābi'ūn*, the people gathered around him and he taught *qirā'ah* for more than seventy years.

Sa'īd ibn Manṣūr says that he heard Mālik ibn Anas say that the *qirā'ah* of the people of Madīnah was *sunnah*. Asked whether he meant the *qirā'ah* of Nāfi', he answered in the affirmative.

'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal says that when he asked his father as to which *qirā'ah* he liked most, he said, "The *qirā'ah* of the people of Madīnah." When asked about his next choice, he said, "The *qirā'ah* of 'Āṣim." (The sign for Nāfi''s *qirā'ah* is ا). Qālūn and Warsh were the two narrators of his *qirā'ah*.

(a) **Qālūn**, Abū Mūsā 'Īsā ibn Mīnā (120—220/738—835), studied under Nāfi' for fifty years, and was closely attached to him. It is said that he was Nāfi''s wife's son. He was called 'Qālūn' because of his superb *qirā'ah*, for *qālūn* means 'beautiful' in the Greek language (*kalos*=beautiful). Qālūn was the *qāri'* of Madīnah and its grammarian, and it is said of him that he was hard of hearing, to the extent that he could not hear the sound of a trumpet; but when the Quran was recited to him he could hear it. He himself states: "I read the Quran several times to Nāfi' and wrote his *qirā'ah*. Nāfi' said to me: 'How long will you be my pupil in *qirā'ah*? Sit beside a column and I will send pupils to learn *qirā'ah* from you.'" (His *qirā'ah* is indicated by the sign ب.)

(b) **Warsh**, 'Uthmān ibn Sa'īd al-Miṣrī (110—197/728—812): His *kunyah* was Abū Sa'īd—also said to be Abū 'Amr or Abū al-Qāsim—and Warsh was his *laqab* (nickname). He went to Madīnah in 155/772 for learning *qirā'ah* from Nāfi' and completed several rounds of the *qirā'ah* before him. After returning to Egypt, he became the accepted authority on *qirā'ah* there and his command of the Arabic language and the science of *tajwīd* was uncontested. He had a good voice and Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-'A'lā says of him, "Warsh's *qirā'ah* was excellent and his voice was beautiful." He vocalized the *hamzah*, *madd* and *shaddah* and

pronounced the *i'rāb* (i.e. vowels) with such clarity that the listener was never wearied. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ج.)

2. Ibn Kathīr al-Makkī, Abū Ma'bad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Kathīr ibn 'Umar ibn Zādān (45—120/665—738) learnt the *qirā'ah* from Abū al-Sāyib 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī al-Sāyib al-Makhzūmī and 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Sāyib had learnt it from Ubayy ibn Ka'b, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Ibn 'Abbas, who had learnt the *qirā'ah* from the Prophet (S) and 'Alī (A). (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is د.)

Ibn Kathīr was the uncontested master of *qirā'ah* at Makkah. A man of eloquence,...and of dignified demeanour, Ibn Kathīr had met some *Ṣaḥābah* such as 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr, Abū Ayyūb al-'Anṣārī and Anas ibn Mālik. Of the narrators of his *qirā'ah* are al-Bazzī and Qunbul.

(a) **Al-Bazzī,** Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Qāsim (170—250/786—864) was the *mu'adhdhin*, imām and teacher of *qirā'ah* at the Masjid al-Harām. He learnt the *qirā'ah* from 'Ikrimah ibn Sulaymān al-Makkī, and 'Ikrimah had learnt it from Shibl and Shibl from Ibn Kathīr.

An authority in *qirā'ah*, trustworthy and of safe memory, the chains of Makkī tradition of *qirā'ah* end in al-Bazzī. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ه.)

(b) **Qunbul,** Abū 'Amr Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khālid ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Makhzūmī al-Makkī (195—291/810—904) his *kuniyah* was Abū 'Amr and Qunbul was his *laqab*. He learnt the *qirā'ah* from Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Awn al-Qawwās. Al-Qawwās had learnt the *qirā'ah* from Abū al-'Akhrīṭ and Abū al-'Akhrīṭ from al-Qisṭ, who told him that he had learnt it from Shibl and Shibl was among the pupils of Ibn Kathīr and had finished the *qirā'ah* in his presence.

Qunbul was an authority on *qirā'ah* and the leader of the Ḥijāzī school of *qurrā'*. People used to come to him from all places. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is و.)

3. Abu 'Amr, Zabbān ibn al-'Alā' ibn 'Ammār al-Baṣrī (68 or 70—154/687 or 689—771) learnt *qirā'ah* from a group of scholars including Abū Ja'far Zayd ibn al-Qa'qā' and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī had learnt *qirā'ah* from Ḥaṭān and Abū al-'Āliyah and the latter had learnt it from Ubayy ibn Ka'b and 'Umar ibn al-Kaṭṭāb.

Abū 'Amr was most able in *qirā'ah* and Arabic usage, in addition to being an honest and truthful narrator and a pious and trustworty man. Once when al-Ḥasan happened to pass by him, he saw Abū 'Amr surrounded by a great circle of devoted pupils. لا إله إلا الله, said al-Ḥasan, remarking that "Scholars were near to becoming gods (*arbāb*)", and that "Every honour that is not backed by learning reverts to degradation."

It has been narrated from Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah that once he saw the Prophet (S) in his dream and said to him: "O Apostle of God, I find different kinds of reading. Whose *qirā'ah* do you command me to follow?" The Prophet (S) said: "Follow the *qirā'ah* of Abū 'Āmr ibn al-'Alā'." (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ز .) The narrators of his *qirā'ah* are al-Dūrī and al-Sūsī, who narrate from Abū 'Amr through Yaḥyā ibn Mubārak al-Yazīdī (d.202/817)

(a) Al-Dūrī , Abū 'Amr Ḥafṣ ibn 'Umar al-Muqrī' al-Ḍarīr (d.246/860). He belonged to al-Dūr, a place to the east of Baghdād. He was an authority (imām) of the *qirā'ah* during his own day and the chief of the *qurrā'* of his time. A highly trustworthy and precise narrator, he was the first to collect the different readings (*qirā'āt*) of the Quran. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ح .)

(b) Al-Sūsī, Abū Shu'ayb Ṣāliḥ ibn Ziyād (d.261/874, at 90), belonged to Sūs, the modern Shūsh, near Ahwāz. A trustworthy and precise teacher of *qirā'ah*, he was one of the most eminent of al-Yazīdī's pupils. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ط .)

4. Ibn 'Āmir al-Tābi'ī, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Āmir al-Yaḥṣabī al-Dimashqī (8 or 21—118/629 or 642—736). Yaḥṣab was a subdivision of Ḥimyar. His *kunyah* was Abū Nu'aym and some report that it was Abū 'Imrān. Ibn 'Āmir was the imām of the Mosque of Damascus and the city's qāḍī. He was a *Tābi'ī* and had met Wāthilah ibn al-'Asqa' and al-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr. Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥārith al-Dhamārī states that he had learnt the *qirā'ah* from 'Uthmān, who had learnt it from the Prophet (S). He served as the imām of the Umayyad grand mosque in the reign of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, and also before and after that period, and the caliph prayed behind him. It is enough to indicate his eminent position that he simultaneously held the offices of *imāmah*, judgeship and authority on *qirā'ah* at Damascus. During those days Damascus was the capital of the caliphate and a centre of scholars and *Tābi'ūn*. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ي .) The narrators of Ibn 'Āmir's *qirā'ah* were Hishām and Ibn Dhakwān.

(a) Hishām, Abū 'Ammār ibn Naṣīr al-Salamī (153—245/770—859) served as the *qāḍī* of Damascus. His *kunyah* was Abū al-Walīd. He had learnt the *qirā'ah* of Ibn 'Āmir by oral presentation before 'Arāk ibn Khālid al-Mazzī, he from Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥārith al-Dhamārī, who had learnt it from Ibn 'Āmir. He was *muftī*, *muḥaddith*, *muqrī'* (teacher of *qirā'ah*) and *khaṭīb* (preacher) of the people of Damascus, trustworthy and precise. 'Abdān says that he heard him say: "I never repeated a sermon in twenty years." (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ك .)

(b) Ibn Dhakwān, 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Bashīr ibn Dhakwān al-Qarashī al-Dimashqī (173—242/789—856) known by his *kunyah* Abū 'Amr, had learnt Ibn 'Āmir's *qirā'ah* from Ayyūb ibn Tamīm, who had learnt it from Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥārith al-Dhamārī, who in turn had learnt

it from Ibn 'Āmir himself. The chair of *iqrā'* (teaching of *qirā'ah*) reached him after Ayyūb ibn Tamīm. Abū Zar'ah al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dimashqī states that throughout the Iraq, the Ḥijāz, Syria, Egypt and Khurāsān no *qārī'* of the Quran excelled him. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ل .)

5. **Abū Bakr**, 'Āṣim ibn Abi al-Najūd ibn Bihdalah al-'Asadī al-Kūfī (76—127 or 128/695—744—5 or 745—6) *mawlā* of Banū Khuzaymah ibn Mālik ibn al-Naḍr, had learnt the *qirā'ah* under Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥabīb al-Salamī, and Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān had learnt under 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A), Ubayy ibn Ka'b, 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, Zayd ibn Thābit and 'Uthmān. Eloquent, well-versed in *taḥrīr* and *tajwīd*, he recited the Quran in a beautiful voice. 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal says that asked about 'Āṣim his father told him that 'Āṣim was a man of right conduct (ṣāliḥ) and reliable (*thiqah*). Ibn 'Ayyāsh states that when he visited 'Āṣim at the time of his death, he was repeating the verse: ثُمَّ رُدُّوا اِلَى اللهِ مَوْلٰىهُمُ الْحَقِّ ... , 'Then they were returned to their real Master.' (6:62) (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is م). The narrators of his *qirā'ah* were Abū Bakr Shu'bah and Ḥafṣ.

(a) **Abū Bakr**, Shu'bah ibn 'Ayyāsh ibn Sālim al-'Asadī al-Kūfī (95—193/713—808), his name is also said to be Muḥammad or Muṭriq. He was an authority and a great scholar. It is said that when at the time of his death his sister began to weep, he said to her, "Why do you cry? Look at that corner wherein I have read (*khatamtu*) the Quran eighteen thousand times." (The sign of his *qirā'ah* is ن .)

(b) **Ḥafṣ**, Abū 'Amr ibn Sulaymān ibn al-Mughīrah al-Bazzāz al-'Asadī (90—180/709—796). He learnt *qirā'ah* from 'Āṣim, five verses at a time, as a child learns from a teacher. He was the ablest of 'Āṣim's pupils in the *qirā'ah* of the Quran and a scholar of deeds (*'āliman 'āmilan*). He was 'Āṣim's wife's son.

According to Yaḥyā ibn Mu'īn, the trustworthy *riwāyah* about the *qirā'ah* of 'Āṣim is that of Ḥafṣ. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is س .)

6. **Hamzah** ibn Ḥabīb ibn 'Umārah al-Zayyāt al-Taymī al-Kūfī (80—156/699—773). *mawlā* of 'Ikrimah ibn Rib'ī al-Taymī, Abū 'Umārah was his *kunyah* . He learnt the *qirā'ah* under Abū Muḥammad Sulaymān ibn Mihrān al-'A'mash, and al-'A'mash from Abū Muḥammad Yaḥyā ibn Waththāb al-'Asadī, and Yaḥyā from Abū Shibl 'Alqamah ibn Qays, and 'Alqamah from 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, who had learnt the *qirā'ah* from the Prophet (S). He was Kūfah's leading authority on *qirā'ah* after 'Āṣim and al-'A'mash. He was trustworthy (as a narrator) and an authority on the Quran, well-versed in *tajwīd*, *farā'iḍ* (precepts), Arabic literary sciences and good at remembering traditions by heart. He was pious and humble, devout, ascetic and obedient to God, a man whose peer could not be found. He used to bring oil from Iraq to Ḥulwān and exported its cheese and walnuts to Kūfah. Abū Ḥanīfah once told him: "You have beaten us in two matters in which we cannot

compete with you: the Quran and the *farā'iḍ*." His teacher al-'A'mash used to say when his eyes fell on him: "Here comes the rabbi (*ḥabr*) of the Quran" and Ḥamzah himself stated: "I have not recited a single word from the Book of God without the help of a tradition". (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ع .) The narrators of his *qirā'ah* are Khalaf and Khallād, who have narrated from him through Salīm.

(a) Khalaf, Abū Muḥammad ibn Khalaf ibn Hishām ibn Ṭālib al-Bazzāz al-Kūfī (150—229/767—843), had learnt the Quran by heart at the age of twenty, having started his education while he was thirteen. He was a scholar and an authority, a trustworthy narrator and a devout and pious man.(The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ف .)

(b) Khallād, Abū 'Īsā ibn Khālid al-Ṣayrafī al-Kūfī (142—220/760—835), was an authority in the *qirā'ah*, trustworthy (as a narrator) and had mastery in the science of *tajwīd*. Al-Dānī says that he was the most precise (*aḍbaṭ*) of all the pupils of Salīm and the most eminent of them. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ص).

7. Al-Kisā'ī, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ḥamzah al-Naḥwī al-Kūfī (119—189/737—805) was of Persian descent and from the Sawād of Iraq. When asked as to why he was given the name Kisā'ī, he answered that he was called so because he had used a *kisā'* (a linen sheet) for *iḥrām*. Al-Kisā'ī studied *qirā'ah* under Ḥamzah and was trusted by him. He completed four recitals of the Quran in his presence. He also studied under Muḥammad ibn Abī Laylā and 'Īsa ibn 'Umar, and 'Īsā ibn 'Umar had studied under 'Āṣim. He was the most learned in the Quran among the scholars of his time and an authority on its *qirā'ah*.

Abū Bakr ibn al-'Anbārī says of him, "Al-Kisā'ī had gathered in himself several merits: mastery in syntax (*naḥw*), unparalleled knowledge of the *gharīb* (difficult words and phrases of the Quran), and superb knowledge of the Quran. So many pupils swarmed around him that it became difficult for each to record from him. Thereupon he gathered them in an assembly where he himself sat on a chair and read the Quran aloud from the beginning to the end and the pupils would listen attentively recording every detail, even the beginnings and the endings. Ibn Mu'īn says: "My eyes did not fall on any person more truthful in his speech than al-Kisā'ī. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ق .) Abū al-Ḥārith and al-Dūrī were the narrators of his *qirā'ah*.

(a) Abū al-Ḥārith, al-Layth ibn Khālid al-Marūzī al-Muqri', al-Baghdādī (d.240/854) learnt *qirā'ah* under al-Kisā'ī. He was reliable and accurate in *qirā'ah*.

According to al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū 'Umar, he was among the most eminent pupils of al-Kisā'ī. (The sign for his *qirā'ah* is ر .)

Al-Dūrī has already been mentioned under the account of Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā'.

In the above account of the seven *qurrā'*, we have relied upon

al-Mukarrar fī mā tawātara min al-qirā'āt al-sab' wa taḥarrar by Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar ibn Zayn al-Dīn Qāsim ibn Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Anṣārī al-Miṣrī, popularly known as al-Nashshār al-Muqri' in *al-Jāmi'* of al-'Atābakī.[98]

IX. The Use of I'rāb in the Quran:

History tells us that the Companions divested the early codices of all diacritical points (*nuqaṭ*) and vowels (*ashkāl*). The script inherited by the Arabs did not contain the diacritical signs to mark vowelled and vowelless consonants (*ḥarakāt wa sakanāt*) that are used today; rather, it was devoid of even these signs that distinguish the vowels in writing. But out of habit they possessed the capacity, prior to their intermingling with non-Arab peoples, of distinguishing between the consonants and of reading them with proper vowel sounds. Their speech then was secure from ungrammatical usages, and the Arab Beduins used to speak in flawless literary Arabic. They composed lucid poetry, comprehended the eloquence of the Quran, and appreciated the rhetorical excellences of orations, which had a profound effect on their minds.

When Islam spread and the Arabs intermingled with non-Arab nations, the elements of corruption started appearing in the Arabic language. Grammatical errors started occurring even in the speech of Arab men of eloquence. The increasing frequency of such occurrences gave them a jolt and impelled them to take measures to save the Quran, which was the foundation of the faith, and to guard Islam from the profusion of these errors.

Abū al-'Aswad al-Du'alī, who had learnt the principles of Arabic grammar and syntax from Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A),[99] became famous as an expert of the Arabic language. Of many who learnt Arabic grammar and syntax from him were Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mar al-'Adwānī, the *qāḍī* of Khurāsān, and Naṣr ibn 'Āṣim al-Laythī, both of whom distinguished themselves in Arabic grammar, the *qirā'ah* of the Quran and the literary arts. However, the interest of a group in Arabic grammar and syntax could not prevent the sweeping stream of corruption in the language resulting from the intermingling of the nations.

At that time, Ziyād ibn Sumayyah, who was the governor of Baṣrah, asked Abū al-'Aswad to devise some method for a linguistic reform. Ziyād told him: "This smut has spread all over and corrupted the Arabic language. If you devise something it would help people to reform their speech and recite the Quran correctly." At first Abū al-'Aswad refused due to certain reasons which appeared valid to him. Ziyād did not give up his idea. He ordered a man to sit on the way where Abū al-'Aswad used to pass and recite the Quran loudly as soon

as he drew near, taking care not to make it evident that it was intended to be heard by him. The man recited: إِنَّ اللهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولِهِ with a *kasrah* below لِ (of رَسُولِ). Abū al-'Aswad, dismayed at the enormity, said: "God is higher in majesty than that He should be disaffected with His Prophet (S)". Immediately, he returned to Ziyād and told him: "I accept to do what you asked of me. I want to begin with the *i'rāb* of the Quran; so send the scribes to me." Ziyād sent him thirty scribes. He selected one of them from 'Abd al-Qays. Then he asked the scribe to take a copy of the Quran and select an ink of a colour other than black. The scribe was to watch Abū al-'Aswad read the Quran and put a point above the letter when he saw his lips open (*fatḥah*), a point under it when he parted them (*kasrah*), and a point in the middle of the letter when his lips met (*ḍammah*), and to put two points whenever he saw these movements accompanied by a nasal sound.

Then he started reading the Quran with a slow speed and the scribe put the points, and whenever a page was completed Abū al-'Aswad would examine it. This went on until the whole Quran was marked with diacritical signs. Other people also followed his practice. When a guttural consonant followed *tanwīn* (marking of the final letters of nouns with nasal vowels), they would put one of the two points above the other to indicate that the *nūn* was to be pronounced; otherwise, the two points were put side by side to indicate that the *nūn* was either contracted or suppressed.

Thereafter, the people of Madīnah devised an arch-shaped sign with both the ends turned upwards for marking the sign of *tashdīd*, like this (◡). Later on the followers of Abū al-'Aswad invented other signs for vowels, making a separate horizontal stroke over the letter to indicate *sukūn* (vowelless consonant), regardless of whether it was a *hamzah* or some other character. They made a stroke over *alif al-waṣl* (the *alif* of *al*) adjoined to it if it followed a *fatḥah* (like this: ⊤) and a stroke under it if there was a sign of *kasrah* before the *alif* (like this: ⊥). They put the stroke in the middle of it if there was a *ḍammah* before it (like this: ┼)

X. The Use of I'jām in the Quran:

The purpose of using the *i'jām* was to distinguish between letters of a similar shape by putting diacritical points in order to avoid error. Thus *hamzah* is one of the i'jām, intended to remove the possibility of incorrect reading, such as in this sentence: شَكَوْتُ إِلَيْهِ فَأَشْكَانِي

It is generally believed that the *i'jām* came to be invented during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, but investigations prove that their use was common even before the advent of Islam. Books written prior to the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān have been found

with *i'jām* on certain letters like *al-bā'*, *al-yā'*, and the like. Moreover, it is highly improbable that given the close similarity in the shape of several letters, like *al-bā'*, *al-tā'* and *al-thā'*, they should not have been marked with some sign to enable them to be distinguished from one another. Therefore, it is true that the use of diacritical points was common before Islam, but on account of negligence towards them they gradually fell out of use and were almost forgotten by the time of 'Abd al-Malik, who made their use compulsory for the official scribes.

This shows that the people continued to read the Quran from the codices compiled by 'Uthmān for more than forty years, and we have already mentioned that the *maṣāḥif* of 'Uthmān were devoid of diacritical points and signs.[100] For this reason, the readers of the Quran were puzzled at the time of reading, for they were not sure if their *qirā'ah* was correct or not. For instance while reading تَنْشُزُهَا, one would not know whether it was to be read with a (ز) or if it was to be read تَنْشُرُهَا with a (ر). In the verse لِتَكُونَ آيَةً لِمَنْ خَلْفَكَ one would not know whether it was to be read لِمَنْ خَلْفَكَ with a (ف) or لِمَنْ خَلَقَكَ with a (ق). On account of this mispronunciation (*taṣḥīf*) become common in Iraq. Al-Ḥajjāj, who was the governor of Iraq during 'Abd al-Malik's reign, became apprehensive of it. He ordered his scribes to devise certain signs in order to distinguish between similar letters. Naṣr ibn 'Āsim al-Laythī and Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mar, the pupils of Abū al-'Aswad, were called for this work. The common Muslims, for their fear of *bid'ah* (innovation in the faith), detested adding anything to the *muṣḥaf* of 'Uthmān, even if it was for the sake of betterment. Most of them had hesitated in accepting the corrections introduced by Abū al-'Aswad. After much deliberation and discussion, Naṣr and Yaḥyā, who are very God-fearing men and blameless in their faith and religious commitment, introduced the second reform in the Arabic script. Their work involved the devising of single and double points in order to distinguish similar letters from one another, in the same manner as we have them today. As mentioned before, the marking of vowelled and vowelless consonants (*ḥarakāt wa sakanāt*) was through putting points; this was also true of the *i'jām*, which was done by the use of points. Therefore, in order to avoid confusion between *ḥarakāt* and *sakanāt* on the one hand and the i'jām on the other, the practice was, for instance, to mark the *ḥarakāt* with red ink while the points of *i'jām* were made with an ink of a different colour. Abū 'Amr says: "I do not consider it permissible that the marking of diacritical signs (*nuqaṭ*) be done with black ink, since it will alter the form of the writing of the codex (that is, the writing of the codex of 'Uthmān), and I prefer that *hamzah* be written in yellow ink." The people of Madīnah followed this practice in their codices.

'Uthmān ibn Sa'īd al-Dānī writes in his book *al-Muqni'*: "I see no

objection to your using green ink for writing *alif al-waṣl* in the way the people of our city began to do many years back." He belonged to Dāniyah in Andalus. The Andalusians made use of inks of four colours in writing the codices of the Quran: black for letters, red for the points indicating vowels, yellow for *hamzah*, and green for *'alif al-waṣl*. The method used by Abū al-'Aswad did not become popular, but it continued to be used for writing the copies of the Quran in order to preserve its structure.

CHAPTER 3: Europeans and the Quran:

I. Translations in European Languages:

In the beginning no one thought of translating the Quran in Europe and until a number of dictionaries were published. Perhaps the first translation of the Quran in Latin, which was the scientific language of Europe, was undertaken by Robert of Ketton in 1143, on the initiative of Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny. Thus, the Quran entered the European continent through Andalusia. In translating the Quran for Peter of Cluny, his intention was to refute it. Subsequently the Latin translation was printed in 1509, but readers were not allowed to circulate its copies as that edition was not accompanied by a refutation.

In 1594 Hinkelmann published his translation of the Quran, followed in 1698 by Marracci's which included a refutation. Some scholars have come across a copy of Marracci's translation in the library of American missionaries in Beirut. Thereafter, translations of the Quran began to appear in modern European languages — such as English, French, German, Italian and Russian — so that now there is no language which doesn't have one or more translations. George Sale's translation of the Quran in English is one of the early ones; it first appeared in 1734. Although this is an extended paraphrase and not a literal translation, yet it is one of the best and useful translations available.

II. The Views of Some Orientalists on the Chronological Order of Sūrahs:

The most important work by a European on the history of the Quran is that of Theodor Nöldeke's in German.

There are some valuable analytical studies in this book, and other things for which the researcher can be taken to task for not having met the demands of scientific study.[101]

In his study of the history of the Quran, Nöldeke has dealt with its diverse aspects in a way which is proof of his command of the subject and the extent of his learning. He has discussed about the nature of

revelation and prophethood, the personality of the Holy Prophet (S), the revelation of the Quran, the chronological order of the *sūrahs*, and whether they were revealed at Makkah or Madīnah.

For discovering the date of the revelation of *sūrahs*, Nöldeke follows a sound method which occasionally leads to right conclusions.

He takes hints from the battles, campaigns and events that took place during the Prophet's (S) time — like the battles of Badr and Khandaq, the truce of Ḥudaybiyyah and so on, whose dates are known for certain — for dating the Quranic passages related to those events. Similarly, he takes the difference and change in the Quranic tone and style to be another indicator for determining the chronology of the Quranic *sūrahs* and verses. For instance, Nöldeke believes that most of the verses containing the address يا أيها الناس "O, mankind", and those of them that have a severe threatening tone were revealed during the early years of the Prophet's mission, when there were fewer Muslims. Likewise, the verses containing the address يا أيها الذين آمنوا "O, ye who believe!" and assurances of Divine mercy were revealed after the number of the Muslim believers had increased.

In the course of his analytic study, Nöldeke expresses doubts about the *riwāyahs* and traditions and the views expressed by the exegetes regarding the chronology of the Quran; however, at the same time, he takes from them whatever suits his ideas and helps him in discovering the chronology of the *sūrahs* and occasionally their order.

He has chosen the chronological order of the *sūrahs* given in the work of Abū al-Qāsim 'Umar ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Kāfī, one of the scholars of the 5th/11th century. We have cited above the chronological order given by him, but Nöldeke has divided the *sūrahs* into two parts belonging to the Makkī and the Madanī periods. For instance, the *Sūrat al-'Alaq*, which according to the *riwāyahs* of the traditionalists is the first *sūrah* to be revealed, has been placed by him at the beginning, and the *Sūrat al-Qalam*, which was revealed after it according to the muḥaddithūn, is placed next to it, and so on.

Nöldeke's Arrangement of Makkī Sūrahs:

96, 68, 73, 74, 111, 81, 87, 92, 89, 93, 94, 103, 100, 108, 102, 107, 109, 105, 113, 114, 112, 53, 80, 97, 91, 85, 95, 106, 101, 75, 104, 77, 50, 90, 86, 54, 38, 7, 72, 36, 25, 35, 19, 20, 56, 26, 27, 28, 17, 10, 11, 12, 15, 6, 37, 31, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 51, 88, 18, 16, 71, 14, 21, 23, 32, 52, 67, 69, 70, 78, 79, 82, 84, 30, 29, 83.

Nöldeke's Arrangement of Madanī Sūrahs:

2, 8, 3, 33, 60, 4, 99, 57, 47, 13, 55, 76, 65, 98, 59, 110, 24, 22, 63,

58, 49, 66, 62, 64, 61, 48, 5, 9.[102]

III. On the Openings of the Sūrahs:

One of the most abstruse problems with which a researcher studying the scientific and historical aspects of the Quran is confronted with is the meaning of the Arabic letters (*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'ah*) at the opening of some *sūrahs* and their specific relevance to the history of the Quran. Though the mufassirūn from the times of the *Saḥābah* to the present day have offered different interpretations, they have remained incomprehensible and obscure. The abundance of views and diversity of explanations are an indication of the mystery and ambiguity surrounding the matter. Here we shall cite some of the views and interpretations about these letters, mentioning the more plausible ones:

1. It is reported from Mujāhid that حم، ق، ص and طسم are the openings of the *sūrahs*.

2. It has been reported from Ibn 'Abbās[103] that الم , حم and ن are the abbreviated Divine Names: for instance, الم means أنا الله أعلَمُ

3. 'Ikrimah[104] is reported to have suggested that الم and حم allude to the conclusion of the preceding *sūrah*.

In his book *Tahdhīb al-'asmā' wa al-lughāt*, al-Nawawī[105] mentions five interpretations of حم :

(a) These letters stand for one of God's Names by which He swears, as maintained by Ibn 'Abbās.

(b) They stand for one of the names of the Quran, as narrated from Qatādah.

(c) They are an abbreviation of the Names of the Almighty, that is, *al-Raḥmān* and *al-Raḥīm*.

(d) They stand for "*Muḥammad*", as stated by Ja'far ibn Muḥammad (A).

(e) They represent the opening verse, as narrated from Mujāhid.

A tradition says: شِعَارُكُم حم لا يُنْصَرونَ Al-'Azharī reports that Abū al-'Abbās was asked about the utterance of the Prophet (S): حم لا يُنْصَرُونَ ; he said it meant : والله لا يُنْصَرُونَ ,'By God, they shall not be helped.'

As mentioned in *Lisān al-'Arab*,[106] the ḥadīth, إذا بُيِّتُمْ فَقُولُوا حاميم لا يُنْصَرُونَ is explained by Ibn al-'Athīr as meaning: اللّهُمَّ لا يُنْصَرُونَ 'O God, may they not be helped.'

Al-Tabarī[107] states that a group believes that the *sūrahs* opened with these letters in order to attract the attention of the idolaters, for they advised one another not to listen to the Quran. So when they turned their ears to listen to it, they also had to listen to the verses that followed.

Al-Nawawī reports Qatādah to have said that ق stands for one of the names of the Quran, and that Abū 'Ubaydah and al-Zajjāj have said

that ق at the beginning of the *sūrah* is similar to the letters ن ، الم، المر at the head of other *sūrahs*.

According to what al-Wāḥidī, al-Farrā' and al-Zajjāj narrate, a group belonging to Madīnah said that ق implies قَضىٰ الله ما هُو كائِنٌ , 'God has decreed that which is to be'; they based their argument on the words of the poet:

قُلْتُ لَها قِفي فَقالَتْ قافِ

It means: قالَتْ قِف . In his book *Sa'd al-su'ūd*, Ibn Ṭāwūs, quoting from the first part of *Sharḥ ta'wīl al-Qur'ān wa tafsīr ma'ānīh*[108] by Abū Muslim Muḥammad ibn Baḥr al-'Iṣfahānī, regarding *al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'ah*, says: "Says Abū Muslim: 'That which we believe is that these alphabets being the elements of the Arabic language, the challenge of the Quran to bring a *sūrah* like one of its *sūrahs* lies in that the Quran is also made up of these isolated letters known to you and over which you have command. Therefore, your inability to bring anything like the Quran or any of its *sūrahs* is the proof of the fact that the incapacity and failure on your part to do such a thing is indeed from God, and this is the evidence of the prophethood and truthfulness of the Prophet (S)'" He then adds, "Of the things that strengthen this explanation is that in every *sūrah* that opens with such letters, the letters are followed immediately by an allusion to the Quran, implying that the Quran is composed of these letters which you know very well and have command over them." Later on he asks himself that if it was meant to be so, it would have been sufficient to use these letters in one *sūrah* alone. Then he answers himself that it is customary for the Arabs to repeat when they want to explain something. From a rational point of view, the last two opinions, reported by al-Ṭabarī and ibn Ṭāwūs, appear to be the most plausible.

According to the first, the *sūrahs* open with such letters in order to attract the attention of the idolaters for making them listen to the verses of the Quran. According to the other reported by Ibn Ṭāwūs al-'Alawī from Abū Muslim Muḥammad ibn Baḥr al-'Iṣfahānī, their purpose is to bring to the notice of the people that the Quran is composed of the common letters of alphabet, but to produce something like the Quran is not possible for anyone, although these alphabets are used by all.

Western writers have also discussed the openings of the *sūrahs*. But my study of their views showed that they have not produced anything sound or of a historical or scientific worth.

In the Encyclopaedia of Islam, F. Buhl, in the article dealing with the Quran, has described the views of H. Bauer and Nöldeke, after enumerating the opinions of Muslim scholars, the summary of whose

views we have given above from reliable sources. Here, we shall refrain from mentioning the views of any of these European scholars, for they lack firmness and do not rest on any scientific basis. And God guides to the Truth.

Concluded, wa al-ḥamdu lillāh.

NOTES:

86. Aḥmad ibn Abī Ya'qūb ibn Wāḍiḥ (d.287/900), known as al-Ya'qūbī. His work on history, known as *Ta'rīkh al-Ya'qūbī*, was published from Leiden by Houtsma.

87. *Editor's Note:* The number of *sūrahs* given in al-Ya'qūbī's list of Imām 'Alī's *muṣḥaf* is 110. *"Mūsā wa fir'awn"* could not be identified with any of the five *sūrahs* missing from the list, i.e. 1, 13, 34, 66 and 96.

88. Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, p.40.

89. *Editor's Note:* Four *sūrahs* are repeated in this list (67, 80, 95 & 111). Three Nos. 74, 90 & 92) were not identifiable. The *Sūrat al-Khal'*, mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm here, and quoted by al-Suyūṭī and other Sunnī writers elsewhere (see for instance, *al-'Itqān*, II,26) is not in the Holy Quran. Moreover, the names of a number of *sūrahs* have apparently been dropped by copyists of Ibn al-Nadīm's work.

90. *"Al-Ṭihār,"* in Ibn al-Nadīm, *op. cit.* p.37.

91. *Editor's Note:* Three *sūrahs* are repeated in this list (32, 39 & 54). Two are unidentifiable (Nos. 35 & 44) and several others are missing.

92. Without *'ayn* after *mīm*.

93. Ibn al-Nadīm, *op. cit.*, p.40.

94. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-'Isābah*, I,9.

95. 'Alī ibn Mūsā ibn Ja'far (589—664/1193—1265), known as Ibn Ṭāwūs, is one of the greatest of Shī'ī scholars.

96. *Editor's Note:* The first *sūrah*, *Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*, is missing from this list.

97. *Editor's Note:* The accounts of the seven *qurrā'* given here are uncritical and leave out the opinions of other scholars which could put them in a proper perspective. For a balanced account, see, for instance, *al-Bayān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* by al-'Imām al-Khū'ī.

98. Manuscript No. 493, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah.

99. When asked about the source of his knowledge of the science of Arabic Syntax (*naḥw*), Abū al-'Aswad replied, "I learnt its principles from 'Alī (A)". See Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-'a'yān* (Egypt), I, 240.

100. The diacritical points indicating vowels and the difference between similarly-written consonants were not in use during 'Uthmān's reign. The points used during his times were specific signs used to indicate the dialects in which the Companions recited. In the *ṣuḥuf* which were with Ḥafṣah, there were points, laid down by custom, or letters to mark out other dialects and for indicating *al-'imālah*. *ḍamm mīm al-jam'*, *al-'ishmām*, *al-hamz*, *al-tashīl*, etc., relating to the readings narrated by various tribes from the Prophet (S). 'Uthmān ordered the scribes to divest the Quran of these points, choosing to have it written in the dialect of Quraysh, for it had been revealed in their dialect.

101. See the 2nd edition of his work on the history of the Quran, 1, 4, 24.

102. *Ibid.*, I, 58.

103. *Al-Ṭabarī*, I, 68.
104. *Ibid.*, I, 67, 69.
105. Al-'Allāmah Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (d.678/1279); *Tahdhīb al-'asmā' wa al-lughāt* (Egypt), I, 72.
106. XV, 40.
107. I, 63.
108. Ibn Ṭāwūs possessed this tafsīr in the year 664/1265.

قالَ عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ: الصَّبْرُ صَبْرانِ: صَبْرٌ عَلىٰ ما تَكْرَهُ، وَصَبْرٌ عَمّا تُحِبُّ.

'Alī (A) said: "Forbearance is of two kinds: to endure what you dislike and to forgo what you love."

(Nahj al-balāghah, ḥikam 55, p. 478)

Forty Ḥadīth: An Exposition *Part 12*

by Imām Rūḥullāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī

Translated from the Persian by Martyr Mahliqā Qarā'ī

Twelfth Ḥadīth: On Contemplation (Tafakkur)

بِسَنَدي الْمُتَّصِلِ إلىٰ مُحَمَّدِبْنِ يَعْقُوبَ رِضْوانُ اللّهِ عَلَيْهِ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ إبْراهيمَ عَنْ أبيهِ عَنِ النَّوْفَلي عَنِ السَّكُوني عَنْ أَبي عَبْدِاللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ قالَ: كانَ أميرُالْمُؤْمِنينَ (ع) يَقولُ: نَبِّهْ بِالتَّفَكُّرِ قَلْبَكَ، وَجافِ عَنِ اللَّيْلِ جَنْبَكَ، وَاتَّقِ اللّٰهَ رَبَّكَ.

...Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb (al-Kulaynī), from 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, from his father, from al-Nawfalī, from al-Sakūnī, from Abū 'Abd Allāh (al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq) (A) that he said: "Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A) used to say: 'Arouse your heart to contemplation; keep your side clear off the night; and be heedful towards your Lord.'"[1]

Exposition:

The phrase *kāna yaqūl* (used to say) has a meaning different from *qālā* (said) or *yaqūl* (says), as it indicates continuation and perpetuation. It shows that Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A) repeatedly used to utter these words. The word *tanabbuh* means 'to arouse','to warn','to call attention to', and 'to awaken from sleep.' Here all of these meanings are suitable, for the hearts are in a state of neglectfulness and sleep prior to contemplation, and they come out of this state by means of it. Sleep and awakening, unconsciousness and consciousness are different for the realm of the body and the kingdom of the soul. Many a time the outward eye is awake, the corporeal personality is conscious but the inner eye and the inward vision is deep asleep, and the spiritual regions and the domain of the soul are heedless and unconscious. *Tafakkur* (contemplation, intellection) is the activity of the intellect. It is the reordering of known matters for the purpose of reaching hitherto unknown conclusions. It includes the kind of contemplation which is one of the

characteristics of mystics and wayfarers of the Path. Khwājah 'Abd Allāh al-'Anṣārī has described it in these words:

اِعْلَمْ أَنَّ التَّفَكُّرَ تَلَمُّسُ الْبَصِيرَةِ لِاَسْتِدْراكِ الْبُغْيَةِ.

Know that contemplation is the inquisitive groping of the inner vision for attaining the coveted end.[2]

It is obvious that *ma'rifah* (gnosis) is the desired object of the heart. Accordingly, in this ḥadīth also contemplation has a specific sense concerned with the heart and its life.

What is Heart?

There are various applications and denotations of the word 'heart'. For physicians and the common people it is a piny piece of flesh, whose contractions and expansions cause the flow of blood through arteries and veins, which generates a subtle élan vital. The philosophers (*ḥukamā'*) use it for a certain seat of the psyche (*nafs*). The 'urafā' assign to it grades (*marātib*) and stages (*maqāmāt*), and to go into their details is not our concern here. In the Holy Quran and the aḥādīth, it has been used both in its general as well as its particular senses in different places.

In the verse وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ '...the hearts reached to the throats' (33:10), 'heart' is used in the same sense as used by physicians. And in لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا 'They have hearts wherewith they understand not, and they have eyes wherewith they see not' (7:179), it is used in the sense used by the philosophers. And in: إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ 'Therein verily is a reminder for him who hath a heart, or giveth ear with full intelligence' (50:37), 'heart' is used in the same sense as used by the 'urafā'.

In the tradition, *tafakkur* is used in the sense as is generally used by *ḥukamā'*, but the 'heart' as meant by 'urafā' has no relation to *tafakkur*, especially on its certain levels, as those who are familiar with their terminology know well.

In the statement: جافِ عَنِ اللَّيْلِ جَنْبَكَ جَفَاً *jāfī* gives the sense of *bu'd*, to keep away, to shun, and such is its meaning in جافاهُ عَنْهُ فَتَجافاعَنِ الْفِراشِ as given by *al-Ṣiḥāḥ*. 'Night', here, has been used allegorically for 'bed'... and as discussed in detail by the uṣūlī faqīh Āqā Shaykh Riḍā Iṣfahānī in *Jaliyyat al-ḥāl* , the avoiding of 'night' refers to getting up from the bed for night prayers....God willing, we shall discuss the holy tradition in a number of sections.

The Merits of Contemplation:

It should be known that there is a great merit in contemplation. Contemplation is the key to the doors of *ma'rifah* and to the treasure chests of knowledge and excellence. It is the necessary and the surest first step on the path of genuine humanness. It has been highly commended and glorified by the Glorious Quran and in traditions, and one who abandons it has been censured and denounced.

In *al-Kāfī*, it is reported from al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) that:

أَفْضَلُ الْعِبادَةِ إِدْمانُ التَّفَكُّرِ فِي اللّٰهِ وَفِي قُدْرَتِهِ.

The best form of worship is to contemplate about God and His Power.[3]

In another ḥadīth, it is stated that an hour's contemplation is better than a night's worship.[4] And according to a Prophetic tradition, the contemplation of an hour is better than a year's worship. In another tradition it is stated that an hour's contemplation is better than sixty years of worship (according to another ḥadīth, seventy years). And some traditionists and fuqahā' have even mentioned it as being better than a thousand years of worship. In any case, there are different grades and levels of contemplation, and every grade gives certain results and consequences. Here we shall mention a few of them.

1. The first kind of contemplation is about God, His Names, Attributes and His Perfections, the result of which is the knowledge of His existence and His irradiations (*tajalliyāt*) from which the archetypes (*a'yān*) and the manifestations (*maẓāhir*) emerge. And this is the most superior level of contemplation which yields the sublimest of the kinds of knowledge, and the firmest of the arguments (*burhān*); for thinking about the essence of the Cause and meditating on the Absolute Cause imparts knowledge about Him and the understanding of the effects. Such is the outline of the revelations on the hearts of the Truthful (*ṣiddīqūn*), and it is for this reason that it is called *burhān al-ṣiddīqīn*, the Proof of the Truthful; since the Truthful observe the Names and the Attributes, and view the first essences (*a'yān*) and manifestations (*maẓāhir*) in the mirror of the Names through the witness of the Essence. The reason, however, that this type of proof is called *burhān al-ṣiddīqīn* is that if a Truthful one (*ṣiddīq*) wishes to set forth his observations in the form of a proof and give his gnostic, intuitive experience the apparel of words, it would appear in this form; not that anyone who gains the knowledge of the Essence and its irradiations through this proof becomes one of the Truthful, or that the knowledge of the Truthful belongs to the category of proofs, even especial ones. How far from the truth to imagine that their knowledge is of the category of contemplation, or

that their cognitions are like arguments and their premises! As long as the heart is covered within the wrapping of arguments and one is in the stage of contemplation, one has not yet reached even the first grade of the Truthful. And when the thick curtains of knowledge and proof are set aside and contemplation brushed aside, it is at the extremity of the Path that there, without the mediation of contemplation — in fact without any means or agency whatsoever — that he ultimately succeeds in viewing the glory and beauty of the Absolute at the end of his voyage; it is then that he experiences perpetual and everlasting delight. He transcends the world and everything therein, covered under the mantle of the Almighty to remain existent in total annihilation. Nothing remains of him, and he passes into absolute oblivion, save that Divine favour should take him back to his realm and to the regions of (relative) being, in accordance with the capacity of his unchanging essence (*al-'ayn al-thābitah*). In the state of this return, the spheres of Divine glory and beauty are revealed to him, and he perceives (the meaning of) the Names and the Attributes in the mirror of the Essence. Through that he witnesses his own unchanging essence and everything that is under His shelter and protection, and discovers the tracks of the manifestations and the ways of recourse to the heart's exterior. Then he is conferred with the robes of prophethood and the difference of the stations of the apostles and prophets becomes evident to him. The vastness or narrowness of the circle of prophethood and that of those from whom the prophet is raised and those towards whom he is sent are revealed to him. And to enlarge on this topic further is not proper for these pages. So we shall leave it here and part, too, with the theme of *burhān al-ṣiddīqīn*, as it needs a preparatory introduction with its elaborate details.

The Desirable and the Forbidden Contemplation on the Divine Essence:

It should be known that what we said about the possibility of contemplation on the Essence, the Names and the Attributes may lead the ignorant to imagine that it is forbidden in accordance with certain *riwāyāt*, knowing not that that which is forbidden is to attempt to fathom the quality and depths of the Essence, as is clear from the traditions.[5] Sometimes those who are not capable of such (otherwise desirable) contemplation are also forbidden from reflecting on certain kinds of *ma'ārif* which require initiation into certain subtleties. The *ḥukamā'* confirm both of these points. The impossibility of fathoming the Essence is demonstrated in their writings, and the prohibition on contemplation on it is acknowledged by all of them. Also the conditions of entry into these sciences and the prohibition of the unworthy from learning them is also mentioned in their books; it is a customary advice

which is mentioned by them either in the beginning or at the end of their works. For instance, the two great philosophers of Islam and authorities in this field, Shaykh Bū 'Alī Sīnā and Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn (R) have stated this at the end of *al-'Ishārāt*[6] and at the beginning of *al-'Asfār.*[7] They have given eloquent counsels in this regard. But to contemplate the Essence for positing the principle of *al-tawḥīd* and affirming Its transcendence (*al-tanzīh*) and sanctity was the ultimate goal and purpose of the sending of the prophets and the cherished end of the 'urafā'. The Holy Quran and the sacred aḥādīth are loaded with the knowledge of the Essence, Its Perfections and the Divine Names. Reliable books of traditions, like *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* and *al-Tawḥīd* of al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, also do not forbid contemplation for the purpose of affirmation of the Essence, the Names and the Attributes. The difference between the scriptures and traditions of the prophets and the writings of the philosophers is regarding their terminology and their synoptic or elaborate treatment of the subject, as is the case with the difference between fiqh and traditions. But the calamity is that certain ignorant persons have appeared in the garb of scholars during the last few centuries, who, being bereft of the knowledge of the Quran and the Sunnah, consider their sheer ignorance as the sole proof of the vanity of the knowledge of *al-mabda'* and *al-ma'ād*. Such a man for the sake of promoting his trade, labels these *ma'ārif*, which were the ultimate goal of the apostles and the *Awliyā'* (A) of God and with whose description the entire Book of God and the traditions of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) are replete, as *ḥarām*. Not sparing any charge and calumny against those who pursue these *ma'ārif*, he diverts the hearts of the creatures of God from the knowledge of *al-mabda'* and *al-ma'ād*, in addition to sowing the seeds of discord and disharmony in the community of Muslims. When asked about the reason for all this *takfīr* (calling someone *kāfir*) and *tafsīq* (calling someone *fāsiq*), he immediately clings to the tradition لا تَتَفَكَّرُوا في ذاتِ اللهِ, 'Do not contemplate upon the Essence (of God)'. The ignorance and the error of this wretch is for two reasons: Firstly, he believes that the *ḥukamā'* contemplate on the Essence, whereas they consider its intellection as impossible and probing deep into its mysteries as forbidden, and this itself is one of the established issues of their discipline. Secondly, having misunderstood the meaning of the tradition, he believes that not a single word be uttered regarding the Sacred Essence.

Here we shall cite some of the related traditions and, in our humble capacity, try to reconcile them, leaving the judgement to the (reader's sense of) justice. Though this makes us digress from the proposed exposition of the ḥadīth — our original goal — it is essential for eliminating doubts and refuting misconceptions. The following tradition is mentioned in *al-Kāfī:*

عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ قالَ: قالَ أَبوجَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ: تَكَلَّمُوا في خَلْقِ اللّٰهِ وَلا تَتَكَلَّموا في اللّٰهِ فَإِنَّ الْكَلامَ في اللّٰهِ لايَزْدادُ صاحِبَهُ إِلاّ تَحَيُّراً.

...Abū Baṣīr reports Abū Ja'far (A) as having said: Speak (*takallamū*) about the creation of God, and do not speak about God (*fī Allāh*), for discourse about God will bring nothing but confusion (*taḥayyur*) to the discourser.[8]

This tradition itself indicates that the purpose of the prohibition is to discourage discourse aimed at fathoming the depths (*iktināh*) of the Essence and Its *kayfiyyah* (quality) with a view to discovering Its cause. Otherwise, discoursing about the Essence with a view to affirming It, Its Perfections, Its Unity and Transcendence does not cause confusion. It is also possible that the prohibition here relates to such persons in whom discourse about these matters will cause perplexity and confusion. The late muḥaddith al-Majlisī (R) has allowed both of these possibilities without elaborating them, but he gives more weight to the first one. Another tradition of *al-Kāfī* states:

وَفي رِوايَةٍ أُخْرىٰ عَنْ حَريزٍ: تَكَلَّمُوا في كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلا تَتَكَلَّمُوا في ذاتِ اللّٰهِ.

...from Ḥarīz, from Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) that he said: "Discuss everything, but do not discuss the Essence of the Almighty."[9]

There are other traditions which are identical or close in import to this *riwāyah*, and to cite them all is not essential. Another tradition of *al-Kāfī* states:

عَنْ أَبي جَعْفَرٍ قالَ: إِيّاكُمْ وَالتَّفَكُّرَ في اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنْ إِذا أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْظُرُوا إِلىٰ عَظَمَتِهِ فَانْظُرُوا إِلىٰ عَظيمِ خَلْقِهِ.

...Abū Ja'far (A) said: "Beware of *tafakkur* in God. But if you wish to view His grandeur, observe the great of His creations."[10]

Apparently, this *riwāyah* also seems to forbid probing into the reality of the Essence, for the tradition adds that if someone wants to perceive the glory of the Almighty he should infer it from the grandeur of His creation. This kind of parabolic approach is intended for various types of persons whose knowledge of God is derived through the means of the creation.

This and other such traditions which appear to forbid discourse and contemplation on God by themselves support our claim, which is expressly confirmed by the following tradition of *al-Kāfī* on contemplation:

بِإِسْنادِهِ عَنْ أَبي عَبْدِاللّٰهِ(ع) قالَ: أَفْضَلُ الْعِبادَةِ إِدْمانُ التَّفَكُّرِ في اللّٰهِ وَفي قُدْرَتِهِ.

The most superior form of worship is perpetual contemplation on God and His Power.[11]

Accordingly, contemplation on God for positing His Essence and contemplating His Power, His Names and Attributes is not only not prohibited, but is the most superior kind of worship. Another tradition of *al-Kāfī* states:

سُئِلَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِما السَّلامُ عَنِ التَّوحيدِ، فَقالَ: إِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ عَلِمَ أَنَّهُ يَكُونُ في آخِرِ الزَّمانِ أَقْوامٌ مُتَعَمِّقُونَ فَأَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ تَعالىٰ «قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ» وَالآياتِ مِنْ سُورَةِ الْحَديدِ إِلىٰ قَوْلِهِ: «وَهُوَ عَليمٌ بِذاتِ الصُّدُورِ» فَمَنْ رامَ وَراءَ ذٰلِكَ فَقَدْ هَلَكَ.

'Alī (A) ibn al-Ḥusayn (A) was questioned about *tawḥīd;* he answered : "Verily, God Almighty knew that during the Last Age there would be a people of profound thinking. Hence the Almighty revealed قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ ... (*Sūrat al-Tawḥīd*) and the verses of the *Sūrat al-Ḥadīd* up to وَهُوَ عَليمٌ بذاتِ الصُّدُورِ 'And God is the Knower of all that is in the hearts'. So whosoever goes beyond that will perish."[12]

This shows that these verses about *tawḥīd* and *tanzīh*, the verses about the emergence and the return of the creation mentioned therein, are for those who contemplate profoundly. Can then anyone still claim that contemplating on God Almighty is prohibited? What 'ārif and *ḥakīm* has brought anything that goes beyond the commencing verses of the *Sūrat al-Ḥadīd*? The ultimate of their achievement is that سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مافِي السَّمٰواتِ وَالْاَرْضِ 'All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Allah'. Is there any better way of describing God Almighty and the aspects of His Sacred Essence than the verse:

هُوَ الْاَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظّاهِرُ وَالْباطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَليمٌ *

He is the First and the Last, and the Outward and the Inward, and He is the Knower of all things.(57:3)

By the Life of the Beloved, had there been nothing besides this verse in the Glorious Book of God, it would have been sufficient for the men of heart!

If one were to consider the Book of God and the sermons and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and his infallible vicegerents (A), one shall notice that no 'ārif or *ḥakīm* has said anything on any of the conceivable sub-issues of the Divine teachings that goes beyond these;

all their statements are replete with the description (*tawṣīf*) of the Almighty and full of arguments about His sacred Essence and Attributes, so that every class of scholars benefits from them according to the capacity of its comprehension.

Then all of these traditions show that contemplating and meditating on the Essence is forbidden on a certain level, which is to probe into the inmost mysteries (*kunh*) of the Essence and Its Quality (*kayfiyyah*), as stated in this tradition of *al-Kāfī:*

مَنْ نَظَرَ فِي اللّٰهِ كَيْفَ هُوَ هَلَكَ.

Whosoever contemplates in God to see how He is, perishes.[13]

Moreover, the traditions forbidding contemplation and those enjoining it, when reconciled, give the conclusion that a group of people who do not possess the strength of giving ear to philosophical arguments (*burhān*), having no capacity of entering into such discussions, are forbidden from doing so, and there are indications in the *riwāyāt* which testify to this. But as for those who have an aptitude for it, it is not only proper but is the highest form of worship. In any case, we have digressed completely from our proposed theme, but there was no way we could avoid examining those degenerate views and the kind of calumnies, displeasing to God, which have acquired circulation during recent times on tongues, with the hope that it will make some effect on some hearts, and if one person were to accept this it would be sufficient for me. And praise is God's and to Him do we complain.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَاِلَيْهِ الْمُشْتَكىٰ.

Contemplation on Creation:

Another level of contemplation is reflecting on the subtleties of creation, its perfection and refinement, to the extent that it is in human power. Such contemplation leads to the intellection of its Perfect Source, its Wise Maker, and is a process which is the reverse of the *burhān al-ṣiddīqīn*; for, in the latter, the point of departure is the station of God Almighty, glorious is His Name, wherefrom is acquired the knowledge of the manifestations of His Sovereignty (*wilāyah*). Here, however, the point of departure is creation, whereafter is acquired the knowledge of its Source and Maker. This proof (*burhān*) is for ordinary people, who do not partake of the *burhān al-ṣiddīqīn*. Therefore, perhaps, many of them would negate that the contemplation of God can bring the knowledge of Him and that the knowledge of the Origin can lead to the knowledge of the creation.

Hence, the contemplation of the subtleties and the marvels of creation and the firmness and finesse of the system of creation belongs to the category of beneficial knowledge; it is the most meritorious of the actions of the heart and superior to all worships, since its result is the noblest of all results. Although in all forms of devotional rites (*'ibādāt*) the main aim and the real secret is the acquisition of transcendental knowledge (*ma'ārif*), yet the likes of us find no access to such secrets and such results. They are for their own people, to whom every devotional rite is like a grain of one or several revelations.

In any case, man has not been able to acquire the real knowledge of the subtleties and secrets of creation. So subtle are its foundations and so firm its design, so beautiful and perfectly planned is its system that if we consider any creature, however insignificant and humble it should appear to be, with all the scientific development acquired during centuries of studies man has been unable to discover even one of its thousand secrets, let alone the majesty of the cosmic system of creation whose intricacies and mysteries are beyond the reaches of our vision and inaccessible to our imperfect, limited ideas. Now we shall draw your attention to one of the subtleties of creation which is relatively near to understanding and comprehension and is considered to lie in the realm of the sensible.

The Earth and the Sun: Two Masterpieces of Creation

My dear, observe and reflect on the relationship between the earth and the sun, the fixed distance and the suitable speed with which the earth spins on its axis and revolves in its orbit around the sun, causing day and night and the seasons. What a perfection of creative skill and what a work of immaculate wisdom it is that had it been not exactly so — that is had the earth been a little away or nearer to the sun — there would not have been any vegetation and animal life, on account of chilling cold due to the former and excessive heat due to the latter. And, similarly, had the earth remained static, there would not have been any days and nights and seasons either, and the earth would have been without any trace of life despite possessing everything else to support life. Yet He did not suffice at this; He made its north furthest from the sun (in the northern hemisphere), so as to ensure that excessive heat does no harm to the creatures; the point nearest to the sun was situated towards the south, so that coldness should not harm the inhabitants of the earth. This was also not enough; the moon, which also influences the earth's creatures, was assigned a different course than the earth, in such a way that when the sun is the northern region of the earth, the moon appears in the southern, and vice versa. This was for the sake of the utmost benefit of their positions relative to the earth. These are essentially

sensible phenomena, yet to encompass their subtleties and secrets is not possible for anybody but their omnipotent Creator.

Why should we go so far ? If one contemplates his own creation, according to the scope of his knowledge and capability, beginning with the external senses he will see that they have been contrived according to the kind of sensations and sense perceptions they receive. For every group of sensible objects a separate faculty of perception has been created, and that too with what astounding propriety and skill! And for matters of a supra-sensible nature, which cannot be perceived through the outward senses, internal senses have been fashioned to perceive them. Let alone the knowledge of the soul and its spiritual faculties, which the human intellect cannot comprehend, and contemplate upon the human body, its anatomy, its physical constitution and the functioning of each and every external and internal organ. See what a wonderful system and what a striking order they constitute! In spite of a hundred centuries of scientific study, man has not been able to understand a thousandth fraction of it, and all the scientists declare their inability in this regard in unambiguous terms, although this body of man is no more than an insignificant speck in comparison to other creatures on the earth's crust, and the earth with all its inhabitants is of little significance as compared with the solar system and our complete solar system is of no consequence when compared with other solar systems and galaxies; and all these macro and micro systems are parts of a disciplined and orderly system, no speck of which can be found faulty by anyone and all the human intellects are unable to understand even a single secret of its myriad recondite subtleties and secrets.

Does your intellect still need something more after this reflection to believe that an Omniscient, Omnipotent and All-Wise Being, who does not resemble any other being in anything, has created all these creatures with their firm orderliness and subtlety?

... أَفِي اللهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمٰوٰاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

....Can there be any doubt concerning God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?...(14:10)

All this orderly and systematic artistry, whose general laws no human mind can comprehend, has not come into existence by itself and spontaneously. Blind be the inner eye that fails to perceive the Truth and cannot observe Its beauty in these creatures! Perish the man who is skeptical and doubtful despite seeing all these effects and signs! But, what else can helpless man, captivated by fantasies, do? If you take out your rosary and claim that its beads got assembled on the thread by themselves, without anybody arranging them, everyone will

laugh at your intelligence. You will invite a calamity if you take out your pocket watch and make similar claims about it; if you do such a thing will you not have stuck off your name from the list of the sane and wouldn't all the sane people of the world consider you a lunatic? If one who considers this simple and small mechanical system to originate without a cause and as being outside causality is considered insane and is likely to be stripped of all the rights belonging to men of reason, what is to be done with the person who claims not the whole cosmic system but even man and the complex system of his body and soul alone to have come into existence by itself? Is he still to be reckoned among men of reason? What fool is more stupid than such a man?

قُتِلَ ٱلْإِنْسَانُ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ ۞

Perish man! What has made him an unbeliever? (80:17)

Death to him whom knowledge cannot revive and who is drowned in the sea of his own error!

Contemplation on the States of the Soul:

One of the levels of contemplation is meditation on the states of the soul, which is of immense benefit being the source of vast transcendental knowledge. Here we intend to discuss two benefits: one is the knowledge of the Day of Resurrection, and the other is the knowledge of (the necessity of) prophethood and revealed scriptures — that is, of general prophethood (*al-nubuwwat al-'āmmah*) and systems of Divine Law (*sharāyi' ḥaqqah*). One of the issues pertaining to the soul is its state of independence (from the body), a problem which has been given more significance than any other philosophical issue by all the eminent *ḥukamā'*, about which they have given numerous proofs and explanations. Here we are not in a position to offer an elaborate proof of this. We shall confine ourselves to mentioning some simple preliminaries and then return to our subject.

All the physicians, scientists and anatomists unanimously agree that all the human organs, from the piamater — which is the centre of sense perceptions and the stage for the manifestation of all psychic faculties — to the coarser parts and organs of the body, weaken, deteriorate and decline after the age of thirty or thirty-five years. We ourselves have experienced how weakness and sluggishness overtake all the organs of the body after that age. However, at the same time, that is at the age of thirty and forty and after that, the spiritual faculties and intellectual perceptions become more refined and gain in growth and strength. This implies that the rational faculties are not physically based, for had they

been corporeal like other physical faculties, they would also have declined. It is not right to imagine that it is the extent of intellectual activity as well as experience which strengthen the intellectual faculties, because all the physical faculties weaken and decline despite prolonged use and do not grow in strength and perfection. This proves that the intellectual faculty is not physically rooted.

It is also improper to say that the faculty of intellect also declines with age, because, firstly, none of the physical faculties grows strong till middle age, so that it may be said that a certain organ of the body has been the centre of intellectual perception that grows in strength till middle age and then becomes weaker, thus rendering weak the faculty of intellect as well.

Secondly, the weakness which continues into middle age is associated with rational thought, which is either a faculty present in the body or is dependent on the physical faculties. The purely intellectual and higher faculties continue to become stronger than ever before during middle age, although their expression and outward manifestation may be lesser. In short, the strength of the faculty of intellectual perception at the age of forty or fifty years is enough for proving our contention.

Moreover, every such faculty which is nearer to the physical and corporeal domain is inclined to deteriorate and decay more rapidly, and that which is more removed from it weakens more latterly. But the powers belonging to the world of the transcendent and the celestial become stronger and their vitality increases. This proves that the soul is not corporeal and physical in nature. Since the properties, effects and activities of the soul are opposed to the properties, effects and activities of the purely corporeal organs, it proves that the soul is not corporeal in nature. For instance, through prior knowledge we know that a body does not accept more than one form. If it is to receive another form, it will have to part with the form it earlier had. For example, if a picture is drawn on a paper, another picture cannot be painted on that page as long as the first picture is not erased completely. This principle is applicable to all bodies; but for the soul, while one form is impressed on it, other totally different forms can also be stamped on it without the first form being wiped out. Every corporeal body can receive only finite forms, whereas the soul can receive infinite forms, and it is for this reason that it can posit infinity. Also, every corporeal body, if it loses one form, that form cannot be restored to it without a renewed cause; but in the case of the soul, any form, after having left it, may return to it without any resumption of the cause. This shows that the soul is opposed to all corporeal bodies regarding properties, effects and action. Hence it has a non-corporeal existence of its own and does not belong to the category of bodies and physical objects.

Anything that is non-corporeal is not subject to decay — as has

been demonstrated in its own place — because decay cannot occur without matter, and the non-corporeal is independent of matter. Matter is the precondition of corporeal bodies; therefore, decay is not possible for the soul. Hence we come to the conclusion that the soul does not weaken and decay or is destroyed with the weakening, decay or destruction of the body, or after separating from it. It remains in another world and there is no death and extinction for it; this is a spiritual resurrection for the souls, prior to the Day of Resurrection, when they are united with the bodies by the will of God.

Now we reach the point of absolute affirmation of Resurrection, and stand opposed to those who negate it absolutely. From these preliminaries it should be clear that there is health and disease, reform and corruption, knowledge and wretchedness for souls, and to discover their source and to know the secrets of their corruption and welfare is not possible for anyone except the Holy Essence of the Almighty. In the perfect system of the cosmos, which is the best of possible systems ordered by the Absolutely Wise and the Omniscient, it is impossible that there should be any negligence regarding the education of mankind as to the ways of its felicity and wretchedness, its guidance towards the causes of spiritual soundness and corruption, and the prescription of remedies for curing the soul. This is because such a negligence would imply a defect either in God's knowledge or His power, either His generosity or His justice, whereas it is known that His Holy Being is free from all these defects. He is absolutely perfect and absolutely generous. Any neglect providing guidance pointing out the paths of knowledge and wretchedness will imply a great defect in Divine wisdom, which would lead to cosmic disorder and chaos. Therefore, the perfect system necessitates the declaration of the paths of felicity and the road to guidance. This explanation leads to two clear conclusions.

One is that the Sharī'ah is the prescription for spiritual maladies and is known to none except the Sacred Being of the Almighty. The other is that it is necessary for God to bring it to the knowledge of man. It is obvious that such a momentous, perfect and precise knowledge, whose apprehension is not possible through the intellectual faculties of men — none of which can grasp either the relationships between the corporeal and transcendental worlds or the effects of the transcendental forms on the inner depths of the soul — can only be accessible through the agency of *waḥy* or revelation, that is, by means of Divine teaching. It is clear that every human individual is not worthy of this office and does not have the capability of occupying this station and performing this duty. It is only once in several centuries that one such individual is to be found who is worthy of performing this task and who can undertake such a great mission. God Almighty assigns to him the task of expounding the paths of felicity and wretchedness to humanity, to

make them aware of that wherein lies their welfare. This is general prophethood (*al-nubuwwat al-'āmmah*). Now that we have arrived at this point in our discussion, we may explain a further point which should be considered as one of self-evident truths.

A Conclusive Proof:

Now that we know that there should necessarily be a sharī'ah laid down by the Divine Lawgiver for mankind, when we turn to the sharī'ahs prevailing amongst mankind we see that there are three principal ones: the sharī'ah of Jews, the sharī'ah of Christians, and the sharī'ah of Islam. We find that in all the three essential foundations which constitute the basis of all sharī'ahs (of which the first is concerned with the true doctrines and Divine teachings about God's Attributes and His transcendence, the knowledge of angels and the qualities of the prophets (A) and their infallibility, which are the principal and main component of the sharī'ahs; the second is about praiseworthy qualities, purification of the soul and moral excellences; the third is about outward individual and social acts and rites pertaining to political and civic actions and their like), the Islamic sharī'ah is more complete than the others. Anyone who tries to judge without prejudice will discover that it is incomparable to the others, and there does not exist any religious law pertaining to all the aspects and stages of life more perfect regarding its worldly and otherworldly aspects than this Law. This is itself the biggest proof in favour of its Divine origin. Accordingly, after affirming the doctrine of universal prophethood and the doctrine that God Almighty has legislated a Divine sharī'ah for humanity, showing them the path of guidance and bringing them under the cover of one discipline and system, no preliminaries are required for proving the truthfulness of the Islamic *Dīn* except for examining it and comparing it with other religious laws on every conceivable level of human need — from righteous qualities and spiritual learning to individual and social responsibilities. And this is the meaning of the following sacred tradition:

اَلْإِسْلامُ يَعْلو وَلا يُعْلىٰ عَلَيْهِ

Islam surpasses (every creed) and is not surpassed (by anything).

This is because the more the intellects of men progress and the more they gain in understanding, they bow their heads in front of its light of guidance when they consider its proofs (*ḥujaj*) and arguments (*barāhīn*), and no *ḥujjah* in the world can refute them.

The result of our arguments relating to the positing of the prophetic mission of the Seal of Prophethood (S) is that in the same way as the

creative perfection manifest in the creation of the cosmos and its perfect arrangement and order directs us towards the intellection of a Being who has ordered it and whose omniscience encompasses all its particulars, subtleties and grandeurs, the perfection of the Sharī'ah — whose perfect order and methodical finesse is capable of guaranteeing all the material and spiritual, this-worldly and otherworldly, collective and individual needs — guides us to the fact that the system of this sharī'ah has been ordered by a knowledge which encircles all the needs of the human species. And since our intellects tell us that the intellectual faculties of a man whose biography has been written by all the historians of religion and who was an unlettered person brought up in a society devoid of all higher knowledge and virtues, could not have produced such a perfect and systematic sharī'ah. Hence, of necessity, we have to acknowledge that this Sharī'ah has a metaphysical and transcendental source, and reached that glorious personage (S) by means of Divine revelation and *waḥy*. And praise is God's for the clarity of proofs.

We had intended to describe another stage of contemplation — the contemplation on this world, and *zuhd* is its fruit — but since this pen broke its reins in the earlier stages of this discourse making it somewhat lengthier than intended, we shall refrain from going into it.

to be continued — inshā' Allah.

NOTES:

1. *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* (Ākhundī, ed. by 'Alī Akbar Ghaffārī), II, 54.
2. *Manāzil al-sā'irīn*, I, 57.
3. *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, II, 55.
4. *Ibid.*, II, 50.
5. *Al-Maḥajjat al-bayḍā'*, VIII, 193. تَفَكَّرُوا في خَلْقِ اللهِ وَلَا تَتَفَكَّروا في اللهِ فَإِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَقْدِرُوا قَدْرَهُ
6. *Al-'Ishārāt wa al-tanbīhāt* (Tehran: Ḥaydarī), III, 419.
7. *Al-'Asfār al-'arba'ah* (Dār al-Ma'ārif al-'Islāmiyyah), I, 10.
8. *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, I, 92, ḥadīth 1.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, I, 93, ḥadīth 7.
11. *Ibid.*, II, 55, ḥadīth 5.
12. *Ibid.*, I, 91, ḥadīth 3.
13. *Ibid.*, I, 93, ḥadīth 5.

A Selection From Uṣūl al-Kāfī *Part 1*

Preface:

The ḥadīth literature can broadly be divided into at least four categories depending on the themes dealt with in traditions. Firstly, there is the part which is concerned with matters of doctrinal significance (*uṣūl al-Dīn*). Secondly, there are traditions which deal with spiritual and ethical themes (*'irfān* and *akhlāq*). Thirdly, there is the great mass of traditions concerned with law and legal issues (*fiqh*). Fourthly, there are the traditions which deal mainly with history and historical incidents. Of the four major collections of Shī'ī ḥadīth, namely *al-Kāfī*, *al-Tahdhīb*, *al-'Istibṣār*, and *Man lā yaḥḍuruhu al-faqīh*, only a part of *al-Kāfī* deals with doctrinal and ethical themes. The rest of *al-Kāfī* as well as the whole of the three other collections, deal mainly with legal matters. This part of *al-Kāfī* dealing with doctrinal, ethical and historical themes consists of the books constituting *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* and *Rawḍat al-Kāfī*.

Uṣūl al-Kāfī is the first part of al-Kulaynī's *al-Kāfī* that deals with themes of doctrinal and ethical significance in a systematic manner. *Rawḍat al-Kāfī*, which deals with miscellaneous themes, is a record mostly of the sermons, letters, polemics, episodes, etc. of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A). *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* contains eight books in the following order: (1) *Kitāb al-'aql wa al-jahl* (The Book of Intellect and Ignorance, contains 34 traditions), (2) *Kitāb faḍl al-'ilm* (The Book of the Merits of Knowledge, contains 176 traditions), (3) *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (The Book of Divine Unity, contains 212 traditions), (4) *Kitāb al-ḥujjah* (The Book of God's Proofs, contains 1015 traditions), (5) *Kitāb al-'īmān wa al-kufr* (The Book of Belief and Unbelief, contains 1609 traditions), (6) *Kitāb al-du'ā'* (The Book of Invocation, contains 409 traditions), (7) *Kitāb 'aẓamat al-Qur'ān* (The Book of the Greatness of the Quran, contains 124 traditions), and (8) *Kitāb al-mu'āsharah* (The Book of

Social Ethics, contains 464 traditions). Thus the eight books of *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, which consists of two volumes, contain 3783 traditions. The entire *al-Kāfī* is said to contain 16,199 traditions, including 11,156 traditions of the *Furū' al-Kāfī*. Not all traditions of *al-Kāfī* are of equal reliability. According to the great Imāmī scholar Zayn al-Dīn al-'Āmilī, known as al-Shahīd al-Thānī (911—966/1505—1559), who examined the *asnād* or the chains of transmission of *al-Kāfī's* traditions, it consists of 5072 *ṣaḥīḥ*, 144 *ḥasan*, 1118 *muwaththaq*, 302 *qawī* and 9485 traditions which are categorized as *ḍa'īf*.

Traditions fall into two basic categories: *mutawātir* and *āḥād*. A ḥadīth is said to be *mutawātir* when it has been narrated by so many different chains of narrators belonging to various periods and different regions of the Islamic world, and in so many different wordings as to preclude any doubt about its authenticity. Traditions which are not *mutawātir* are termed as *āḥād* or *wāḥid*. The *āḥād* traditions in turn are classified into various categories by Shī'ī scholars, according to the qualities of their *asnād* and the repute of narrators in a chain. These categories, in a decreasing order of reliability are: *ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥasan*, *muwaththaq* and *ḍa'īf*. A *ṣaḥīḥ* tradition is one which is free from any kind of defect in its unbroken chain of transmission and is narrated by transmitters of well-known veracity (*thiqah*).

This selection from *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* is based on the selection published by Muḥammad Bāqir Maḥmūdī, in Arabic under the title *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Kāfī* and with Persian translation with the title *Guzīdeh-ye Kāfī* (vol.1, Markaze Intishārāt-e 'Ilmī wa Farhangī: Tehran, 1363 H. Sh.). All the aḥādīth selected here fall, according to his estimation, in the category of *ṣaḥīḥ* traditions from the viewpoint of *asnād*.

The main sources of information about the reliability of Shī'ī narrators are:

1. *Fihrist asmā' muṣannifī al-Shī'ah*, known as *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, by Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn al-'Abbās al-Najāshī al-'Asadī al-Kūfī (372—450/982—1058), referred to in the notes as N.

2. *Rijāl al-Ṭūsī*, By Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (385—460/995—1067), referred to in the notes as Tr.

3. *Fihrist al-Ṭūsī*, also by Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah al-Ṭūsī, referred to here as Tf.

4. *Ikhtiyār ma'rifat al-rijāl*, known as *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, edited by Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah al-Ṭūsī, referred to in the notes as K.

The traditions selected here have been numbered, and the serial number of each tradition in *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* is also mentioned after its serial number in this selection. The part of ḥadīth pertaining to *sanad* has been typeset separately in smaller characters so that the reader not interested in *sanad* can turn to the text of a ḥadīth directly. For those readers interested in information about the standing of narrators, some de-

tails about the sources affirming their reliability have been given in the notes at the end. Al-Kulaynī is usually placed in the 9th *ṭabaqh* (generation) of narrators. The *ṭabaqah* of each narrator is indicated after his name in the notes. For instance, 5/VI, indicates that the narrator belongs to the 5th *ṭabaqah* and has met and narrated from the Sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A). A zero instead of a Roman numeral indicates that he has not narrated directly from any of the Imams. 'N353' means, for instance, page 353 of *Rijāl al-Najāshī*. Other symbols pertaining to books of *rijāl* have been explained in the bibliography.

For information about al-Kulaynī's life and works, refer to the article "Introduction to Imāmiyyah Scholars: Al-Kulaynī and His works," by Dr. Waḥīd Akhtar in *al-Tawḥīd*, vol.II, No. 3.

At times, at the beginning of a *sanad*, al-Kulaynī cites his immediate sources with the phrase عَنْ عِدَّةٍ مِنْ أَصْحابِنا (from a group of our companions), indicating that he received the tradition from a group of his teachers, who are identifiable from the teacher from whom they narrate. Thus when al-Kulaynī says, "A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā," one or more of the following five pupils of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā are meant:

1. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-'Aṭṭār al-Qummī.
2. 'Alī ibn Mūsā ibn Ja'far al-Kamandānī.
3. Abū Sulaymān Dāwūd ibn Kawrah al-Qummī.
4. Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Idrīs ibn Aḥmad al-'Ash'arī al-Qummī.
5. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim al-Qummī.

When al-Kulaynī says, "A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Barqī," the following four pupils of al-Barqī are meant:

1. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī.
2. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Udhaynah.
3. Aḥmad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Umayyah.
4. 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sa'dābādī.

When al-Kulaynī says, "A group of our companions, from Sahl ibn Ziyād," he means the following four of Sahl's pupils:

1. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abān al-Rāzī, known as 'Allān al-Kulaynī.
2. Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Abd Allāh Ja'far ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Awn al-'Asadī al-Kūfī, resident at Ray.
3. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Farrūkh al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī.
4. Muḥammad ibn 'Aqīl al-Kulaynī.

When al-Kulaynī says, "A group of our companions from Ja'far ibn Muḥammad, from al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Faḍḍāl", one of them is Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Imrān ibn Abī Bakr al-'Ash'arī al-Qummī.

I. THE BOOK OF INTELLECT AND IGNORANCE (Kitāb al-'Aql wa al-Jahl):

ـ أَخْبَرَنا أبوجَعْفرٍ مُحمّد بن يعقوب قال : حدّثني عدّةٌ مِن أصحابِنا مِنهُم محمّد بن يحيى العطار ، عن أحمد بن محمّد ، عن الحسن بن محبوب ، عن العلاء بن رزين ، عن محمّد بن مسلم ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : لمّا خلق الله العقل استنطقه ثمّ قال له : أقبل فأقبل ثمّ قال له : أدبر فأدبر ثمّ قال : وعزّتي وجلالي ما خلقت خلقاً هو أحبُّ إليَّ منك ولا أكملتك إلّا فيمن اُحبّ ، أما إنّي إيّاك آمر ، و إيّاك أنهى وإيّاك اُعاقب ، وإيّاك اُثيب .

1/1: (Al-Kulaynī's disciples say): Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb (al-Kulaynī, the compiler of *al-Kāfī*) informed us, saying: A group of our companions (i.e. al-Kulaynī's teachers), among them Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-'Aṭṭār,[1] narrated to us from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad[2], he from al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb[3], from al-'Aṭā' ibn Razīn[4], from Muḥammad ibn Muslim,[5] from Abū Ja'far (al-'Imām al-Bāqir) (A) that he said:

When God created the Intellect (*al-'Aql*), He examined it. Thereupon He said to it: 'Come forward!' It came forward. Then He said: 'Go back!' It went back. Thereupon He said: 'By My power and majesty, I didn't create any creature dearer to me than thee! I will not make thee perfect except in one whom I love. Indeed, to thee are My orders and prohibitions addressed. And for you are My rewards and retributions reserved.'

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد ، عن ابن محبوب ، عن عبدالله بن سنان قال : ذكرت لأبي عبدالله عليه السلام رجلاً مبتلىً بالوضوء والصلاة و قلت : هو رجل عاقل ، فقال : أبوعبدالله وأيُّ عقل له وهو يطيع الشيطان ؟ فقلت له : وكيف يطيع الشيطان؟ فقال سله هذا الّذي يأتيه من أيّ شيء هو؟ فإنّه يقول لك من عمل الشيطان .

2/10: (Al-Kulaynī, from) Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from (al-Ḥasan) ibn Maḥbūb, from 'Abd Allāh ibn Sinān[6], who said:

I mentioned to Abū 'Abd Allāh (al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq) (A) about a man afflicted with (doubts about) *wuḍū'* (ritual ablutions) and *ṣalāt*, remarking that he was a man of intellect (*'āqil*). Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'What kind of intellect has he when he obeys Satan! ' I said: 'How does he obey Satan?' He said: 'Ask him about its cause and he will tell you that

it is the work of Satan.'

ـ عدّة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمّد ، عن الهيثم بن أبي مسروق النهديّ ، عن الحسين بن خالد ، عن إسحاق بن عمّار قال : قلت لأبي عبدالله عليه السلام : الرجل آتيه وأُكلّمه ببعض كلامي فيعرفه كلّه ، ومنهم من آتيه فأُكلّمه بالكلام فيستوفي كلامي كلّه ثمّ يردّه عليّ كما كلّمته ، ومنهم من آتيه فأُكلّمه فيقول : أعد عليّ ؟! فقال : يا إسحاق ! وما تدري لِمَ هذا ؟ قلت : لا ؛ قال : الّذي تكلّمه ببعض كلامك فيعرفه كلّه فذاك من عجنت نطفته بعقله ، و أمّا الّذي تُكلّمه فيستوفي كلامك ثمّ يجيبك على كلامك ، فذاك الّذي ركّب عقله فيه في بطن امّه ، و أمّا الّذي تكلّمه بالكلام فيقول : أعد عليّ ، فذاك الّذي ركّب عقله فيه بعدما كبُر ، فهو يقول لك : أعد عليّ .

3/27: A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from al-Haytham ibn Abī Masrūq al-Nahdī[7], from al-Ḥusayn ibn Khālid[8], from Isḥāq ibn 'Ammār[9], who said:

I asked Abū 'Abd Allāh (A): 'How is it that certain people understand everything on being told a little (about some matter) and some people are such that they hear the whole thing and respond to it; but there are some others who on being told (about a matter) ask one to repeat it again?' The Imam (A) said: 'O Isḥāq, do you know why that is so? The man who understands the whole (matter) on hearing a little is one whose intellect was kneaded with his (substance) at the spermatic stage. The one who hears the whole thing and responds in accordance with what you had told him, is one whose intellect developed in his mother's womb. And the man who requests you to repeat is one whose intellect developed after he grew up.'

II. THE BOOK OF THE MERIT OF KNOWLEDGE (Kitāb Faḍl al-'Ilm):

The Duty to Seek Knowledge:

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن محمّد بن الحسين ، عن محمّد بن عبدالله ، عن عيسى بن عبدالله العَمريّ ، عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام قال : طلب العلم فريضة .

4/38: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn,[10] from Muḥam-

mad ibn 'Abd Allāh,[11] from 'Īsā ibn 'Abd Allāh al-'Umarī:[12]

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'It is a duty to acquire knowledge'.

ـ محمّد بن إسماعيل ، عن الفضل بن شاذان ، عن ابن أبي عمير ، عن جميل بن درّاج ، عن أبان بن تغلب ، عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام قال : لوددت أنّ أصحابي ضربت رؤوسهم بالسياط حتّى يتفقّهوا .

5/44: Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl[13], from al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān[14], from Ibn Abī 'Umayr[15], from Jamīl ibn Darrāj[16], from Abān ibn Taghlib[17]:

Abū 'Abd Allāh said: 'It will be to my liking if the heads of my companions (followers) are struck with lashes until they become learned (in religion)'.

The Merits of Scholars:

ـ الحسين بن محمّد ، عن أحمد بن اسحاق ، عن سعدان بن مسلم ، عن معاوية ابن عمّار قال : قلت لأبي عبدالله عليه السلام : رجل راوية لحديثكم يبثّ ذلك في الناس و يشدّده في قلوبهم و قلوب شيعتكم ولعلّ عابداً من شيعتكم ليست له هذه الرواية أيّهما أفضل ؟ قال : الراوية لحديثنا يشدّ به قلوب شيعتنا أفضل من ألف عابد .

6/54: Al-Husayn ibn Muhammad[18], from Ahmad ibn Isḥāq[19], from Sa'dān ibn Muslim[20], from Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Ammār[21], who said:

I said to Abū 'Abd Allāh (A): 'Between a man who narrates your traditions and establishes them among the people, (as if) inscribing them in the hearts of your followers, and a devout person from among your followers who does not narrate these traditions—which of them is better?' The Imam (A) replied: 'He who narrates our traditions and thereby makes firm the hearts of our followers is better than a thousand devotees'.

The Reward of the Teacher and the Student:

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد ، عن الحسن بن محبوب ، عن جميل بن صالح. عن محمّد بن مسلم ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : إنّ الّذي يعلّم العلم منكم له أجر مثل أجر

المتعلّم وله الفضل عليه، فتعلّموا العلم من حملة العلم وعلّموه إخوانكم كما علّمكموه العلماء.

7/60: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb, from Jamīl ibn Ṣāliḥ,[22] from Muḥammad ibn Muslim:

Abū Ja'far (al-'Imām al-Bāqir) (A) said: 'The teacher of Knowledge among you receives the reward of the student and has a merit over the latter. So seek Knowledge from its possessors and teach it to your brothers in the same way as the learned taught you.'

Attributes of The Learned:

ـ محمّد بن يحيى العطّار ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن الحسن بن محبوب عن معاوية بن وهب قال : سمعت أباعبدالله عليه السلام يقول : اطلبوا العلم و تزيّنوا معه بالحلم و الوقار ، و تواضعوا لمن تعلّمونه العلم ، و تواضعوا لمن طلبتم منه العلم ، ولا تكونوا علماء جبّارين فيذهب باطلكم بحقّكم .

8/65 Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-'Aṭṭār, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb, from Mu'āwiyah ibn Wahb,[23] who said:

I heard Abū 'Abd Allāh (al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq) (A) say: 'Seek Knowledge and adorn it with forbearance and dignity.Be humble to those whom you teach and to those from whom you learn. Don't be tyrannical in your teaching conduct, for you will forfeit that to which you are entitled on account of it.'

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، ومحمّد بن إسماعيل ، عن الفضل بن شاذان النيسابوريّ جميعاً ، عن صفوان بن يحيى ، عن أبي الحسن الرّضا عليه السلام قال: إنّ من علامات الفقه الحلم والصمت .

9/68 Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā and Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl, both of them from al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān al-Nīshābūrī, from Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā:[24]

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A) said: 'Forbearance and silence are among the signs of learnedness.'

On the Death of an 'Ālim:

ـ عدّة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن خالد ، عن عثمان بن عيسى ، عن

أبي أيّوب الخزّاز ، عن سليمان بن خالد ، عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام قال : ما من أحد يموت من المؤمنين أحبّ إلى إبليس من موت فقيه .

10/73 A group of our companions from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid, from 'Uthmān ibn 'Īsā,[25] from Abū Ayyūb al-Khazzāz,[26] from Sulaymān ibn Khālid:[27]

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'Of the believers that die, the death of none of them is so much lovable to Iblīs as the death of a scholar (learned in the *Dīn*).'

On Questioning Scholars:

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن حمّاد بن عيسى ، عن حريز عن زرارة ومحمّد بن مسلم و بريد العجليّ قالوا : قال أبوعبدالله عليه السلام لحمران بن أعين في شيء سأله : إنّما يهلك النّاس لأنّهم لايسألون .

11/85 Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā,[28] from Ḥarīz,[29] from Zurārah,[30] Muḥammad ibn Muslim and Burayd (ibn Mu'āwiyah) al-'Ijlī,[31] who (all the three) said:

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A), in reply to Ḥumrān ibn A'yan, who had asked him about something, said: 'Indeed (many) people perish for not having asked questions.'

On Not Speaking Without Knowledge:

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد وعبدالله ابني محمّد بن عيسى ، عن عليّ بن الحكم ، عن سيف بن عميرة ، عن مفضّل بن يزيد قال : قال [لي] أبوعبدالله عليه السلام : أنهاك عن خصلتين فيهما هلاك الرجال : أنهاك أن تدين الله بالباطل ، وتفتي الناس بما لاتعلم .

12/97 Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad and 'Abd Allāh, the sons of Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from 'Alī ibn al-Ḥakam,[32] from Sayf ibn 'Umayrah,[33] from Mufaḍḍal ibn Mazyad.[34]

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'I forbid you from two qualities which destroy men: don't worship God with false (doctrines) and don't give *fatwās* (legal verdicts) to people about something you know not.'

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن الحسن بن محبوب ، عن عليّ

ابن رئاب . عن أبي عبيدة الحذّاء ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : من أفتى الناس بغير علم ولا هدى لعنته ملائكة الرّحمة ، وملائكة العذاب ، ولحقه وزر من عمل بفتياه .

13/99: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb, from 'Alī ibn Ri'āb,[35] from Abū 'Ubaydah al-Ḥadhdhā':[36]

Abū Ja'far (A) said: 'One who gives *fatwās* to people without knowledge and guidance is cursed by the angels of (Divine) mercy and (Divine) chastisement, and on him rests the burden (of the sins) of those who act upon his verdicts.'

ـ عدّة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن خالد ، عن الحسن بن عليّ الوشّاء ، عن أبان الأحمر ، عن زياد بن أبي رجاء ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : ما علمتم فقولوا ، و ما لم تعلموا فقولوا : الله أعلم ، إنّ الرجل لينتزع الآية من القرآن يخرّ فيها أبعد ما بين السماء والأرض .

14/100 A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid, from al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Washshā',[37] from Abān al-'Aḥmar,[38] from Ziyād ibn Abī Rajā':[39]

Abū Ja'far (A) said: "Tell (the people) what you know, and when you don't know say, 'God knows best.' (It happens that) someone singles out a verse from the Quran (interpreting it in isolation from the rest of the Book) deviating in it (from the truth) to an extent greater than the distance between the heaven and the earth."

ـ محمّد بن إسماعيل ، عن الفضل بن شاذان ، عن حمّاد بن عيسى ، عن ربعيّ بن عبدالله ، عن محمّد بن مسلم ، عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام قال : للعالم إذا سئل عن شيء و هو لا يعلمه أن يقول : الله أعلم ، وليس لغير العالم أن يقول ذلك .

15/101 Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl, from al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān, from Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā, from Rib'ī ibn 'Abd Allāh,[40] from Muḥammad ibn Muslim:

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: "When a learned man is asked about something he doesn't know, he should say, 'God knows best.' But it is not for someone who is not learned to say that."

ـ عليّ بن إبراهيم ، عن أبيه ، عن ابن أبي عمير ، عن يونس [بن عبدالرحمن]

عن أبي يعقوب إسحاق بن عبدالله ، عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام قال : إنّ الله خصّ عباده بآيتين من كتابه : أن لا يقولوا حتّى يعلموا ولا يردّوا ما لم يعلموا وقال عزّ وجلّ : «ألم يؤخذ عليهم ميثاق الكتاب أن لا يقولوا على الله إلّا الحقّ» و قال : : « بل كذّبوا بما لم يحيطوا بعلمه ولمّا يأتهم تأويله » .

16/104 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, from his father, from Ibn Abī 'Umayr, from Yūnus,[41] from Abū Ya'qūb Isḥāq ibn 'Abd Allāh:[42]

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: "God has specified (the limits of the duty of) His creatures by two verses from His Book: That they speak not until they know and that they reject not what they don't know. The Almighty has said: 'Has not the compact of the Book been taken touching them, that they should say concerning God nothing but the truth?' (7:169) And He has said: 'No; but they belied that which they encompassed not in knowledge, and whose interpretation has not yet come to them.'" (10:39)

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن الحسين بن سعيد ، عن النضر بن سويد ، عن يحيى الحلبيّ ، عن أبي سعيد المكاريّ ، عن أبي بصير ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام في قول الله عزّ وجلّ : «فكبكبوا فيها هم و الغاوون » قال : هم قوم وصفوا عدلاً بألسنتهم ثمّ خالفوه إلى غيره .

17/125 Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from al-Ḥusayn ibn Sa'īd,[43] from al-Naḍr ibn Suwayd,[44] from Yaḥyā al-Ḥalabī,[45] from Abū Sa'īd al-Mukārī,[46] from Abū Baṣīr:[47]

Explaining the words of the Almighty, 'So they shall be pitched into it (hell), they and the perverse' (26:94), Abū Ja'far (A) said, 'They are a people who praised justice with their tongues and violated it (with their deeds)'.

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن عليّ بن النعمان ، عن عبدالله بن مسكان ، عن داود بن فرقد ، عن أبي سعيد الزهريّ ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : الوقوف عند الشبهة خيرٌ من الاقتحام في الهلكة ، و تركك حديثاً لم تروه خيرٌ من روايتك حديثاً لم تحصه .

18/134: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from 'Alī

ibn al-Nu'mān,[47] from 'Abd Allāh ibn Muskān,[49] from Dāwūd ibn Farqad,[50] from Abū Sa'īd al-Zuhrī:[51]

Abū Ja'far (A) said: 'To halt when in doubt is better than dashing into ruin. To abstain from (narrating) a tradition which is obscure to you is better than narrating something of which you are not sure.'

- محمّد، عن أحمد، عن ابن فضّال، عن ابن بكير، عن حمزة بن الطيّار أنّه عرض على أبي عبدالله عليه السلام بعض خطب أبيه حتّى إذا بلغ موضعاً منها قال له: كفّ و اسكت ثمّ قال أبو عبدالله عليه السلام: لا يسعكم فيما ينزل بكم ممّا لا تعلمون إلّا الكفّ عنه والتثبّت والردّ إلى أئمّة الهدى حتّى يحملوكم فيه على القصد ويجلوا عنكم فيه العمى، و يعرّفوكم فيه الحقّ، قال الله تعالى: «فاسئلوا أهل الذّكر إن كنتم لا تعلمون

19/135 Muḥammad, from Aḥmad, from Ibn Faḍḍāl,[52] from Ibn Bukayr,[53] from Ḥamzah ibn al-Ṭayyār:[54]

Ḥamzah ibn al-Ṭayyār was reproducing some of the speeches of the father of Abū 'Abd Allāh (i.e. al-'Imām al-Bāqir [A]) in his presence. When he reached a point the Imam (A) said: "Stop and be silent." Then he added, "When something comes to you that you don't know, your duty in such a case is nothing but to halt, to verify it and refer it to the Imam of guidance (*A'immat al-hudā*), who will lead you to what is right, clarify that which was obscure for you and acquaint you with the truth therein. God Almighty has said: 'Question the *Ahl al-Dhikr*, if you know not.'" (16:43)

On Narration of Ḥadīth:

- محمّد بن يحيى، عن محمّد بن الحسين، عن ابن أبي عمير، عن ابن أذينة، عن محمّد بن مسلم قال: قلت لأبي عبدالله عليه السلام: أسمع الحديث منك فأزيد وأنقص؟ قال: إن كنت تريد معانيه فلا بأس.

20/142: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn, from Ibn Abī 'Umayr, from Ibn Udhaynah,[55] from Muḥammad ibn Muslim:

Muḥammad ibn Muslim says, "I said to Abū 'Abd Allāh (A), "Can I add to or omit some (words) from a ḥadīth that I hear from you (while narrating it)?' He replied, 'It does not matter if your purpose is to convey its meaning.'"

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن الحسن بن عليّ بن فضّال عن ابن بكير ، عن عبيد بن زرارة قال : قال أبو عبدالله عليه السلام : احتفظوا بكتبكم فإنّكم سوف تحتاجون إليها .

21/150: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Faḍḍāl, from Ibn Bukayr, from 'Ubayd ibn Zurārah:[56]

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'Take good care of your books (written records of traditions), for you will stand in need of them in the future.'

ـ محمّد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن عيسى ، عن أحمد بن محمّد بن أبي نصر ، عن جميل بن درّاج قال : قال أبو عبدالله عليه السلام : أعربوا حديثنا فإنّا قوم فصحاء .

22/153: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Naṣr,[57] from Jamīl ibn Darrāj:

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'Arabicize our traditions (i.e. narrate them in accordance with the grammatical, literary and phonetic criteria), for we (Ahl al-Bayt) are an eloquent people.'

To be continued — inshā' Allāh.

NOTES:

1. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-'Aṭṭār al-Qummī, 8/0, N353/A157: *thiqah, 'ayn, kathīr al-ḥadīth, shaykh aṣḥābinā fī zamānihi.*

2. By "Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad" here is meant one of the following two: Aḥmad ibn Abī 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-Khālid al-Barqī, 7/0, N76/: *kāna thiqah fī nafsih, yarwī 'an al-ḍu'afā', wa i'tamada al-marāsīl;* Tf20/A14: *thiqah, qhayr annahu akthara al-riwāyah 'an al-ḍu'afā' wa i'tamada al-marāsīl.*

Abū Ja'far Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Sa'd al-'Ash'arī al-Qummī, 7/0, N82:met (IX) and (X), *shaykh al-Qummiyyīn, wa wajhuhum wa faqīhuhum, ghayr mudāfi'.* Tr366 mentions him among companions of (VIII) and (IX), and says: *thiqah*. A13:met (VIII) (IX) & (X), *kāna thiqah.*

3. Al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb al-Sarrād (or al-Zarrād) al-Kūfī (d.224/839), 6/VIII, Tr 347 Tf 46: *thiqah;* K556: he is one of the Shī'ī narrators about whose authenticity there is consensus among Shī'ī scholars.

4. 'Alā' ibn Razīn al-Qallā', 5/VI, N298: *thiqah;* Tf483: *thiqah jalīl al-qadr;* Sh84: *thiqah;* A123: *thiqah.*

5. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn Riyāḥ al-'Awqas al-Ṭaḥḥān al-Kūfī (d.150/767), 4/V,VI;N324,A149: *wajh aṣḥābinā bi al-Kūfah, wari' faqīh,...kāna min awthaq al-nās;* K238: he is one of the Shī'ī narrators about whose veracity (*taṣdīq*) there is consensus among Shī'ī scholars. He was one of the six most learned companions of V and VI, the others being Zurārah, Ma'rūf ibn Kharbudh,

Burayd, Abū Baṣīr and al-Fuḍayl ibn Yasār.

6. 'Abd Allāh ibn Sinān al-Kūfī, 5/VI,VII,N214,A105: *thiqah, min aṣḥābinā, jalīl, lā yuṭ'an 'alayhi fī shay'in;* Tf101: *thiqah;* Sh72; *thiqah;* K410: *kāna raḥimahu Allāh min thiqāt rijāl Abī 'Abd Allāh (A).*

7. Al-Haytham ibn Abī Masrūq al-Nahdī, he is one of those from whom Ibn Abī 'Umayr, who–like al-Bīzanṭī and Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā–does not narrate except from *thiqah* narrators, has narrated traditions. See *al-Wāfī*, vol.10, p.109.

8. Al-Ḥusayn ibn Khālid al-Ṣayrafī, one of the narrators of Ibn Abī 'Umayr (*al-Wāfī*, vol.13,p.18) and al-Bīzanṭī (*al-Wāfī*, vol.11, pp.42,81: vol.12, p.69; vol.13, p.21).

9. Isḥāq ibn 'Ammār, there are two narrators of this name, both of them *thiqah*: Abū Ya'qūb Isḥāq ibn 'Ammār ibn Ḥayyān al-Ṣayrafī, 5/VI,VII;N71: *thiqah, shaykh min aṣḥābinā.*

Isḥāq ibn 'Ammār al-Sābātī, 5/VI,VII;Tf15: *kāna Faṭḥiyyan illā annahu thiqah.*

10. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-Khaṭṭāb al-Zayyāt al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī (d.262/875), 7/0,N334: *jalīl min aṣḥābinā, 'aẓīm al-qadr, kathīr al-riwāyah, thiqah, 'ayn, ḥasan al-taṣānīf, maskūn ilā riwāyatih*; Tr407,Tf140: *thiqah.*

11. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Hilāl; 6/0; he is one of the *thiqah* narrators of Ja'far ibn Muḥammad ibn Qūlawayh; see his *Kāmil al-ziyārāt*, p.23.

12. 'Īsā ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Umar ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A), 5/VI; among the *thiqāt* of Ibn Qūlawayh; see *Kāmil al-ziyārāt*, p.47.

13. Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Nīshābūrī al-Bunduqī, 8/0; he has been considered reliable by: al-Ḥurr al-'Āmilī in *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol.3, p.555, al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī in *al-Muntahā*, p.275 and *al-Mukhtalif*, p.92.

14. Abū Muḥammad al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān ibn al-Khalīl al-'Azdī al-Nīshābūrī (d.260/873), 7/VIII,IX;N307; *kāna thiqah, aḥad aṣḥābinā al-fuqahā' wa al-mutakallimīn wa lahu jalālatun fī hadhihi al-ṭā'ifah.*

15. Abū Aḥmad Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Umayr Ziyād ibn 'Īsā al-'Azdī al-Baghdādī (d.217/832), 6/VII,VIII;N326: *jalīl al-qadr 'aẓīm al-manzilah fīnā wa 'ind al-mukhāliflīn...aṣḥābunā yaskunūna ilā marāsīlihi*; Tf142: *kāna min awthaq al-nās 'ind al-khāṣṣah wa al-'āmmah, wa ansakahum nusukan, wa awra'ahum wa a'badahum;* K556: he is among the narrators considered trustworthy by consensus of Shī'ī scholars.

16. Abū 'Alī Jamīl ibn Darrāj ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Nakh'ī, 5/VI,VII;N126: *shayknuna wa wajh al-ṭā'ifah, thiqah;* Tf44: *thiqah.*

17. Abū Sa'īd Abān ibn Taghlib ibn Rabāḥ (d.141/758); 4/V,VI; N10: *'aẓīm al-manzilah fī aṣḥābinā*; Tf17: *thiqah jalīl al-qadr 'aẓīm al-manzilah fī aṣḥābinā.*

18. Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Imrān al-'Ash'arī al-Qummī; 8/0; N66/A52: *thiqah.*

19. Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Isḥāq ibn 'Abd Allāh al-'Ash'arī al-Qummī; 7/IX,X, XI; Tr427: *thiqah;* A 15: *thiqah, shaykh al-Qummiyyīn, ra'ā Ṣāḥib al-Zamān 'alayhi al-salām.*

20.Sa'dān ibn Muslim al-'Āmirī; 5-6/VI,VII; one of the narrators of Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā; see Tf79 & N193: lived a long life.

21. Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Ammār ibn Abī Mu'āwiyah Khabbāb al-Duhnī al-Kūfī (d.175/791) 5/VI,VII; N411: *Kāna wajhan fī aṣḥābinā, wa muqaddaman, kabīr al-sha'n, 'aẓīm al-maḥall, thiqah.*

22. Jamīl ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Asadī; 5/VI,VII; N127/A34: *thiqah, wajh.*

23. Mu'āwiyah ibn Wahb al-Bajalī; 5/VI,VII; *thiqah, ḥasan al-ṭarīqah;* A167: *thiqah, ṣaḥīḥ, ḥasan al-ṭarīqah.*

24. Ṣafwān ibn Yahyā, Abū Muḥammad al-Bajalī al-Kūfī (d. 210/825); 6/VIII; N197: *thiqah thiqah, 'ayn:* Tf83: *awthaq ahl zamānihi 'ind aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth wa*

a'baduhum; K556: he is one of the *ruwāt* whose authenticity is accepted by consensus by Shī'ī scholars.

25. 'Uthmān ibn 'Īsā, Abū 'Amr al-'Āmirī al-Kilābī; 6/VII; K556: There is consensus among Shī'ī scholars about his reliability.

26. Ibrāhīm ibn 'Īsā (or 'Uthmān), Abū Ayyūb al-Khazzāz al-Kūfī; 5/VI,VII; N20/A5: *thiqah, kabīr al-manzilah*; Tf8: *thiqah.*

27. Sulaymān ibn Khālid ibn Dahqān al-Hilālī al-Kūfī; 4/V,VI; N183: *kāna qāri'an faqīhan wajīhan*; A77: *thiqah.*

28. Ḥammād ibn 'Īsā, Abū Muḥammad al-Juhanī (d.208 or 209/823 or 824); 5/VI,VII,VIII; N142: *kāna thiqah, fī ḥadīthihī ṣadūq*; Tr 346/Tf61/A56: *thiqah.*

29. Ḥarīz ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Sijistānī; 5/VI; Tf62/A63: *thiqah.*

30. Zurārah ibn A'yan (d.150/767); 4/V,VI; Tr350/A76: *thiqah*; N175: *qad ijtama'at fīhi khiṣāl al-faḍl wa al-dīn, ṣādiqan fī mā yarwīh*; K238: the most learned of early Shī'ī fuqahā' and one of those considered reliable by consensus.

31. Burayd ibn Mu'āwiyah al-'Ijlī (d.150/767); 4/V,VI; N12: *wajh min wujūh aṣḥābinā*; A27: *thiqah*; K238: he is one of the early Shī'ī fuqahā' and one of those considered reliable by consensus.

32. 'Alī ibn al-Ḥakam al-Kūfī; 6/IX,X; Tf87/A93: *thiqah jalīl al-qadr.*

33. Sayf ibn 'Umayrah al-Nakh'ī al-Kūfī; 5/VI, VII; N189/Tf78: *thiqah.*

34. Mufaḍḍal ibn Mazyad; 5/VI; of the *rijāl* of Ibn Abī 'Umayr, see al-Kulaynī *Rawḍat al-Kāfī*, ḥadīth 257.

35. 'Alī ibn Ri'āb al-Kūfī; 5/VI,VII; Tf87/A93: *thiqah jalīl al-qadr.*

36. Ziyād ibn 'Īsā, Abū 'Ubaydah al-Ḥadhdhā' al-Kūfī (d. before 148/765); 4/V,VI; N170/A74: *thiqah.*

37. Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Ziyād al-Washshā', Abū Muḥammad al-Ṣayrafī al-Bajalī al-Kūfī; 6/VIII; N39: *kāna min wujūh hādhihi al-ṭā'ifah, 'aynan min 'uyūn hādhihi al-ṭā'ifah*; al-Majlisī, *al-Wajīzah*, Tehran, 149: *thiqah.*

38. Abān ibn 'Uthmān al-'Aḥmar al-Bajalī al-Kūfī; 5/VI,VII; K375:considered reliable by consensus of Shī'ī scholars.

39. Ziyād ibn Abī Rajā', Abū 'Ubaydah al-Kūfī; 4/V; N171: *thiqah*; A74/K347: *thiqah.*

40. Rib'ī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Jārūd al-Basrī; 5/VI,VII; N167/A71: *thiqah.*

41. Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 208/823); 6/VII, VIII; Tr364,394: *thiqah*; N446/A184: *kāna wajhan fī aṣḥābinā mutaqaddiman 'aẓīm al-manzilah.*

42. Abū Ya'qūb, Isḥāq ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Madanī, 5/VI; Ibn Abī 'Umayr has narrated from him in this tradition; he is considered reliable.

43. Al-Ḥusayn ibn Sa'īd ibn Ḥammād ibn Mihrān al-'Ahwāzī; 7/VII,IX,X; Tr372/Tf58/A49: *thiqah.*

44. Al-Naḍr (Naṣr) ibn Suwayd al-Ṣayrafī al-Kūfī; 6/VII; N427/A174: *thiqah, ṣaḥīḥ al-ḥadīth*; Tr362: *thiqah.*

45. Yaḥyā ibn 'Imrān al-Ḥalabī; 5/VI,VII; N444/A182: *thiqah thiqah, ṣaḥīḥ al-ḥadīth.*

46. Abū Sa'īd al-Mukārī, Hāshim ibn Ḥayyān al-Kūfī; 5/VI; among the *rijāl* of Ibn Abī 'Umayr(*al-Wāfī*, V,242, VIII, 112) and Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā (*al-Wāfī*, VIII, 82, X, 66; *al-Maḥāsin*, I, 199; *al-Tawḥīd*, 149; al-Nu'mānī's *al-Ghaybah*, 128).

47. Abū Baṣīr is the *kunyah* of five narrators from among the pupils of the Imams (A). As argued by al-Tabrīzī (*Mu'jam al-thiqāt*, Qumm, 1404, pp. 136—138), in chains of transmission of traditions narrated from V,VI and VII by Abū Baṣīr is meant either of the following two:

(a) Abū Muḥammad Layth ibn al-Bakhtarī; 4/V,VI; K238: considered reliable by consensus of Shī'ī scholars according to some.

(b) Yaḥyā ibn al-Qāsim al-'Asadī (d. 150/767); 4/V,VI,VII;N441: *thiqah wajīh*; K238: considered reliable by consensus.

48. 'Alī ibn al-Nu'mān al-Nakh'ī al-Kūfī, Abū al-Ḥasan; 6/VII; N274/A95: *kāna thiqatan, wajhan, thābitan, ṣaḥīḥan, wāḍiḥ al-ṭarīqah.*

49. 'Abd Allāh ibn Muskān; 5/VI,VII: N214/A106: *thiqah, 'ayn.*

50. Dāwūd ibn Farqad al-'Asadī al-Kūfī; 5/VI,VII; N158: *thiqah thiqah*; Tr 349/A68: *thiqah.*

51. Abū Sa'īd al-Zuhrī; 4/V,VI; sources of *tawthīq* untraced.

52. 'Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Faḍḍāl al-Kūfī; 7/X,XI; N257/Tf92/A93: *thiqah.*

53. 'Abd Allāh ibn Bukayr ibn A'yan al-Shaybānī; 5/VI; Tf106/Sh77: *thiqah*; K375: he is one of the six pupils of VI considered reliable by consensus.

54. Ḥamzah ibn al-Ṭayyār; 5/VI; Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā narrates from him in K348, ḥadīth 649, which is, however, weak from the viewpoint of *sanad.*

55. 'Umar ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Udhaynah al-Baṣrī; 5/VI; among the *rijāl* of Ibn Abī 'Umayr; N283: *shaykh aṣḥābinā al-Baṣriyyīn wa wajhuhum.*

56. 'Ubayd ibn Zurārah ibn A'yan al-Shaybānī; 5/VI; N233/A127: *thiqah thiqah, 'ayn, lā labs fīhi wa lā shakk.*

57. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Naṣr al-Bīzanṭī al-Kūfī (d.221/836); 6/VII, VIII; Tr344,366/Tf19: *thiqah, 'aẓīm al-manzilah 'ind al-Riḍā* (A); A13: *thiqah jalīl al-qadr.*

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Tadwīn al-Ḥadīth: A Historical Study of the Writing and Compilation of Ḥadīth *Part 2*

by Rasūl Ja'fariyān

Translated from the Persian by A. Q. Qarā'ī

One of the things which indicate the inauthenticity of the tradition ascribed to the Prophet (S) about prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth is the statement of 'Umar in regard to his intention to have ḥadīth compiled. 'Umar is reported to have said: "I had intended to write the Prophet's Sunnah. But then it came to my mind that the past peoples wrote certain books and put their reliance upon them, as a result of which they abandoned the Divine Scriptures. By God, I will not allow anything to cover (eclipse) the Book of God."[61]

The above *riwāyah* shows that the Second Caliph had at first intended to write ḥadīth. In some versions of this *riwāyah* it is stated that he consulted other Companions about this matter and they too approved of it; but he later changed his mind for a reason that he himself states, not on account of the Prophet's prohibition.

Another thing which may be cited as evidence of the inauthenticity of the tradition regarding prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth is the statement of the Prophet (S) on the last Thursday of his terrestrial life. On that day when the Companions had assembled around his death bed, the Prophet (S) had said to them: "Bring me ink and paper that I may write for you something after which you will not fall into error." Thereat some people with 'Umar at their lead opposed him (S), saying, حَسْبُنا كِتَابُ اللهِ, "The Book of God is sufficient for us."[62] This *riwāyah* reveals that the writing of anything aside from the Quran was not only not banned, it was considered even essential by the Prophet (S) in order to stop the Ummah from falling into error and misguidance. When the Prophet (S) was asking for writing material and a group of Companions — led by the Second Caliph according to al-Shahristānī in *al-Milal wa al-niḥal* — opposed him, he (S) was aware of the disasters that would follow in the wake of this episode. Later we will see the details as recounted by Sunnī scholars of the harms caused by not

writing ḥadīth, but is it right to consider the Prophet (S) responsible for something which brought so much harm for Islamic culture and caused the Prophet's Sunnah to be adulterated by inauthentic traditions?

Prophetic Traditions Permitting the Writing of Ḥadīth:

Traditions have been narrated from the Prophet (S) in which he has permitted the writing of ḥadīth in general or given such permission to particular individuals. These traditions, by themselves, are sufficient for refuting the earlier ones prohibiting the writing of ḥadīth or, to say the least, for bringing about a conflict of *riwāyāt*, in which case both of them cease to retain validity (*ḥujjiyyah*); for the number of these traditions is large and, in view of the objections that arise against the traditions prohibiting the writing of ḥadīth, the possibility of their being authentic is very real. These traditions not only contain the permission but also the command to write aḥādīth.

This tradition has been reported through several chains of transmission that a man complained to the Prophet (S) about his incapacity to retain things in his memory. The Prophet (S) told him: اِستَعِنْ عَلىٰ حِفْظِكَ بِيَمِينِكَ "Take the assistance of thy right hand (i.e. writing) against (the defects of) thy memory."[63]

It is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet (S) stood up and delivered a speech on the occasion of the conquest of Makkah. Abū Shāt requested the Prophet (S) to write the sermon for him, whence he (S) ordered the sermon to be written down for Abū Shāt.[64]

The Prophet (S) is reported to have stated:

قَيِّدُوا العِلْمَ بِالكِتابَةِ

'Arrest' (i.e. preserve, record) knowledge by the means of writing.[65]

It is reported from Rāfi' ibn Khadīj that he said: "We asked the Prophet (S), 'Should we write some of the things that we hear from you?' The Prophet replied, اُكْتُبْها وَلا حَرَجَ 'Write it; there is no harm in it.'"[66] It is reported on the authority of 'Amr ibn Shu'ayb that his grandfather asked the Prophet (S): "We hear things from you which we cannot commit to memory. Are we permitted to write them?" The Prophet (S) replied, بَلىٰ فَاكْتُبُوها ,"Yes, write them."[67]

It is reported through several chains of transmitters from 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ that he said: "I said to the Prophet (S): 'May we write what we hear from you?' The Prophet replied, 'Yes.' I said, 'Irrespective of whether you are angry or calm?' The Prophet (S) replied, 'Yes. I don't speak anything but the truth whether I am

wrathful or pleased.'"[68]

In another tradition, the narrator is reported as asking the Prophet (S): "May we 'arrest' knowledge?" The Prophet (S) replied: "Yes".[69]

The same 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr reports that, "I used to write down whatever I heard the Prophet (S) say with the purpose of recording it. Then Quraysh stopped me from doing it and I, too, abstained from writing. Later I mentioned the matter to the Prophet. He said, 'By God, in whose hand is my life, I don't speak anything but the truth.'"[70]

It is reported from Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A) that the Prophet said, "Write this knowledge (*'ilm*) from which you will benefit in this world and the next. Know that knowledge does not allow its possessor to be ruined."[71]

Another famous tradition of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), which has been narrated both by Sunnī and Shī'ī sources, refers to an inscription (*ṣaḥīfah*) on the Prophet's sword. Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) is reported as having said about it:

وُجِدَ في قائِمِ سَيْفِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَحيفَةٌ مَكْتُوبٌ فيها مَلْعُونٌ مَنْ سَرَقَ تُخُومَ الأَرْضِ، مَلْعُونٌ مَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ غَيْرَ مَواليهِ، أَوْ قالَ مَلْعُونٌ مَنْ جَحَدَ نِعْمَةَ مَنْ أَنْعَمَ عَلَيْهِ.

> A *ṣaḥīfah* existed in the hilt of the Prophet's sword, in which was written: "Cursed is he who steals the land's boundaries. Cursed is he who befriends others than his *mawālī*," or he said, "Cursed is he who repudiates the bounty of his Bestower."[72]

Abū Hurayrah is reported to have said: "No one is better informed than me about the Prophet's aḥādīth except 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr, because he would write with his hand and memorize with his mind, whereas I would only memorize and would not write. He had obtained the Prophet's permission to write aḥādīth and the Prophet (S) had granted him the permission." [73] 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr is reported to have said: "I went to the Prophet (S) and said to him, 'I want to narrate your traditions and if you permit I will employ my hand (i.e. writing) to assist my heart (i.e. memory).' The Prophet (S) said, 'If it is my ḥadīth then take the assistance of thy hand.'" [74] He also reportedly possessed a *ṣaḥīfah* which was well-known as *al-Ṣaḥīfat al-ṣādiqah*, [75] although some have denied that it contained the Prophet's aḥādīth.[76] Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah is reported to have confirmed that 'Abd Allāh possessed such a *ṣaḥīfah* called *al-Ṣaḥīfat al-ṣādiqah*.

In another tradition the Prophet (S) is reported to have stated: "When a *mu'min* dies, the page on which he had recorded *'ilm* will last and it will be a curtain between him and the Fire on the Day of Resurrection."[77]

Al-Tirmidhī has reported that Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah possessed a *ṣaḥīfah*

in which he had collected a number of the Prophet's aḥādīth.[78] His son also used to narrate traditions from the *ṣaḥīfah*. According to al-Bukhārī's *riwāyah*, it was copy of the *ṣaḥīfah* of 'Abd Allāh ibn Awfī, who used to write aḥādīth in it with his own hand.[79]

Samurah ibn Jundab had also collected many traditions in a big book and his son, Sulaymān, who inherited it, used to narrate traditions from it. It was probably the same treatise about which Ibn Sīrīn says: "In the *risālah* given by Samurah to his son there is a great amount of *'ilm*."[80]

It is reported from Anas that pointing to a *muṣḥaf* he would say: "These are the aḥādīth which I heard from the Prophet (S). I wrote them down and presented them to the Prophet (S) (for the Prophet's approval)."[81]

Al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) narrates from his ancestors (A) that the Prophet (S) said: "When you write a ḥadīth, write it with its *sanad* (chain of transmission). If it is true, you will share in its reward; if false, its sin will lie on its speaker."[82]

The Prophet (S) is also reported to have said: قَيِّدُوا الْعِلْمَ 'Arrest knowledge.' When asked as to what he meant, he explained that he meant writing.[83]

Umm al-Mu'minīn Umm Salamah (R) is reported to have said: "The Prophet (S) asked for *adīm* (tanned sheep skin) to be brought. 'Alī (A) was also with him. Then he dictated so much to 'Alī (A) that both its sides and even edges were filled."[84]

All these traditions bear evidence that the Prophet (S) permitted the writing of ḥadīth. There are many scholars who hold that the Prophet (S) prohibited its writing earlier and permitted it later.[85] If this is the case, what was the basis for some of the Caliphs to prohibit the writing of ḥadīth? Is it possible, after that the Prophet (S) had permitted it and after a great number of aḥādīth had been already written, to link the Caliphs' prohibition to the Prophet (S)?

Rashīd Riḍā has analyzed the traditions prohibiting and permitting the writing of ḥadīth. He has tried to prove that the prohibition superseded earlier permission and hence the traditions prohibiting the writing of ḥadīth ought to be accepted as genuine. He writes:

> If we assume that there is a conflict between traditions prohibiting the writing of ḥadīth and those permitting it, one may say that one of them abrogates the other by proving that the traditions prohibiting supersede the permitting ones for two reasons: Firstly, the Companions narrated the traditions prohibiting writing even after the Prophet (S). Secondly, the Companions did not write traditions; for had they done so, their compilations would have reached us.[86]

We cannot accept this explanation for the following reasons.

Firstly, the Companions narrated the traditions permitting the writing of ḥadīth along with those prohibiting it, and, as we have seen above, some Companions did continue to write ḥadīth.

Secondly, the reason for the Companions' abstinence from compilation was the prohibition imposed by the First and the Second Caliphs, not on account of the Prophet's prohibition.

Thirdly, since it is not possible to claim that one kind of these traditions abrogated the other kind, we should say that their conflict makes both of them void and not that one of them supersedes the other.

Regarding Abū Hurayrah's admission that 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr used to write aḥādīth, Rashīd Riḍā says: "There is no reason that we should regard it as evidence of the permissibility of writing, because it is not mentioned in the ḥadīth that 'Abd Allāh wrote with the Prophet's permission."[87]

We have already cited above the *riwāyah* showing that 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr indeed did possess such a permission. There are many *riwāyāt* which bear this out, and in the one cited above Abū Hurayrah expressly states that 'Abd Allāh had obtained such a permission from the Prophet (S).

On the contrary, others, like Abū Zuhrah, are of the opinion that the Prophet (S) permitted writing of ḥadīth towards the end of his ministry when the danger of the intermingling of ḥadīth with the Quranic text was removed.[88] If we take into view the practice of some Companions, especially that of the Caliphs, we cannot accept this opinion; on the other hand, if we accept it, we shall have to consider the practice of some Caliphs as blameworthy. We don't know which of these two alternatives will be approved by Mr. Abū Zuhrah.

Views of Some Companions Regarding the Writing of Ḥadīth:

Despite the belief of some Companions that ḥadīth should not be written down, a group of them continued to do so. This fact is itself an indication that the related prohibition was imposed by the order of the Caliphs and not by the Prophet's command. Among the Companions those who believed in its permissibility were Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A) and his son al-Ḥasan (A), who not only wrote traditions but also laid stress upon their writing.[89]

'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās, it is reported, used to say, "Arrest *'ilm* by the means of writing."[90] Hārūn ibn 'Antarah narrates from his father that 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās after narrating a tradition to him asked him to write it down.[91]

Salamī reports that he saw some tablets with Ibn 'Abbās on which he wrote the Prophet's deeds as narrated to him by Abū Rāfi'.[92]

It is reported that Anas ibn Mālik used to tell his son, قَيِّدُوا الْعِلْمَ بِالْكِتَابَةِ.[93]

Al-Kattānī reports that 'Ayāḍ used to narrate the permissibility of writing ḥadīth from most of the Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'ūn.[94]

Nonetheless, most of the Companions, it seems, had either no conviction in what they stated about the permissibility of writing or had no courage to express it in deed; the evidence of it is their abstention from compilation of ḥadīth.

Zāzān reports. "I took some psalms (*tasābīḥ*) from Umm Ya'fūr and went to 'Alī (A). He taught them (i.e. their meaning) to me and then told me to return them to Umm Ya'fūr."[95]

It is narrated that Ibn 'Abbās used to write the Prophet's *sunan* on tablets which he carried with himself during sessions of learned assemblies. It has been widely reported (*mutawātir*) that on his death he left behind a camel-load of books.[96]

The report according to which Abū Bakr wrote some aḥādīth after the Prophet (S) and then burned them after some time,[97] also indicates that the writing of ḥadīth was an accepted practice among the Companions.

The tradition reported from 'Alī (A) in which he said that whoever wrote a tradition should write it with its *sanad*[98] also supports this view. The sources are explicit that a number of the Companions considered the writing of ḥadīth as permissible.[99] The report about the *ṣaḥīfah* of Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh which contained the Prophet's aḥādīth[100] also supports that the practice of writing ḥadīth existed among the Companions. On the basis of this we can conclude that the writing of ḥadīth was approved by a group of Companions and the Caliphs' opposition to it was not on account of any command of the Prophet (S) but based on their own judgement.

The Quran and Writing:

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, in order to lend support to his view about the permissibility of writing ḥadīth, cites evidence from the Quran. On the basis that the Quran enjoins us to write down anything about which there is a fear that it may get lost, he argues that ḥadīth, which is also subject to such a danger, should be committed to writing. In this relation he cites verses 2:282, 6:91 and 37:157 of the Quran.[101]

Al-Ṭaḥāwī also, citing the verse:

...وَلَا تَسْئَمُوا اَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيراً اَوْ كَبِيراً اِلىٰ اَجَلِهِ...

And be not averse to write it down, whether it be small or great, with its term;....(2:282)

about the writing of debts, says that when God commands the writing of debts to avert the occurrence of doubt, a realm of knowledge whose safeguarding is more difficult and important than recording of debts stands in greater need of being committed to writing to eliminate the possibility of doubt mentioned here. Abū Ḥanīfah, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī are of the same opinion.[102]

The real Reason Behind the Prohibition on the Writing of Ḥadīth:

The above discussion shows that the responsibility for the delay in the writing of ḥadīth cannot be put upon the Prophet (S), because the traditions ascribed to him (S) implying such a prohibition by him (S) are not acceptable for various reasons. Now we shall try to identify the real factor behind it. In this attempt, we shall rely mostly on authentic historical sources of the Ahl al-Sunnah and occasionally make use of Shī'ī sources. We hope that the reader will evaluate the soundness and validity of this study with due attention.

'Ā'ishah is reported to have said: "My father had collected 500 aḥādīth of the Prophet (S). One morning he came to me and said, 'Bring the aḥādīth that are with you.' I brought them to him. He burnt them and said, 'I am afraid lest I should die leaving these with you.'"[103]

It is reported on the authority of al-Zuhrī that: 'Umar wanted to write the Prophet's *sunan*. He thought about it for a month, seeking guidance from God in this regard. One morning he took his decision and declared: "I recalled to my mind the peoples who have gone before you, who wrote and became absorbed in their writings and abandoned the Book of God."[104]

Abd al-'Alā' says: "Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr used to dictate ḥadīth to me. He said, 'Aḥādīth increased during the days of 'Umar. He then ordered all of them to be gathered. When they were gathered, he set them on fire, declaring, 'لامَثْناةَ كَمَثْناةِ أَهْلِ الكِتاب'."[105]

'Mathnāt', it appears, was a book which the Jews had written for themselves and was different from their Scripture, the Torah. Here 'Umar has compared it to the Prophet's traditions, which he did not want to exist by the side of the Book of God. Yaḥyā ibn Ju'dah also reports that 'Umar had intended to write aḥādīth and *sunan*. But having changed his mind he sent a circular to all the cities declaring مَنْ كانَ عِنْدَهُ شَيْءٌ مِنْها فَلْيَمْحُهُ 'Whoever has with him anything of it should destroy it.'[106]

It has been reported from 'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr that,'"Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wanted to write the Prophet's *sunan*. In this relation he consulted the Prophet's Companions. All of them were of the opinion that they should be written. But 'Umar reflected upon the matter until one morning he took his decision and said, 'I wanted to write the *sunan*: but then I recalled a people who have gone before you who wrote

books and abandoned the Book of God. By God, I will not cover the Book of God with anything.'"[107]

This *riwāyah* shows us that all the Companions — or at least those of them who were consulted — approved the writing of ḥadīth. But the Caliph, after a month's reflection, prohibited the writing of aḥādīth on the basis the he himself states, an argument which is, of course, not based on the Prophet's Sunnah.

The Opposition of Some Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'ūn to the Writing of Ḥadīth:

After the Caliphs' prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth, since their moves were regarded as legal precedents (sunnah) by the people, a group of the Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'ūn also abstained from committing ḥadīth to writing and relied solely upon their memory. They transmitted the aḥādīth through oral narration and abhorred the idea of writing them. To them it was improper to write and compile the Prophet's traditions,[108] whereas the Quran and the Prophet (S) had laid great stress on writing in general.

Abū Burdah is reported as having said that his father told Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'arī to bring to him whatever he had written of his father's narrations. When they were brought he destroyed them and said, "You too, like us, should only memorize."[109]

'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Salamah al-Jamḥī reports: "I heard a ḥadīth of the Prophet (S) from 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr and wrote it down. After memorizing it, I destroyed what I had written."[110]

'Āṣim said: "I wanted to leave a book with Ibn Sīrīn but he abstained from keeping it, saying that he would not allow any book to remain near him."[111]

Abū Naḍrah says: "I told Abū Sa'īd to write for us. He replied, 'I will not write and I will not make out of something a Quran for you. You take (aḥādīth) from us in the same way as we received from the Prophet (S).' Abū Sa'īd used to say, 'Narrate traditions to one another, for one of them recalls another to mind.'"[112]

It has been reported on the authority of Ibn Abī Tamīm that Ibn Sīrīn and his companions would not write traditions.[113]

Al-Harawī writes that the Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'ūn would not write aḥādīth and would record them only in their memory, with the exception of the book of *ṣadaqāt*.[114]

Al-Nuwawī writes: "All the attention of the Ṣaḥābah was focussed on *jihād*, on struggle against the carnal self, and on worship. Therefore they could not find any time for writing (!) For similar reasons, the Tābi'ūn also did not produce any written work (*taṣnīf*)."[115]

Abū Kathīr al-Ghubrī reports Abū Hurayrah as having said: "Aḥādīth should neither be concealed nor written."[116]

'Abd Allāh ibn Muslim reports that Sa'īd ibn Jubayr had a detestation to writing.[117] Similarly, Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī declared that he had never written down anything.[118] When asked why he didn't write, he replied, "When man writes something, he comes to rely on that writing."[119]

Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit is reported to have said: "I haven't a book in the whole world, except for a ḥadīth which is for my coffin."[120]

Al-Ḥasan ibn Abī al-Ḥasan at the time of his death ordered his servant to ignite the oven and to throw all his books with the exception of one into it.[121] Ibn Sīrīn used to say: "If I had to write a book, I would make a book of the Prophet's letters."[122] Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd says: "I found the scholars in a state in which they were averse to writing."[123] Sulaymān ibn Ḥarb reports: "Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd came to us and he would narrate ḥadīth.(At first) our companions would not write his aḥādīth, but after some time they began to write them."[124]

Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr would ask 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Alā' not to write ḥadīth.[125] Sufyān reports that when 'Amr ibn Dīnār was told that he wrote 'Amr's aḥādīth, 'Amr stood up and said, "Whoever writes should leave my place." Sufyān says that thereafter he did not write anything that he heard from 'Amr but would only memorize it.[126]

It is reported from Ibn Ṭāwūs that his father said: "Someone asked 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās a question which pleased Ibn 'Abbās. The man told Ibn 'Abbās to write the answer for him. But Ibn 'Abbās said that they would not write anything of the *'ilm*."[127] This *riwāyah* conflicts with the earlier ones about Ibn 'Abbās cited above.

Mālik ibn Anas reports that when Ibn Musayyab died he did not leave behind any book. The same was true of Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, 'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī.[128] Manṣūr ibn Mu'tamir is reported to have said: "I haven't written anything until now."[129] A similar statement is reported from Yūnus ibn 'Ubayd.[130] It is reported of Ibn Abī Dhu'ayb that he would only memorize aḥādīth and abstain from writing any. He belonged to the fifth *ṭabaqah* and lived during the middle of the 2nd/8th century.[131] It has been said of Sa'īd ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz that he would not write anything.[132]

Ismā'īl ibn 'Ayyāsh, who belonged to the sixth *ṭabaqah*, remembered ten thousand traditions by heart but would not write anything.[133] Abū Ḥātim reports that he never saw any writing in the hands of Abū al-Walīd al-Ṭayālisī.[134] Both of them belonged to the seventh *ṭabaqah* and detested writing ḥadīth. It is also said of al-Nufaylī that a book was never seen with him.[135] Also Ṣāḥib al-Baṣrī is said to have detested writing.[136]

Book besides the Book of God:

As can be gleaned from the *riwāyāt* relating to those who considered the writing of ḥadīth as impermissible, the pretext they offered was that the writing of ḥadīth would lead to the emergence of 'a book by the side of the Book of God,' as a result of which the people would abandon the Scripture for other books. Here we shall examine the validity of this fear and it will be seen that it was no more than a pretext. The Book and the Prophet's Sunnah complement each other, and, as all Muslims know, each of them is incomplete without the other — except of course for those whose slogan is حَسْبُنا كِتابُ اللهِ

A point which requires attention here is that the champions of prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth — whether they were the Caliphs or others who followed them in this matter and sought to justify their acts — had in their view a statement of the Prophet (S) about "a book by the side of the Book of God." However, by mistake or intentionally, they misapplied that statement.

It is a fact that during the Prophet's lifetime certain Companions had acquired some copies of the Torah and other books of the Jews. When the Prophet (S) heard about it, he told them to abstain from making other books a parallel authority with the Book of God, the Quran. In this relation we should take note of the following *riwāyah* narrated on the authority of Jābir. Jābir reports that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb brought a copy of the Torah to the Prophet (S) and said, "This is a copy of the Torah which I read." The Prophet (S) was silent but the colour of his face changed. Abū Bakr noticed this and said to 'Umar, "May thy mother mourn for thee, don't you see the Prophet's face!" 'Umar glanced at the Prophet's face and said, "I take refuge with God from the Prophet's wrath. I accept God as the Lord, Islam as the *Dīn* and Muḥammad (S) as the prophet." Thereupon the Prophet (S) said: "By God, if Moses were to come here and were you to follow him and abandon me, you would have deviated from the straight path. If he were alive and had he seen me he would have followed me."[137]

This tradition shows that the Prophet (S) was wrathful because 'Umar had taken some other scripture as a parallel authority to the Quran. In another tradition of a similar kind 'a man from the Anṣār' takes the place of Abū Bakr. It is also probable that the two refer to different incidents of this kind and that this happened on several occasions.

It is reported from Abū Qallābah that once 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb passed by a man who was reciting from a book. After listening for a while 'Umar liked what he read. He asked the man to write from this book for him. The man consented to do so. 'Umar then bought a leaf and brought it to him, on which the man wrote filling both its sides.

Later, he came to the Prophet (S) and read it out to him (S). Thereupon the colour of the Prophet's face changed. Thereat a man belonging to the Anṣār said to 'Umar: "May your mother mourn for you! Don't you see the Prophet's face?" On this the Prophet (S) said: "I am raised as a prophet, as the opener (*fātiḥ*) and the sealer (*khātim*), and I have brought everything that I should have brought."[138]

It is reported on al-Zuhrī's authority that Ḥafṣah, 'Umar's daughter, brought a book to the Prophet (S) in which there were stories of Joseph (A). She began to read them to the Prophet (S), whose face reddened as he listened. Thereupon the Prophet (S) said: "By God, if Joseph himself were to come here and were you to follow him and leave me you would have gone astray."[139]

These traditions indicate that what the Prophet (S) detested was the reading of corrupted texts, whose inevitable effect was propagation of Jewish misconceptions — which have been called Isrā'īliyyāt — amongst the Muslims. The Prophet (S) did not want that those Jewish books should take a place by the side of the Holy Quran, whose every word was the word of God Almighty; the legends, fables and superstitious nonsense that they contained could make the people deviate from the straight path of true doctrine that the Quran had pointed out to them.

The traditions just cited also show that the to-be Caliph and his daughter were greatly interested in books of this kind and had often to be checked by the Prophet (S). Nevertheless, unfortunately we see that later on when Ka'b al-'Aḥbār, a jew who had outwardly converted to Islam, came to 'Umar and asked his permission to read the Torah, 'Umar told him: "If you know that it is the same Torah that was revealed to Moses (A) on Mount Sinai, then read it day and night."[140] And this was 'Umar's view after the Prophet (S) had expressly forbidden him personally not to read such things.

There are other *riwāyāt* which confirm our viewpoint that the Prophet's prohibition regarding 'setting another book by the side of the Book of God' relates to Isrā'īlī texts. It has been reported that when 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd heard that some people had a book whose contents amazed them, he took it away and destroyed it, saying: "The People of the Book were ruined because they relied upon the writings of their scholars (*'ulamā'*) and neglected the Divine Scripture."[141] The term *'ulamā'* to the Arabs of those days meant the scholars of the Jews and the Christians and the books referred to in this *riwāyah* were Isrā'īlī writings.

The following tradition clarifies this matter very well. Murrah al-Hamadānī says: "Abū Murrah al-Kindī brought a book from Syria (al-Shām) and gave it to Ibn Mas'ūd. Ibn Mas'ūd glanced through it, brought water and washed away its written contents. Then he said, 'The peoples who lived before you perished for following such books as

this and abandoning the Scripture of God." Al-Ḥuṣayn says, "Indeed he would not have destroyed that writing had it been the Quran or the Sunnah. Rather, it was a book belonging to the Ahl al-Kitāb."[142]

'Alī (A) is reported to have said: "Any of you who has a book should destroy it. The peoples who lived before you were destroyed on account of following the statements of their scholars and abandoning the Book of God."[143]

Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) is reported to have said: "Some scholars are after the traditions of Jews and Christians, wherewith they seek to increase their knowledge. Their place is in the bottommost level of Hell."[144] It is reported on the authority of 'Amr ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ju'dah that when a book was brought to the Prophet (S) he said: "It is enough for the stupidity and misguidance of an *ummah* that it should avoid what its prophet has brought them to see what some other prophet has brought."[145] This tradition also reveals the kind of book that was brought to the Prophet (S) and throws light on the meaning of كِتابٌ مَعَ كِتابِ اللهِ.

Also, Ibn 'Abbās says: "How do you question the Ahl al-Kitāb about a problem when the Book of God is amongst you?"[146] All these traditions show that the Prophet's prohibition regarding 'setting another book by the side of the Book of God' was related to the danger of diffusion of *Isrā'īliyyāt* and did not, by any means, relate to his own Sunnah, which is complementary to the Quran and whose laws are binding (*wājib al-'iṭā'ah*), as accepted by all Muslims. Our thesis is further strengthened by the fact that Muslim scholars of ḥadīth later wrote and compiled the Prophet's traditions. As to those who like 'Urwah burnt the aḥādīth that they had written with the rationale that "We do not want to set a book by the side of the Book of God,"[147] it must be said that they acted out of misunderstanding.

to be continued—'inshā' Allāh

Notes:

61. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 57, cites this *riwāyah* through several chains (*ṭuruq*); see also *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 49, 50, 51.

62. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, VI, 47, 106, 116; I, 90, 22, 29, 32, 336; III, 346; *Tahdhīb ta'rīkh Dimashq*, VI, 451; 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, V, 438, 439.

63. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, II, 152; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 65—68; *Mīzān al-'i'tidāl*, I, 653; *Lisān al-mīzān*, II, 298, IV, 21.

64. *Musnad Aḥmad*, I, 238; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 84; *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, I, 184; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 86.

65. *Al-'Iqd al-farīd*, II, 419; *al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn*, II, 38; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 68—70; see also *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 127; *Ḥusn al-tanbīh*, 194; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 72; *Kanz al-'ummāl*, V, 224; Abū Nu'aym's *Akhbār Iṣfahān*, II, 228.

66. *Majma' al-Zawāyid*, I, 151; *Kanz al-'ummāl*, V, 225; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 72—74; *al-Manār*, I, 763; *al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, II, 245.

67. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 74,79; *Musnad Aḥmad*, 215; *Biḥār al-'anwār*, II, 147; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 85.

68. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, I, 85.

69. *Ibid.*, 74, 75; *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, I, 184; *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, II, 66.

70. *Musnad Aḥmad* II, 162, 192; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 85.

71. *Kanz al-'ummāl*, X, 157.

72. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 85; see also *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, I, 182, 199, 203, 246, 247; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 88, 89; al-Bukhārī's *al-'Adab al-mufrad*, 129; *Musnad Aḥmad*, I, 100.

73. *Al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, II, 24, quoting from *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, *Musnad Aḥmad* and *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*; see *al-Muṣannaf*, XI, 254; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, I, 148; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 84; *Sharḥ Ma'ānī al-'āthār*, IV, 318—320; *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, I, 42; *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, II, 66.

74. *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 126; *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, II, 66.

75. *Al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, II, 245; *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, VII, 494, IV, 262; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 84; *Ta'wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*, 93; Ibn Qutaybah's *al-Ma'ārif*, 200.

76. Hāshim Ma'rūf al-Ḥasanī, *Dirāsāt fī al-ḥadīth wa al-muḥaddithīn*.

77. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, II, 144.

78. *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, *kitāb al-'aḥkām*, *bāb al-yamīn ma'a al-shāhid*.

79. *Al-Sayr al-ḥathīth fī ta'rīkh tadwīn al-ḥadīth*, p. 9; *'Ulūm al-ḥadīth*, 13.

80. *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, IV, 236; *'Ulūm al-ḥadīth*, 14.

81. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 96.

82. *Al-'Imlā' wa al-'istimlā'*, 5.

83. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, II, 152; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, II, 34.

84. *Al-'Imlā' wa al-'istimlā'*, 12.

85. *'Ulūm al-ḥadīth wa muṣṭalaḥuh*, 8,9; *Ta'rīkh al-madhāhib al-fiqhiyyah*, 24; *al-'Imlā' wa al-'istimlā'*, 146.

86. *Aḍwa' 'alā al-Sunnat al-Muḥammadiyyah*, 48.

87. *Ibid.*, 50, quoting *al-Manār*

88. Abū Zuhrah, *Ta'rīkh al-madhāhib al-fiqhiyyah*, 24; *al-'Imlā' wa al-'istimlā'*, 146.

89. The sources for this statement are cited below.

90. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 92.

91. *Sharḥ Ma'ānī al-'āthār*, IV, 319; *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 128.

92. *Al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, II, 246; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 92.

93. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, VII, 21; *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 127; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 96, 97.

94. *Al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, II, 247.

95. Ibn Abī Shaybah's *al-Muṣannaf*, II, 390.

96. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, II, 123; *Sayr al-ḥadīth*, 9; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 136; *'Ulūm al-ḥadīth*, 20.

97. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, I, 5.

98. *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, II, 67.

99. *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 127, 128, *al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'rīkh*, II, 279; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 84; *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, II, 371; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 113—199.

100. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, I, 123; *al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'rīkh*, II, 142, 143, 661; *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 467; *Sharḥ Ma'ānī al-'āthār*, IV, 319; 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, XI, 183.

101. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 71.

102. *Sharḥ Ma'ānī al-'āthār*, IV, 319.

103. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, I, 5; *Kanz al-'ummāl*, I, 174.

104. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, III, 287; 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, XI, 257;

Taqyīd al-'ilm, 49; *Ta'rīkh al-khulafā'*, 138.

105. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 188.
106. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I. 77; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 53.
107. *Tadrīb al-rāwī*, II, 68.
108. *Ibid.*, II, 65.
109. *Kashf al-'astār*, I, 109.
110. *Al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'rīkh*, II, 523.
111. *Al-Kifāyah*, 353; *al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'rīkh*, II, 59.
112. *Ḥayāt al-Ṣaḥābah*, I, 243, 244.
113. *Al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, I, 62; *al-Ṭuruq al-ḥukmiyyah*, 256.
114. *Al-Tarātīb al-'idāriyyah*, II, 249.
115. *Ibid.*
116. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, II, 364.
117. *Ibid.*, VI, 258; on page 257 that he wrote Ibn 'Abbās's aḥādīth.
118. *Ibid.*, VI, 258.
119. *Ibid.*, VI, 271, whereas his pupil regretted not having written traditions, see p. 270.
120. *Ibid.*, VI, 320.
121. *Ibid.*, VII, 157.
122. *Ibid.*, VII, 157; *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 120.
123. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, VII, 141; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 81.
124. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 111, *al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'rīkh*, II, 829.
125. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 188.
126. *Ibid.*, V, 480; *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, I, 113.
127. 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, XI, 258; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 42.
128. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāẓ*, I, 111.
129. *Ibid.*, I, 142.
130. *Ibid.*, I, 145.
131. *Ibid.*, I, 192.
132. *Ibid.*, I, 219.
133. *Ibid.*, I, 254.
134. *Ibid.*, I, 382.
135. *Ibid.*, I, 441.
136. *Ibid.*, I, 461; see *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 78—79; *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 119, 120.
137. *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 116; 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, X, 313.
138. *Ibid.*, VI, 113, XI, 111; *Majma' al-zawā'id*, I, 182.
139. 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, XI, 110; *Mīzān al-'i'tidāl*, I, 666; *Lisān al-mīzān*, II, 408; *Biḥār al-'anwār*, XI, 99; *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, IV, 49, III, 28, 29; al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Fā'iq*, IV, 114.
140. *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, IV, 262; *al-Fā'iq*, I, 651.
141. *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 122; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 53, 56.
142. *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, IV, 48; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, II, 52, 53; in *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 34, there is a similar *riwāyah* that a book was brought to him from Yemen in which there were aḥādīth relating to the Ahl al-Bayt (A) and that he destroyed it.
143. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 76.
144. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, II, 108.
145. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, II, 50.
146. 'Abd al-Razzāq's *al-Muṣannaf*, X, 314; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, II, 51.
147. Abū Zuhrah, *al-'Imām Zayd*, 167.

God, Human Knowledge and Science

by Sayyid Mujtabã Mũsawī Lãrī

Translated from the Persian by Dr. Hamid Algar

1. The Development of Beliefs through the Ages:

Among the fundamental intellectual topics that concern human life, religious questions enjoy a particular importance. They have always been regarded, in fact, as the most basic concern for the well-being and destiny of man and have produced profound insights and extensive knowledge.

Scholars and researchers have undertaken wide-ranging and comprehensive studies on the origins and motives of man's religious concerns, pursuing their researches with a particular point of view and methodology that governs also their judgements and conclusions.

The truth of the matter is that since the earliest prehistoric times faith and belief have always been part of the texture of human society; neither in the past nor in the present is it possible to find a society in which religious issues have not been raised. The Noble Qur'ãn refers in several verses to the historical fact that heaven-sent prophets constantly appeared in past nations where in addition to their beneficial spiritual influence they also played a fundamental role in the creation of human civilization.

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*This is the first part of the first volume of the author's work in Persian, *Mabānī-ye i'tiqādāt dar Islām* ("The Foundations of Islamic Doctrines"), which deals with the theological and philosophical foundations of Islamic doctrines. The first of this four-volume work deals with important problems of theology, such as the existence of God, His attributes, Divine Unity, Divine Justice, free will and determinisim, fate and predestination, etc. Among other books by the author are *Western Civilization Through Muslim Eyes* (which has been translated into English, German, Urdu, and Japanese), *Mushkilāt-e akhlāqī wa rawānī* and *Risālat-e akhlāq dar takāmul-e insān.*

The study of the changes which human life has undergone and the way knowledge has developed, together with the knowledge yielded by the most distant horizons of history, shows that man was attached to religious belief before he became fully aware of the methods of rational inference.

The first era of man's knowledge and industry does not, therefore, enjoy primacy over the earliest eras of religion and belief. It may even be claimed that human endeavour in the realm of religion and belief has been more strenuous and longer-lasting than his efforts in the area of knowledge and art; for the knowledge of a transcendent reality that is the essence of the world of being is more difficult and less accessible than the essence of those things which knowledge and art strive constantly to attain.

The essential nature of resplendent sun, which is the most manifest of all things, remained unknown to man for many centuries and its movements and effects were subject to all kinds of interpretations; although none could deny the luminosity of its rays, the minds of most men remained in deep darkness with respect to its knowledge.

The perception of great truths is, then, impossible without logical examination, deduction and comprehensive study. If superstitions and religious myths are to be found among ancient peoples, constantly being infused into new moulds because of deficiency and weakness in thought and restriction in knowledge, this does not mean then that religion with its doctrinal content is false. Rather it demonstrates the primacy and autonomy of religious aspiration in the very depths of the human soul and heart. Moreover, from the science that seeks to explore prehistoric times, we cannot expect that it will uncover more of ancient religions than the traces of myths and superstitions decipherable in the vestiges of primitive man and beneath the earth.

Since human conduct and activity are always accompanied by two clear characteristics — primacy and autonomy on the one hand and comprehensiveness and universality among the members of the species on the other hand — it appears entirely logical that we should posit some origin for that conduct and activity in the depths of the human spirit. The existence of such a continuous phenomenon in an eternal and universal form, throughout history and prehistory, cannot be regarded as the effect of customs and habits; it is the manifestation of a primordial thirst, an imperative instinct for seeking the truth. All religious beliefs, with their different aspects and forms, arise from a single gushing, abundant source — the primordial nature of man, which is neither externally imposed nor accidental.

First there comes into being within man's disposition the capacity to accept belief, and then belief takes form. The same inward inclination that impels a person to intellectual investigation and research in order

to perceive reality is an indication of man's need of religious knowledge. This of course does not mean that an inward state and predisposition is necessarily accompanied by a correct and fully formed belief. In just the same way that the body desires nutritive substances without this desire implying the goodness and wholesomeness of the food, the soul too seeks out its food — namely faith and belief — insistently seeking awareness of its Lord and wishing to supplicate at His threshold. But the instinct that impels it to search is unable to recognize and assess beliefs and creeds, distinguishing the true from the false.

Scholars are agreed that religious beliefs have always been intertwined with human life. However, their opinions differ concerning the fundamental roots of religion and the factors that have played a primary role in its establishment and development. Their judgements in this respect are generally based on studies of superstitious religions and primitive beliefs, with the result that their conclusions are, in the final analysis, defective and illogical.

It is true that certain religions, lacking a connection with the principle of revelation, have been influenced in their appearance and growth by the social environment and similar factors. However, it is illogical to ascribe the foundation of all faiths and religious tendencies to material or economic circumstances and demands, to fear of the terrifying forces of nature, to ignorance or to considerations rejected by science.

Without doubt, one of the factors in the emergence of anti-religious ideas and a phalanx of deniers of God has been the false teachings, the inadequacies and the intellectual perversions of the followers of some religions. The peculiarities and separate characteristics of each religion must therefore be individually examined when studying the reasons that have led men to adhere to that religion.

In many historical events religion can be seen to have dominated all relationships. If religion were not a primary phenomenon, it would have to be enclosed within the four walls of material motives. However, what factor could have given religious personalities such firmness and steadfastness for the sake of their religious goals? Was it the expectation of material benefits and personal gains that made the bitter hardships of misfortune and difficulty sweet-tasting to their souls? On the contrary, we see that they sacrificed all their material resources, prosperity and personal desires, to their religious sentiments and ideals, going so far as lovingly to sacrifice their lives.

In the story concerning the Pharaoh and his sorcerers, we read that he summoned all his magicians in order to defeat Moses, the one addressed by God (peace be upon our prophet and him), hoping that with their ingenuity and magical powers they might compel him to submit. But thanks to the miraculous power vested in Moses they were over-

powered and they turned to the true belief. The furious Pharaoh whose arrogance had been broken began to slander and threaten them, saying he would punish them with the worst of tortures, the severance of their limbs. But a profound revolution had taken place in the souls of the sorcerers; they remained firm and steadfast in the face of the threats and cajoling of the Pharaoh and his painful tortures. They replied, with remarkable fortitude, "Give orders for us to be tortured; your writ runs only in this narrow world" (20: 63–73).

This was a clear display of the strength of the innate desire for truth and reality in man when confronted with suppression, coercion and brute force. Men who had lived at the very heart of the Pharaoh's apparatus and had benefited from it raised up their heads in rebellion and were ready to renounce their own lives.

The specific inclination of man to religious concerns cannot therefore be explained in terms of materialist interpretations; on the contrary, incidents such as that of the sorcerers demonstrate the primacy of the religious sense in man.

Illogical beliefs do not pertain only to religious questions. Before they were properly refined, many of the sciences were commingled with superstitions. Men found their way from incantation and magic to true and beneficial medicine and from unrealistic alchemy to realistic chemistry. No one can claim that if man once committed an error in searching for something he is bound always to remain in error and will never find a way of reaching the truth. Those who believe in scientific philosophy and the primacy of the experimental method accept that their experiments may yield erroneous results although they invariably give them the status of truth.

Those who deny God insist on the conclusion that God is the product of human thought. For example, the English philosopher Bertrand Russell regards the fear of natural forces to have been the origin of religion:

> In my opinion, religion is above all founded on fear: fear of the unknown, fear of death, fear of defeat, fear of the mysterious and the hidden. In addition, as already remarked, a sentiment comes into being enabling everyone to imagine that he has a supporter in all his problems and struggles.[1]

This is merely a claim, unsupported by any evidence. Samuel King says:

> The source of religion is shrouded in mystery. Among the countless theories of scholars on the subject some appear to be more logical than others, but even the best of them is open to objection from the point of view of scientific proof. They cannot transcend the sphere of logical speculation. There is therefore intense disagreement among sociologists concerning the origins of

religion.[2]

Nonetheless, we can respond that even if we accept the original and fundamental motive for man's belief in a creator to have been fear, this in no way proves that the existence of God is a mere fancy without reality.

If fear motivated man to seek a refuge and if in the course of that search he discovered a certain reality (God), is there any objection to be made? If fear is the cause for the discovery of a certain thing, can we say that that thing is imaginary and unreal because it was fear that prompted man to seek it out?

It would surely be illogical to maintain for example that the science of medicine has no reality because man has sought and discovered it out of fear, fear of disease and death? The truth of the matter is that the science of medicine is a reality, irrespective of whether the original motive of man in discovering it was fear of disease and death or some other factor.

In all the affairs and occurrences of life belief in a wise and powerful Lord is a real refuge and strong support. This is a quite different matter from whether or not men's motive in searching it out was fear of vicissitudes and the search for a refuge. The two matters are quite separate and must be studied separately.

No doubt in the primitive stages of his life man was indeed prey to humiliating and painful terror when faced with awesome natural occurrences such as storms, earthquakes and diseases. A nightmare of fear cast its inauspicious shadow on all the aspects of his life and his thoughts, and in the unceasing struggle he waged against impotence and fear he sought a support where he might take refuge from his terrifying environment, and find inner peace. Finally, through unrelenting effort, he conquered the nightmare of abjection and fear and attained a remarkable triumph.

The study of the different stages in the life of primitive man, and the discovery of evidence that fear prevailed his thoughts, do not prove that fear and ignorance were the sole fundamental factor in man's inclination to religion. Such an assertion would be the result of seeing only one dimension of the matter. General conclusions can be drawn from historical researches and studies only when the entirety of history, with all the different periods in the life of man, is investigated and researched, not one corner of his vast and variegated history.

The domination of human affairs by fear and abjection in specific and limited periods must not be made the basis for a general judgement concerning all eras. Would it not be a hasty judgement to say that all the religious ideas and sentiments of men, the inclination to the worship of God in all periods down to and including the present, have been

caused simply by terror, by fear of the wrath of nature, of war and disease?

In actual fact, the most firmly convinced among men are by no means the weakest. Those who in the course of time have raised high the banner of religion have been the strongest and most steadfast of men. A person's faith is never increased in proportion to his weakness, and the leader of a people in matters of religious belief is not the foremost among them in weakness, abjectness and impotence.

Is the belief in religion of thousands of scholars and thinkers the product of fear on their part of storms, earthquakes and disease? Can their inclination to religion, the result of scholarly studies, of logic and rational proof, be attributed to their ignorance and lack of awareness of the natural causes of phenomena? What would be the answer of an intelligent person?

Moreover, it is not in order to attain some kind of peace that man turns to religion; rather it is after attaining belief and conviction that he begins to enjoy the fruits of religion — peace and tranquillity.

In the opinion of divinely guided scholars, the world is a compendium of finely calculated causes and reasons, the precise system of the cosmos bearing witness to the existence of a source characterized by knowledge and power. The confused and incomprehensible brushstrokes of a painting cannot be taken as the indication of a skilled artist, but precise strokes and design with meaningful content are indeed evidence for the existence of a talented painter.

* * *

There are also people who regard belief in a reality beyond nature as the product of economic factors; they make strenuous efforts to establish some connection between religion and economics. They claim that religion has always been in the service of imperialism and exploitation and that it was the invention of the ruling, exploiting class as a means for breaking the resistance of the exploited masses. Religion has been used, they claim, to stupefy the deprived toilers and to encourage them to accept their deprivation. There is no doubt that like everything else in the world religion can be misused. When diverted from its true aims it becomes a tool in the hands of profiteers who wish to enslave the nations. However, this misuse of religion should not provide opportunists with a pretext for mercilessly attacking everything that bears the name of religion. A clear separation must be made between perverted religions concocted by imperialism to stupefy the masses, and authentic constructive religions.

It is possible that in many human societies unfavourable economic conditions, stagnation and backwardness may coexist with religious belief. But this coexistence does not necessitate any causal relationship;

one cannot be presented as the cause of the other. Sometimes we see a society enjoying prosperity and flourishing economically that is deeply attached to religion, while another society that enjoys similarly favourable economic conditions is totally averse to religion. Similarly, in an environment of poverty and backwardness the sun of religion may set, while in another such environment the influence of religion may be at its zenith. This obvious lack of congruity between economic conditions and the prevalence or decline of religious influence is a clear proof of the fact that contemporaneity does not suffice to establish a causal relationship. Some special factor must obtain for the emergence or disappearance of one to be linked to the existence or non-existence of the other.

We can clearly observe this lack of congruity in two societies that are both under the oppressive domination of the exploiting class; in one of them religion has totally left the scene while in the other its influence has expanded.

Objective realities show us, then, that man is drawn to religion in a variety of external circumstances. Wherever religion demostrates its appeal, one must look for the fundamental inward motive in the specific nature of religion, not in economic circumstances. In addition, when we examine the aims of the heavenly religions, we reach the conclusion that the provision of prosperity and establishment of a just economic system based on religion have been one of the reasons for the sending of the prophets. This too is one of the reasons why men have gravitated to religion and one of the benefits humanity has gained from religion.

2. The Depths of Man's Being Impel him to Seek God:

Outside the complex system of his body man has vast and vital dimensions that are not in any way confined by his bodily mechanism. In order to discover those aspects and planes that are beyond the bodily structure and physical dimension of man, one must search out the inward and spiritual structures of man and perceive the broad horizons of his comprehensive nature, together with the delicate and refined manifestations of his feelings and instincts.

A series of special modes of perception exist in man's being that are rooted in themselves, arise from the very stuff of man's nature, and do not owe their emergence to any external factor. Among these perceptions are the sense of commitment to trust, justice, veracity and honesty.

Before he enters the realm of science and knowledge with all its concerns, man is able to perceive certain truths by means of these innate perceptions. But after entering the sphere of science and philosophy and filling his brain with various proofs and deductions, he may

forget his natural and innate perceptions or begin to doubt them. It is for this reason that when man moves beyond his innate nature to delineate a belief differences begin to appear.

Inclination to religion and belief in God draw, in their initial stages, on instinctive motives and innate perceptions, but then they develop and evolve with the help of contemplation and reflection. The roots of innate feeling in the disposition of man are so deep and at the same time so clear and evident that if a person purges his mind and his spirit both of religious concepts and of anti-religious thoughts and then looks at himself and at the world of being, he will clearly see that he is moving in a certain direction together with the whole caravan of being. Without any desire or will on his part, he begins his life at a certain point, and again without willing it, he advances toward another point, one which is unknown to him. The same reality can be observed in all natural creatures, operating in a precise and orderly way.

If a clear-sighted man still in the state of nature looks at the circumstances surrounding him, he will distinctly feel the existence of a great force that encompasses him and the whole world. In his own being, which is an extremely small part of the great world, he will see knowledge, power and will to exist, and he will ask himself how knowledge, power and will could not exist in the world as a whole. It is the finely calculated order and motion of the world that compels man to accept the existence of a universal intellect that lying beyond the world of nature nonetheless designs and commands it; unless this be accepted, the orderliness of the world cannot be explained. Anyone assessing his position in the world can perceive that there is a power which creates him, brings him here, inspires motion in him, and then removes him again, without his permission or assistance being sought for any of this.

The Doyen of the Martyrs, al-Ḥussayn ibn 'Alī — may peace be upon both of them — said in his intimate supplications to the Creator:

> How is it possible to deduce Your existence from a thing which depends upon You for its very being? Why do You not possess that manifestness that other-than-You possesses, so that it might make You evident? When were You ever hidden from the inward eye so that You might need proofs as a guide to You? When were You ever distant from us so that Your traces and signs might draw us nigh to You? Blind be the eye that does not see You watching over and guarding it!...
>
> O God, You Who have manifested Yourself to us with Your splendour, how can You be hidden when You are manifest and evident? How can You be absent when with Your unceasing manifestation You watch over Your servants?[3]

Nowhere and at no time has a thing made without a maker been seen, nor a deed without a doer. The search for the link between cause

and effect arises from an inward instinct in man; awareness of causality cannot be removed from anyone. Likewise the religious feeling, the search for a Creator, can also not be removed from anyone. Even a child with no experience of the world, whenever he hears a sound or observes a motion, will instinctively turn his attention to the origin of the sound or the motion.

The foundations both of practical life and of knowledge rest upon the acceptance of a cause for every effect. The norm of causality is in fact an absolute one which admits of no exceptions. Geology, physics, chemistry, sociology, economics — in these and other sciences research has the purpose of specifying the causes and factors that determine relationships. In short, it is clear that science and knowledge are nothing other than the search for causes; all progress and advancement in human affairs result from the investigations carried out by scholars into the causes of phenomena.

Were it to be possible for us to find in a single being or corner of the universe a sign of absolute self-origination or creativity, we would be justified in extending that one instance to the whole scheme of being.

Of course, it is not necessary that the law of causality should always manifest itself to us in familiar forms. The variety and multiplicity of causes is such that an investigator concerned with only one phenomenon might not be able to specify all the causes. However, in all the affairs of mankind, particular and general, past and future, in the circumstances of the individual or of society, not a single point can be found that is accidental. Not only is there a particular order inherent in the creation of each separate phenomenon, there is also observable in the relationship of every phenomenon with other phenomena, as well as the relationship of each phenomenon with the environment within which it exists, a subtle and finely calculated order. For example, in the cultivation of a tree the laws of the heavens and the earth operate in perfect harmony with the structure of its roots and branches. There is also a relationship of animals with that tree insofar as they draw nourishment from it. How is it possible that accident should lie at the origin of such orderly relationships?

If a phenomenon were to take shape at a certain level in the structure of being, unconsciously and on the basis of chance, this would furnish an excellent groundwork for the disappearance and destruction of the world. For the slightest disruption in the balance of elements and the smallest disharmony in the radiant laws of the universe would be enough to make things lose their moorings and the heavenly bodies collide, resulting in a massive explosion and the destruction of the world.

If the origin of the world were based on accident, why are the theories even of the materialists based on the supposition of a plan,

an ordering, an absence of chance? If the whole world is the result of chance and accident, what is it that did not emerge on the basis of chance? If an existent thing came into being not by virtue of chance, what are its distinguishing features and characteristics and can they be applied to the numerous and variegated phenomena of the universe?

Now since accident is opposed to order and harmony, it follows that whatever bears traces of planning, design and calculation should be disharmonious and discontinuous, because the concepts of planning, design and calculation are opposed to accident and chance.

To suppose that accident is the infrastructure of the universe and its governing principle does not rest on any logical proof or scientific evidence; it cannot be accepted as a definitive solution to the geometry of the structure of being.

When the experimental sciences demonstrate that the elements and natural factors cannot exert any independent influence and do not possess any creativity; when all of our experiences, our sensory feelings, and our rational deductions point to the conclusion that nothing occurs in nature without a reason and cause and that all phenomena are based on an established system and specific laws — when all of this is the case, it is surprising that some people turn their backs on scientific principles, primary deductions and propositions based on reflection, and deny the existence of the Creator.

Education and environmental factors are among the causes that either prevent man's innate perceptions from displaying themselves, or on the contrary reinforce them. Whatever displays itself from the source of instinct resembles in its orderliness the patterns of nature. Those who have been left free to follow the original course of their creation without being imprisoned by habit and whose inner nature has not been coloured by words and expressions, are better able to hear the summons of their inner being and to distinguish good deeds from bad and true beliefs from false. Irreligion, which is in fact a turning away from original nature, is therefore rarely to be seen among such individuals. If someone tells them that the world has no indwelling order and that it is the offspring of chance, decking out his words in philosophical terminology, he will have no effect on such people, because they will reject his theories by virtue of their own original nature.

Those who are caught up in the webs of science may fall prey to doubt and confusion as a result of alluring terminology. The limited knowledge that inspires arrogance in man is like a piece of coloured glass placed in front of the aperture of the intellect and the original nature; whoever possesses this knowledge sees the world tinged with the colour of his learning and art. He imagines that the entirety of reality is what he sees through the narrow aperture of his senses and intellect that are a prey to colour. Of course we do not mean that man should refrain from

developing his intellect in order to safeguard himself against illusion. However, he should not be limited by or take pride in his limited knowledge and art.

Most people, instead of making their learning and knowledge a ladder for the ascent of their intellect in order to raise themselves to a higher level, remain stationary and imprisoned within the four walls of concepts and terms.

Man's original nature, once it senses danger, rushes to his aid. When a person is pressed by hardship and overwhelming problems, when material factors turn their back on him, when he has no access to any of the resources of life and is drowning like a straw in a maelstrom of vicissitudes and death is but one step away — then an inward motive guides him instinctively to a non-material source of support. He seeks aid from one whose power is superior to all powers, and he understands that it is that compassionate and all-powerful being who can succour him with his extraordinary power and save him. Because of his perception, with all of his strength he seeks the aid of the most sacred being to save him from danger, and in the sanctum of his heart he feels the power and strength of that being at work for his salvation.

Once someone asked al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq — upon whom be peace — to guide him toward the Lord, saying that he had been confused by the words of the polemicists.

The Imam said: Have you ever travelled by ship?

—Yes.

The Imam: Did it ever happen that the ship sprang a leak and there was nobody to save you from drowning in the tempestuous waves of the ocean?

— Yes.

The Imam: At that dangerous moment and in that state of despair, did you have the feeling that an infinite and almighty power might save you from your terrible fate?

— Yes, that's the way it was.

The Imam: It is God Almighty Who is the source of reliance and toward Whom men look with hope when all doors are closed.[4]

Even rebellious and materialistic men of power who are oblivious to the eternal power of God when they enjoy dominion, change when they fall into the trap of defeat and destruction. They forget the denial of God that their environment and materialist schools of thought had inculcated in them and they wholeheartedly turn to the Origin of all beings and the Source of all strength.

History records numerous examples of such persons who fell victim to difficult and trying circumstances so that the dust of pollution was suddenly removed from their original natures and from the depths of their souls they turned toward the peerless Creator.

In addition to the inner resources that are innate in man's being and help him to discover reality, so that free from all mental constructs and constraints he advances on the path of his original nature, the external factor of guidance and admonition is also necessary to show him the way and to reinforce his original nature. It is guidance that reforms rebellious qualities and protects intellect and original nature from perversion and obedience to false gods.

The prophets were sent to make men aware of the subtle perceptions of their original nature, to make their godly inclinations flow in their proper course, and to give wings to their lofty aspirations.

The Commander of the Believers, 'Alī — upon whom be peace — said:

> God sent His messengers among men so they might question them concerning their covenant with God, recall to them the forgotten bounties of God, speak to them by way of admonition, arouse in them hidden wisdom, and display to them the signs of God's power.[5]

Such guidance and admonition do not in any way imply extinguising the light of man's creative will or depriving him of his freedom and ability to think and to choose. It is on the contrary a kind of assistance to his positive inclinations and instincts enabling them to grow and develop. It is through guidance and admonition that men are freed of their bonds and enabled to profit from all the dimensions of their original nature and to flourish with all of their beings.

The Qur'ān says:

...ٱلرَّسُولَ... وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ
وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

The Prophet (S) removes all the arduous rules and customs that men had placed on their necks like chains. So those who believe in him, respect him and aid him, who follow the light that has been revealed to him, they are in truth those who are saved in this world.(7:157)

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ

O you who believe, respond and obey when God and the Messenger summon you to life-giving commands....(8:24)

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم مَّوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَآءٌ لِّمَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ...

O mankind, in truth an admonition has come to you from your Lord and a

healing cure for the sicknesses of your soul....(10:57)

The first people who accepted the summons of the prophets were men of pure hearts and enlightened consciences. The ranks of their opponents consisted of those who relied on their illusory power and wealth or were filled with pride on account of their paltry knowledge and deficient, illusion-tainted intellects, in such a way that their groundless arrogance prevented their inner capacities and aspirations from flourishing.

As a certain scholar put it:

> In spiritual matters too, the law of supply and demand prevails. If the demand for religion did not exist in man's nature, the supply provided by the prophets would be wasted. We see that the supply provided by the prophets did find customers; their fertile, unclouded and authentic visions found numerous followers and supporters. This is a proof that the demand for religion exists within man and his innermost consciousness.

In fact, the basic preaching of all the prophets was a call to monotheism, not a proof of the existence of God. They negated the worthiness of idols, of the sun, the moon and the stars, to be worshipped, so that man's inner and natural thirst for worship should not be satisfied by recourse to external objects such as these and they might instead seek all their aims and values in a firm arc ascending to the true object of worship. Their hearts should be attached to infinite perfection, and with such a faith, ever ascending, they should constantly advance toward the source of all values and virtues, finally reaching their aim.

All varieties of polytheism and irreligion — the primitive form that is idolatry and the advanced form that is materialism — are the result of turning away from innate nature.

The progress of knowledge concerning religious experience which is taking place all over the world has resulted in discoveries that permit certain important conclusions to be drawn.

Based on the considerable data collected by sociologists, archeologists and anthropologists, the history of religions now analyzes the religious instinct, together with the institutions, beliefs, customs and other factors that shape society, in a new way that is largely at variance with the explanations previously given.

There is now a current of thought that is constantly winning new adherents from various schools of thought to the effect that the religious feeling is a primary, natural and stable component of the human spirit and that it is an innate means of perceiving the suprarational.

In about 1920, a German philosopher by the name of Rudolf Ett was able to prove that parallel to the intellectual and ethical elements

in man, there are also innate, suprarational elements that constitute the religious feeling. Attributes concerning God such as power, greatness and transcendence have the purpose of emphasizing that sanctity cannot be reduced to any other concept. It is an independent category that cannot be derived from any other category and cannot be identified with any other concept, rational or otherwise.

One of the peculiarities of the present age is in fact the search for a fourth dimension in the world of nature, called "time." Like the other dimensions, it must be intermingled with bodies, and therefore no body exists in the world free from the time which arises from motion and change.

It is likewise a characteristic of the age that the researches of scholars have led to the discovery of a "fourth dimension" of the human spirit — the religious feeling. The other three dimensions or feelings consist of the sense of curiosity, the sense of virtue, and the sense of beauty. The religious sense, or the concept of the sacred, is the fourth dimension and the most basic of senses. Everyone has innately an attraction and inclination to what lies beyond nature, separately and independently from the other three senses. With the discovery of the religious sense, the three-dimensional prison of his spirit collapsed and it was proven that man's religious inclinations are autonomously rooted in his being; they showed themselves even in ages when men were living in forests and caves.

Despite the primacy, autonomy and effectiveness of the senses of curiosity, virtue and beauty and the role they played in the emergence of science, morality and art, it was the religious sense that prepared the ground for the activity of these three senses, helping them to advance on their path and to discover the secrets of the created world.

From the viewpoint of a believer, the world has been designed on the basis of laws and a precise, well-calculated plan. This belief in an ordaining, wise God stimulates the sense of curiosity to seek out and discover the laws and mysteries of nature that are based on a chain of causes and effects.

The role of the religious sense in the development and advancement of man's lofty qualities, in modifying his instincts and fructifying his sense of morality and virtue, is undeniable. Those who follow the dictates of religion regard it as one of their most important religious duties to control their instincts and to acquire outstanding, lofty attributes.

Religious thought has also been a factor throughout history in cultivating the aesthetic sense. Primitive men produced their most creative works of art in order to glorify their gods. The remarkable temples of China, the great pyramids of Egypt, the distinctive statues of Mexico, the refined and astounding architecture of the Islamic East — all these drew on the religious sense.

Psychologists believe that there is a connection between the crisis of adolescence and the sudden emergence of religious feelings. In this period of life, even in persons who had previously been indifferent to religious matters, the religious sense takes on a special intensity.

There is no doubt that inward summons manifest themselves in such a way that no obstacle can block their path. However, certain factors such as contrary propaganda can decrease the growth and development of inward feeling and correct thought, although such negative influences cannot result in the complete uprooting of natural tendencies. If such hindrances are removed, sound instincts resume their activity and display themselves by means of their inward creative effort.

We know that more than half a century has passed since the communist revolution of the Soviet Union, but the roots of religion are still alive deep in the souls of many of the Soviet people. Despite all the efforts that have been made over this long period by the rulers to obliterate religion, they have been unable to remove the religious sense from the masses.

The existence of materialist ideas in the world does not therefore contradict the fact that belief in God is natural to man. If a certain school leaves the path of original nature, thereby making an exception of itself vis-a-vis other schools, both in the present world and in past times, this cannot be regarded as disproving the contention that belief in God is natural to man; exceptions exist in all spheres. What history shows is that the materialist school was founded in the sixth and seventh centuries before Christ.

3. God and Empirical Logic:

Without doubt, social circumstances, historical and educational factors, and the various forms of human labour cannot be without influence on the practical expression of man's inward inclinations and his spiritual and emotional characteristics. Although these various circumstances do not create any compulsion or necessity in man's choice of direction, they may bring into being a more suitable environment for a certain kind of choice, thus playing an important role in men's view of things. These circumstances may even sometimes display themselves in the guise of obstacles to man's freedom and ability to choose.

As a result of greater familiarity with scientific and empirical inference, the human mind tends naturally to shy away somewhat from purely intellectual deduction, particularly if the matter under investigation is non-material and insensible.

In general, man's mental faculties acquire strength and skill in the area to which they are most applied; matters lying outside that area

appear to him unreal or inauthentic, or at best secondary or tangential to the matter in which he specializes. Man therefore tends to judge everything in a particular way.

One of the most destructive and misleading factors in thoughts concerning God is to restrict one's thought to the logic of the empirical sciences and to fail to recognize the limits and boundaries of that logic. Since the specialists in the empirical sciences devote all their mental energy to the sensory sciences, they are alien to matters that lie beyond sense perception. This alienation, this distance from non-sensory matters, this extraordinary trust in the data yielded by the empirical sciences reaches such a point that testing and experimentation form the whole mental structure and world view of such specialists. They regard experimentation as the only acceptable tool and means of cognition, as the sole criterion; they expect it to solve every problem. The function of the sciences is to explain the relationships between phenomena; their aim is to establish the connection between events, not between God and events. In the experimental sciences man is not at all concerned with God. One should not expect to be able to perceive suprasensory realities by means of sensory criteria, or to see God in a laboratory. The sciences cannot carry out a laboratory experiment on the existence of God and then reach the verdict that if a thing is not physically observable and it cannot be established by means of laboratory experiment and mathematical calculation, it therefore has no reality.

In fact, no experiment can be set up to determine whether a non-material being exists or not, because only that which can be negated by means of experiment can be proven by means of experiment. Science and metaphysics are two forms of knowledge which enjoy equal degrees of validity and authenticity. A metaphysical law neither arises from experimentation nor can it be negated by experimentation. If thousands of scientific experiments are designed to prove that all things are material, they will all fall short of their goal.

The empirical scientist has the right to say, "I have found such-and-such" or "I have not found such-and-such." He does not have the right to say, "such-and-such a thing does not exist."

Laboratory methods, for all their complexity and advanced state of development, cannot find their way through the unknown, dark and expansive world of the elements that is the object of experimentation; they cannot understand all the realities hidden in the heart of the infinite atoms; and they cannot even discover the true nature of matter.

The empirical method has been very useful in developing man's awareness of the precise order of creation, and it may provide a clear and novel basis for belief in the Lord through its investigation of the order of creation, for it indicates the existence of a conscious and powerful Creator. However, the aim and purpose of scientists in their

researches and investigations into questions of nature and the mysteries of the world is generally not to perceive the Creator of existence. In the course of its continuous development at the hands of researchers science is constantly uncovering the mysteries of existence without the scientists emerging, by means of their science, from the narrow and restricted knowledge given them by the current stage of their researches. If they were to do so, they would realize the connectedness of phenomena and the subordination of all things to a given order, and thus attaining two additional stages of knowledge and insight. First they would be able to correlate all their sensory, empirical data, and then they would be able to draw rational conclusions and make interpretations. Without admitting the existence of a wise Creator it is impossible to interpret convincingly the totality of the varied data yielded by the different sciences and the connections existing among them.

Practically, however, the work and the method of scientific thought is to formulate principles and undertake research without reference to God, so that a system of thought from which God is absent becomes the axis on which scientific work turns causing man to be alienated from whatever lies beyond the scope of that thought.

At the same time, man's practical life is inevitably connected with the sciences. The results yielded by empirical knowledge embrace all the material aspects of life, imprisoning man within their four impenetrable walls, and it is hardly possible to find any natural tool among the means of man's life. This necessarily increases man's trust in the sciences and affects his behavior, inducing in him a state of doubt and hesitation.

In addition, the beneficial nature of the phenomena investigated by empirical science is tangible and apparent to everyone, in sharp contrast to metaphysical questions. Similarly, the material phenomena investigated by empirical science are well-known, whereas the opposite is true in the case of metaphysics.

The presentation of religious questions in the incorrect method followed by the medieval church, combined with enmity to all manifestations of science, was the most important factor in making empirical science appear preferable to philosophical and metaphysical concerns. In short, science appeared to be opposed to religion, not parallel to it.

Once empirical logic succeeded in pouring all thoughts into its own mould, it coloured men's outlook on the world, to such a degree that they were convinced that it was the only basis for accepting the truth of a thing. They assigned it supreme authority and considered it impossible to prove the existence of anything imperceptible to the senses.

So the empirical scientist who is unaware of the method of those who know God accepts and regards as proper in the course of his life whatever is compatible with scientific logic and thought. He grants

himself the right to deny whatever is incompatible with his scientific method. His method is absolute trust in the experiment and regarding it as the sole proof for the correctness of any deduction.

In such a situation, when the whole basis of religious thought is ignored, the scientist finds himself without any principles for interpreting those secondary religious questions which appear in the form of commands and prohibitions. Being totally accustomed to the language of science and dependent on formulae, he is utterly committed to his own method and imagines the binding, simple and straightforward commands of religion to be without content or value.

This manner of thought is faulty and incorrect. Although the sciences have complex and extraordinarily precise formulae, the comprehension of which requires profound and difficult study, those same formulae leave the realm of science once they enter our practical lives, distancing themselves from the technical language of the scientists. Were this not to be the case, they would be restricted to scientific and industrial centres, libraries and centres of research.

Everyone can make use of such facilities as the telephone and the radio. The same holds true of all scientific tools and instruments. For all their precision and complexity, a little specialized instruction will enable anyone to use them. The specialist and the expert do not pass on their mechanical, technical knowledge to the purchasers of the device; instead, they summarize in a few short sentences the result of the toils endured by the inventors.

It is therefore unfair and incompatible with scientific logic to attempt to force the commands of religion (which cannot be compressed into a scientific formula, being both simple and universal) into the mould of one's own incorrect prejudices and imaginings, and then pronounce them worthless and insignificant, while ignoring their decisive role and their profound effects in our life. Practical instructions bear their fruit when they are proclaimed in a generally comprehensible language and become tangible for everyone in individual and social life.

Furthermore, if it were supposed that the commands and instructions of religion should be determined by our cognition, understanding and taste, there would be no need for revelation and prophets; we could construct our own religions.

Man often overlooks his weakness, preoccupied as he is with his strengths. The science-worshipper of the contemporary world is so proud of his knowledge as a result of the progress that has been attained in the experimental sciences that he imagines himself to have conquered and triumphantly taken possession of the world of truth. But nobody has ever been able to claim that he has attained knowledge of all the mysteries of the universe and removed all the veils from the world of nature.

One must take a broader view of reality and realize how slight is one's own drop of knowledge when compared to the ocean of hidden mysteries that confronts us. In the wake of every scientific discovery, a further series of unknowns comes into view. Throughout the centuries that man has untiringly laboured with all his resources to know the world as fully as possible, the only result of his exertions has been the discovery of a few among the many mysteries of the universe. Only a few short steps have been taken on this path, and there is a whole mass of unknowns clustered round human knowledge like a cloud.

One must therefore assess more realistically the cognitive scope of the sensory sciences and their proper area of activity and influence. All preconceptions that are like barriers on the path to truth must be discarded in favour of a correct analysis.

Without doubt the empirical sciences can inform us only of the external aspects of phenomena; it is only matter and material phenomena that come within the scope of their study and are susceptible to laboratory experimentation. The method of the sciences in attaining their goal, while seeking to benefit from each slight increment in knowledge, is observation and experiment. Since the fundamental concern of the empirical sciences is the investigation of the external world, in order to be sure that a certain scientific theory is correct, we must compare it with the external world to test it. If the external world effectively verifies it, we accept it; if it does not, we do not accept it. So considering the object and the method of the empirical sciences we must ask whether metaphysical truths are subject to sensory test and experimentation? Does any empirical enquiry have the right to intervene in matters of faith and belief? Is any part of the experimental sciences concerned with God?

To discover the correctness or incorrectness of a matter in the empirical sciences it is necessary to make use of change and of the elimination of given factors and circumstances. This method is not applicable to the eternal, immutable and supramaterial divine existence.

Material knowledge is a lamp that can illumine certain unknown matters with its rays but it is not a lamp that can eliminate all darkness. For the knowledge of a system is dependent on comprehension of the whole in its totality and a form of cognition that can unite all partial insights in itself, resulting in a total vision. Now to imprison human knowledge in the narrow, restrictive confines of the sensory sciences cannot bring man to a total vision, but only to an awareness of empirical phenomena combined with an unawareness of the inner dimension of being.

Whether we believe in God or not has in fact no connection with the empirical sciences, because since the object of their investigations is matter, the sciences that concern themselves with material phenomena

do not have the right to express themselves, affirmatively or negatively, concerning any non-material subject. According to the belief of religious schools of thought, God is not a body, He cannot be perceived by the senses, He transcends time and place. He is a being Whose existence is not subject to temporal limitation and place cannot restrict Him. He is therefore free of need and exalted in His essence above any kind of deficiency. He knows the inner as well as the outer aspect of the universe; the world lies open before Him. Finally, He possesses the highest degree of every perfection and is loftier than whatever concerning Him might come to man's mind. We cannot possibly know the ground of His essence, given the inadequacy of ourselves and of our powers, faculties and instruments of discernment.

For this reason, if you study all the books of empirical science you will not find the slightest mention of an experiment concerning God or any judgement offered concerning God.

Even if we do regard sense perception as the only means for discovering reality, we cannot prove, relying on sense perception, that nothing exists beyond the world of the senses. Such an assertion would in itself be nonempirical, resting on no sensory or empirical proof.

Even if the followers of a religious school of thought had no proofs for their claim, to conclude firmly and forcibly that non-being reigns beyond the sensory realm would be a non-scientific choice, based on imagination and speculation. Some people try to propagate this fantasy in the garb of science and to present their choice as having been dictated by scientific thought. In the final analysis, however, the denial involved in such an assertion is unworthy of science and philosophy, and even contradicts empirical logic.

In *The Elementary Principles of Philosophy*, Georges Pulitzer says: "To imagine a thing that does not occupy time and space and is immune to change and development is an impossibility." It is plain that these words reflect a way of thought that does not know what it is searching for. If it knew what it was looking for, it would also understand how to look for it. Since the activity of this mode of thought revolves around nature and the sensory realm, it will naturally regard as impossible whatever lies beyond the scope of its activity and the existence of which cannot be proven by way of sensory experience. It will regard belief in such an entity as contrary to the scientific mode of thought. However, scholars in the natural sciences are confronted with a whole mass of unknowns concerning this very earth and tangible, lifeless matter, even though they are constantly in touch with it (apart from which the material universe, with its countless mysteries and secrets, does not consist simply of this globe on which we live). Such scholars have, then, the right only to say: "Since the supranatural realm lies beyond the scope of my professional tools, I remain silent and cannot utter a

denial." How could they permit themselves to make a claim that would necessitate knowledge as extensive as the scheme of the universe, when their knowledge of the total scheme of being is close to zero?

What proof exists to substantiate the claim that being is equivalent to matter and that the whole world of being consists of material entities? What scientist rejecting metaphysics has ever been able to found his denial on logic or proof, or to furnish evidence that beyond absolute non-being nothing exists outside the sensory realm?

* * *

Although science does not explicitly and definitively reject every unknown thing simply because it can have no access to it by means of its tools and instruments, patiently awaiting instead the day when it should be discovered, materialists do not even approach the question of the existence of God with doubt and hesitation; on the basis of their erroneous and hasty prejudices, they pronounce their judgement that the Creator does not exist.

Such persons establish certain criteria and standards for themselves and are not prepared to apply a criterion established for a definite purpose in a given area to something which lies outside it. For example, they would never use the criteria applicable to a surface to measure a volume; but when it comes to measuring the suprasensory world they try to measure God, the spirit, and inspiration, with the same tools they use to measure the material world. When they find themselves unable to gain any knowledge of the entities in question, they proceed to deny their existence.

Now if a person imprisoned in empirical logic desires to accept the reality of the universe only to the extent permitted him by sensory experience and to deny whatever lies beyond that, he must recognize that this is a path he has chosen for himself; it is not the result of scientific investigation and experiment. This kind of pseudo-intellectualism arises from intellectual rebellion and an abandonment of one's original nature. The god that the natural scientist wishes vainly to "prove" with his tools and instruments is in any event no god at all in the view of those who worship God.

4. Belief in the Reality of the Unseen Involves More than God:

One of the characteristics of the unique God to the knowledge and worship of Whom prophets and religious leaders summon us is that He is utterly inaccessible to sense perception. In addition, He possesses the attributes of pre-eternity and post-eternity. Existing everywhere, He is nowhere. Throughout the world of nature and sensory being His manifestations have an objective existence, and His will is everywhere mani-

fest in the world of being, all the phenomena of nature declaring the power of that wise Essence.

Of course, such a being that man cannot perceive with his senses, that is not in any way coloured by materiality, and that does not correspond to our normal experience and observation, is extremely difficult for us to imagine. Once the existence of a thing is difficult to imagine, it becomes easy to deny it.

Those who want to solve the question of the existence of God within the framework of their own intellectual limitations and narrowness of vision ask how it is possible to believe in an unseen being. They overlook the fact that sense-perception, being limited, can help man to know and perceive only one mode of being; it cannot discover other modes of being and penetrate all the dimensions of existence. Sensory organs do not permit us to advance a single step beyond the outer aspects of phenomena, in just the same way that the empirical sciences cannot carry human thought beyond the boundaries of the suprasensory.

If man through the application of scientific instruments and criteria cannot perceive the existence of a thing, he cannot deny its existence, simply because it is incompatible with material criteria, unless he disposes of some proof that the thing in question is impossible.

We discover the existence of an objective law from within the totality of phenomena that it is capable of interpreting. If, then, the establishment of scientific truths is possible only by means of direct sensation, the majority of scientific truths will have to be discarded, since many scientific facts cannot be perceived by means of sensory experience or testing.

* * *

As far as the realities of the material world are concerned, no rational person will commonly regard his not seeing or not sensing a given thing in his everyday life as grounds enough to deny it; he will not condemn as non-existent whatever fails to enter the sphere of his sense-perception. The same will hold true *a fortiori* of non-material realities.

When we are unable to establish the cause of something in a scientific experiment, this does not lead us to deny the law of causality. We say only that the cause is unknown to us, because the law is independent of a given experiment; no experiment can lead to the negation of causality.

Is it true that all the things we accept and believe to exist have an existence belonging to the same category as our own or are things that are visible to us? Can we see or feel everything in this material world? Is it only God we cannot see with our senses?

All materialists are aware that many of the things known to us consist of matters and realities that we cannot sense and with which we

are not customarily familiar. There are many invisible beings in the universe. The progress of science and knowledge in the present age have uncovered numerous truths of this kind, and one of the richest chapters in scientific research is the transformation of matter into energy.

When the beings and bodies that are visible in this world wish to produce energy, they are compelled to change their original aspect and transform it into energy. Now is this energy — the axis on which turn many of the motions and changes of the universe — visible or tangible?

We know that energy is a source of power, but the essence of energy still remains a mystery.

Take electricity on which so much of our science, civilization and life depend. No physicist in his laboratory — or anyone else, for that matter dealing with electrical tools and appliances — can see electricity itself or feel and touch its weight or softness. No one can directly perceive the passage of electricity through a wire; he can only perceive the existence of a current by using the necessary equipment.

Modern physics tells us that the things of which we have sense perception are firm, solid and stable, and there is no visible energy in their motions. But despite outward appearances, what we see and perceive is in fact a mass of atoms that are neither firm nor solid nor stable; all things are nothing other than transformation, change and motion. What our sense organs perceive to be stable and motionless lack all stability and permanence and immobility; motion, change and development embrace them all, without this being perceptible to us by way of direct sensory observation.

The air that surrounds us has a considerable weight and exerts a constant pressure on the body; everyone bears a pressure of about 16,000 kilograms of air. But we do not feel any discomfort because the pressure of the air is neutralized by the inward pressure of the body. This established scientific fact was unknown until the time of Galileo and Pascal, and even now our senses cannot perceive it.[6]

The attributes assigned to natural factors by scientists on the basis of sensory experiments and rational deductions cannot be directly perceived. For example, radio waves are present everywhere and yet nowhere. There is no locus that is free of the gravitational force of some material body, but this in no way detracts from its existence or lessens its substance.

Concepts such as justice, beauty, love, hatred, enmity, wisdom, that make up our mental universe, do not have a visible and clear-cut existence or the slightest physical aspect; nonetheless, we regard them as realities. Man does not know the essence of electricity, of radio waves, or energy, of electrons and neutrons; he perceives their existence only through their results and effects.

* * *

Life very clearly exists; we cannot possibly deny it. But how can we measure it, and by what means can we measure the speed of thought and imagination?

From all this it is quite clear that to deny whatever lies beyond our vision and hearing is contrary to logic and the conventional principles of reason. Why do the deniers of God fail to apply the common principles of science to the particular question of the existence of a power ruling over nature?

A certain materialist of Egypt went to Mecca in order to engage in debate, and there he met al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq, upon whom be peace.

The Imam said: Begin your questioning.

The Egyptian said nothing.

The Imam: Do you accept that the earth has an above and a below?

The Egyptian: Yes.

The Imam: Have you ever gone below the earth?

The Egyptian: No.

The Imam: So how do you know what is below the earth?

The Egyptian: I do not know, but I think there is nothing below the earth.

The Imam: Imagining is a sign of impotence when confronted with what you cannot be certain of. Now tell me, have you ever been up in the skies?

The Egyptian: No.

The Imam: Do you know what is there?

The Egyptian: No.

The Imam: How strange it is that you have not been to the west or to the east, that you have not descended below the earth or flown up to the heavens, or passed beyond them to know what lies there, but nonetheless you deny what exists there. Would any wise man deny the reality of what he is ignorant of? And you deny the existence of the Creator because you cannot see Him with your eyes.

The Egyptian: No one talked to me before in this way.

The Imam: So in fact you have doubts concerning the existence of God; you think He may exist and He may not exist.

The Egyptian: Perhaps so.

The Imam: O man, the hands of one who does not know are empty of all proof; the ignorant can never possess any kind of evidence. Be well aware that we never have any kind of doubt or hesitation concerning the existence of God. Do you not see the sun and the moon, the day and the night, regularly alternating and following a fixed course? If they have any power of their own, let them depart from their course and not return. Why do they constantly return? If they are free in their alternation and rotation, why does the night not become day and the day not become night? I swear by God that they have no free choice in

their motions; it is He Who causes these phenomena to follow a fixed course; it is He Who commands them; and to Him alone belong all greatness and splendour.

The Egyptian: You speak truly.

The Imam: If you imagine that nature and time carry men forward, then why do they not carry them backwards? And if they carry them backwards why do they not carry them forward?

Know that the heavens and the earth are subject to His will. Why do the heavens not collapse onto the earth? Why are the layers of the earth not overturned and why do they not mount up to the heavens? Why do those who live on the earth not adhere to each other?

The Egyptian: God Who is the Lord and Master of the heavens and earth protects them from collapse and destruction.

For the words of the Imam had now caused the light of faith to shine on the heart of the Egyptian; he submitted to the truth and accepted Islam.[7]

Let us not forget that we are imprisoned in the framework of matter and its dimensions; we cannot imagine an absolute being with our customary habits of thought. If we tell a villager that a great and populous city exists called London, he will conceive in his mind of some big village, maybe ten times bigger than his own, but the same with respect to its buildings, the way people dress, their way of life and dealings with each other. He will assume that the characteristics of people everywhere are the same as in his own village.

The only thing we can tell him to correct the unrealistic way he thinks is that London is indeed a place of settlement, but not of the kind you imagine, and its characteristics are not of the same kind you see in your own village.

What we can say concerning God is that God exists, and that He possesses life, power and knowledge, but His existence and knowledge and power are not of the kind familiar to us. In this way we can to some extent escape the restrictions placed on our understanding. For the materialist, too, it is impossible to conceive of the essence of primary matter.

Although it appears that sense objects are the things we know most clearly and precisely, we cannot rely exclusively on such objects in scientific and philosophical matters. Laying aside all fanatical attitudes, we must assess the true nature of sense objects and the degree to which they can aid man in uncovering the truth. Otherwise, they will mislead us, because sense perception relates only to certain qualities of the external aspect of sense objects. It cannot perceive the totality of those qualities or the essence and substance of sense objects, let alone non-sensory objects.

The eye that is the surest means for the perception of reality is in

many cases unable to show reality to us. It can observe lights only when their wavelength is less than .04 microns and more than .08 microns, and therefore it cannot see lights higher than violet or lower than red. In addition the errors made by sense perception form an important section in books on psychology; the eye is known to commit numerous errors.

The colours we recognize in the external world are in fact not colours. They are vibrations on different wavelengths. Our visual sense experiences these different wavelengths of light in accordance with its own particular mechanism as colours. In other words, what we perceive by means of our senses is limited by the structure and capacity of those senses. For example, the structure of the visual sense in certain animals such as cows and cats causes them to see monotone external reality as coloured. From the viewpoint of scientific analysis the nature of the mechanism in man's visual sense that permits him to see colours is not entirely clear and the theories put forward so far are all hypothetical. The question of man's ability to see colours is obscure and complex.

In order to see how the sense of touch may be deceived, you can fill three bowls with water: the first with very hot water, the second with very cold water, the third with lukewarm water. Then place one hand in the hot water and the other in the cold water, and leave them there for a time. Then place them both in the lukewarm water, and you will see to your great surprise that you experience contradictory sensations. One hand will tell you that the lukewarm water is extremely cold, and the other will proclaim that it is extremely hot. Of course, the water is one and the same, and its temperature is known.

Now reason and logic say that it is not possible for water to be both cold and hot at the same time, to have two contradictory attributes. It is the sense of touch that is at fault, having lost its self-control as a result of the two bowls of water in which the hands were immersed. What it feels is at variance with the truth, and reason and the mind point out its error.

This being the case, how can we rely on sense perception without the guidance of the intellect and mental criteria? Is there any way to protect ourselves against the errors of sense perception other than rational judgement?

Once someone asked the Commander of the Believers, upon whom be peace: Have you seen your Lord?

He answered: I will never worship a lord whom I cannot see.

The man then asked: How did you see him? Explain it to us.

He replied: Woe upon you! No one has ever seen Him with the physical eye, but hearts filled with the truth of faith have contemplated Him.[8]

It is then the judgement of reason which is entrusted with the task

of correcting the errors of sense perception, and the source of that judgement lies beyond the sensory realm.

Sense perception cannot therefore yield a realistic vision; its only value is practical. Those who rely exclusively on sense perception in their investigations will never be able to solve the problems of existence and the riddle of creation.

From our assessment of the competence of sense perception we reach the conclusion that even in the empirical, sensory realm it is unable to bestow alone certain knowledge on man and to guide him to the truth. *A fortiori*, the same is true of matters that are beyond sensory perception.

The followers of metaphysics are convinced that in just the same way that experiment and testing are the method of investigation and cognition to be followed in the sensory sciences, it is intellection that is the means of discovering the truth in metaphysical matters.

The Primality of the Life Principle:

Science says it is life that creates life. The life of animate beings is possible only by means of generation, procreation and the reproduction of the species. No single cell has yet been discovered that was born from lifeless matter. Even the lowest forms of living being, such as fungi and parasites, cannot come into existence and grow unless a cause that itself partakes of life is to be found in its environment.

According to the testimony of science, the earth went through long periods in which there was no possibility of life because of the extreme heat prevailing. No vegetation was to be seen on the face of the planet and there were no rivers or springs. The atmosphere was full of molten metals and volcanic eruptions. Later, when the crust of the earth began to cool, only inorganic matter could be found there for millions of years. In short, throughout the tumultuous changes that took place on the surface of the earth, there was no trace of life on it. How, then, did life suddenly gush forth?

There is no doubt life came into being some time after the appearance of the earth; how long that process took and how it came about is not known. For centuries researchers have been striving in their laboratories to uncover the mystery of life, this truly remarkable phenomenon, but they have not yet come any closer to solving the riddle.

One researcher writes in the book "Distant Worlds":

> What a bewitching word is life! Did existence come into being from non-existence? Can organic matter emerge from inorganic matter? Or is some powerful and creative hand at work? It is sometimes suggested that life may have come to our planet from other heavenly bodies, because when the lowest forms of life — the seeds of vegetable microbes — swimming in the

> atmosphere of a heavenly body rise to a great elevation the rays of the sun may carry them by means of pressure into space, so that they ultimately reach the surface of another heavenly body where they flourish and develop. This hypothesis does not represent the slightest progress in the solution of the great riddle, because if the hypothesis be true we still do not know how life appeared, whether on one of the planets in the solar system or one of the Great Dog stars. Just as a clock is not made by heaping together springs, cogs, bolts and levers, so too the creation of life is not possible in the absence of a heart — i.e., that which sets life in motion — and a summons that proclaims 'come to life!'

We know that matter in and of itself lacks life and that no material element possesses life unaided. Thus life cannot be supposed to proceed from the harmonious compounding of the atoms that make up matter. The question arises why living matter cannot repeat itself other than by procreation and reproduction of the species. Chemical actions and reactions are constantly underway in inanimate bodies without any trace of life being reflected in them. To say that matter is inclined to compounding and that life suddenly emerged in the course of its development and evolution is to describe the living and vital phenomena we sensorially observe; it is not to explain the origin of life and its cause.

Moreover, the particles of matter were not originally incompatible with each other; a cause must therefore have operated to bring about the compounding of some of them and to prevent the compounding of others. And what is the cause for some particles being endowed with life and others deprived of it?

The only thing to result from the compounding of two or more elements is that each element gives to the other some of the properties it possesses; how should it make a gift of something it does not possess? The elements acquire a common property as a result of compounding, a property that cannot go beyond the properties that each possesses, but life with its unique character bears no similarity to the properties of matter. Life displays itself in ways of which matter is incapable, and in many respects, indeed, life dominates matter. Although life appears to be dependent on matter, matter being the mould which receives it, motion, will and ultimately perception and knowledge appear in matter only when life casts its rays upon it. It is therefore unjustifiable to attempt to interpret life in terms of chemical reactions.

What factor is it that manufactures cells in numerous different varieties and with different programmes and then inserts them in a planned form? It prepares reproductive cells that transfer the characteristics and peculiarities of fathers to their offspring, without the slightest error occurring in the performance of that function.

We see that life cells have certain particular characteristics in their composition, among which are repair, reconstruction, preservation of

the species, and the capacity for variation.

Every cell in man functions at the required time and in the required manner. The distribution of labour and function among cells is remarkable. They are distributed in the quantity needed to assure growth of the body, and every cell goes to its appointed place in the brain, the lungs, the liver, the heart and the kidneys. Once the cells have taken up their appointed positions, they do not fail for an instant in performing their vital functions: they disperse and repel superfluous and useless matter and preserve exactly their proper volume.

To ascribe to mechanical and unconscious factors this remarkable classification which has the purpose of forming in due proportion the limbs and organs needed by animate beings is a completely inadequate interpretation. What freely thinking person would accept such illogicality?

Life is, then, a light which shines from lofty horizons on material entities that have the capacity to receive it; it sets them in motion and puts each intelligently in its particular locus.

It is the guiding will of the Creator, His power to decide in a way that ensures movement and development toward perfection, and His comprehensive and far-reaching wisdom, that bestow the great miracle of life, with all its properties, on lifeless matter. A man who is aware of the truth sees a constant thread of life running through the changing and moving substance of matter. He contemplates God in His aspect of continuous creation and origination, His ceaseless impelling of all things toward perfection.

5. The Manifestations of God in Nature:

The world of matter and nature, conceived as a created whole, is the best, clearest and most universal evidence for the knowledge of God. The wise will of the Eternal Principle can be discovered in the very processes of material change. It is apparent that His eternal rays bestow life and sustenance on all beings, and that all of creation derives both its existence and its advancement from Him.

To study the different beings in the universe, the mysteries of the book of creation, the pages of which all bear witness to the operation of a lofty intelligence in its creation, provides then evidence on which to base knowledge of and belief in a wise Creator, whose power is but slightly manifested in the order of beings for all their splendour and vastness. It is, moreover, a simple and straightforward proof that lacks the complexity and weightiness of philosophical evidence. It is a path for study and contemplation that is open to all; everyone can benefit from it, both thinkers and scholars and the simple masses of humanity.

Everyone, to the extent permitted by his capacity and vision, can

see in all the phenomena of creation indications of connectedness, harmony, and purposefulness, and find in every one of the countless particles of creation a firm proof for the existence of the source of being.

The complete adaption of every species of animal to its conditions of life is a great sign of God; each has been created with all the particular instruments needed for its conditions of life.

Moses, the one who spoke with God — peace be upon our prophet and him — made use of this proof in order to demonstrate the existence of God to the Pharoah. The Pharaoh said to Moses and his brother: "Who is your Lord?"

Moses — peace be upon our prophet and him — replied: "Our Lord is the one who endowed all things with a particular form of creation." (20: 49—50)

Likewise, al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said to Mufaḍḍal: "Look carefully at the structure of bird's creation; see how it has been created light and small in volume to enable it to fly. It was given only two legs instead of the four given to other animals and only four of the five toes they have on each foot. Birds have slim, pointed breasts to enable them to fend the air easily and fly in every direction. The long legs of the bird fit easily beneath its tail and its wings, and its whole body is covered with feathers so that air might penetrate them and aid it to fly. Since the food of birds consists of seeds and the flesh of animals that they consume without chewing, they have no need of teeth. Instead, God created for birds a hard and sharp beak that cannot break when tearing off meat or suffer injury when gathering seeds. To enable this creature to digest the food it has not chewed, it has been given a powerful digestive system and a warm body. Furthermore, birds reproduce by laying eggs so they can remain light enough to fly; if their offspring were to grow in their stomachs, they would become too heavy to fly."

Then the Imam referred to a general law, saying: "Thus all the peculiarities of a bird's creation conform to its environment and its manner of life."[9]

The question of animal speech — the means by which animals communicate with each other — is another Divine sign. They possess a special kind of language that enables them to communicate with each other.

The Noble Quran thus relates the story of an ant addressing the Prophet Solomon — peace be upon our Prophet and upon him:

... قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

An ant said: 'O ants, enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his army unwittingly trample you under foot.'(27:18)

Modern scientists have discovered a sophisticated system of communication among the animals that is more complex and precise than our own system of communication.

Crissy Morrison writes:

> If we put a female moth next to the window of our room, it emits soft signals that a male moth picks up from an incredible distance and it sends its own signals in return. However much you may wish to disturb this communication, you will be unable to do so. Does this weak creature carry some kind of transmitter, or does the male moth have a receiver concealed in his antennae? A cricket rubs its legs together, and the sound can be heard up to a kilometer away on a quiet, still night. In order to summon its mate the male cricket sets sixty tons of air in motion and the female cricket sends a warm response to his wooings by some physical means, although apparently no sound is audible from her.
>
> Before the invention of radio, scientists used to imagine that animals communicated with each other by means of smell. Supposing this hypothesis to be true, it would still be something of a miracle, because the smell would have to move through the air to reach the nostrils of the female insect. This is quite apart from the question of whether a wind is blowing or not and how the female insect is to pick up the smell and tell where it is coming from, enabling her to know where her suitor is located.
>
> Today, thanks to highly complex mechanical means, we have gained the ability to communicate with each other over great distances. Radio is a remarkable invention, enabling us to communicate with each other instantaneously. But the use of this invention is dependent on a wire and our being present in a certain place. The moth is still way ahead of us.[10]

Choosing the empirical sciences as a means of studying the infinite mysteries of the world has another advantage in addition to lying within the reach of everyone. It is that awareness of the wonders of creation and the order prevailing in it naturally links man to God who has created it; such awareness displays to man the attributes of perfection, knowledge and limitless power that characterize the Creator and Source of all being.

This precise order indicates an aim, a plan, broad and extensive wisdom. What creativity, what power, what knowledge He has invested in all the world of being, in the smallest and the greatest of His creation alike — in the earth, in the atmosphere, in the heavenly bodies, in the heart of stones, in the heart of atoms!

When we speak of "order" it should be understood that the concept of order is applicable to a phenomenon when its different parts are somehow interrelated in such a way that they harmoniously pursue a specific aim; the collaboration of the parts with each other must also have been taken into account.

Although those who deny the existence of order in the universe generally do not deny the existence of an active cause (since they accept

the law of causality), what is meant by the principle of mutual acquaintance in nature is the ultimate cause, and this — implying as it does the intervention of aim and purpose in natural phenomena — they do reject.

In numerous of its verses the Noble Quran invites men to ponder on the order of creation so that the mass of people should be able, in the simplest way possible, to become aware of the existence of the Unique Creator.

These are some of the verses in question:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا
يَنفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ
دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

In the creation of the heavens and the earth, in the alternation of the night and the day, in the sailing of ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which God sends down from the skies and the life He gives therewith to a land that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth — in all of these matters there are for the wise clear proofs of the knowledge and power of the Creator.(2:164)

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي
لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢﴾

God it is, that Pure Essence, that has raised the heavens without any pillar, as you see, and then adorned His throne in the midst of creation with perfect power. He has subjected the sun and the moon to His will so that each of them rotates in due course. He has imposed firm order on the affairs of the world and set forth the signs of His power with detailed proofs, that you may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord. (13:2)

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ يُغْشِي
اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾

He it is Who spread out the earth and raised the mountains upon it. He made the rivers course and brought forth every kind of fruit, and He created all things in pairs. He covered the bright day with the dark night. Certainly in these matters are clear proofs for the thoughtful of the power of the Creator. (13:3).

If we accept and have recourse to every theory that has been put forward by the specialists and researchers, even the theory of evolution concerning the appearance of the various species found in the world,

none of the theories in question will be comprehensible without the presence of an absolute power, the intervention of a will, an awareness, and a final purpose and aim. Gradual creation within the system of nature also clearly displays the intervention of will and awareness in its processes; all the stages in the movement and progress of nature have been based on a very exact choice and calculation, and nature has never diverged in the slightest in millions of years from its ordained path.

It is true that in the initial stages of deriving proof for the existence of God from the orderliness of the universe use is made of empirical data, and that some parts of the argument are constructed with the help of the senses, the study of nature and empirical observation. However, in reality the argument is not an empirical one but rather a rational one, guiding us away from nature toward the transcendent reality that lies beyond nature. Empirical proofs concern the relationship between two parts of nature, each of which must be sensorily perceptible to permit the relationship between the two phenomena to be established.

When we estimate the degree of knowledge and awareness of a person by examining his works and achievements, we are not engaged in an empirical discovery; for the degree of knowledge and intelligence of a person is not a tangible quantity for us subject to direct experimentation on our part. Of course, man directly experiences will, intelligence, and thought within his own being, but he does not have a similar awareness of their existence in others; they are inaccessible to him.

It is through the works and achievements of men that we become aware of the existence of intelligence and thought in them, although there is no empirical proof of their existence in them. Now the discovery of intelligence in others by way of their works and achievements rests on a rational proof, not an empirical deduction in the sense of intelligence and its workings being directly susceptible to direct examination so that their interrelations might be discovered. This discovery also does not rest on a logical comparison in the sense of positing an identity between one individual and all others.

Given, then, that the recognition of thought and intelligence in men does not take place by way of empirical proof, it is obvious that the argument of orderliness in the universe and its connection with the Divine Essence also does not belong to the category of empirical proofs.

* * *

From another point of view, since man is not the creator of nature but a part of it, his actions in the world of nature represent the establishment of a relationship between different parts of that world.

The aim and the purpose pursued by man in the compounding of a whole series of material elements (as, for example, in constructing a building, a car, or a factory) relate to his own being; that is, the ultimate

purpose and aim is the maker himself, not the thing made. The relationship between the parts of the things made is therefore a non-natural relationship; by establishing that relationship, the maker wishes to attain his own purposes and to relieve his own deficiencies, for all the efforts of man are a movement from potentiality to actuality and deficiency to perfection.

However, these two characteristics do not apply to the relationship between created beings and God. The relationship between the different parts of God's works is not a non-natural one, and the purpose of the created phenomenon does not relate to the Creator. Put differently, the aims of God's acts all relate to the acts themselves not to the Agent; for God's wisdom necessitates that He should cause all beings to attain their perfection.

If in the course of developing the argument of the orderliness of the universe we attempt to prove the existence of a maker similar to the human maker, that divine maker will in reality also be a created being on the level of man; proving the existence of such a maker is an entirely different matter from proving the existence of the Maker and Creator of all being. From a scientific point of view, the self-origination of matter is impossible; the Marxist theory that the material world is constantly evolving and advancing toward higher states is clearly contradictory to scientific data and the realities of nature. All development and motion in the mineral realm is due either to the intervention of a will external to matter or to attraction, interchange, and compounding with other bodies.

In the vegetable world, development, growth and increase occur as the result of rainfall, sunshine and obtaining the necessary materials from the soil. The same is the case in the animal world, except that there the factor of volitional movement toward what is useful and necessary must be added.

In all the instances just mentioned, there is a clear cooperation between things and creatures on one hand and factors external to them on the other hand. In accordance with the particular properties innate in each being and the laws and formulae to which it is subject, it is incapable of disobeying the commands that have been engraved in its being.

The realities that man perceives by way of his senses have certain particular properties. We sense clearly that beings in this world are subject to change and impermanence. Throughout the period of its existence, any material being is either proceeding along the path of growth and development or advancing toward decay and decline. In short, no material being on the plane of existence remains fixed and unchanging.

Finiteness is another property of a sensory existent. From the

smallest particle to the biggest galaxy, all things are in need of space and time; it is simply that certain things occupy a greater space or a longer time, and others a shorter time and a smaller space. Moreover, all material beings are relative from the point of view of their very existence as well as the properties they possess; whatever attributes such as power, magnificence, beauty and wisdom we ascribe to things, we do so in comparison to something else.

Dependence and conditionality are also among the characteristics of these beings. The existence of any being we may conceive is dependent and conditional on other factors, and it therefore stands in need of them. No material thing can be found in the world that relies entirely upon itself, that has no need of anything other than itself. Neediness and dependence therefore circumscribe all material beings.

Man's intelligence and thought are able to transcend the veils of outward appearance, unlike his senses, and to penetrate the depths and inner dimension of being; they cannot accept that existence should be confined to relative, finite, changing and dependent beings. On the contrary, the power of thought clearly recognizes the necessity of the existence, beyond the observable realm, of a stable, absolute and self-subsistent reality upon which all other beings rely and depend. This reality is present in all times and at all places; were it not to be present, the totality of the world would cease to exist and would lose all share of being.

Once we see the dependency of the created world and realize that no phenomenon can exist unaided, we conclude that there is a Necessary Existent, for we are compelled to ask, "Upon what is every phenomenon ultimately dependent?"

If we answer, "On another body," then we must ask, "On what is that body in turn dependent?" If then the answer is given, "On a thing the nature of which is unknown to us," the question arises, "Is that thing simple or compound?"

If it is said to be compound, then we reply that a compound is also dependent on its parts, since first the parts must exist in order for the compound to come into being. Since nature is a compound, it cannot be the Necessary Existent.

We are therefore compelled to say that the first cause must be simple; it must also be coterminous with the Necessary Existent, since the chain of causality cannot continue indefinitely.

The totality of the world is then in need of a reality that is independent and upon which all conditional, finite and relative phenomena depend. All things need that reality to fill them with being, and all beings possess a sign of its infinite life, knowledge, power and wisdom. They thus permit us to gain valuable knowledge concerning that reality and enable every intelligent, curious person to deduce the existence of

a creator.

* * *

The mutual dependence of matter and the laws of being in no way points to the independence of matter. On the contrary, the different phenomena that arise from matter, together with their close interrelatedness, indicate that matter, in its mode of existence, is compelled to accept and follow certain laws and norms that impel it to order and harmony. Existence depends on two basic factors: matter and orderliness, which are closely interrelated and give birth to a coherent and harmonious world.

Some people regard matter as independent and imagine that it has itself gained this freedom and elaborated the laws that rule over it. But how can they believe that hydrogen and oxygen, electrons and protons, should first produce themselves, then be the source for all other beings, and finally decree the laws that regulate themselves and the rest of the material world?

Materialism imagines that lowly objects are the source for the emergence of higher objects without troubling to ascertain whether the higher in fact exists at the level of the lower. If lowly matter is unable — even at the highest stage of its development, namely thought and reflection — either to create itself or to violate any of the laws that rule over it, it follows ineluctably that it is unable to create other beings and the laws regulating them. How then can it be believed that lowly matter should engage in the creation and origination of higher beings or have the power to bestow existence on lofty phenomena?

In the new science of systems, the principle has been established that systems comprising living elements that have an aim or systems organized externally on the basis of a given programme, may develop in the direction of expansion, greater orderliness and improvement. However, all systems, whether simple or compound, need to be aided by and interrelated with factors external to themselves; they are unable to construct themselves. No system or substance in the world will be able to create or to will a moving and developing organ unless it enjoys a measure of will, power and consciousness.

Based on the law of probabilities, the result of universal independent motivation could be only dispersal and anarchy, tending to a uniform death.

The law of probabilities also decisively refutes the appearance of the world by way of accident, considering it irrational and impossible. Even calculations based on the mathematical law of probabilities confirm the necessity of correct guidance and planning for the world, in accordance with a precise programme and a conscious will.

The law of probabilities deals, in fact, a decisive blow to those

who believe in theory of the accidental origination of the universe. If we attempt to apply the theory of accident to a simple system or to small numbers, its applicability is not impossible, although extremely unlikely. But it is inconceivable that one should ever chance on a geometric accident expressing the firm orderliness and harmony that prevail in the complex system of the world. Partial and simple changes in the order of existence are also unable to explain the transformation of the world, the coalescing of diverse elements, and the compounding of fundamental atoms to form a harmonious compound.

If nature was once engaged autonomously in composition and formation, why does it not now display any initiative in the direction of changing itself further; why does it no longer exhibit profound, automatic change?

Even slight and simple occurrences in the world result in the creation of remarkable images that are harmonious and consonant with the aim of creation. This is itself an indication of the truth that behind all the stupendous changes a conscious and powerful force is engaged in creating and producing the wondrous system of the universe: it gives shape to the remarkable crystallization of the world of creation and traces out the plan and order of being.

* * *

The harmony and interconnectedness of millions of natural phenomena and their relationship to life can be explained on the basis of one hypothesis only — namely that we conceive of a creator for this vast system who has established the diverse elements of life on this globe by means of a limitless and infinite power and drawn up a programme for each of those elements. This hypothesis is in conformity with the harmonious links that we see embedded in all phenomena.

If we do not accept this hypothesis, how likely is it that such harmony should have come about — accidentally and without purpose — among the variegated orders of being? How could it be believed that matter should itself be the origin of millions of attributes and characteristics and thus be the equivalent of the purposeful, wise and all-knowing Creator?

If the world of being did not exist, with all its wonders that bedazzle the intellect and the splendour of which human knowledge cannot fully comprehend, and if the universe consisted simply of a monocellular being, still the possibility that such a slight and insignificant entity, together with the order prevailing over it and the necessary conditions and materials, should come into existence as a mere chance, a possibility, an accident, such a possibility represents, according to the Swiss biologist Charles Unguy, so minute a figure as to be mathematically inconceivable.

* * *

All the particles of existent beings are subject, both in their internal structure and in their interrelations, to a well-established order. Their composition and their relations with each other are such that they aid each other to advance along their respective paths to the aims that lie before them. Benefiting from the relationship they have with all other beings and from their exchange of influence with them as determined by their own composition, they are able to advance toward their aim and destination.

The principal accomplishment of the material sciences is to identify the external aspects and qualities of the world; to identify the essence and true nature of created beings and phenomena lies beyond the grasp of those sciences.

For example, the utmost achievement of which an astronomer is capable is to know whether the billions of spheres in the heavens are fixed and stationary by virtue of centrifugal force or whether they are continuing to rotate while a force of attraction prevents them from colliding with each other and maintains their equilibrium. He may also measure their distance from the earth and their speed and volume by means of scientific instruments. However, the final result of all this knowledge and experimentation does not extend beyond the interpretation of the external and superficial aspects of creation, for the astronomer is unable to perceive the true nature of the attractive force, the essence of the centrifugal force or the manner in which they and the system they serve came into being.

Scientists can interpret a machine without being aware of the interpretation of the motive power. The natural sciences are similarly incapable of interpreting and analyzing the millions of truths that are embedded in nature and in the human person.

Man has delved into the heart of the atom but has been unable to solve the complex and obscure mysteries of a single living atom. In short, it is these bastions of mystery that the champions of the natural sciences have been unable to conquer.

* * *

One of the wonders of creation is the mutual harmony existing between two phenomena that are not contemporaneous with each other. This harmony is of such a nature that the needs of a phenomenon that has not yet come into being are already provided for in the structure of another phenomenon.

The best example of this kind of harmony can be seen in the relationship between mother and child. Among humans and other mammals, as soon as the female becomes pregnant and as the foetus grows in the womb, the mammary gland that produces milk — a pleasant and comprehensive form of nurture — sets to work under the influence

of special hormones. As the foetus grows, this nutritive substance increases in quantity so that when the foetus is on the threshold of birth and is ready to step forth into the broad and limitless world, the nutriment needed by the child and suited to all its bodily needs stands ready.

This ready-made substance is perfectly attuned to the still undeveloped digestive system of the infant. It is stored in a hidden depot — the breast of the mother, a depot with which the mother was equipped years before the infant took shape. In order to facilitate the feeding of the newly-born infant, small, delicate holes are placed in the tip of the breast — itself of a size to fit in the mouth of the infant — so that the milk should not flow directly into the mouth which does not have the power to swallow it. Instead the infant draws the daily sustenance it needs from that depot by sucking.

As the newly-born infant grows, changes appear in the milk that are linked to his age. It is for this reason that physicians believe the suckling of a newly-born infant by wet nurses who have not born a child in some time to be inadvisable.

Here the question arises: Is not the provision for the needs of a being made in the structure of one being for the needs of another being that does not yet exist, something planned and foreseen on the basis of wisdom and exactitude? Is not this provision for the future, this subtle and wondrous interrelation between two beings, the work of a powerful and all-wise power? Is it not a clear sign of the intervention of an infinite power, a great designer and planner, whose purpose is the continuation of life and the growth of all phenomena toward perfection?

We know well that the precise calculations which we can see underlying all machines and industrial tools are the result of the talents and ideas that went into their planning and construction. Similarly, based on our objective observations we can reach the general philosophical conclusion that wherever order and assembly based on balance and calculation are to be observed, will, intelligence and thought should also be sought.

The same precision that can be observed in industrial machines is to be seen to a higher and more remarkable degree in natural beings and their composition. Indeed, the degree of planning and organization visible in nature is at such a high level that the precision expended by man on his own creations cannot in any way be compared with it.

When without any hesitation we recognize that our industrial order is the product of thought and of will, ought we not perceive the operation of infinite intelligence, will and knowledge behind the precise planning of nature?

* * *

In the present age the science of medicine has reached a degree of progress that permits it to remove a kidney from within the human body and implant it in the body of a person whose kidney has stopped functioning and who is on the verge of death. This advance is assuredly not the result of one physician's labours alone; it draws on the legacy of several millennia.

A transplant operation is then the final stage in a long process, the preliminary stages of which were accomplished by earlier scientists: the ideas and insights of scientists had to accumulate for several thousand years before a kidney transplant could take place.

Is it possible that this result could have been attained without knowledge? Plainly not; powerful human brains had to labour for several millennia for the transplanting of kidneys to be made possible.

Now let us pose another question. Which requires the more knowledge and science: the changing of a tire on the wheel of an automobile — a task which admittedly calls for a certain technical skill — or the manufacture of the tire itself? Which is more significant: the making of the tire or changing it?

Although a kidney transplant is a medically significant procedure, it resembles changing the tire on the wheel of an automobile; it fades into insignificance when compared with the structure of the kidney itself and the mysteries, subtleties and calculations that it contains.

What realistic scientist, sincerely given to seeking the truth, could claim today that while a kidney transplant is the result of centuries of continuous scientific reasearch and experimentation, the structure of the kidney itself reveals no trace of a creative intelligence and will, being the product of mere nature — nature which has no more knowledge or awareness than a kindergarten pupil?

Is it not more logical to posit the existence of intelligence, will and planning in the creation and ordering of the world than to attribute creativity to matter which lacks intelligence, thought, consciousness and the power to innovate?

Belief in the existence of a wise creator is without doubt more logical than faith in the creativity of matter, which has neither perception, consciousness, nor the ability to plan; we cannot attribute to matter all the properties and attributes of intelligence that we see in the world and the ordering will that it displays.

Mufaḍḍal said to al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A): "Master, some men imagine that the order and precision we see in the world are the work of nature."

The Imam responded: "Ask them whether nature performs all its precisely calculated functions in accordance with knowledge, thought and power of its own. If they say that nature possesses knowledge and power, what is there to prevent them from affirming the eternal Divine Essence and confessing the existence of that supreme principle? If on

the other hand they say that nature performs its tasks regularly and correctly without knowledge and will, then it follows that these wise functions and precise, well-calculated laws are the work of an all-knowing and wise creator. That which they call nature is in fact a law and a custom appointed by the hand of Divine power to rule over creation."[11]

The Subtleties of Nature:

Consider a malarial mosquito. There is no need to use a microscope; through the customary use of the naked eye you will be able to perceive the precise and complex order contained in that insignificant object.

Within this delicate object there exists a complete set of members and senses, remarkable for their precision: a digestive system, a circulatory system, a nervous system, a respiratory system. The mosquito possesses a fully equipped laboratory: with wonderful precision and speed it processes all the materials it needs. Compare with it a scientific laboratory: For all the human and economic resources devoted to it, it can never attain the speed, precision and exactitude of the contemptible laboratory of the mosquito. How much time, reflection and intelligence are needed, for example, to manufacture a cure for the mosquito's sting!

When so much planning, thought and precision are needed for man to perform such a task, are not the subtlety, exactitude and orderliness observable in the world a proof of origination deriving from the intelligence, creative planning and far-reaching wisdom of the Creator? Is it at all feasible to regard all the precise geometry, functioning and movement of the universe as the outcome of matter in its ignorance? We proclaim most affirmatively that the phenomena of creation express order and regularity; they do not proclaim purposelessness, anarchy and disorder.

If we occasionally perceive weak points in nature this does not imply inadequacy or defect in the vast book of creation. Our thought and perception are unable to soar and take flight, and the reach of our intelligence is too short to understand all the mysteries and enigmas of the universe. Our intellect cannot discern all the aims and goals of existence.

If we are unable to understand the function of a small screw in a great machine, does this give us the right to accuse and condemn its designer as ignorant? Or is that the horizon of our gaze is too narrow to encompass the true aim and purpose of the machine?

Accident cannot perform the task of knowledge, knowledge, moreover, that is never commingled with ignorance in any way. If, as the materialists imagine, the world of nature did not arise from knowledge and will (despite the signs of creativity and inventiveness apparent in

its every phenomenon) then man too in order to attain his purposes would have to abandon his advance on the path of knowledge and imprison himself in ignorance in order to conform to the ignorance of nature itself.

The reality that guides and directs the functioning of the world with such regularity and orderliness possesses an aim, purpose and will that cannot be denied. It cannot be supposed that the ceaseless process of action and reaction advances in a fixed direction without the intervention and supervision of an intelligence.

After years of careful planning and exhausting labour, biochemists have succeeded in discovering certain experimental organisms on a very simple and primitive level from which all trace of life is absent. This scientific triumph was regarded as very valuable and received with great enthusiasm in scientific circles, and nobody claimed that this highly deficient and primitive laboratory creation had come into being as the result of chance, without direction, planning and precision.

This being the case, those who ascribe all the beings in the vast system of the universe, together with their complex and mysterious properties to the blind and unconscious forces of matter, are in reality doing violence and injustice to logic and human intelligence and waging open war on the truth.

Give your attention for a minute to a typesetter in a printing house. He expends great care and attention when he is setting the letters required for one page of a book; but when he reviews his work he comes across small errors arising from some slight inattention. Were the typesetter to take a handful of letters and scatter them over the plate instead of carefully arraying them in rows, is it at all possible that the resulting page should be correct in its contents and free of error?

It would be still more absurd to claim that a hundred kilograms of molten lead, forced through a tube, should emerge in the form of ready-made letters; that a fierce tempest should then pick up those letters and arrange them in a particular and regular order on thousands of metal plates; and that these plates should result in the printing of a thousand-page book containing numerous precise scientific discussions and attractive, alluring expressions, all this without the slightest error occurring.

Could anyone support such a theory?

What do the materialists who deny God have to say concerning the emergence of the variegated forms of the letters of creation and the precise and complex relations that regulate the heavenly bodies, natural creation and all material objects? Are the letters of creation (i.e., the atoms and the particles that comprise them) in any way lesser than the letters used in printing? Is it in any way acceptable that these orderly, meaningful letters, this precise and well-organized geometry, the astounding forms depicted in the book of creation, should be the work

of ignorance and aimlessness? That a great and wise power, a miraculous ordering principle, should not be present in the very texture of the world? Do not all phenomena arise from a manifestation of consciousness, awareness and power?

If the power hidden in the depths of matter does not arise from the universal intelligence, what factor guides it to the elaboration of forms, to an amazing regularity and harmony?

If that power is an agent devoid of intelligence and conscious will, why does it never fall prey to disorder, and why does its compounding of matter never result in collision and destruction?

It is here that belief in the creator bestows meaning on all existence and endows the world with sense and content. Those who possess deep vision and clear thought perceive plainly that an infinite power assures the preservation of the order of the world by means of firm supervision and absolute sovereignty.

In the past, everyone used to guide and control his own riding beast, and he was similarly accustomed throughout the ages to see an owner or supervisor in control of every piece of property, every scrap of land, every group or organization. Now matters are different. Today's man has gained access to remote-controlled satellites, electronic devices and pilotless planes, all equipped with automatic instruments and gadgets. Everyone knows that it is possible to construct a well-equipped machine that will react in appropriate ways to various contingencies, without the maker of the device being present or visible. We therefore no longer have the right obstinately to deny the existence of God simply because His hand is not visibly at work in the affairs of creation — visibly, that is, to our deficient understanding and knowledge.

It would of course be a highly defective analogy were we to draw a parallel with the maker of an artificial satellite or rocket who sitting in a fully equipped station on earth and with the aid of complex equipment guides and controls the course and movement of a spaceship. But if the intervention of God's hand in the order of creation is not visible to our physical eye and perception (although we can observe signs and indications that are like a ray proceeding from the splendour of His majesty) can we for that reason overlook the existence of planner and mover who alone possesses true knowledge, power and will, simply because he cannot be contained in the narrow framework of time and space?

It is true that in understanding a being who is without any like or exemplar in the sensory realm and whom human language is unable to describe fittingly and precisely, our capacities are limited. The lamp of our intelligence sheds little light on this endless plain, or — to put it differently — it encounters walls of limitation. At the same time, our relations in this world are with phenomena; that which impresses itself

on our minds consists of the lines that are traced out by the observation of the objective world. But in perceiving that world, the problem of imagining it is removed from us; no barrier exists between our concepts and the necessary amount of cognition.

Nonetheless, certain sceptical persons who have abandoned the sound mode of thought that derives from man's essential nature and who have become accustomed to the existent entities of nature constantly await the occurrence of a miracle from God which will rupture the current order of nature in order to make a gift to them of faith and belief, making His existence readily comprehensible and acceptable.

However, they overlook that whatever new traces and signs of God might appear will cause only a temporary excitement and agitation; with the passage of time they will become "normal" and no longer arouse attention.

Although all phenomena are now included in the framework of the order of creation, they began by rupturing the order of nature, and since all beings have been repeated on the stage of the world since the first manifestation, they now appear to be normal and customary.

By contrast, a sensorily imperceptible being — a being, moreover, that is replete with splendour and majesty and full of sanctity and greatness — will always influence men's souls. Their attention to such a being will, indeed, always increase and they will constantly look towards it with desire.

It is the dominance of a spirit of obstinacy, of judgement based on a discordant logic, that shackles human thought with limitations. For every creature in the order of being is an adequate proof for those who purge and empty their minds of obstinacy and the causes of denial.

6. The Need of the World for One without Need:

The principle of causality is a general and universal law and foundation for all efforts of man, both in the acquisition of knowledge and in his customary activities. The strivings of scholars to uncover the cause of every phenomenon, whether natural or social, arise from the belief that no phenomenon originates in and of itself, without the intervention of causes and agents.

The researches of thinkers throughout the world have given them the ability to know better the powerful order of nature; the farther they advance on the path of knowledge, the more devoted they are to the principle of causality. The link between cause and effect and the principle that no phenomenon will set foot on the plain of being without a cause, are among the strongest deductions ever made by man and count as indispensable conditions for intellectual activity. They represent something natural and primordial, assimilated automatically by our

minds.

Even prehistoric man was inclined to discover the causes of phenomena, and in fact philosophers derived the living conept of causality from the very nature and disposition of man before they placed it in a philosophical mould. Imprisoned as we are within the four walls of matter, we never encounter anything accidental in life, and indeed no one has ever encountered, in the history of the world, an accident not arising from a cause. Were this not the case, we might have an excuse for regarding the universe as accidental in origin. What kind of accident might it be that from the dawn of being to the present has guided the infinite interactions of all things, in so wondrous, precise and orderly a fashion? Can the order we perceive be the reflection of mere accident and happenstance?

Any supposable phenomenon in the universe was submerged in the darkness of non-being before it assumed the form of being. It cannot pierce the darkness of non-being and step forth on the plain of being as an existent thing until the powerful hand of causality sets to work.

The relationship between cause and effect is the relationship between two existing things, in the sense that the existence of one of them is dependent on the existence of the other. Every effect has a relationship of affinity and harmony with its cause, since the effect draws its existence from the cause. This specific relationship cannot be destroyed or replaced by another.

Whenever you consider the quiddity of a thing that has an identical relationship to being and non-being, neither of them being rationally essential for it, that thing is technically designated as "contingent," in the sense that there is nothing within its essence necessitating either being or non-being. If a thing in its own essence requires its own non-being, then its existence is impossible. Finally, if being emerges from within the essence of a thing in such a way that reason cannot regard it as dependent on anything else, the existence of that thing is designated as necessary. It is an independent being, free of all need and subsisting by means of its own essence; its existence is the source of all other beings, while it is not subject itself to any need or condition.

It should be added that material existence cannot in way acquire the attribute "necessary," because the existence of any compounded material entity is conditional on the existence of the parts that comprise it; it is dependent on its own parts both for its origin and for its survival.

Matter has different aspects and dimensions; it is immersed in quantity and multiplicity; and it acquires its various dimensions by means of attributes and properties. The necessary being, by contrast, is free of all such properties.

All the phenomena that once did not exist and then came into

being once possessed abstract notions of being and non-being. When they hastened toward the point of being this was as a result of a cause that impelled them in that direction. It was an impulsion, an external factor, that drove them in one direction instead of the other. In other words, the existence of a cause was the agent of being, just as the non-existence or absence of a cause is the agent of non-being.

Of course, a phenomenon that comes into being as the result of the existence of a cause never loses its essential neediness; it will always remain a being characterized by need. For this reason the need of a phenomenon for a cause is permanent and indissoluble; its relationship with the cause will never be severed for an instant. Were the relationship to be severed, the existence of the phenomenon would immediately yield to non-existence, in just the same way that the very instant an electricity generator stops working, all the bright lamps connected to it fall dark. It is for this reason that cause and effect, freedom from need and subjection to need, are in constant relationship with each other; were the relationship to be severed nothing would remain but darkness and non-being.

Thus no phenomenon becomes manifest in the world until a certain power is bestowed on it by one whose essence is free from need and is itself the very source from which being gushes forth. Were being inherent in the essences of phenomena, they would never follow the path of cessation and non-being. But it is neediness that is inherent in their essences, so that even after their being is established in the order of creation their attribute of neediness continues under all circumstances. They are never free of need for a cause; it is impossible that an effect should enjoy existence independently or continue to exist for a single instant without relying on a cause.

It thus becomes apparent to us that all phenomena — all contingent beings — derive at all times and in every instant from an infinite essence that bestows being — i.e., the Necessary Being, the Unique and Almighty Creator — the power and sustenance that permit them to come into being and remain in being.

The Noble Quran says:

وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَغْنَىٰ وَأَقْنَىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾

He it is Who from the plenitude of His essence has bestowed on us the capital of being.(53:48)

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ أَنتُمُ ٱلْفُقَرَآءُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾

O mankind, you are in need of your Lord; it is only His unique essence that is free of need and worthy of praise.(35:15)

Let us pay heed, too, to this Quranic summons:

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

Do they imagine that they have been created without any cause, or do they suppose that they are their own creators?(52:35)

أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَل لَّا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

Have they created the heavens and the earth? They have no certain belief in what they say.(52:36)

... أَمْ لَهُمْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

Do they have a Lord other than God? No, it is not so; God is exalted above the partners they ascribe to him.(52:43)

... تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

Glorified be He in Whose hand is all sovereignty and Who has power over all things.(67:1)

The Source of All Being is Free of Need for a Cause:

The followers of materialism pay much critical attention to the principle that God does not stand in need of a cause. They say if we suppose the Creator to be the originator of the world and the one who bestows existence upon it, all phenomena deriving their origination and continued existence from Him, what cause has freed Him of need for having a creator; what agent has caused Him to come into being?

In a lecture given to the London Atheist Society, the well-known writer Bertrand Russell said:

> One day, when I was eighteen years of age, I was reading the autobiography of John Stuart Mill. One sentence in particular caught my attention: Mill wrote that one day he asked his father who had brought him into existence, and his father had been unable to answer. The reason for this was that he immediately posed the question: who brought God into being?

Russel then adds:

> I am still convinced that that simple sentence exposes the sophistry of the primary cause. For if everything must have a reason and cause, the same must apply to the existence of God. If on the contrary something can exist without reason or cause, that thing might be either God or the world, and the whole discussion becomes meaningless.[12]

Unfortunately certain Western philosophers who accept the existence of God have been unable to solve this problem. The English philosopher Herbert Spencer has said the following on this connection:

> The problem is that on the one hand human reason seeks a cause for everything and on the other hand refuses all circularity. It neither perceives nor comprehends an uncaused cause. When the priest tells a child that God has created the world, the child asks who has created God.[13]

Elsewhere he says:

> The materialist tries to convince himself of a world that exists in and of itself, eternally and without cause. However, we cannot believe in something that has neither beginning nor cause. The theologian takes matters one step further back by saying that God created the world. But the child asks him the unanswerable question: Who created God?[14]

We can raise precisely the same objection against the materialists and ask them, "If we follow the chain of causality back, we will ultimately reach the primary cause. Let us say that cause is not God, but matter. Tell us who created primary matter. You who believe in the law of causality, answer us this: If matter is the ultimate cause of all things, what is the cause of matter? You say that the source of all phenomena is matter-energy; what is the cause and origin of matter-energy?"

Since the chain of causality cannot recede into infinity, they can answer only that matter is an eternal and timeless entity for which no beginning can be posited: matter is non-created, has no beginning or end, and its being arises from within its own nature.

This means that the materialists accept the principle of eternity and non-origination; they believe that all things arose out of eternal matter and that being arises from within the very nature of matter, without any need for a creator.

Russell openly states this belief in the lecture quoted above. He says: "There is no proof that the world ever had a beginning. The idea that things must once have had a beginning results from the poverty of our imagination."[15]

In just the same way that Russell regards matter as eternal, believers in God attribute eternity to God. Belief in an eternal being is then common to materialist and religious philosophers: both groups agree that there is a primary cause, but believers in God regard the primary cause as wise, all-knowing, and possessing the power of decision and will, whereas in the view of the materialists the primary cause has neither consciousness, intelligence, perception, nor the power of decision. Thus the removal of God in no way solves the problem posed by eternal being.

Moreover, matter is the locus for motion and change, and its

motion is dynamic and situated within its own essence. Now essential motion is incompatible with eternity, and matter and essential stability are two mutually exclusive categories that cannot be fused in a single locus. Whatever is stable and immutable in its essence cannot accept movement and change within that essence.

How do Marxists, who believe that matter is accompanied by its antithesis, justify the eternity of matter? Eternity means stability and immutability of essence, the impossibility of cessation, but matter is in its essence a compendium of forces and potentialities, it is relativity itself, totally caught up in living and dying.

Eternity is incompatible with the mode of being possessed by matter and the factors and attributes necessitated by its nature. The belief of those who have faith in God concerning a fixed and absolute principle relates to a being who in and of his nature can accept stability and absoluteness; his nature is completely devoid of and remote from the properties of matter. The very nature of matter refuses permanence, eternity and continuity, for it can never separate itself from movement, relativity, and it stands in opposition to being a prime or absolute agent.

It will be useful here to relate the discussion of al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) with one of the materialists of his age.

The materialist: "Out of what were beings created?"

The Imam: "They were created out of nothing" (i.e., they were originally non-beings).

The materialist: "How do they grow and emerge from non-being?"

The Imam: "Did I not say that all things in the world were created out of nothing? My purport is this, that all beings were originally non-beings; they were non-existent, and then they became existent. You wish to say that the world is eternal, but this notion is incorrect for the following reasons:

"First, if the material world is eternal, it follows that an eternal being should be subject to change and cessation, which is impossible.

"Second, if the elements comprising the world are eternal by virtue of their essence, how is it possible that they should enter the embrace of death and disappearance? And if, conversely, they lack life in their essences, how can life surge forth from them?

"If you say that living beings emerge from living elements and inanimate beings from inanimate elements, we reply that an essence that lacks life in and of itself cannot be eternal and cannot be the source for life."

The materialist: "If matters are as you say, why are beings said to be eternal?"

The Imam: "Belief in the eternity of the universe is held by those who deny the existence of a ruler and planner of creation, reject the messengers of God, regard the books they bring as the fables of the

ancients, and concoct beliefs pleasing to themselves."[16]

We say then that the existence of a thing is not possible without a cause — of a deficient thing, that is, whose fate is in the hands of its cause and whose permanence is dependent on the existence of its cause. This does not apply to a being that is conscious of its reality and exhibits no trace of defect and limitation.

The primary cause is the primary cause by virtue of possessing perfect and unlimited being; not being subject to any agent, it is free from need, condition and dependency, and it contains no trace of mutability or change.

When we speak of the first cause and simultaneously assert that God is free of all need for a cause, we do not mean that He generally shares with created beings the need for a cause but was once as it were granted an exemption from the law of causality. God is not an effect in order that He might need a cause; He is not a phenomenon in order that He might need a creator. On the contrary, all manifestations and phenomena of being derive from Him, the eternal source of being. The law of causality applies uniquely to the sphere of those things whose non-existence preceded their existence.

Similarly, the meaning of the first cause is not that God originated Himself, that He was His own cause. The need of the effect for the cause lies in the type of existence that the former possesses; it exists not because it is essentially existent but as a result of the derivative and dependent existence it acquires from the cause. But a being whose nature is subject to no condition and exhibits a complete absence of dependence and connection is totally removed from the sphere in which the law of causality operates.

If a being by virtue of the perfection and freedom from need of its essence stands in no need of a cause, it follows that no cause has fixed it at a given degree of being and that no cause can intervene in it.

The chain of causality cannot be extended indefinitely backwards, and an absence of connection is inherent in the very concept of the first cause. The question, "Whence did the first cause arise?" does not therefore arise; questions such as this apply only to the origins of phenomena and their dependency.

The existence of the first cause is identical with its essence; its being the first cause is, indeed, also identical with its essence. Both these properties imply freedom from need, whereas things whose existence is borrowed stand in need of a cause, because they are characterized by transformation and change, by emergence from non-existence and entry into existence.

How can it be supposed that belief in the existence of God is the acceptance of contradiction, whereas belief in the uncaused nature of an effect such as matter is not contradictory?

We live in a world where all things are exposed to change and destruction; there is the mark of impermanence, subjection and indebtedness imprinted on each one of its particles. Need and dependence are firmly rooted in the depths of our being and that of everything on earth and in heaven. Our existence is not eternal and has not emerged from within our own essence; we were not, and then we were clothed in the garb of existence and came into being. In order to come into being, creatures such as us must beseechingly reach out to the bestower of existence.

But He Who is eternal and everlasting, Whose existence emerges from within His own essence, and Whose appearance is outside of time, manifestly has no need of a cause.

The meaning of a cause in philosophy is that which brings forth an effect from non-existence into existence and clothes it in the garb of existence. This creativity cannot be posited for material causes, and the only role of matter is to abandon one form in order to become receptive to another.

It is true that every material being acquires each instant a new and different character as a result of internal development. However, the innate motion of the world and the processes of generation and corruption proclaim a lasting need for a hand that creates the motion, a hand that both nurtures the swift caravan of being and impels it forward.

7. The Finiteness of the Chain of Causality:

The materialists may insist obstinately on denying the truth and put forward another specious argument. They may say, "We do not cut off the chain of causality but, on the contrary, perpetuate it indefinitely; we defend the principle of the infinite nature of the causative link."

In that case they should be answered as follows: to analyze the world of creation in this manner rests on the supposition of a chain of causes and effects and the infinite unfolding of a succession of causes. However, since each cause is also an effect, it lacks being in its own essence; it is unable to partake of existence apart from the cause superior or precedent to it.

So how did each part of the chain, which is dominated by neediness from one end to another, emerge from non-being? The existence of each part of the chain manifests inadequacy, impotence and origination in time; so whence did its existence arise? How can great and complex beings emerge from infinite joinings of non-being? Does life gush forth from the union of the numerous factors that bring about death?

However far this infinite chain is prolonged, it will still have the attributes of neediness, dependency and origination in time. A chain

from the very nature of which autonomy and freedom from need do not arise can never put on the garment of being until it connects with one who is in his essence absolutely free of need — with a being who possesses the attributes of divinity and who is only a cause and not an effect. Without the existence of such an unconditional being, the source of all causes and the foundation of all existence, the order of creation cannot be explained.

Suppose that at the war front a column of soldiers intends to attack the enemy but none of them is ready to begin the battle by lunging into the heart of the enemy army. Whoever is given the order to do so replies: "I won't attack until so-and-so begins to fight." Every single soldier repeats the same thing; there is no one unconditionally ready to begin the attack.

Under such conditions will the attack ever take place? Of course not, because everyone's fighting is conditional on that of someone else. It is obvious that a whole series of conditional attacks will not take place without the fulfilment of the condition, something impossible under the circumstances, and as a result the attack will not take place.

If we continue the chain of cause and effect indefinitely, the existence of each link in the chain will be conditional on that of the preceding link, which in turn will be conditional on the existence of the link preceding it. It is as if each link in the chain of causality were to proclaim loudly from the depths of its being: "I shall not don the garment of existence until that other one has set foot on the plain of being." Each link depends on a condition that has not been fulfilled, and each one is therefore barred from enjoying the blessing of existence.

Since we see the whole of the universe to be surging with different forms of being, there must exist in the world a cause that is not an effect, a condition that is not subject to a condition; otherwise the surface of the world would not be thus thickly covered with phenomena.

That primary cause is one who in His essence is free of all need, who can dispense with all the different aspects of existence, and who is able to bring forth the most wondrous phenomena and the most original manifestations. He is a creator who plans all of this and then puts it into effect, who joins all of creation to a temporal mechanism, who constantly scatters the jewel of existence over the world, and who impels the great panorama of creation forward to fulfil the purposes of the order of being.

By making the world non-created and eternal, the materialists try to disprove the world's lasting need for a creator and thereby to bestow independent existence on the world. Their method,however, does not yield satisfactory results.

The materialists imagine that the world needs a creator only at the initial moment of creation; once the need is met, God and the world are

independent of each other and have no links with each other. As a consequence of this belief, the materialists proceed to deny even that initial moment of need, and, by rejecting the idea of a beginning for creation, they imagine they have solved the problem of God and creation and liberated the world of need for a creator.

This is because they imagine the need of the world to be temporary and passing, whereas the need is inherent in the essence of the world — the world is nothing but motion, a limited and dependent form of motion.

Each moment is in fact a beginning of creation; every instant, each atom in the world is engaged in origination. It follows that the whole of which the atoms are a part has similarly originated in time; it does not have an ipseity independent of that of the atoms composing it.

So the world still has the same need for a creator that it had at the moment when creation began. Even supposing the world to be eternal, it would still not enjoy autonomy of existence.

The Answer of Science to the Thesis of the Eternity of the World:

Just as man gradually loses his faculties with the passage of time so that one day the lamp of his life is extinguished, so too the universe is constantly advancing toward collapse and dissolution. For the energies existing in the world are gradually becoming dulled; atoms become energy, and active energy becomes inactive and motionless. Once the atoms are uniformly and equally divided, nothing remains but absolute silence and immobility. It is therefore impossible to regard matter as the eternal essence or substance of being, and there is no choice but to regard the world as created.

The second principle of thermodynamics, entropy or the decline of thermal energy, teaches us that although we cannot fix a date for the appearance of the world, the world certainly did have a beginning. The heat in the world is gradually decreasing and falling, like a piece of molten iron that gradually diffuses its heat in the air until finally the heat of the iron will be identical with that of the objects and the air surrounding it.

If there were no beginning or point of departure for the world, all the existing atoms would have dissolved and been transformed into energy. In the course of a very long past, the heat of the world would have come to an end, for matter, in the course of its successive and continuous transformations, is transformed into perishable energies. It is not possible for all the energy dispersed to be transformed anew into matter and mass conformable to the world of being.

In accordance with the principle just mentioned, once usable energy is exhausted, chemical action and reaction can no longer take

place. But given that chemical action and reaction do take place, that life is possible on the earth, and that a huge body like the sun is reducible each day and night by three hundred thousand million tons, it is clear that the world has originated in time.

The death of planets and stars, the disappearance of suns, is a proof of death and mutation in the order existing; they show that the world is advancing towards non-being and an inevitable conclusion.

We see then that the natural sciences have expelled matter from the stronghold of eternity. Science not only proves the createdness of the world but also bears witness that the world came into existence at a given time.

The world at the time of its birth stood in need of a preternatural force, for at the beginning all things were formless and undifferentiated. It was necessary for some primordial spark of motion and life to alight on the world of nature. How could an environment devoid of all active energy, characterized by absolute silence and formlessness, serve as the origin of motion and life?

Mechanics tells us that a motionless body is always motionless unless it becomes subject to a force external to itself. This law represents an inviolable principle in our material world, and we cannot therefore believe in a theory of probability or accident. Not a single motionless body has entered in motion up to now without being subject to an external force. So based on this mechanical principle a force must exist which being other than the world of matter creates that world and imparts it with energy so that it takes shapes, differentiates itself, and acquires various aspects.

Frank Allen, an outstanding scientific personality, proposes the following interesting argument in favour of the creation of the world by God:

> Many people have tried to demonstrate that the material world does not need a creator. What is above all doubt is that the world does exist, and four explanations can be proposed for its origin.
> The first is that despite what we have just said we regard the world as a mere dream and illusion. The second is that it has emerged from non-being entirely of itself. The third is that the world did not have a beginning and that it has existed eternally. The fourth is that the world has been created.
> The first hypothesis depends on our accepting that there is in reality no problem to be solved apart from the metaphysical problem of man's awareness of self, which can also be dismissed as a dream, a fantasy, an illusion. It is possible that someone might say that imaginary railroad trains, full of imaginary passengers, are crossing non-existent rivers over immaterial bridges.
> The second hypothesis, that the world of matter and energy came into being entirely of itself, is as meaningless and absurd as the first; it is not even worth considering or discussing.
> The third hypothesis, that the world has always existed, has one element in

> common with the concept of creation, for either lifeless matter and the energy intermingled with it or a creator have always existed. Neither attribution of eternity presents any particular problem in itself. However, thermodynamics has proven that the world is advancing toward a state in which the heat of all bodies will be at a similarly low degree and usable energy will no longer be available. Life will then become impossible.
> If the world had no beginning and existed from all eternity such a state of death and lifelessness would already have occurred. The brilliant warm sun, the stars and the earth full of life bear faithful witness to the world having originated in time; a particular moment in time marked the beginning of creation. The world then cannot be other than created; it must have been a supreme, primordial cause, an eternal, omniscient and omnipotent creator that brought the world into being.[17]

If man thinks deeply a little and reflects on reality with broadness of vision, he will understand that faced with the vast geographic dimensions of existence and the need in some way to comprehend them, he can hardly regard his own capacity as adequate to the task. The knowledge of the system of creation accumulated by man through his untiring efforts is next to nothing. Although science has taken great steps forward, there is an utter disparity between what man has learned and what he still does not know.

As far as those periods of the past are concerned that are shrouded in total darkness, for all we know thousands or even millions of human species superior to the present one may have existed, such species may yet come into being in the future.

What is called science by the science-worshippers of the present age and regarded by them as equivalent to the sum total of reality, is simply a collection of laws applicable to a single dimension of the world. The result of all human effort and experimentation is a body of knowledge concerning a minute bright dot — comparable to the dim light of a candle — surrounded by a dark night enveloping a huge desert of indefinite extent.

If we turn back millions of years, the dust of obscurity will cover our path as one emphatic indication of man's weakness and ignorance when confronted with the grandeur and vastness of nature.

It may be that the period in which man has existed is nothing more than an instant in the life of the world; it is certain that there was once a dark ocean of non-being in which there was no trace of man.

In short, we know very little of the beginning of our journey and nothing of its future.

At the same time, it is impossible to believe that the conditions necessary for life exist exclusively on this tiny planet. Many scientists today regard the sphere of life as extremely vast and broad; they present countless millions of planets to our gaze and we look upon them by various means. But what we are thus enabled to see is nothing more

than the field of vision of an ant when compared with the vastness of the universe.

Describing an imaginary journey to the world of infinity, Camille Flammarion, the famous scientist, says the following in his book on astronomy:

> We continue to advance for a thousand years, for ten thousand years, for a hundred thousand years, at the same speed, steadily, without slowing down our vehicle, constantly moving forward along a straight line. We advance at a speed of three hundred thousand kilometers a second. Do we imagine that after travelling at that speed for a million years we will have reached the limits of the visible world?
> No, there are further vast dark spaces that must be traversed, and there too new stars are visible at the limit of the heavens. We advance toward them, but will we ever reach them?
> More millions of years; more fresh discoveries; more splendour and grandeur; more new worlds and universes; more new beings and entities — will they never end? The horizon never closes; the heavens never bar our path; continual space, continual void. Where are we? What is the path we have followed? We are still in the middle of a dot — the center of the circle is everywhere, its circumference nowhere to be seen.
> Such is the infinite world that lies open before us, and the study of which has barely begun. We have seen nothing, and we turn back in fear, collapsing in exhaustion from this fruitless journey. But where are we to fall? We can fall for an eternity into unending whirlpools the bottom of which we never reach, just as we cannot reach their summit. North becomes south; there is neither east nor west, neither up nor down, neither left nor right. In whatever direction we look we see infinity, and within this endless expanse our world is nothing more than a small island in a great archipelago spread out across an unending ocean. The entire life of humanity, for all the pride man takes in his political and religious history, or even the whole life of our planet with all of its splendour, is like the dream of a fleeting moment.
> If it were desired to write out again all the works of research penned by millions of scholars in millions of books, the ink required for the task would not exceed the capacity of a small tanker. But to describe and arrange in orderly fashion the forms of all existent things upon earth and in the heavens, in invisible past ages and in the infinite future — to write down, in short, all the mysteries of creation — might require more ink than the oceans contain water.[18]

As Professor Ruwaya (?) says:

> In order to have a complete conception of the world, it is enough to know that the number of galaxies in the infinite expanse of the universe is greater than that of all the grains of sand on all the shores in the world.[19]

Such considerations concerning what we know and what we do not know make it possible for us to escape imprisonment in the cocoon of our narrow life; to become humbly aware of how small we

are; to go beyond this limited life of ours, to the degree that we are able; and to contemplate reality with greater care and profundity.

8. Pseudo - Scientific Demagoguery:

The materialists claim that the establishment of their school of thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was directly connected to the progress of science and that the dialectical method was a fruit plucked from the fruitful tree of science.

They depict every philosophy apart from materialism as a form of idealism, opposed to the scientific method of thought, and insist that their position is a scientific and progressive one. According to them, realism consists in turning away from metaphysical truths, everyone ought to base his world view on sensory and empirical logic and opt for materialism. But this claim is nothing more than a fanatical illusion based on unproven theories. Views such as these derive directly from a system of thought centred on materialism; within it, everything is defined and delimited with reference to materialism.

Belief in an object of worship is without doubt one of the principal sources of human culture and knowledge. The propounding of belief in God as basis for a correct world view has brought about profound changes in the foundations of society and thought throughout human history. Now, too, in the age of science and technology, when man has found his way into space, a considerable number of scientists have a religious outlook as part of their intellectual system; they have come to believe in the existence of a creator, a source for all beings, not only by means of the heart and the conscience, but also through deduction and logic.

* * *

If the materialists' justification for their world view were true, instead of being based on inadequate knowledge of the history of materialist thought, there ought to be a particular connection between science and an inclination to materialism; only materialist views would be represented in the realm of science.

Has every philosopher and scholar, in every age, held an atheistic world view and belonged to the materialist camp? A scholarly examination of the lives and works of great thinkers will suffice to show that not only is the religious camp by no means empty of true scientists but also that many great scientific thinkers and personalities, including the founders of much of contemporary science, have believed in monotheism.

In addition, materialistic and atheistic beliefs have by no means been confined to the period of the evolution and advancement of science; since ancient times and, indeed, throughout history, materialists have

stood in opposition to a united front of believers.

Today it is primarily in a vulgarized form of Marxism that the wares of science have been turned into a tool of deception. Those who supposedly should be mapping out their path in the clear light of knowledge and weighing all matters with profound, logical perception and investigation, in complete freedom from all fanaticism and hasty prejudice — precisely these people have fallen prey to stagnation and blind imitation. They have arrogantly denied all values higher than intellect and reason, and even boast of their ignorant denial.

Their claim that the coming of science has put paid to the notion of God is purely rhetorical and has nothing to do with logical method, because even thousands of scientific experiments could not possibly suffice to demonstrate that no non-material being or factor exists.

Materialism is a metaphysical belief, and must therefore be proven or disproven according to philosophical method. Precisely for this reason, an acceptance of materialism cannot be made a basis for the denial of metaphysics. To interpret materialism in such a sense is in the final analysis strictly meaningless; it would be a superstitious notion involving the perversion of truth, and to regard it as scientific would in fact be treason to science.

It is true that until very recently man was largely unaware of the natural causes and factors that give rise to phenomena and that he had little awareness of the occurrences that took place around him. But his belief did not derive from ignorance, for if it did, the foundations of belief in God would have collapsed once certain facts concerning the world were discovered. On the contrary, we see in the present age that with the discovery of a whole mass of mysteries concerning creation belief in God has taken on added dimensions.

Now science illumines a limited realm; the scientific world view is a knowledge of the part, not a knowledge of the whole. Science is unable to demonstrate the aspect and form of the whole of creation. But at the same time, since the scientific mode of perception is precise and specific, belief in God acquires a more scientific nature and a new kind of logic through the advancement of science. Man's awareness comes into being through his perception of cause and effect, and one who believes in causality underlying phenomena cannot possibly ignore the role of the most fundamental factor that is at work over and above all other causes.

* * *

Until very recently man imagined his own being to consist simply of a symmetrical and well-proportioned form; he was unaware of the complex mysteries contained in his creation. Today he has discovered astounding and far-reaching truths concerning the interior of his slight being, realizing that there are tens of millions of billions of cells in his

body. This makes possible a particular appreciation of the greatness of the creator responsible for this artefact that was not possible in the past.

Is it logical to say that belief in God is peculiar to those who know nothing about man's composition and creation, and that by contrast a scientist who is aware of the natural laws and factors responsible for man's growth and development, who knows that law and precise calculation preside over all stages of man's existence, is bound to believe that matter, lacking all perception and consciousness, is the source of the wondrous laws of nature?

Do scientific discoveries and knowledge cause such a scientist to conclude that matter, unknowing and unperceiving, is his creator and that of all beings?

Materialism looks at the world with one eye closed and as a result is unable to answer numerous questions.

Science, too, offers no answer to the question of whether the world can be divided into two parts, material and non-material, or to the question of whether the world has an innate purpose. These questions do not belong to the realm of science; scientific knowledge can acquaint us — to a certain degree — with what is, but it is unable to show us a direction in life or inspire us with a path to be followed.

A scientific world view cannot then be the foundation for a human ideology. The value of scientific knowledge is primarily practical, in that it enables man to dominate nature. It is ideal and theoretical values that are required as the foundation of belief.

Furthermore, science is based on experiment and investigation, and laws having experiment for their foundation are bound to be changing and unstable. Faith requires a basis that partakes of eternity, being immune against change, and is able to answer questions such as the nature and shape of the world as a whole in a trustworthy and permanent manner. Only thus can man's need for a comprehensive interpretation and analysis of existence be met.

As he advances toward perfection, man requires spiritual and intellectual equilibrium; lacking an aim, he will stray along false paths and risk disaster. A man who does not find his aim in religion will pursue an aim of his own making, which will be nothing other than a kind of revolt against the will of nature; it will have nothing to do with creativity or intellectual maturity.

The Reasons for Denial and Unbelief:

Books on the history of religion try to delineate the factors that have drawn men to religion. But attempts such as they make are in vain and incapable of uncovering the truth of the matter. It is necessary to focus on man's innate tendency to monotheism, that primary existential

characteristic of the human species which gives man — for all his internal contradiction, thoughts, and desires — a special place in creation. It then becomes possible to discover the factors that lead man to trample on his own nature by foreswearing religion.

Man's religious ties are an outgrowth of his nature, and materialism is something opposed to his nature. In accordance with his specific make-up man will create his own god if he does not discover the true God, and the god he discovers may be nature or historical inevitability. This false god takes the place of the true God with respect to comprehensiveness of authority, effectiveness of decree, and capacity to guide man on a certain path and propel him forward, unhindered by anyone's desires.

This is the source of the trade in false gods, the adherence to the new idolatry, that would cruelly sacrifice God to history and exchange a pearl for a bead.

Alas that so many people smitten with self-inflicted abjection have bowed before the idol they have fashioned themselves and deified! They have turned away from the peerless creator and willingly accepted the polluting disgrace of such misdirected worship.

If we examine the matter closely, we see that the appearance of materialism in Europe as a school of thought, the severance of men's links with a sublime principle, their imprisonment in the fetters of matter, the choice of science in place of religion — all this was caused by a series of social and historical factors that emerged in the West.

One of the factors that aroused a widespread reaction in Europe and caused the emergence of freethinking and anti-religious propaganda, was the crushing pressure exerted by the Christian ecclesiastical authorities at the beginning of the Renaissance on scholars who were propounding new scientific ideas.

In addition to specifically religious doctrines, the Church was also beholden to certain scientific principles concerning man and the world that it had inherited from ancient — primarily Greek — philosophers and that it placed on the same footing as religious beliefs. Whatever theory appeared to contradict the Bible and these inherited principles was regarded as heretical, and whoever espoused it would be severely punished.

The clear contradiction between science and religion created a mutual hostility in both camps. Intellectuals and scientists saw that the Christian church was enslaving intelligence and thought, preventing the free development of ideas; through its adherence to a petrified system of thought and an anti-intellectual tradition it was creating a stifling atmosphere for the man of the new age. Thinkers thus retreated into a painful isolation from religion.

These accumulating pressures finally led to violent reactions that

engulfed the whole of Europe. Once the power and dominion of the Church declined and its oppressiveness came to an end, Western thought recovered its lost freedom and reacted strongly against the limitations once imposed on it.

The intellectuals removed the chains of ancient ritual from their necks and turned away from religion. All the pain and anger they had felt found expression in a great wave of hostility to religion. An acute spiritual crisis began that culminated in the separation of science from religion. An illogical desire for vengeance on religion led to the denial of heavenly truths and of the existence of God.

It is true that some of the doctrines connected with religion were illogical or even baseless, having no connection with authentic religious knowledge. But to take revenge on the Church is one thing, and to fall into hasty and erroneous prejudice concerning religion as such is something else. It is obvious that vengeance, being a purely emotional matter, has nothing to do with scholarly precision.

The spiritual poverty of man thus advanced at a rate commensurate with his scientific and technological wealth. As he progressed in industry, he regressed in ethics and spirituality, to such a degree that he lacked the moral capacity to make proper use of his newly acquired knowledge.

Scientific knowledge is in itself indifferent to values; one cannot determine the duties of a responsible human being by referring to science. However far science advances, it cannot see more than one step ahead of itself. Human knowledge cannot attain to the essence of the world and perceive it in its totality, and nor can it foretell the future destiny of man.

It is only the world view of monotheism that does not attempt to confine man to the material aspects of his existence. On the contrary, through the symbols and signs that have been given to man to guide him on his path, monotheism delineates an exalted origin and destiny for man. Once man places himself on the path of monotheism he acquires a comprehensive world view within the framework of which he finds answers to his probing fundamental questions. Once he has reached this stage of comprehensive and multidimensional belief, man's life takes on fresh vigour and the values that are the fruit of that world view come to fruition.

The struggle with the Church was, then, one factor in the divorce of science from religion.

Another group abandoned religion and took refuge in materialism because the concepts propounded by the Church were improper and inadequate, lacking transcendental value. These concepts were naturally found unacceptable and unconvincing by intelligent people. The Church would present God in material and human terms, in a sense that was

opposed to the human desire for absolute values and the striving to break through and transcend all limiting frameworks.

There can be no doubt that if an indubitable truth is impressed in someone's mind in the defective form of a legend, that person will react negatively as soon as he reaches intellectual maturity.

Confronted with the anthropomorphic depiction of God made in Christian theology, the exaltation of belief over reason, and the insistence that faith should precede thought, enlightened people realized that these narrow-minded efforts to imprison wisdom and science in the monopoly held by Christian theology were incompatible with rational criteria and scientific method. Since they had no authentic source from which they might learn true teachings about God, being wholly dependent on the institutions of the Church and its corrupted books, and since they had no access to a superior system which would satisfy both their spiritual and their material needs and offer them a suitable framework for integrating all the vital elements of life, material and spiritual, emotional and intellectual, the world view of materialism took root in them, leading to the denial of all transcendental and suprahuman values.

They were unaware that although error leads religion astray when it follows the path of ignorance, true religion, free of all illusion, superstition and distortion, can liberate man from bondage to myth and superstition, hold him firm on the axis of true belief, and supply him with a correct understanding of teachings concerning God, one that satisfies the enquiring mind.

Instead, Western intellectuals were aware only of the superstitious aspect of false religion and how the established dogmas of religion lacked all logical basis, so they had no hesitation in condemning religion as such to be baseless. Their judgement was based on their discouraging experiences with their own religion, and it could not fail, then, to be hasty, unrealistic, irrational and illogical.

This is expressed as follows by a scholar of physiology and biochemistry:

> The fact that certain scholars have not been led, in the course of their researches, to a perception of the existence of God, has numerous reasons. Here we will mention only two of them. First, the political circumstances created by despotism, together with the attendant social and administrative conditions, have tended to cause men to deny the existence of the Maker. Second, human thought has always been influenced by certain fantasies and illusions, and although man may have no fear of spiritual or bodily torment, he is still not completely free to choose the right path.
>
> In Christian families, most children come to believe early in life in the existence of a God similar to man, as if man had been created in the form of God. When they begin to enter the realm of science and to learn and implement scientific concepts, they can no longer reconcile their feeble, anthropomorphic concept of God with the logical evidence and methods of science. So after a

certain time, when all hope of reconciling belief and science has disappeared, they totally abandon all concept of God and expel it from their minds. The main cause for this is that the evidence of logic and the categories of science do not modify their previous feelings and beliefs but instead cause them to feel that they were mistaken in their previous belief in God. Under the influence of this feeling, combined with other psychological factors, they are appalled at the inadequacy of their concepts and turn away from all attempts at the knowledge of God.[20]

Hence scientists tried, by propounding all kinds of laws and formulae, to leave no place for God and religion in the solution of questions touching on existence and creation. They tried to sever men's hopes from religion and to depose God from playing any role in the functioning of the world and the ordering of nature.

Whenever they came to a dead end, they tried to solve the problem by means of various hypotheses or postpone its definitive solution until more extensive research had taken place. They imagined that in this way they were avoiding surrender to non-scientific formulae and superstitions. Thus although they did escape the perils of polytheism they regrettably took up arms for irreligion and atheism.

* * *

Although a faith in God and belief in an originating principle is natural and innate in man, it cannot be compared to the material necessities of life which man constantly strives to obtain. It is quite distinct from material life, and being an inward need belongs to a totally separate category.

In addition, it is easier to deny an invisible being than it is to affirm it, given our inability to describe it adequately. People who lack mental capacity therefore choose the easy and painless path of denial instead of undertaking mental exertion. The path of denial does not, moreover, involve any apparent harm. By turning away from God people gradually acquire an attitude of obstinacy and hostility to religion, tainted with fanaticism. The profound effects of such an attitude can easily be seen in the malicious arguments of those who have turned their backs on religion.

It is also easier to deny an invisible being because to affirm it implies various obligations for man; those who wish to shake off those obligations simply deny the existence of an originating principle.

The Qur'ān says:

بَلْ يُرِيدُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُۥ ﴿٥﴾ يَسْـَٔلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ﴿٦﴾ فَإِذَا بَرِقَ ٱلْبَصَرُ ﴿٧﴾

Does man wish to spend all the remaining days of his life in impiety and vain desire? For he asks, implying denial, When will be the day of resurrection and

accounting? Say: 'On a day when the eyes of mankind will be blinded in terror and fear.'(75: 5—7)

* * *

The teachings of ignorant and illogical professional ascetics also cannot be overlooked as a factor impelling certain groups of people in the direction of materialism.

The instincts that come into being together with the natural life of man and are intertwined with his existence not only are not vain and purposeless, they are also a determining and destiny-shaping force, a factor of development and motion that drives man forward to the purpose envisaged in his creation. It is true that man should not be a blindfolded slave to his instincts, like a prisoner all of whose being and motions are under the control of the jailer. But he should also not do battle with the reality of his own being and seek to block all activity and movement on the part of his instincts. A fruitful existence for man is in fact dependent on the active presence in his life of his instincts, deployed in proper equilibrium; the suppression of the instincts leads to complexes and the destruction of the personality.

The world view prevailing in Christianity during the Middle Ages was based on an exclusive orientation to the hereafter that entailed the devaluation of the material world. Now what will be the consequence if one denies all validity to the forces of instinct, in the name of God and religion, and even tries to annihilate them; if one sanctifies celibacy and monasticism and denounces as impure marriage and procreation, the very activity that secures the survival of the species, and if one regards poverty and deprivation as the guarantee of bliss? Will it then be possible to expect religion to play an active and creative role?

The true role and mission of religion is to refine, to guide and to control the instincts; to delimit the sphere of their activity; and to purge them of all perversion and excess. It is not to annihilate and abolish them.

Through controlling the instincts and striving always to free himself from the trap they may present, man creates a purposeful destiny for himself. If he fails to do this, the intense clash of instincts within him is so intense that he cannot easily be master of his own being. He therefore needs a comprehensive system of moral education.

Man is on the one hand subject to the influence of the religious impulse; this tames him inwardly and draws together his scattered energies in the grasp of its power, directing them toward the acquisition of virtue and benefit. On the other hand, he is also subject to the influence of his instincts.

In any society where people are constantly told, in the name of God and religion, that the path to happiness lies in turning one's back

on the gifts of this world, an opening is automatically created for the development of materialism and a concentration on material values, so that the lofty concepts of religion, with all their far-reaching implications, disappear from the scene.

But this does not represent the true logic of religion. True religions direct man's attention to authentic spiritual values, basing themselves on belief in the Creator and presenting man with comprehensive teachings and principles for living. They extend the field of his vision to the frontiers of the heavenly realm, deliver him from the servitude of self-worship and materialism, and at the same time permit him to enjoy material pleasures to a reasonable extent.

* * *

Some people imagine that the free enjoyment of certain things religion has prohibited will guarantee them happiness. They think that religion is obstinately fighting against all enjoyment and is in no mood to compromise with the pleasures of this world, as if God were forcing man to choose between happiness in this world and happiness in the hereafter.

This attitude to religion is totally misleading and unrealistic. If religion seeks to play a role in man's efforts and his choice of direction, it is because unbridled indulgence of desire, unconditional surrender to instinct and appetite, and obedience to the commands of the ego, darken man's life and propel him into a form of unconscious slavery. Despite his essentially pure nature, he falls from his true rank and strays from his real path. Were the free indulgence of instinctual desire not a cause of eternal misery and painful degradation, it would not have been forbidden.

It is considerations such as these which make it possible to understand why religion has forbidden certain things and how worldly happiness is compatible with happiness in the hereafter.

Similar considerations apply to the imposition on man of certain duties. The attempt to perform obligatory acts of worship, sincerely and without any hypocrisy, brings about an inward change in man; the purpose of these acts is not in any way to diminish man's worldly happiness.

Worship is like a tempest in the stagnant lagoon of the heart, transforming man's inner nature and his criteria of judgement. It is the cornerstone on which the foundation of religion is made firm, a fruitful educative practice that penetrates the depths of the soul. Its sharp sword severs the skein of corruption and lowliness in man, enabling him to take flight for a pure, vast and limitless realm. In short, it makes it possible for man to grow to true maturity.

Not only is there no contradiction between the concerns of life

and those of the spirit, spiritual concerns are conducive to a life of greater happiness in this world.

It may be that the unconvincing and illogical teachings of Christianity have influenced the anti-religious tendencies of people like Bertrand Russell. He evidently believed that faith in God leads to unhappiness, as is apparent from the following words:

> The teachings of the Church have made man choose between two forms of misery and deprivation: either misery in this world and deprivation of its enjoyments, or misery in the hereafter and deprivation of the joys of paradise. For the Church, one of these two forms of misery must necessarily be endured. One must either submit to misery in this world and suffer deprivation and isolation in order to enjoy pleasure in the hereafter, or, if one wishes to enjoy the pleasures of this world, he must accept that he will be deprived of pleasure in the hereafter.

The diffusion of opinions such as these, which display an intense and profound ignorance of the religious world view, may determine the fate of the prevailing religion in a given society. Their effect on human beliefs and actions is too profound to be adequately measured with a passing, superficial glance. This mode of thought has caused the attention of man to be directed exclusively to the material sphere — consciously or unconsciously. The resulting concentration on pleasure and indulgence has caused the weakening of spiritual and moral concerns.

Religion does not condemn man to enduring one of two forms of misery. It is entirely possible to combine happiness in this world with happiness in the hereafter. Why should God, Whose treasury of mercy and grace is inexhaustible, not wish for His servants a complete happiness that embraces both this world and the hereafter? This is precisely what He does wish.

Another factor in the spread of materialistic ideas has been the indulgence of passion and immersion in the cesspool of lust. Every mental perception and idea forms the base of some external action; man's path of action takes shape under the influence of his beliefs. Conversely, man's actions and morals also bring about qualitative changes in his mental habits and mode of thought.

A man who worships his lusts will gradually lose all exalted ideas about God. Once he chooses an axis for his existence other than God and imagines that whatever exists in this world has simply been cast into it, free of any purpose, so that the very idea of an aim in life becomes meaningless, he begins to devote all his mental energies to the maximizing of pleasure. This humiliating plunge to a lowly plane of existence withers the roots of all aspiration for growth and development.

The idea of belief in God is, by contrast, like a seed that needs

suitable soil in which to grow. It can blossom only in a pure environment, an environment in which man can swiftly and easily attain the degree of perfection that is peculiar to him, thanks to a framework in which the principles of his life are set down.

Belief in God can never flourish in an unfavourable environment where corruption is rampant.

One of the obstacles to the knowledge of God and the reasons for man denying His existence, despite all the clear signs and decisive proofs that are available, is, then, surrender to sin and indulgence in passion.

Al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq — upon whom be peace — said in answer to Mufaḍḍal, in the *Risālah-ye Ihlīljah:*

> I swear by my own soul that God has not failed to make Himself known to the ignorant, for they see clear proofs and decisive indications of the Creator in His creation and behold wondrous phenomena in the kingdom of the heavens and on earth that point to their Creator.
> The ignorant are those who have opened the gates of sin before them and followed the path of indulgence in passion and lust. The desires of their souls have gained dominance over their hearts, and because of their oppression of their own selves Satan has gained dominance over them. God has sealed the hearts of the transgressors.

The desire for comfort, contentiousness, profligacy, the weak logic of certain ignorant believers — these too are among the factors impelling men to materialism.

The chaos and confusion of life, the abundance of mass produced goods, affluence and power, the dazzling and distracting aspects of modern life, the proliferation of means for enjoyment and pleasure — all these completely overwhelm greedy men. They try completely to withdraw themselves from the sphere of religious concern and refuse to accept the authority of any superior power, for not only would this not bring them any material benefit, it would also rein in the tempest of their overweening desires.

In an environment where poeple are immersed in sin, dissipation and corruption, and refuse to accept any limitation governing their deeds, religion can exist only in name.

Self-indulgent and materialistic people cannot be seekers and worshippers of God. When one of the two opposing principles, pleasure-seeking and belief in God, has occupied the mental space of an individual, the other must necessarily vacate it. Once the spirit of worship prevails in human existence, it casts out all materialistic inclinations by severing the firm fetters of lowly desire and inspiring constant effort in man to ascend in the direction of his goal. Thus a complete model of human freedom from slavery to nature emerges.

The more elevated and distant the goal man sets himself, the sharper is the incline leading toward it and the greater and more pro-

longed the effort required to reach it. So if we choose God as our goal, we have chosen an infintely elevated goal, and the path leading to attainment of the goal will be similarly infinite, although clear and straight at the same time. It is a goal that will answer many problems and questions, and since it will compel us to negate the tyranny of the ego it will bestow absolute freedom on us.

If we accept God as our goal, freedom will be harmonized with our growth and development. Our efforts to develop and progress will take on content and meaning, thanks to the divine impulse and the desire for eternal life. In short, the desire for progress and advancement, once regulated by the worship of God, neither contradicts man's freedom nor results in his enslavement.

We can claim to have attained freedom only when we are in step with the universal advancement of the world toward perfection, deliberately, consciously, and in awareness of the benefits this will bring. To act in obedience to nature or historical inevitability is not freedom, for when man ignores his own welfare to follow the dictates of nature, this is nothing other than slavery or blind obedience.

NOTES:

1. Russell, *Why I am not a Christian.*
2. King, *Sociology*, p. 99.
3. *Du'ā' 'Arafah.*
4. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, III, p.41.
5. *Nahj al-balāghah.*
6. There is a clear reference to this matter in the following words of al-'Imām al-Sajjād, upon whom be peace: "Pure and exalted are You, O Lord, Who knows the weight of the heavens! Pure and exalted are You, O Lord, Who knows the weight of the earth! Pure and exalted are You, O Lord, Who knows the weight of the darkness and the light! Pure and exalted are You, O Lord, Who knows the weight of the shade and the air!" (*al-Ṣaḥīfah al-thāniyah*, prayer 55).
7. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, III, pp. 51—53.
8. *Mīzān al-ḥikmah.*
9. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, III, pp. 103—104.
10. Morrison, *Rāz-e āfarīnish*, pp. 102—104.
11. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, II, p. 21.
12. Russell, *Why I am not a Christian*, p. 9.
13. Quoted in Furūghī, *Sayr-e ḥikmat dar Urūpā*, III, p. 162.
14. Will Durant, *History of Philosophy*, II, p. 497.
15. Russell, *Why I am not a Christian*, p. 20.
16. *Biḥār al-'anwār*, I, p. 166.
17. *Ithbāt-e wujūd-e Khudā*, p.17.
18. This is reminiscent of the Quranic verse that says, "If all the trees in the world were to be turned into pens, and all seven seas together with an additional ocean were turned into ink, the recording of God's words would still be incomplete, for truly God possesses wisdom and power" (31:27) .
19. *Do hezār dānishmand dar justujū-ye Khudā-ye Buzurg*, p. 13.
20. *Ithbāt-e wujūd-e Khudā*, p.60.

Marriage,
According to Five Schools of Islamic Fiqh *Part 5*

by 'Allāmah Muḥammad Jawād Maghniyyah

Translated from the Arabic by Mujāhid Ḥusayn

Custody (Al-Ḥiḍānah):

Custody has no connection with guardianship (*wilāyah*) over the ward with respect to marriage; it is limited to the care of a child for its upbringing and protection for a period of time during which it requires the care of women. Custody is the right of the mother by consensus, though there is a difference of opinion regarding: the period after which it expires, the person who is entitled to custody after the mother, the qualification for a woman to act as a custodian, her right to receive a fee for it, and other aspects which we shall discuss subsequently.

The Right to Act as a Custodian:

If it is not possible for a mother to act as the custodian of her child, to whom will this right belong?

The Ḥanafīs observe: It is transferred from the mother to the mother's mother, then to the father's mother, then to the full sisters, then to the uterine sisters, then to the paternal sisters, then to the full sister's daughter, and so on till it reaches the maternal and paternal aunts.

The Mālikīs say: The right is transferred from the mother to her mother, how high so ever; then to the full maternal aunt; then the uterine maternal aunt, then the mother's maternal aunt, then the mother's paternal aunt, then the father's paternal aunt, then his (father's) mother's mother, then his father's mother and so on.

The Shāfi'īs say: The mother, then the mother's mother, how high so ever, on condition that she inherits; then the father, then his mother, how high so ever, on condition that she inherits; then the nearest among the female relatives, and then the nearest among the male

relatives.

According to the Ḥanbalīs, the mother is followed by her mother, then her mother's mother, then the father, followed by his mothers; then the grandfather followed by his mothers; then the full sister; then the uterine sister; then the paternal sister; then the full maternal aunt; then the uterine maternal aunt, and so on.

The Imāmiyyah observe: The mother, and then the father, and if the father dies or becomes insane after he has taken the child's custody, the right to custody will revert to the mother on her being alive, because she is better entitled than others — including the paternal grandfather — even if she has married a stranger. If the parents are not there, the custody of the child will lie with the paternal grandfather, and if he isn't there nor has an executor, the child's custody will lie with its relatives in order of inheritance, the nearer taking precedence over the remote. If there is more than one relative of the same class, such as the maternal and paternal grandmothers or maternal and paternal aunts, the matter will be decided by drawing lots in the event of contention and dispute. The person in whose name the lot is drawn becomes entitled to act as the custodian till his death or till he forgoes his right.[1] This is also the view of the Ḥanbalīs (*al-Mughnī*, vol. 9, *bāb al-ḥiḍānah*).

The Qualifications for Custody:

The scholars concur regarding the qualifications required for a female custodian, which are: her being sane, chaste and trustworthy, her not being an adulteress, a dancer, an imbiber of wine, or oblivious to child care. The purpose of these requirements is to ensure the proper care of the child from the viewpoint of physical and mental health. These conditions also apply if the custodian is a man.

The schools differ as to whether being Muslim is a condition for custodianship. The Imāmiyyah and the Shāfi'ī schools say: A non-Muslim has no right to the custody of a Muslim.

The other schools do not consider Islam as a requirement for a custodian, except that the Ḥanafīs say: The apostasy of a custodian, male or female, terminates his/her right to custody.

The Imāmiyyah state: It is compulsory that the female custodian be free from any contagious disease.

The Ḥanbalī school says: It is compulsory that she should not suffer from leprosy and leucoderma, and that which is important is that the child should not face any harm.

The four schools have said: If the mother is divorced and marries a person who is unrelated to the child, her right to custody shall terminate. But if the husband is of the child's kin, the right to custody remains with the mother.

The Imāmiyyah observe: The right to custody terminates with her marriage irrespective of whether the husband is related to the child or not.

The Ḥanafī, the Shāfi'ī, the Imāmiyyah and the Ḥanbalī schools have said: If the mother is divorced by the second husband, the disability is removed and her right to custody reverts after its earlier termination due to her marriage.

According to the Mālikī school, her right to custody does not revert.

The Period of Custody:

The Ḥanafīs say: The period of custody for a boy is 7 years, and for a girl 9 years.

The Shāfi'ī school observes: There is no definite period of custody; the child shall remain with its mother until it is able to choose between the two parents; and when it has reached the discriminating age it will choose between the two. If a boy chooses to stay with his mother, he will stay with her during the night and spend the day with his father, so that the father can arrange for his instruction. If a girl chooses to stay with her mother, she will continue to stay with her during the day as well as in the night. If the child chooses both the parents together, lots will be drawn between them, and if the child keeps quiet and does not choose any one of them, the custody shall lie with the mother.

The Mālikīs consider the period of custody for a boy to be from birth until puberty and for a girl until her marriage.

According to the Ḥanbalī school, it is 7 years irrespective of the child's sex, and, after that, the child can choose to live with one of the parents.

The Imāmiyyah have said: The period of custody for a boy is 2 years, and for a girl 7 years. After this, the custody shall lie with the father until the girl reaches the age of 9, and the boy the age of 15; thereafter they can choose to live with one of the parents.[2]

Fee for Custody:

The Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools state: A female custodian has the right to claim a fee for her services irrespective of whether she is the mother or someone else. The Shāfi'īs clarify that this fee shall be paid from the child assets if any; otherwise it is incumbent upon the father, or upon whoever is responsible for the child's maintenance.

The Mālikīs and the Imāmiyyah[3] observe: The female custodian is not entitled to any fee for her services. But the Imāmiyyah add: She is entitled to be paid for breast-feeding. Therefore, if the child has any

assets she shall be paid out of that; otherwise, the father shall pay it if he is capable of doing so (*al-Fiqh 'alā al-madhāhib al-'arba'ah*, vol.4; *al-Masālik*, vol.2).

The Ḥanafī school has said: The payment of fee for custody is *wājib* if: there does not exist any marital relationship between the female custodian and the child's father; if she is not in the course of observing the *'iddah* of a revocable divorce given by the child's father; if she is observing the *'iddah* of an irrevocable divorce of an invalid marriage, in which case she is entitled to receive maintenance from the child's father. If the child has any property, the payment shall be made from it; otherwise the payment shall be made by the one responsible for the child's maintenance (*al-'Aḥwāl al-shakhṣiyyah* by Abū Zuhrah).

Travelling With the Child:

In case the mother takes the child under her custody, and the father intends to travel with his child to settle down in another town, the Imāmīs and the Ḥanafīs say: He cannot do so. The Shāfi'ī, the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: He can do so.

But if it is the mother who intends to travel with the child, the Ḥanafī school gives her the right to do so if the two following conditions are met: (1) That she be migrating to her own town; (2) that the marriage contract should have been recited in the town to which she is migrating. If any of these two conditions is not met, she is forbidden to travel except to a place so near that it is possible to return before it gets dark.

The Shāfi'ī and the Mālikī schools, and Aḥmad in one of the two traditions narrated from him, observe: The father has greater right over the child irrespective of whether he is moving or she (*Raḥmat al-'ummah fī ikhtilāf al-'a'imah*).

The Imāmiyyah state: A divorced mother is not permitted to travel with the child under her custody to a far-off place without the consent of the child's father. The father, too, is not permitted to travel with the child to any town which is not the mother's hometown while the child is in her custody.

Voluntary Breast-Feeding and Custody:

The difference between custody and breast-feeding (*al-riḍā'*) is that by 'custody' is meant only the upbringing and care of the child; it excludes breast-feeding, which involves the infant's nourishment. Because of this difference, it is valid for a mother to forgo her right to breast-feed while her right to custody remains intact. The Imāmiyyah and the Ḥanafī schools concur that if a woman volunteers to breast-

feed a child gratuitously while the mother refuses to breast-feed without recompense, the woman volunteering shall be given precedence over the mother, whose right to suckle her child is lost. But her right to the custody of her child shall remain as it is, and the child shall be under her care while the nurse comes to feed it or it is taken to the nurse to be fed.

If a woman volunteers to act as a child's custodian, the child shall not be separated from the mother, according to the Imāmiyyah and the other schools which do not require compensation for a custodian's services.

But the Ḥanafīs, who consider the payment of compensation for custody as *wājib*, observe: Where the mother refuses to act as a custodian unless she is paid and another woman volunteers to act as a custodian, the mother is better entitled to custody if the compensation is to be paid by the father, or if the woman is an outsider and there are no women custodians among the child's relatives. But if the woman volunteering is related to the child and the compensation lies upon an indigent father, or is to be paid from the child's property, the other woman shall be preferred, because, in such a situation, the child is saved from payment of fee out of its assets by the woman volunteering. Therefore, she shall be given preference over the mother in the child's interest (*al-'Aḥwāl al-shakhṣiyyah* by Abū Zuhrah).

Surrendering of the Right to Custody:

Is the right to custody specifically the right of a female custodian that terminates on her surrendering it — similar to the right of pre-emption which can be surrendered — or is it a right of the child that binds the female custodian precluding her right to surrender it, as in the case of a mother's right which cannot be surrendered?

The Imāmiyyah, the Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: Custody is the specific right of a female custodian, and she can surrender it whenever she pleases and she shall not be compelled to act as a custodian on her refusing to do so. There is a tradition from Mālik regarding this, and the author of *al-Jawāhir* has argued on its authority that the legists have not concurred that a female custodian can be compelled to act as a custodian, and the Sharī'ah does not expressly mention such compulsion; on the contrary, the texts of the Sharī'ah apparently consider custody similar to breast-feeding, and, consequently, she has the right to surrender her custody at will.

The same principle applies where a child's mother seeks a divorce from her husband by surrendering in his favour her right to custody of the child, or when the husband surrenders to her his right to take away the child after the expiry of her period of custody. This form of divorce is valid and neither of the two can refrain from discharging their agree-

ment after it is concluded, except by mutual consent. Similarly, if the two compromise and she surrenders her right to custody or he surrenders his right to take away the child, the compromise is binding and its fulfilment is *wājib*.

Ibn 'Ābidīn has reported a difference of opinion amongst the Ḥanafīs on this issue. He has pointed out that it is better that custody be considered as a right of the child, so that the mother does not have the right to surrender her responsibility to act as a custodian, to make compromise over it, or to exchange it for securing a divorce.

The Sunnī Sharī'ah courts in Lebanon consider a divorce of this kind as valid, but consider as invalid the condition that she would surrender her right to custody; any compromise which includes the surrendering of her right to custody is considered void *ab initio*. But the Ja'farī Sharī'ah courts consider the divorce, the condition, and the compromise as valid.

The Right to Maintenance:

There is consensus among all Muslims that marriage is one of the causes that make maintenance *wājib*. A similar consensus exists regarding kinship (*al-qarābah*). The Holy Quran has explicitly mentioned the wife's maintenance in the following verse:

... وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ...

...And on the child's father (the husband) is their food and clothing....(2:233)

By the pronoun هُنَّ are meant wives and the الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ is the husband. There is also a tradition which says:

حَقُّ الْمَرْأَةِ عَلَىٰ زَوْجِها أَنْ يُشْبِعَ بَطْنَها، وَيَكْسُو جَنْبَها، وَإِنْ جَهِلَتْ غَفَرَلَها.

The right of a woman over her husband is that he feed her, clothe her, and if she acts out of ignorance, to forgive her.

The Quran has referred to the maintenance of relatives in the phrase وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً, and the Prophet (S) has said أَنْتَ وَمالُكَ لِأَبِيكَ (You and your property are for your father).

Our discussion comprises two issues: first, the maintenance of a wife and her maintenance during the *'iddah* period; second, the maintenance of relatives.

The Maintenance of a Wife and a Divorcée During 'Iddah:

The legal schools concur that the wife's maintenance is *wājib* if the

requisite conditions, to be mentioned subsequently, are fulfilled, and that the maintenance of a divorcée is *wājib* during the *'iddah* of a revocable divorce. The schools also concur that a woman observing the *'iddah* following her husband's death is not entitled to maintenance, whether she is pregnant or not, except that the Shāfi'ī and the Mālikī schools state: If the husband dies, she is entitled to maintenance only to the extent of housing.

The Shāfi'īs have said: If he separates from her while she is pregnant and then dies, her maintenance shall not cease.

The Ḥanafīs observe: If she is a revocable divorcée and the husband dies during the *'iddah*, her *'iddah* of divorce shall change into an *'iddah* of death, and her maintenance shall cease, except where she had been asked (by court) to borrow her maintenance and she had actually done so. In this case, the maintenance shall not cease.

There is consensus that a woman observing *'iddah* as a result of 'intercourse by mistake' is not entitled to maintenance.

The schools differ regarding the maintenance of a divorcée during the *'iddah* of an irrevocable divorce. The Ḥanafīs observe: She is entitled to maintenance even if she has been divorced thrice, whether she is pregnant or not, on condition that she does not leave the house provided by the divorcé (husband) for her to spend the period of *'iddah*. According to the Ḥanafī school, the rules which apply to a woman in an *'iddah* following the dissolution of a valid contract are the same as those which apply to a divorcée in an irrevocable divorce.

According to the Mālikī school, if the divorcée is not pregnant, she shall not be entitled to any maintenance except residence, and if she is pregnant she is entitled to her full maintenance; it shall not subside even if she leaves the house provided for spending the *'iddah*, because the maintenance is intended for the child in the womb and not for the divorcée.

The Shāfi'ī, the Imāmiyyah and the Ḥanbalī schools state: If she is not pregnant she is not entitled to maintenance, and if pregnant, she is entitled to it. But the Shāfi'īs add: If she leaves the house of her *'iddah* without any necessity, her maintenance shall cease.

The Imāmiyyah do not consider the dissolution of a valid contract similar to an irrevocable divorce; they observe: A divorcée undergoing the *'iddah* of a dissolved contract is not entitled to any maintenance whether she is pregnant or not.

A Disobedient Wife (al-Nāshizah):

The schools concur that a disobedient wife is not entitled to maintenance. But they differ regarding the extent of disobedience which causes the maintenance to subside. According to the Ḥanafīs,

when a wife confines herself to her husband's house and does not leave it except with his permission, she shall be regarded as 'obedient', even if she denies him her sexual company without any valid reason. Therefore, though such an act is *ḥarām* for her, it shall not cause her maintenance to cease. Thus, the cause which entitles her to maintenance, according to the Ḥanafīs, is her confining herself to her husband's home, and her denial of her sexual company has no effect at all. This view of the Ḥanafī school is contrary to the view of all the other schools who concur that if a wife does not allow her husband free access to her person without any legal and reasonable excuse, she shall be considered 'disobedient' and shall not be entitled to any maintenance. The Shāfi'īs further add: Her allowing him free access is not enough unless she comes forth and says expressly to him: 'I surrender myself to you'.

In fact, the criterion for ascertaining 'obedience' and 'submission' is the general custom, and there is no doubt that the people consider a wife obedient if she does not deny him access when he demands it, and they do not consider it necessary that she offer herself to him morning and evening. Whatever be the case, we have here the following questions concerning 'obedience' and 'disobedience'.

(1) If the wife is a minor, unfit for intercourse, and the husband a major capable of it, shall maintenance be *wājib*?

The Ḥanafīs say: There are three types of female minors:

(i) A minor wife who is neither of any use for service nor for sociability, shall not be entitled to maintenance.

(ii) A minor wife with whom intercourse is possible enjoys the rights of a major wife.

(iii) A minor wife who is of use for service or for sociability alone, but not for intercourse, shall not be entitled to maintenance.

The remaining schools state: A minor wife is not entitled to maintenance even if the husband is a major.

(2) If the wife is a major capable of intercourse while the husband is a minor and incapable of it, the Ḥanafī, the Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: Her maintenance is *wājib* because the hindrance is from his side, not her.

The Mālikīs and some scholars of the Imāmiyyah have said: Maintenance is not *wājib* because the sole granting of access from her side has no effect while there exists a natural disability in the husband, and a minor husband is free of obligations (*ghayr mukallaf*), and as to the duty of his guardian, there is no proof (that he is responsible for his ward's wife's maintenance).

(3) If the wife is sick or suffers from *al-ratq* or *al-qarn*,[4] her maintenance does not cease according to the Imāmiyyah, the Ḥanbalī and the Ḥanafī schools,[5] and it does according to the Mālikī school if she is suffering from a serious disease or if the husband himself is similarly ill.

(4) If the wife apostatizes, her maintenance ceases according to all the schools. The maintenance of a wife belonging to the *Ahl al-Kitāb* is *wājib*, and there is no difference between her and a Muslim wife from the viewpoint of maintenance.

(5) If a wife leaves her husband's home without his permission or refuses to reside in a house which fits her status, she shall be considered 'disobedient' and shall not be entitled to maintenance according to all the schools. The Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools further add: If she goes out with his permission for his need she shall be entitled to maintenance, and if she goes out not for his need, her maintenance shall cease even if he had granted her permission to do so.

(6) If she goes out for performing the obligatory Ḥajj pilgrimage, her maintenance shall cease according to the Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanafī schools, and according to the Imāmiyyah and the Ḥanbalīs, it shall not.

(7) If the wife is obedient to the husband in granting him access and resides with him wherever he wants, but uses harsh language while talking to him, frowns in his face and opposes him in many matters, as is the case with many women, shall this be a cause for the maintenance to cease or not?

I have not come across the views of the schools on this question, but in my opinion if the wife has a hot-tempered disposition by nature and this is her way of behaviour with everyone including her parents, she shall not be considered disobedient. But if she is not so by nature and is well-disposed towards everyone except her husband, she should be considered disobedient and not entitled to maintenance.

(8) If the wife refuses to obey her husband unless she is paid her *mahr*, agreed to be paid immediately, shall she be considered disobedient? The schools have divided the question — as mentioned in the chapter on *mahr* — between her refusing him before granting him access to her person and her refusal after granting him access willingly before taking the *mahr*.

In the first case, her refusal is due to a legally valid excuse and therefore she shall not be considered disobedient. In the second case, her refusal is without any valid excuse and, therefore, she shall be considered disobedient.

(9) I have come across an opinion expressed by the Ḥanbalīs that if a wife imprisons her husband, demanding her maintenance or *mahr*, her maintenance shall cease if he is indigent and unable to meet her monetary rights, and if he has the means to pay but delays doing so it shall not.[6]

This opinion is both good and firm because if she has imprisoned him while he is an indigent man unable to pay, she is oppressing him; and if she has imprisoned a husband who has the means to pay her but delays doing it, he is oppressing her. A verse of the Quran says:

وَاِنْ كَانَ ذُوعُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ اِلىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ...

And if the debtor is in straitness, let there be postponement till the time of ease....(2:280)

And there is a tradition which says:

اَلْواجِدُ تَحِلُّ عُقوبَتُهُ وَعِرْضُهُ.

It is permissible to punish and dishonour a person who possesses (but does not pay his liabilities).

It has also been narrated that 'Alī (A) used to detain one who delayed his creditors and release him if his penury was ascertained. Accordingly, a judge, after having ascertained that the circumstances of the husband are straitened and that the wife is entitled to maintenance, will order it to be considered a debt payable by the husband until further notification. If the judge determines the maintenance without mentioning the period during which it is to be paid, and the wife then imprisons the husband despite indigence and poverty, the husband is entitled to approach the judge to have her maintenance annulled from the date of his imprisonment, and the judge is bound to respond to his plea.

(10) If a wife is divorced while she is disobedient, she will not be entitled to maintenance; and if she is undergoing the *'iddah* of a revocable divorce and turns disobedient during this period, her maintenance shall cease; but on her reverting to obedience, it shall resume from the date of his knowledge of her becoming obedient.

(11) If the wife remains at her father's home after the recital of the marriage contract for a period of time and then claims maintenance for that period, shall she be entitled to it?

The Ḥanafīs observe: She is entitled to maintenance even if she hasn't shifted to her husband's home, either because the husband hasn't asked her to do so, or has but she has refused to come until she is given her *mahr* (Ibn 'Ābidīn).

According to the Mālikī and the Shāfi'ī schools, she is entitled to maintenance if the marriage has been consummated or she has offered herself to him.

The Ḥanbalī school states: If she doesn't offer herself, she is not entitled to maintenance even if she remains in such a state for years.

The Imāmiyyah consider her entitled to maintenance from the date of the consummation of marriage — even if such consummation should occur while she is with her family — and from the date of her asking him to take her along with him.

From the above-mentioned views, it follows that all the schools entitle her to maintenance if she has offered herself and showed her readiness to comply, and also if the marriage has been consummated, except that the Ḥanafîs do not suffice with consummation but consider her willingness to confine herself also necessary. Apart from this, it has been pointed in the answer to the eighth question of this section that the wife has the right to refuse obedience till she is paid her prompt *mahr*, and her doing so is legally valid and does not cause her maintenance to cease.

(12) The Mālikî, the Shāfi'î and the Ḥanbalî schools state: An absent husband is similar to a husband present in regard to the rules of maintenance. Therefore, if an absent husband has any known assets, the judge shall order her maintenance to be paid from them, and if he does not possess such property, the judge shall pass an order of maintenance against him and the wife will borrow against his name. This is the procedure followed in Egypt (*al-'Aḥwāl al-shakhṣiyyah*, Abū Zuhrah).

In *al-'Aḥwāl al-shakhṣiyyah* (1942, pp. 269, 272) of Muḥammad Muḥyi al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd it is stated: The Ḥanafî school presumes that the absent husband has left in his property a share for his wife... and if he has not left any property, the judge shall consider him liable to pay the maintenance and will order the wife to borrow against his name. If she complains of not having found a person ready to lend her in her husband's name, the judge shall order the person on whom her maintenance is *wājib* to lend her on the supposition that she has no husband, and if this person refuses to lend her maintenance, the judge will imprison him.

The Imāmiyyah observe: If the husband disappears after her surrendering herself to him, her maintenance is *wājib* upon him on the supposition that her obedience still persists from the time he left her; and if he disappears before consummation, she shall appear before the court and declare her obedience and willingness to live with him. The judge will then order the husband to present himself to inform him of her willingness. If the husband presents himself, or sends for her, or sends her her maintenance, it suffices. But if he does not fulfil any of these alternatives, the judge shall allow a period of time sufficient for the issuance of a notification and the reception of his reply or for his sending of her maintenance; he will not issue any order during this period. After the expiry of this period he shall issue orders. If, for instance, such a period is two months, he shall order the payment of maintenance beginning from the date of expiry of the two months. Or if the wife informs the husband of her state without the mediacy of the judge and proves it, it shall also suffice. Then she shall be entitled to maintenance from that date.

(13) If the wife pleads before a judge to pass an order against the husband for the payment of her maintenance without mentioning the date from which she is entitled to receive it, the judge shall order payment from the date of her demanding maintenance, after ascertaining that the conditions have been fulfilled. If the wife mentions a date which is prior to the date of demand, shall the judge order payment of her maintenance for the period prior to the date of demand?

The Ḥanafīs have said: Past maintenance may not be demanded from the husband; it is annulled by the passage of time except when the period is less than a month or if the judge has ordered its payment, because maintenance ordered to be paid by court remains a debt for the husband irrespective of the passage of time.

The Mālikīs observe: If the wife demands her past maintenance, and the husband possessed the means to pay her during that time, she has the right to such a claim against him even if it had not been ordered by the court. But if the husband was indigent and unable to pay during that period, she cannot claim her maintenance from him, because, according to this school, indigence annuls maintenance; and if his indigence is subsequent to his affluence, the maintenance for the period of indigence shall be void and he shall be liable for the payment of the maintenance pertaining to his period of affluence.

The Imāmiyyah, the Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools state: The wife's maintenance remains his liability, if the conditions entitling the wife to maintenance are fulfilled, no matter how much time has passed and irrespective of whether he was affluent or indigent during that time and regardless of whether the judge had ordered such payment or not.

Determination of Maintenance:

The schools concur that a wife's maintenance is *wājib* in all its three forms: food, clothing and housing. They also concur that maintenance will be determined in accordance with the financial status of the two if both are of equal status. Here, by the financial status of the wife is meant the financial status of her family and its standard of living.

But when one of them is well-off and the other indigent, the schools differ whether maintenance should be in accordance with the husband's financial status (commensurable with his means if he is well-off and the wife indigent, and commensurable with his indigence if he is indigent and she is well-off), or whether the financial status of both should be considered and a median maintenance be fixed for her.

The Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools state: If the couple differ in financial status, a median course will be followed.

The Shāfi'ī school observes: Maintenance will be determined in

accordance with the financial status of the husband, and the status of the wife will not be considered; this is regarding food and clothing. But as regards housing, it should be according to her status, not his (al-Bājūrī, 1343 H.,vol. 2, p. 197) .

The Ḥanafīs have two views. According to the first, the status of both will be considered, and according to the second only the status of the husband.

Most Imāmiyyah legists observe that maintenance will be fixed in accordance with her requirements of food, clothing, housing, servants and cosmetics used by women of her standing among her townspeople. Some Imāmiyyah legists consider the husband's not the wife's financial status as the criterion for fixing maintenance.

Whatever the case, it is necessary that the financial condition of the husband be taken into consideration as the Quran has expressly stated:

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِنْ وُجْدِكُمْ... لِيُنْفِقْ ذُوسَعةٍ مِنْ سَعَتِهِ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْساً إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا...

Lodge them where you are lodging, according to your means....Let the man of plenty expend out of his plenty.... As for him who has his means of subsistence straitened, let him expend of what God has given him. God does not burden anyone except to the extent of what He has granted him....(65:6,7)

Under Egyptian law (act 25, 1929), the wife's maintenance, to be paid by the husband, is fixed in accordance with his financial condition, irrespective of the condition of the wife.

Here it becomes clear that providing a servant and expenses of tobacco, cosmetics, tailoring, etc., requires that two things be taken into consideration: the husband's condition and the custom prevailing among her likes. Therefore, if she demands more than that the husband is not obliged to comply, irrespective of his financial condition; and if she demands what her likes generally require, it is compulsory that the husband meet her demands if he is well-off, but not if his means are straitened. Here, the following questions are also pertinent:

Medical Expenses:

If the wife needs medicines or surgery, will the husband be compelled to pay her medical and surgical expenses?

The answer to this question leads us to another one: Is medical care part of maintenance or something apart from it? When we refer to the canonical sources, we find that the Quran makes the wife's food

and clothing *wājib*. The aḥādīth say: It is for the husband to satiate her hunger and to clothe her. There is no mention of medicine and medical treatment in the Quran and the traditions. The legists have limited maintenance to the providing of food, clothing and housing, and have not touched the matter of medical care. On the contrary, some of them have explicitly said that it is not *wājib* for the husband. In *al-Fiqh 'alā al-madhāhib al-'arba'ah*, it has been narrated from the Ḥanafīs that medicines and fruits are not *wājib* on the husband during the period of dispute between the couple. In the Imāmī work *al-Jawāhir* (vol. 5) it is stated: The wife is not entitled to claim from the husband medicine during illness, or the expenses of cupping and bathing except during winter. Al-Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan observes in *al-Wasīlah*: If the medicines are of common use and needed for common ailments, such medicines are included in maintenance and are *wājib* upon the husband; but if the medicines are for difficult cures and uncommon ailments, which require expensive treatment, they are not included in maintenance and it is not the husband's duty to provide them.

This was a summary of the opinions of the legists which I have come across. It is also said that the treatment of simple diseases, such as malaria and ophthalmia, is included in maintenance, as observed by the author of *al-Wasīlah*. But regarding surgeries, which require large sums of money, if the husband is poor and the wife is financially well-off she will bear the expenditure; and if he is a man of means while she is poor, he will meet the expenses — for of all people the husband, being her life partner, is most entitled to be kind to her. If both of them are indigent, they will share in meeting the expenses.

In any case, it is certain that the Sharī'ah has not explicitly defined the limits of maintenance, but has only made it *wājib* on the husband, leaving it to be determined in accordance with *'urf* (usage). Therefore, we should refer to *'urf* and not make anything *wājib* for the husband except after ascertaining that it is considered part of maintenance by *'urf*. And there is no doubt that *'urf* disapproves the conduct of a husband who while possessing the means neglects his wife who needs medical attention, exactly as it considers a father blameworthy if he neglects his ailing children while having the means to buy medicines and pay the doctor's fee.

Expenses of Child-birth:

The essential expenses of child-birth and the obstetrician's fee will be paid by the husband when called upon by need.

Adjustment of Maintenance:

If a judge determines a certain sum of money, or the spouses

mutually settle it in lieu of maintenance, it is valid to adjust it by increasing or decreasing it in accordance with changes in prices or changes in the financial condition of the husband.

The Wife's Housing:

The Imāmiyyah, the Ḥanafī and the Ḥanbalī schools state: It is necessary that the house provided to the wife befit the couple's status, and that the husband's family and children not reside in it except by her consent.

The Mālikīs observe: If the wife is of a humble status, she may not refuse to stay with the husband's relatives, and if of a high social status she can refuse to stay with them except if it had been mentioned as a condition in the contract. If so, it is *wājib* for her to reside with his family on being provided a room where she can enjoy privacy whenever she desires and does not suffer from mistreatment by his family.

According to the Shāfi'ī school, it is *wājib* that the housing suit her and not his status, even if he is poor.

The truth is that it is necessary to consider the condition of the husband in everything concerning maintenance, without there being any difference between food, clothing and housing in this regard, because the Quran says,

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنتُم مِّن وُجْدِكُمْ...

Lodge them where you lodge, according to your means,(65:6)

on condition that she have an independent home and does not suffer by staying in it.

A Working Wife:

The Ḥanafīs are explicit that a woman if she works and does not stay at home is not entitled to maintenance if the husband demands her to stay at home and she does not concede to his demand. This view is in concurrence with what the other schools hold regarding the impermissibility of her leaving her home without his permission. The Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools further state, as mentioned earlier, that if she leaves home with his permission for meeting her own requirements, her maintenance ceases.

But a correct view would be to differentiate between a husband who knows at the time of marriage that she is employed and her employment prevents her staying at home, and a husband who is ignorant about her employment at the time of marriage. Therefore, if he knew

and remained silent and did not include a condition that she leave her job, he has no right in this case to ask her to forgo her job; and if he demands and she refuses to comply, her maintenance shall not cease, because he has concluded the contract with the knowledge that she works. And many men marry working women with an intention of exploiting them, and when they are unable to do so they ask the wives to stop working with the purpose of harming them (financially).

But if the husband does not know that she works at the time of marriage, he can demand that she stop working, and if she does not comply, she shall not be entitled to maintenance.

Surety for Maintenance:

Is the wife entitled to claim from her husband a surety to secure her future maintenance if the husband intends to travel alone without leaving anything for her?

The Ḥanafī, the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: She is entitled to do so, and he is bound to arrange a surety for maintenance, and on his refusal she can ask that he be prevented from making the journey. The Mālikīs further add: She is entitled to claim from him advance payment of maintenance if he intends to go for a usual journey, and if the wife accuses him of planning to go for an unusual journey she has the right to claim immediate payment of maintenance for the period of a usual journey and to provide her a surety for the period which exceeds the period of a usual journey.

The Imāmiyyah and the Shāfi'ī schools state: She is not entitled to claim a surety for her future maintenance because its payment hasn't become due, and in the future the possibility of its ceasing due to her disobedience or divorce or death is always present.

My opinion is that she has the right to claim a surety because the cause on whose basis a surety is demanded is present, and this is her present obedience. Therefore, al-Shaykh Aḥmad Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' has observed in his *Safīnat al-najāt* (*bāb al-ḍamān*): But the opinion (that she can claim a surety) is not farfetched if not opposed by consensus (*ijmā'*), so that her future maintenance is insured like her past and present maintenance.

As the matter leads to consensus, it lacks strength from the Imāmī viewpoint, because, according to their principles of jurisprudence, every consensus reached after the period of the Imams (A) faces the possibility of being refuted. Thus if there is a possibility that the consensus of the concurring legists is based on their belief that future maintenance does not become payable presently because it is not correct to provide surety for something which has not become payable, the argument on the basis of consensus fails due to the presence of this possibility. Now it

should be seen whether the rule (that everything which has not yet become payable does not require a surety) on which the legists have based their argument is correct and whether it can be applied here or not. Here, as already explained, the cause (the wife's obedience) is present, which is sufficient to justify surety. Accordingly, the wife is entitled to claim a surety for her maintenance if the husband intends to travel, especially when he cannot be relied upon and is known to be irresponsible.

Dispute between Spouses:

If after the husband accepts the wife's right to maintenance, the two differ about the actual payment of maintenance (she denying that he has paid, and he claiming to have paid it) the Ḥanafī, the Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: The wife's word shall be accepted because she is the refuter and the burden of proof is not on her.

The Imāmiyyah and the Mālikī schools state: If the husband resides with her in the same house, his word will be accepted, otherwise her word.

If the husband concedes that he has not paid maintenance on the excuse that she is not entitled to it due to her not surrendering herself to him, his word will be accepted according to all the schools. The consensus on this issue is a corollary to the consensus of the schools on the issue that *mahr* becomes payable on the conclusion of the contract and becomes fully payable on consummation; but maintenance does not become payable solely on the conclusion of the contract, it is necessary for her to surrender herself to the husband. It is the practice of the Sharī'ah courts of Lebanon, both Sunnī and Shī'ī, when the spouses differ regarding disobedience (*nushūz*) (he claiming that she is disobedient and she charging him with disobedience), to order the husband to provide a suitable house and to order the wife to reside in it. If the husband refuses to provide a house, he will be considered disobedient; and if he provides a house which fulfils all the conditions and she refuses to reside in it and to obey him, she will be considered disobedient.

The Wife's Claim of Expulsion:

If the wife leaves her husband's home claiming that she has been expelled, and he denies this, the burden of proof will rest on her and he will be made to take an oath; because it is not valid for her to leave home without an acceptable excuse, and as she claims the presence of such an excuse, she is burdened with proving it.

Loss of Maintenance:

When the husband provides his wife with maintenance for the future, and then it is stolen or destroyed while in her possession, it is not *wājib* upon the husband to replenish it, irrespective of whether such loss occures due to an unavoidable cause or on account of her negligence.

Husband's Debt Claim against Wife:

If a wife owes a debt to her husband, can he adjust this debt against her present or future maintenance?

The Imāmiyyah legists have dealt with this issue; they observe: If she is financially well-off and yet refuses to repay the debt, it is permissible for him to adjust it from her day-to-day maintenance, which means that he consider her debt to him as her maintenance for each day, separately. But if she is financially straitened, he cannot do so; because any payment towards debt should be from what exceeds her daily expenditures.

Maintenance of Relatives:

Who are the relatives entitled to maintenance and who amongst them is liable to provide maintenance? What are the conditions which make such maintenance *wājib*?

Definition of a Relative's Maintenance:

According to the Ḥanafīs, the criterion for the responsibility of the relative to provide maintenance of another is the prohibited degree of marriage, so that if one of them is supposed a male and the other a female, marriage between them would be considered *ḥarām*.

Therefore, this responsibility includes fathers — how high so ever — and sons — how low so ever — and also includes brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts, both paternal and maternal, because marriage between any two of them is prohibited.

The nearest relative shall be liable to provide maintenance, and affinity here has nothing to do with the title to inheritance. Therefore, if there is someone in the two classes of lineal ascendants and descendants, maintenance will be *wājib* on him, even if he is not entitled to inherit (from the person he is liable to maintain). One not belonging to these two classes will not be liable to provide maintenance, though he should be entitled to inherit. For example, if a person has a daughter's son and a brother, his maintenance will be *wājib* upon the former and not the latter, though the latter alone be entitled to the entire legacy to the

exclusion of the former (*al-Durar fī sharḥ al-Ghurar*, vol. 1, *bāb al-nafaqāt*).

Similarly, between two relatives of the same class, the nearer one will be responsible, even if he isn't entitled to any share in the legacy. Therefore, if a child has a paternal great grandfather and a maternal grandfather, his maintenance will be *wājib* upon the latter not the former, though the former should be an heir to the exclusion of the other. The secret here is that the maternal grandfather is nearer though he does not inherit, while the paternal great grandfather is comparatively distant, though he is an heir.

The Ḥanafīs also state: The well-to-do son is responsible for the maintenance of his indigent father's wife, and he is also liable to get his indigent father married if he needs a wife.

The Mālikīs observe: Maintenance is *wājib* only on parents and children, not on other relatives. Thus, a grandson is not responsible to maintain his paternal or maternal grandfathers or grandmothers, and, reciprocally, a grandfather is not liable to maintain his grandsons and granddaughters. On the whole, the responsibility for maintenance is limited to parents and children, to the exclusion of grandparents and grandchildren.

They also state: It is *wājib* upon a well-to-do son to maintain the servant of his indigent parents, even if they don't need him; but it is not *wājib* for a father to maintain his son's servant. A son is also liable to maintain his father's wife and her servant and have his father married to one or more wives, if one wife does not suffice.

The Ḥanbalīs state: It is *wājib* that fathers, how high so ever, provide and receive maintenance. Similarly, it is *wājib* that sons, how low so ever, provide and receive maintenance, irrespective of their title to inheritance. Maintenance of relatives not belonging to the two classes is also *wājib* if the person liable to provide maintenance inherits from the person being maintained either by *farḍ* or by *ta'ṣīb*;[6] but if excluded from inheritance, he will not be responsible for maintenance. Thus, if a person has an indigent son and a well-to-do brother, neither may be compelled to maintain him, because the son's indigence relieves him of the responsibility, and the brother by being excluded from inheritance due to the son's presence (*al-Mughnī*, vol. 7, *bāb al-nafaqāt*).

They also state: It is *wājib* on the son to arrange for his father's marriage and to maintain his wife, in the same way as it is *wājib* on the father to have his son married if he is in need of marriage.

According to the Imāmiyyah and the Shāfi'ī schools, it is *wājib* for sons to maintain their fathers and mothers, how high so ever, and it is *wājib* for fathers to maintain sons and daughters, how low so ever. The obligation of maintenance does not transcend these two main lineal classes to include others, such as brothers and paternal and maternal

uncles.

But the Shāfi'īs are of the view that a well-to-do father is liable to have his indigent son married if in need of marriage; and a son is likewise bound to arrange for his indigent father's marriage if in need of marriage. Moreover, the liability for a person's maintenance includes the maintenance of his wife (*Maqṣad al-bayyinah, bāb nafaqat al-'aqārib*).

Most Imāmiyyah legists state: It is not *wājib* to arrange for the marriage of a person whose maintenance is *wājib*, irrespective of whether he is father or son. Similarly, it is not *wājib* for a son to maintain his father's wife if she is not his mother, or for a father to maintain his son's wife, because the canonical proofs (*adillah*) which make maintenance *wājib* include neither the father's wife nor the son's, and an obligation is assumed to be non-existent until proved.

Conditions for the Wujūb of Maintenance:

The following conditions are necessary for making the maintenance of one relative *wājib* upon another.

(1) The person to be maintained must be in need of maintenance. Therefore, maintaining a person who is not needy is not *wājib*. The schools differ regarding a person who is needy and can earn his livelihood but does not do so, as to whether it is *wājib* to maintain him or not.

The Ḥanafī and the Shāfi'ī schools state: The inability to earn is not a necessary condition for the *wujūb* of the maintenance of fathers and grandfathers. Therefore, their maintenance is *wājib* on sons even if they have the ability to work but neglect to do so. Regarding other relatives who are able to make a living for themselves, their maintenance is not *wājib*; rather, they will be compelled to make a living, and a one who neglects to work or is sluggish commits only a crime against himself. But the Shāfi'īs say regarding a daughter: Her maintenance is *wājib* on the father until she is married.

The Imāmiyyah, the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools state: If one who was earlier making his livelihood by engaging in a trade that suited his condition and status later neglects to do so, his maintenance is not *wājib* upon anyone, irrespective of whether it is the father or the mother or the son. The Mālikīs agree with the Shāfi'īs' position regarding a daughter and the reason for this is that formerly women were considered generally incapable of earning their own livelihood.

(2) That the maintainer be well-off, according to all the schools, except the Ḥanafīs who say: Being well-to-do of the maintainer is a condition only for the maintenance of those who are neither ascendants nor descendants; but financial capacity is not a condition in the maintenance of the scion by one of the parents or the maintenance of the

parents by the scion. The only condition here is the presence of the actual ability to maintain or the presence of the ability to earn. Therefore, a father who is capable of work will be ordered to maintain his child, and similarly a son with respect to his father, except where one of them is indigent and incapable of making an earning, such as due to blindness, etc.

The schools differ regarding the degree of financial ease necessary to cause the liability for providing maintenance to a relative. According to the Shāfi'ī school, it is the surplus over the daily expenditure of his own, his wife's and his children's.

The Mālikīs add to this the expenditure incurred upon servants and domestic animals.

According to the Imāmiyyah and the Ḥanbalī schools: It is the surplus over the daily expenditure of oneself and one's wife, as the maintenance of descendants and ascendants belongs to the same category.

Ḥanafī legists differ in defining the state of financial ease. According to some of them, it is possession of an amount of wealth which gives rise to the incidence of *zakāt* (*niṣāb*); according to others, it should be enough to prohibit his taking of *zakāt*. The third opinion differentiates between the farmer and the worker, allowing the farmer his and his family's expenditure for a period of one month and the worker a day's expenditure as deduction.

(3) According to the Ḥanbalīs, their belonging to the same religion is necessary; thus, if one of them is a Muslim and the other a non-Muslim, maintenance will not be *wājib* (*al-Mughnī*, vol. 7).

The Mālikī, the Shāfi'ī and the Imāmiyyah schools state: Their belonging to the same religion is not necessary. Therefore, a Muslim can maintain a relative who is not a Muslim, as is the case when maintenance is provided by a Muslim husband to his wife belonging to Ahl al-Kitāb.

The Ḥanafīs observe: Belonging to the same religion is not required between ascendants and descendants, but necessary between other relatives. Therefore, a Muslim will not maintain his non-Muslim brother and vice versa (Abū Zuhrah).

Determination of Relative's Maintenance:

It is necessary that maintenance paid to a relative be sufficient to cover his/her essential needs, such as food, clothing and housing, because maintenance has been made *wājib* to protect life and to provide its needs. Thus it is to be determined in accordance with the needs (*al-Mughnt*, vol. 7, *al-Jawāhir*, vol. 5).

Dispute Between Relatives:

The Mālikīs state: Maintenance of parents will not be *wājib* on a son unless their condition of need is proved by the testimony of two just male witnesses; the testimony of a just male witness along with two female witnesses or the testimony of a just male witness along with an oath will not suffice.

The Shāfi'īs state: The father's word will be accepted without an oath if he claims to be in need.

The Ḥanafīs state: Need is presumed unless there is proof to the contrary. Therefore, if the person claiming maintenance pleads indigence, his word will be accepted on oath and the person from whom maintenance is claimed is burdened to disprove the claim of the claimant. And if the person from whom maintenance is claimed pleads indigence, his word will be accepted on oath and the claimant will be burdened with proving the former's financial capacity. If the presence of financial capacity was established in the past and incapacity is subsequently claimed, the former state will be presumed to exist until the opposite is proved.

The Imāmiyyah concur with the Ḥanafī position on this issue, because it is in accordance with the principles of the Sharī'ah, except where the person claiming indigence owns known assets. If he does, his plea will be rejected and the word of the person claiming his financial capacity will be accepted.

Payment of Past Maintenance:

The schools concur that the past maintenance of relatives will not be payable if the judge had not determined it; the spirit of mutual assistance and fulfilment of need being the reason behind it, it cannot be made good for past time. The schools differ where the judge determines it and orders its payment, as to whether outstanding maintenance must be paid after the judge's order or whether it is annulled (with the passage of time) as if he had not ordered its payment at all.

The Mālikīs state: If a judge orders the payment of maintenance to a relative and then it remains unpaid, it will not be annulled.

The Imāmiyyah, the Ḥanafī and some Shāfi'ī legists observe: If the judge orders maintenance to be borrowed and the relative entitled to receive maintenance does so, it is *wajib* for the maintainer to clear this debt. But if the judge does not order the borrowing of maintenance, or orders but it is not borrowed, that maintenance will be void. The Ḥanafīs require the payment of past maintenance after the judge's order if it accrues for a period of less than one month; so if the judge orders payment and a month passes since its becoming due, the relative will be

entitled to claim the maintenance of the current month only, not of the month past.

It should be noted that if a relative entitled to maintenance receives the maintenance of a day or more through litigation, through gift, *zakāt* or some other manner, the maintenance due to him will be deducted to the extent of what he received through these means, even if the judge has ordered the payment of maintenance.

The Order of Relatives on Whom Maintenance is Wājib:

The Ḥanafīs observe: If there is only one person responsible for maintenance, he will pay it; if two or more belonging to the same category and capacity are responsible — such as two sons or two daughters — they will share equally in providing maintenance, even if they differ in wealth, after their financial capacity has been proved.[7]

But where they are of different categories of relationship or of varying capacities, there is confusion in the views of Ḥanafī legists in providing the order of those responsible for maintenance (*al-'Aḥwāl al-shakhṣiyyah*, Abū Zuhrah).

The Shāfi'īs state: If a person in need has a father and a grandfather who are both well-off, his maintenance will be provided solely by the father. If he has a mother and a grandmother, the maintenance will be solely provided by the mother. If both the parents are there, the father will provide the maintenance. If he has a grandfather and a mother, the grandfather will provide the maintenance. If he has a paternal grandmother and a maternal grandmother, according to one opinion, both are equally responsible, according to another opinion, the paternal grandmother will be solely liable (*Maqṣad al-nabīh, nafaqat al-'aqārib*).

The Ḥanbalīs state: If a child does not have a father, his maintenance will be on his heirs; and if he has two heirs, they will contribute in proportion to each's share in legacy. If there are three or more heirs, they will contribute in proportion to their share in legacy. Thus if he has a mother and a grandfather, the mother will contribute one-third of maintenance and the grandfather the remainder, as they inherit in the same proportion (*al-Mughnī*, vol. 7).

The Imāmiyyah state: The child's maintenance is *wājib* on the father. If the father is dead or indigent, its maintenance will lie upon the paternal grandfather; and if the grandfather is dead or indigent, the mother will be liable for maintenance. After her, her father and mother along with the child's paternal grandmother will share equally in the maintenance of the grandchild if they are financially capable. But if only some of them are well-off, the maintenance will lie only on those who are such.

If an indigent person has father and a son,or father and a daughter,

they will contribute to his maintenance equally. Similarly, if he has many children, it will be shouldered equally by them without any distinction between sons and daughters. On the whole, the Imāmiyyah consider the nearness of relationship as criterion while determining the order of relatives who are liable to provide maintenance; on their belonging to the same class, they are compelled to contribute equally without any distinction between males and females or between ascendants and descendants, except that the father and the paternal grandfather are given priority over the mother.

Concluded; wal-ḥamdu lillāh.

NOTES:

1. *Al-Jawāhir* and *al-Masālik, bāb al-zawāj: al-ḥiḍānah.*

2. The child's right to choose to live with the father or the mother on reaching this age is not in conflict with the (Lebanese) law according to which the age of majority is 18 years; because this age has been considered by the law as a condition for marriage and not for choosing between the parents.

3. The author of *al-Masālik* has inclined towards the absence of any compensation for custody, and the author of *al-Jawāhir* has inclined towards its presence. Considering that there is no explicit reference in the Sharī'ah about compensation being *wājib*, and considering that it is not customary to pay compensation for custody, the opinion expressed by the author of *al-Masālik* is correct.

4. The Ḥanafīs state: If she falls sick at her husband's home, she is entitled to maintenance; and if she falls sick before consummation and it is not possible to shift her to his home, she will not be entitled to maintenance. This opinion of the Ḥanafīs is in accordance with their basic principle that maintenance is a compensation for her confining herself to her husband's home.

5. The Mālikīs state: The wife's maintenance ceases during the husband's indigence, irrespective of consummation. If he becomes well-off later on, she does not have the right to claim maintenance for the period during which he was indigent.

6. By '*farḍ*' is meant the specific share of inheritance decreed for an heir by the Quran.

Al-Ta'ṣīb is a doctrine accepted by the Sunnī schools. It applies in situations where the total shares of the decreed sharers fall short of the total legacy. Here, the Sunni schools assign the balance to be inherited by distant relatives, as the nearer relatives have already received their decreed shares and are not entitled to anything in addition to their decreed shares. For example, if a person dies leaving behind a daughter and an uncle, the decreed share of the daughter being half, the other half will be inherited by the uncle and the daughter will not be entitled to inherit more than her decreed share.

The Imāmiyyah do not accept this doctrine and in the above example entitle the daughter to inherit the whole heritable interest to the exclusion of the father's uncle. They apply the rule: the nearer in degree excludes the remote.

7. Some judges distribute the maintenance of a relative between those on whom his maintenance is *wājib* in accordance with the financial capacity of each. Therefore, if an indigent father has two sons, one of them very rich, and the other merely well-off, the first will contribute more than the second to the father's maintenance. The Ḥanafīs give no weightage to this difference in financial capacity

and consider the two equally liable after their capacity has been proved. This is author of *al-Jawāhir* also bear this out where he says: If he has a son who is presently well-off and another son who is in the course of becoming such, the two will contribute equally because the applicable *adillah* are unconditional.

قالَ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ (ص): اَلْعَفافُ زينَةُ النسّاءِ.

The Prophet (S) said: "Chastity is the ornament of women."

(Nahj al- faṣāḥah)

The Meaning of Ijtihād*

by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Jannātī

Translated from the Persian by Martyr Mahliqā Qarā'ī

Introduction:

The sources of *ijtihād* according to Shī'ah and the Ahl al-Sunnah, put together, are: the Book, the Sunnah, *ijmā'* (consensus), *'aql* (reason), *qiyās* (analogy), *istiḥsān*, *maṣāliḥ mursalah*, *istiṣlāḥ*, *sadd al-dharā'i'*, *fatḥ al-dharā'i'*, *madhhab al-Ṣaḥābī*, *sharī'at al-salaf*, *'urf*, *istidlāl*, and so on.

In this series of articles we shall try to discuss and study these topics in detail from the Shī'ī and the Sunnī points of view.

We expect writers and scholars who have specialty in this field to contribute to the soundness and validity of these studies through constructive criticism relevant to the subject studied here. Any constructive criticism is very useful for correcting errors and removing shortcomings, and effective in eliminating ambiguities and omissions. Besides rendering vital service to scholarship, it is beneficial to the author, who is forced to be more careful in his statements and precise in his research. The intellectual history of Islam is indicative of the debt that the development and expansion of legal and other scientific studies owe to diverse viewpoints and competent criticism.

This commendable and beneficial tradition has been in vogue in its most desirable form throughout the seven epochs of *ijtihād* among all the scholars and *mujtahidūn*, and especially in the sixth and the seventh periods, whose fore-runners were Waḥīd Behbahānī and the great al-Shaykh al-'Anṣārī respectively, this tradition reached its zenith.

* This is first of a series of articles by the author on *ijtihād* and its sources. The Persian was published by *Kayhān-e Andīsheh* journal (no. 8) under the title "*Sayrī dar manābi' ijtihād*". The article "The Practice of Ra'y in Ijtihād", which appeared in the earlier issue of *al-Tawḥīd* (vol. V, no.2) was second of this series.

Also, the very force of *ijtihād*, from the era of *tashrī'* (legislation) to the present (as discussed in detail in the article on the epochs of *ijtihād*), as a legitimate activity is derived from criticism and debate. Because, in Islamic fiqh, *ijtihād* has had the meaning of a free and independent effort of the *mujtahidūn*, undertaken for the purpose of advancement and expansion of the Islamic sciences. This development was not possible except through freedom of scholarly research, free expression of different views and clash between views of the *mujtahidūn*, scholars and thinkers.

By practising *ijtihād*, a *mujtahid* deduces the *aḥkām* (laws) of the Sharī'ah for issues and problems regarding which there is no specific express text (*naṣṣ*), by relying on legal sources and principles and by benefiting from the ideas of other *mujtahidūn*. On account of this, it may be said that *ijtihād* plays the role of an evolutionary and dynamic force in legal studies which provides solutions to contingent issues of life and fulfils the needs of changing times and the requirements of new phenomena of human civilization. Therefore, Islamic fiqh does not suffer with inertia, stagnation and passivity vis-a-vis the demands of the times, of life and its manifestations; it also advances along with them. It is for this reason that it has been said that *ijtihād* has been throughout Islamic history the force which has been constantly developing and expanding the boundaries of fiqh with respect to its applications, while maintaining the stability of legislation. Thus, *ijtihād* is essential for Islamic fiqh, without which it cannot be dynamic and progressive.

On the basis of this, closing of the gates of *ijtihād* is contrary to the perennial mission of Islam in all ages, and, most certainly, alien elements have played an active role in promoting this ominous venture. For the enemies of Islam, it has been, and still is, the best weapon to strike Islamic law with, and the most effective instrument for eliminating it from scientific, cultural, economic, social and political arenas. Because, closing of the gates of *ijtihād* renders fiqh ineffective and incapable of providing answers to emergent and contingent issues of life

The present deficiencies in the world of Islam, the failure to confront the contingent issues in a proper way, the issuing of baseless and irrational *fatāwā*, the improper attitude towards new ideas — all these are consequencies of the closing of the gates of *ijtihād* by the Ahl al-Sunnah. It has been instrumental in allowing dubious hands, with the aid of *ṭāghūtī* governments, to instil unhealthy ideas into the people's minds and to insinuate the feeling that Islamic fiqh cannot fulfil the demands of the present age and the modern civilization.

These insinuations have left undesirable effects on the minds of short-sighted and self-alienated persons unaware of the spirit of Islam, to the extent that they servilely follow the aliens and prefer Western laws to the laws of Islam (we shall have more to say about this matter

in the article "The Era of the Decline of Sunnī Ijtihād").

The most outstanding achievement of Shī'ī fiqh has been to keep open the gates of *ijtihād* throughout the course of history. Its superiority over other schools of fiqh, whose doors were closed after the death of their founders (namely, Abū Ḥanīfah al-Nu'mān ibn Thābit, the founder of Ḥanafī School; Mālik ibn Anas al-'Aṣbaḥī, the founder of the Mālikī School; Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, the founder of the Shāfi'ī School; and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, the founder of the Ḥanbalī School), lies here. (An exposition of this issue from various aspects and a critique of the speech of the editor of the Kuwaiti journal *al-Mujtama'*, Ismā'īl al-Shaṭṭī, delivered at the U.A.E. university on Nov. 1, 1982, wherein he denounced the claim about the continuity of *ijtihād* as a 'conspiracy against the faith,' will come in our article on the epochs of *ijtihād*.)

Main Topics of Discussions:

We shall deal with the following topics in this study:
The lexical meaning of the word '*ijtihād*'.
The meaning of *ijtihād* in the utterances of the Prophet (S).
The technical meaning of the term *ijtihād*.
Two different meanings of *ijtihād* as a technical term used by Muslim fuqahā'.
Acceptance of *ijtihād* as an independent source of law in Sunnī fiqh.
Causes of the emergence of *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* and other conjectural instruments among the Ahl al-Sunnah.
Arguments offered in favour of *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* and their refutation.
The beginnings of *ijtihād* in the sense of *ra'y*.
The period during which *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* was known as *ta'wīl*.
The continued use of the term *ijtihād* in the sense of *ra'y*.
Change in the meaning of *ijtihād* from its original sense of *ra'y*.
The meaning of the term *ijtihād*.
The difference between the two meanings of *ijtihād* from the point of view of the effects and consequences of each of them.
Delimiting of the new meaning of *ijtihād* by al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī.
The times since when the Shī'ah and the Ahl al-Sunnah felt the need for *ijtihād*.
Ijtihād in the days of the Imams (A).
Ijtihād, a perennial spring of Islamic fiqh.
The first legist who opened the doors of Shī'ī *ijtihād*.
The difference between the styles of *ijtihād* during the period of the Major Occultation and afterwards.
The development of *ijtihād* in Sunnī fiqh.
The decline of *ijtihād* in Sunnī fiqh.

The impact of the backwardness of Sunnī fiqh on the Sunnī society.
The Akhbārī stand against *ijtihād*.
The factors and causes behind the Akhbārī rejection of *ijtihād*.
Waḥīd al-Behbahānī's crusade against Akhbārism.
The factors and causes behind al-Behbahānī's success and advancement.
The synthesis of Akhbārī and Uṣūlī outlooks regarding *ijtihād*.
The Prophet (S) and *ijtihād*.
The place of *ijtihād*.

The Term Ijtihād:

'Ijtihād', according to the lexicographers, is derived from *'juhd'*, which means employment of effort or endeavour in performing a certain activity. Here we shall quote some of them:

Ibn al-'Athīr defines *'ijtihād'* as the effort and endeavour undertaken for attaining some objective.[1] He further remarks that the word (ﷺ) occurs in many aḥādīth. *'Juhd'* means employing one's complete strength, and *'jahd'* means hardship and difficulty.[2]

Ibn Manẓūr al-Miṣrī says: *Jahd* and *juhd* mean power and strength. He adds that it is said that whereas *jahd* means hardship and difficulty, *juhd* gives the sense of power and strength.[3] Later on he quotes al-Farrā' to the effect that in the verse of the Quran وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ ,[4] *jahd* is used in the sense of power and strength.[5] In the same work, he states that *ijtihād* and *tajāhud* mean exertion of power and strength.[6] In the ḥadīth narrated from Mu'ādh the phrase اِجْتَهِدْ رَأْيَ الاجتهادِ it is used in the sense of effort and endeavour to achieve some purpose.

Sa'īd al-Khūrī says: *Ijtihād* means undertaking effort and endeavour in performing some task. For instance it is said اجتهد في حَمْلِ الحَجَرِ 'He exerted himself to carry the stone', but nobody says: إجتهد في حَمْلِ الخَرْدَلَةِ (*Khardalah*=mustard seed).[7] He further adds that *jahd* (verbal noun of *jahada*) is used in the sense of strength — as in أفرَغَ جهدَهُ (he did all in his power) — as well as in the sense of trying hard, as in أفرَغَ جَهْدَهُ أصابَ جُهْداً ('he tried his utmost, but was faced with difficulty'), and *juhd* is used in the sense of strength.[8]

Al-Munjid states: إجتهد في الأمرِ= جَدَّ وَبَذَلَ وِسْعَهُ

Aḥmad al-Qayyūmī writes: *Juhd* in the usage of the people of the Ḥijāz and *jahd* in the non-Ḥijāzī usage means exerting one's strength and power, and it has been said that *juhd* means strength and *jahd* means toil and strain.[9] He further adds: اجتهد في الأمرِ=بَذَلَ وِسْعَهُ وَطاقَتَهُ في طَلَبِهِ لِيَبْلُغَ مجهودَهُ وَيَصِلَ الى نِهايَتِهِ ('*Ijtahada* means: he spent his strength and capacity to attain his goal and his ultimate objective').[10]

Al-'Allāmah al-Ṭurayḥī states: It occurs in a ḥadīth that: أفضَلُ الصَّدَقَةِ جُهْدُ المُقِلِّ ('the best of charities is that which is given by one in indigence').[11]

He also says: اجتهد بيمينه أي بذل وسعه في اليمين وبالغ فيها ('*ijtahada bi yamīnih* means: He tried hard and did his utmost in order to fulfil his promise').[12] He explains that *ijtihād* involves doing one's utmost while striving and making effort.[13]

Ibn Abī Dhar'ah, quoting al-Māwardī, states that the literal meaning of *ijtihād* is to undertake effort and endeavour in accomplishing something that requires strain and difficulty, and to this is related *jihād al-nafs* (the struggle against the carnal self) which involves labour and toil for winning the desired objective and goal.

Ismā'īl al-Jawharī[14] and other lexicographers have also defined the word *ijtihād* in similar terms. Thus we come to the conclusion that in the light of the definitions given by the lexicographers *ijtihād* means employment of effort and endeavour to one's utmost capacity, and it does not make any difference whether it is derived from *juhd* or *jahd*, as effort and endeavour are not without strain and toil and accompany each other.

On the basis of this definition, the statements of the two Uṣūlī scholars, Shaykh Ḥasan al-'Āmilī al-Jibā'ī[15] and Ākhūnd al-Khurāsānī,[16] and others about this term, that the literal meaning of *ijtihād* is undergoing difficulty and hardship for accomplishing something, appear to be incomplete and controvertible.

'Ijtihād' in the Utterances of the Prophet (S):

The word *ijtihād* also occurs in the statements of the Prophet (S) in the same literal sense. Some examples may be cited here:

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ واجْتَهِدُوا في الدُّعاءِ.

1. Pronounce benedictions over me and be diligent in prayer.[17]

أمّا السُّجُودُ فَاجْتَهِدُوا في الدُّعاءِ فَقَمِنَ ان يُسْتَجاب لَكُمْ.

2. As to the prostration, be diligent (or insistent) in prayer, for that makes it worthy of acceptance.[18]

فَضْلُ العالِمِ على المُجْتَهِدِ مائَةُ دَرَجَةٍ.

3. The *'ālim* (scholar) is superior to the *mujtahid* by a hundred degrees.[19]

In this tradition *mujtahid* is used in the sense of *'ābid* (devotee), one who is diligent in *'ibādah* (worship).

'Ijtihād' In the Utterances of Some Ṣaḥābah:

1. 'Ā'ishah is reported to have said:

كانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ يَجْتَهِدُ في العشرِ الأواخِرِ مالايَجْتَهِدُ في غَيرِهِ.

During the last decade of his life the Apostle of God worked harder than in any period.[20]

2. Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubayd Allāh is reported to have stated:

عَنْ رَجُلينِ على عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللهِ كانَ أَحَدُهُما أَشَدَّ اجْتِهاداً مِنَ الآخَرِ نَفَرَ المُجْتَهِدُ مِنْهُما فَاسْتَشْهَدَ.

(There were) two men in the days of the Prophet (S), one of whom surpassed the other in his *ijtihād* (diligence in worship). The 'diligent one' participated in war and was martyred.[21]

3. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī is reported as having said:

كانَ رسُولُ اللهِ إذا حَلَفَ اجتَهَدَ في اليَمينِ.

Whenever the Apostle of God took an oath (to do something), he would take pains to fulfil the oath.[22]

4. The following is reported about 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy in relation to the campaign of Banū al-Musṭalaq:

فاجتَهَدَ بِيَمينِهِ مافَعَلَ.

He insisted on his oath that he had not done that.[23]

5. Umm Ḥārithah is reported to have stated in a question she asked the Prophet (S):

إنْ كانَ في الجَنَّةِ صَبَرتُ وإنْ كانَ غَيرَ ذُلكَ اجتَهَدْتُ في البُكاءِ.

I shall bear with patience if my son is in Paradise, but if that isn't the case, I shall mourn for him to the limit of my strength.[24]

Ijtihād in the Utterances of the Imams (A):

In the utterances of the Imams (A) of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt, too, the word *ijtihād* is used in its literal sense. Following are three examples:

1. In *Nahj al-balāghah*, Imam 'Alī (A) states:

وَعلَيْكم بالجِدِّ والإجتهادِ والتأهُّبِ والاستِعْدادِ والتزوُّدِ في مَنْزِلِ الزّادِ.

It is for you to make effort and to strive, to prepare yourselves and to supply yourselves with in this stage of provision (i.e. this world).[25]

2. Al-'Imām al-Bāqir (A) is reported to have said to a group of Shī'īs:

وَاللهِ إنّي لَأُحِبُّ ريحَكُم وأرْواحَكُم فَأعينُوا على ذٰلك بِوَرَعٍ واجتهادٍ واعلَمُوا أنَّ ولايَتَنا لا تُنالُ إلّا بِالعَمَلِ وَالإجْتِهادِ.

By God, I love your fragrance and (the purity of) your souls. So strengthen them by means of piety and endeavour (*ijtihād*). You should know that you will not approach our *wilāyah* except by deeds and through endeavour.[26]

3. Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) is reported to have said to Sa'īd ibn Hilāl al-Thaqafī:

أُوصيكَ بتَقْوىٰ اللهِ والوَرَعِ والاجْتِهادِ.

I advise you to fear God, to be pious, and to be diligent (in fulfilling your duties).[27]

Ijtihād as a Technical Term:

There is no consensus of opinion among scholars belonging to different Islamic schools regarding the literal meaning of the term *ijtihād*. A section of Sunnī 'ulamā' believes that *ijtihād* means making effort and endeavour in order to achieve presumption (*ẓann*) regarding a *ḥukm* (law) of the Sharī'ah. The same definition is also found in the writings of some Shī'ī 'ulamā'. But this interpretation was first proposed by a group of Sunnī 'ulamā'. In any case, it would be appropriate to cite some of the views held by Shī'ī and the Sunnī 'ulamā' in this regard:

(a) The great 'Allāmah Sayf al-Dīn al-'Āmidī al-Shāfi'ī (d.631/1234) says: *Ijtihād* means putting in of effort and endeavour in order to reach presumption (*ẓann*) regarding one of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah in such a manner that one feels that he can do nothing more.[28]

(b) Al-'Allāmah Ibn Ḥājib Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān ibn 'Umar ibn Abī Bakr al-Kurdī al-Mālikī (c. 570 — 646/1174 — 1248) writes in his *Mukhtaṣar al-'uṣūl: Ijtihād* means making effort to arrive at presumption or conjecture regarding a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah.

(c) Qāḍī 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ghaffār al-

Shāfi'ī al-'Aḍudī (d. 756/1355), in his book *Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar 'uṣūl Ibn Ḥājib*, writes: *Ijtihād* is employing one's effort and capacity in the way of arriving at a presumption regarding some *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah.

(d) Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī al-Shāfi'ī (460—505/1068—1111) quotes the writer of *Fawātiḥ al-raḥamūt* to the effect that: *Ijtihād* is the effort made on the part of the faqīh to derive a presumed *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah.[29]

(e) Muḥammad Ma'rūf al-Dawālībī writes: *Ijtihād* means the exercise of *ra'y* which is not acceptable to all the 'ulamā', for if it is accepted by all it would be called *ijmā'* (consensus), not *ijtihād*. Therefore, *ijtihād* is on a lower standing than *ijmā'*.[30]

(f) The great *mujtahid* al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī (648—726/1250—1325), in his work *al-Nihāyah* on uṣūl al-fiqh, writes: *Ijtihād* means employment of effort for arriving at presumption with regard to a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah, in a way that is not blameworthy on account of negligence or omission.

(g) Al-'Allāmah al-Ṭurayḥī says: *Ijtihād* is to employ one's effort and endeavour in pursuit of some difficult task and for arriving at presumption with regard to a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah.[31]

(h) The Uṣulī *mujtahid* al-'Āmilī al-Jibā'ī says: *Ijtihād* is the effort and endeavour of a faqīh in order to arrive at presumption in regard to a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah.[32]

(i) Al-Shaykh al-Bahā'ī in his *Zubdah* quotes al-Ḥājibī to the effect that: By *ijtihād* is meant the exhaustive efforts of a faqīh for arriving at presumption in regard to a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah. Al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī agrees with this definition in his book *Tahdhīb al-'uṣūl*.

(j) Al-'Allāmah Tāj al-Dīn al-Subukī, in his book *Jam' al-jawāmi'*, writes: *Ijtihād* as a technical term means the utmost efforts made by a faqīh for arriving at presumption in regard to a *ḥukm* (of the Sharī'ah).

Critique of the Above Definitions:

The above-mentioned definitions of *ijtihād* do not appear to be correct; for if these are meant for determining the logical and technical limits of *ijtihād*, these definitions fail to do so. However, if only an explanation and clarification of the term *ijtihād* is meant, they are not objectionable. Beyond that purpose, they have no scientific value. Here we shall briefly point out the defects in the said definitions.

According to the science of logic, a definition should be inclusive of all the members of the set and exclude all alien elements; the said definitions are not such. For , if by 'presumption' (*ẓann*) they mean something based on the Sharī'ah or reason, they are not inclusive of all their concerned instances. Because, an argument (*dalīl*) related to a *ḥukm* and derived from the Sharī'ah or reason belongs to one of the

following three kinds:

1. The argument creates presumption.
2. The argument creates certainty.
3. The argument creates neither presumption nor certainty.

The said definitions deal with the first kind alone, and leave out the two remaining kinds; whereas a definition of *ijtihād* should include these two as well.

The exclusion of the second kind in the definitions cited — that is that the argument should create certainty — is due to the fact that certainty is different from presumption and the word 'presumption' does not include it. As to the exclusion of the third — in which an argument does not produce either presumption or certainty — the reason is that the argument may not create presumption. For instance, if the validity (*ḥujjiyyah*) of *al-shuhrat al-fatwā'iyyah* or *khabar al-wāḥid* or *al-'ijmā' al-manqūl* is presupposed in such a way that despite not causing presumption they should still be regarded as *ḥujjah*, then, according to this hypothesis, the derivation of *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah by means of *al-shuhrat al-fatwā'iyyah*, *khabar al-wāḥid* and *al-'ijmā' al-manqūl* would not be *ijtihād* — since we have supposed that they do not create presumption — and in the light of the said definitions *ijtihād* means attainment of presumption.

If, in the above-mentioned definitions, should 'presumption' be taken to include both trustworthy and untrustworthy presumptions — as it obviously does — the definition will include untrustworthy presumption also, while the attainment of presumption regarding a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah by means of untrustworthy presumptions is not considered as *ijtihād*; because, it is certain that unreliable presumption cannot be a source of legislation. Accordingly, the definitions cited fail to exclude alien elements.

In addition they suffer from another fault — especially those definitions which mention the faqīh — as they fail to avoid a vicious circle.

In the definitions cited, the definition of '*ijtihād*' rests upon the definition of '*faqīh*' and vice versa, for '*faqīh*', in the technical sense, cannot be imagined without the technical qualification defined as '*ijtihād*', and all scholars and thinkers unanimously agree on the invalidity of the vicious circle.

Regarding this vicious circle, al-Muḥaqqiq al-Qummī writes: The faqīh is a scholar who knows the Divine *aḥkām* through the means of reliable (*mu'tabar*) proofs (*adillah*) and sources (*manābi'*). This ability does not materialize without *ijtihād*, and without it no faqīh can exist. Accordingly, the definition of 'faqīh' rests upon defining *ijtihād*, and vice versa.

Regarding the solution of the problem of the vicious circle, certain Uṣūlīs have said: "According to these definitions, faqīh is a person

who is acquainted with and is well-versed in fiqh; as opposed to one who has no knowledge of fiqh whatsoever. It does not mean someone who has the knowledge of all the *aḥkām*. It is clear that in this sense the meaning of '*faqīh*' does not rest on that of *ijtihād*; this avoids the vicious circle, because whereas the definition of *ijtihād* is dependent upon that of '*faqīh*', the definition of '*faqīh*' is not dependent upon that of *ijtihād*."

But al-Muḥaqqiq al-Qummī objects to this statement and says: Firstly, such a sense imputed to '*faqīh*' is figurative', as it literally means one who knows all the *aḥkām*, not one who knows only a few of them or some of those things that are related to the *aḥkām*. Secondly, the effort made by one who is a '*faqīh*' in this sense does not give rise to the quality of *ijtihād*; for, one who knows the outlines of the issues of *ijtihād* and has read a few books on argumentative fiqh but lacks the faculty that enables him to revert the *furū'* to the *uṣūl*, would not be considered a faqīh.

Then, in an effort to remove the vicious circle, al-Muḥaqqiq al-Qummī says: The '*faqīh*' is a person possessing such capacity as would lead to the knowledge of *far'ī aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah. Thus, the definition of *ijtihād* is made dependent on that of the faqīh, whereas the vice versa is not essential. For, the knowledge of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah exists in a faqīh as a (potential) capability, and in *ijtihād* it exists as an actuality.

This view of the Muḥaqqiq is objectionable, since *faqīh* as a term is applied to one who actually knows the *far'ī aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah through a command of its sources, not one who possesses merely the faculty and capacity of doing so; as mere capacity and faculty do not qualify one for this appallation, though the appallation of '*mujtahid*' may fit him. Therefore, the vicious circle still remains; as it is quite clear that the definition of '*faqīh*' in the above sense is dependent upon that of '*ijtihād*', and vice versa.

Moreover, the apparent meaning of this definition is unacceptable not only in the Shī'ī view of *ijtihād* but is also incomplete and objectionable according to the Sunnī viewpoint; because legal grounds (*adillah Shar'iyyah*) are not confined to presumption and conjecture alone according to Sunnīs and include other things besides.

In any case, the definitions cited are too restrictive in some respects, and in some others they do not exclude what is alien to *ijtihād*. Such definitions are not sound according to the science of logic, and it may be concluded that they are unacceptable to both the Muslim sects. Many a time such incorrect definitions of *ijtihād* have been responsible for giving rise to negative views about *ijtihād*, and made persons like Mirzā Muḥammad Amīn al-'Astarābādī, the founder of the Akhbārī school, to negate *ijtihād* outrightly. As a consequence of it *ijtihād*

had been declared as one of the innovations (*bid'āt*) and impermissible activities (this will be discussed in detail while dealing with the Akhbārī revolt against *ijtihād*).

In fact, if *ijtihād* means exactly what it has been described to be in the definitions, its rejection is justified: for, to claim something as a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah on the basis of presumptive and unreliable grounds (*dalā'il*) and to act according to them is not permissible in Islamic law. Verses of the Quran expressly forbid reliance on presumption and conjecture. God Almighty has stated in the Quran:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّنِّ ...

O ye who believe, shun much suspicion (al-ẓann)....(49:12)

In another place He says:

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ إِلَّا ظَنًّا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ شَيْـًٔا ۚ ...

Most of them follow naught but conjecture. Assuredly conjecture can by no means take the place of the truth....(10:36)

For positing a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah only certainty, or such argument or methods as have been validated by the Sharī'ah, may be relied upon. Such trustworthy grounds as *khabar al-wāḥid* and the Practical Principles (*al-'uṣūl al-'amaliyyah*) of the Sharī'ah (*Barā'ah, Iḥtiyāṭ*, etc), though they do not lead to certainty as to the real *ḥukm* (*al-ḥukm al-wāqi'ī*) — for they may be suspect regarding their chain of transmission, or meaning, or authenticity of source — but the certainty of their validity and reliability justifies reliance upon them and action in accordance with them and provides security from Divine chastisement.

Anyhow, the Uṣūlīs do not conceive *ijtihād* in the above sense. By '*ijtihād*' they mean the knowledge of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah from sources and grounds whose validity has been affirmed by the Sharī'ah, and it is by using such sources, principles and dicta that the *mujtahid* is able to meet the needs of contingent issues and events of life.

Accordingly, the result of *ijtihād* in the context of deduction of *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah is to refer new *furū'* to the fundamental *uṣūl* (which are the general precepts of the Book and the Sunnah) and to apply the *uṣūl* to their corresponding instances. It is by means of *ijtihād* that sufficient evidence or *ḥujjah* regarding a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah is secured for answers to emergent and contingent issues. *Ijtihād* is not meant for providing presumption or conjecture. It is this sound meaning of *ijtihād* that the Uṣūlīs have accepted, and whosoever has faith in Islam and believes in its eternal and immortal character

is bound to accept it in accordance with the precepts of the Sharī'ah and the dictates of reason. Because, it is not possible to posit the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah for issues for which there is no specific express text without sufficient evidence and valid grounds, and this is a conception which Muḥammad Amīn al-'Astarābādī also accepts.

It is by means of such *ijtihād* that valid grounds and basic and general *aḥkām* are employed for deriving a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah on a contingent issue. Such *ijtihād* is approved by the Akhbārīs too, though they do not call it '*ijtihād*'.

Thus, the incorrect conception of *ijtihād* — i.e., the attainment of presumption on a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah — which incited the Akhbārī opposition, is one which the Uṣūlīs also do not accept and one which they have never approved of. The 'presumption' which al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī, the author of *Ma'ālim al-'uṣūl*, and some other Shī'ī scholars mention in their definitions of *ijtihād*, is not presumption in its general sense, but one which is trustworthy and supported by some specific *dalīl*.

Therefore, it does not include such presumption as is not supported by a *dalīl*; for such presumption has been forbidden by verses of the Quran and *aḥadīth*. Hence, it cannot be said that the 'presumption' mentioned in the definitions includes this (untrustworthy) kind of presumption. Accordingly, the *ijtihād* approved by the Uṣūlīs means procurement of sufficient evidence (*ḥujjah*) regarding a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah — a conception which the Akhbārīs also do not reject.

On this basis, it can be said that the dispute between the Uṣūlīs and the Akhbārīs is merely a verbal one, not one which is essential or substantial, for both of them approve of securing sufficient evidence for a *ḥukm sharʿī*, with the difference that the Uṣūlīs call it *ijtihād* whereas the Akhbārīs do not name it so.

In reality, the only objection that the Akhbārīs raise regarding *ijtihād* relates to the definition of *ijtihād* and not to the Uṣūlīs or the *mujtahidūn* as such; for the Akhbārīs themselves never act on presumption unless it is validated by a reliable Sharʿī proof (*dalīl*).

Thus, if the word 'presumption' (*ẓann*) is replaced with the term *ḥujjah* (evidence) in the said definition and it is said: "*Ijtihād* means employment of one's powers to secure sufficient evidence (*ḥujjah*) in regard to a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah", there is no doubt that this controversy can be completely avoided and a synthesis of the views of the Akhbārīs and the Uṣūlīs can be achieved.

Second Definition of Ijtihād:

Another group of scholars defines *ijtihād* as effort on the part of a faqīh for deriving the *ahkām* of the Sharī'ah. Here we shall cite the

views of some of them.

(a) The great scholar Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī al-Shāfi'ī says: "*Ijtihād* is the effort (on the part of the *mujtahid*) and employment of one's utmost powers to extract a command (*ḥukm*). This term is not used unless when it involves hardship and strain. Hence it is said: إجتهد في حمل حجر الرّحى 'He exerted himself to carry the millstone'. But it will not be said that: إجتهد في حمل الخردلة ,'He exerted himself to carry a grain of mustard seed.' But in common usage this word is specifically used for the effort made by the *mujtahid* in the way of acquiring the knowledge of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah."[33] Al-Ghazālī further remarks: "*Ijtihād* in its complete sense is to make utmost effort in achieving a goal so that it is not possible for one to do anything more." [34]

(b) Muḥammad Khiḍrī Bek writes: *Ijtihād* is the effort made by a faqīh for acquiring the knowledge of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah.[35] He adds: *Ijtihād* in its complete sense is the utmost effort that a faqīh undertakes for extracting a *ḥukm* (of the Sharī'ah) in such a manner that he feels that he has exhausted his capacity.[36]

Critique of the Second Type of Definitions:

The above-mentioned definitions also are incomplete and defective in spite of their being closer to a technical definition and freedom from the defects of the former ones. They are still imperfect because the word *'waẓā'if'* (*lit.* duties) needs to be added; because, besides having to deduce the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah, a *mujtahid* is supposed to procure the Practical (*al-uṣūl al-'amaliyyah*) and the Rational Rules (*al-'aḥkām al-'aqliyyah*) — such as *Barā'ah*, *takhyīr* and *Iḥtiyāṭ*. Thus the field of operation of the *mujtahid* includes the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah as well as the Practical and the Rational Rules, whereas the above-mentioned definitions focus merely on the former alone. In this sense, it is not a comprehensive definition.

Third Definition of Ijtihād:

A third group of scholars of uṣūl defines *ijtihād* as: Deduction of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah from the uṣūl, the *adillah*, and their sources in the sacred Sharī'ah. It would be appropriate to quote some of these related views.

(a) Aḥmad Muṣṭafā al-Zarqā', the author of the valuable work *al-Madkhal al-fiqhī al-'āmm*, says: *Ijtihād* means deduction of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah from their elaborate *adillah* found in the Sharī'ah.[37]

(b) Al-'Allāmah Abū 'Abd Allāh Shāh Walī al-Fārūqī al-Dihlawī al-Ḥanafī, in his book *Kitāb al-'inṣāf fī sabab al-'ikhtilāf*, writes: *Ijtihād* means employment of effort and endeavour for the comprehension of

the *far'ī aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah from their elaborate *adillah*, which comprise the Book, the Sunnah, *ijmā'* and *qiyās*.

(c) Muḥammad Amīn has also defined *ijtihād* in his book *Taysīr al-taḥrīr* in similar terms.

(d) Dr. Ṣubḥī al-Maḥmaṣānī says: *Ijtihād* means exertion and effort for discovering the *aḥkām* and laws of the Sharī'ah from their legal sources.

Critique of the Third Type of Definitions:

These definitions are also not free from the defects of the earlier ones, because, like the previous definitions, they need the word *waẓā'if* in order to include the Practical and the Rational Rules with the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah. Another objection against the definition given by al-Dihlawī is that he has considered *qiyās* one of the sources of the *aḥkām*, a viewpoint which is rejected by the Shī'ah (this will be dealt in detail while discussing the sources of *ijtihād*).

Fourth Definition of Ijtihād:

The great thinker and scholar of the Islamic world Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abd al-Ṣamad, popularly known as al-Shaykh al-Bahā'ī, in his book *Zubdat al-'uṣūl*, writes: *Ijtihād* is a capacity (*malakah*) by means of which one obtains the power of deducing the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah.

Some other scholars have also defined *ijtihād* in different words that are close in meaning to this definition. Here we shall quote two of them as specimen.

(a) *Ijtihād* is the manifestation of the capacity for discovering the *ḥujaj* (pl. of *ḥujjah*) and *adillah* for deriving the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah and the Practical Obligations (*al-waẓā'if al-'amaliyyah*), whether posited by the Sharī'ah or affirmed by reason.

(b) *Ijtihād* is a capacity by means of which a faqīh becomes able to relate the minor premises with the major premises and thereby obtains a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah or an answer to a Practical Obligation.

Critique of the Fourth Type of Definitions:

These definitions, also, are controvertible like the previous ones, because firstly, they do not convey the real meaning of *ijtihād*, for *ijtihād per se* is not a capacity; for had *ijtihād* been a capacity, its addition would have served an explanatory purpose, and such is not the case here.

Secondly, the titles that have been mentioned in traditions, like

'faqīh', *'ārif* (عرف احكامنا), *nāẓir* (نظر في حلالنا وحرامنا), *rāwī* (روى حديثنا) — as in the widely accepted tradition narrated by 'Umar ibn Ḥanẓalah, and other such titles which are mentioned in other *riwāyahs* — are not applicable to one who merely possesses the capacity, but apply only to those in whom the capacity has reached the stage of actualization. Capacity (*malakah*) is a potential ability; it may or may not reach the point of actualization. It is for this very reason that the phrase يقتدر بها has to follow the word ملكة in the above definitions.

Thirdly, the jurisprudential authorities (*marāji taqlīd*) have set forth three courses by way of *al-wājib al-takhyīrī* in their handbooks of rulings (*rasā'il 'amaliyyah*) and works of fiqh for the *mukallaf* (adult person liable to perform religious duties); they are: *ijtihād*, *taqlīd* (imitation) and *iḥtiyāṭ* (caution).

If *ijtihād* be a capacity, it is not correct to put it by the side of *taqlīd* and *iḥtiyāṭ*; for *taqlīd* and *iḥtiyāṭ* are concerned with actual practice, while capacity is an inner psychic state. Accordingly, there is no doubt that in the above statement about a *mukallaf's* duty *ijtihād* is the *de facto* knowledge of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah and the Practical Rules derived from the sources of the Sharī'ah.

Further Clarification:

It is evident that the actual *aḥkām* issued by the Sacred Lawgiver (like obligatory duties and impermissible acts, etc.) are known to apply to all the *mukallafūn*. This essential knowledge with the possibility of chastisement is before every *mukallaf*. And since every sane person essentially knows that God Almighty has prescribed certain duties for him, his rational faculty enjoins him to comply with the dictates of reason in comprehending his duties, and to obtain the certainty of their fulfilment; and — as is said in 'ilm al-'uṣūl — the certainty of execution brings the certainty of fulfilment.

Anyone who is in quest of the certainty of fulfilment (of his duties) and wants to tread the path which can assure him that he has performed all the Shar'ī duties assigned by the Supreme Lawgiver, will have to perform one of these three things:

1. He should himself perform *ijtihād* and comprehend his duties, according to the criteria, from the sources of the Sharī'ah.

2. He should follow the rulings of an all-round (*jāmi' al-sharā'iṭ*) *mujtahid*.

3. He should choose the path of *iḥtiyāṭ* (i.e., among other things, refrain from every act that is not known for certain to be permissible).

In any case, it is essential to take one of the paths; for if one does not act or abstain from performing a certain act in accordance with one

of these courses, he faces the possibility of Divine chastisement. The rational faculty of every *mukallaf* individual considers it essential to avoid every possible harm and punishment; and to avoid such a danger is not possible except by following either the path of *ijtihād, or taqlīd* or *iḥtiyāṭ*.

Thus, we see that *ijtihād*, as one of the choices, is *de facto* comprehension of one's duties from the sources of the Sharī'ah that results in avoiding possible chastisement; mere possession of the capacity to comprehend one's duties cannot be regarded as *ijtihād*; rather, it means: the identification of the *aḥkām*, their deduction, and acting according to them.

Accordingly, a '*mujtahid*' who possesses the capacity of *ijtihād* alone, but does not employ the uṣūl and principles for deriving the *aḥkām* is not different from a non-*mujtahid*; for, in the same way as a non-*mujtahid* faces the possibility of chastisement in performing of acts and abstaining from them, a *mujtahid* who does not use his capacity of *ijtihād* is equally exposed to such a danger.

Thus, anyone possessing the capacity of *ijtihād* should be either a *mujtahid* who has derived the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah from its sources, or he should be a *muqallid* or *muḥtāṭ*; otherwise, he shall not be secure from chastisement. Anyone who is endowed with the capacity of *ijtihād* but has not reached the practical stage of deriving the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah may be called a '*mujtahid*'; but as far as practice is concerned he is not different from a non-*mujtahid*. In any case, *ijtihād* should be defined in a manner that is free from such flaws.

A Misconception:

Some people believe that the capacity of *ijtihād* is similar to some other traits (like generosity, justice, valour, etc.), which is acquired after practice and exercise in deriving the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah, in the same way as other qualities reach the stage of actualization after repetition and practice.

They reason that, as in the case of some qualities and traits which are not separable from action (generosity is not separable from acts of generosity, justice is not separable from acts of justice, valour is not separable from deeds of valour) *ijtihād* also is not separable from deduction of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah. Accordingly, whosoever possesses the capacity of *ijtihād* has inevitably derived the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah from its sources, and this necessarily makes him secure from chastisement. Hence the above definition is correct.

This argument is not valid, for the capacity of *ijtihād* is not similar to other qualities. Other qualities cannot be actualized without many attempts and persistent repetition, but the capacity of *ijtihād* can be

acquired without deducing any *ḥukm*. For instance, the quality of valour is acquired by repeatedly exposing oneself to danger and through performance of acts involving danger, because their continuation gradually drives out fear from the heart, to the extent that one can take part in big battles without any fear and nervousness in his heart. Similar is the case with generosity and self-denial: repeated performance of the act of generosity leads man to such a point when he can bear to be thirsty and hungry in order to feed others.

Therefore, the realization of these qualities needs repeated performance, whereas the capacity of *ijtihād* does not need any such practice. On the contrary, unless one possesses the capacity of *ijtihād* and the ability to derive the *aḥkām*, he cannot perform *ijtihād* and derive *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah. Hence it is the exercise of deriving which is dependent upon the capacity, not the capacity on repeated derivation. It is possible for a person to possess the capacity of deriving the *aḥkām* without having derived even a single *ḥukm;* as the capacity of *ijtihād* depends upon learning certain sciences like Arabic grammar and syntax, vocabulary, tafsīr, *rijāl* and 'ilm al-'uṣūl, etc., whose knowledge enables one to derive the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah. Therefore, the act of derivation from the viewpoint of realization is posterior to the capacity — contrary to other qualities whose realization follows performance.

It is true that extensive derivation and repeated employment of the capacity of *ijtihād* can enhance this faculty, but this has nothing to do with its actual realization and existence.

In short, *ijtihād* in the sense of faculty does not guarantee security from Divine chastisement, or repel its potential danger from the *mukallaf*. It cannot be placed in the category of *taqlīd* and *iḥtiyāṭ* either, for that which is equivalent to *taqlīd* and *iḥtiyāṭ* is the knowledge of the *aḥkām* from the Shar'ī sources. Hence *ijtihād* should be defined in a way which is not open to such objections.

Fifth Definition of Ijtihād:

Some other scholars have defined *ijtihād* in yet another way. 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Khallāf says: *Ijtihād* means employment of effort and endeavour for understanding the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah for issues for which there is no specific express text (in the Book and the Sunnah), by exercising *ra'y* and subjective judgement, as well as by using other methods for deriving the laws of the Sharī'ah.[38]

Critique of the Fifth Definition:

This definition is also objectionable like other definitions, but, as we shall see in the discussion about *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* and subjective

judgement, in Islamic fiqh valid *ijtihād* means employment of effort for deriving the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah for emergent and contingent issues from the Shar'ī sources (the Book, the Sunnah, *ijmā'* and *'aql*), not the exercise of one's subjective opinion and judgement. We shall elaborate on this matter later on and there we shall see that no individual — even the Prophet (S) — may legislate laws by exercising personal judgement; for legislation is exclusively a Divine prerogative.

In Islamic law there is a *ḥukm* for every issue, either as a particular or a general law. As for the issues for which no express text exists, a *mujtahid* can derive laws by applying to them the general laws of the Book or the Sunnah. Therefore, in emergent issues a *mujtahid* is required to discover an express Shar'ī text, and whenever he is unable to discover such a proof or express text, he has to secure an 'apparent' *ḥukm (al-ḥukm al-ẓāhirī)* for the *mukallaf* from such Practical Rules as *Barā'ah, Takhyīr, Istiṣḥāb*, etc.

According to Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, the term *ijtihād* has been applied to the following three meanings: (1) *Qiyās*, when the cause (*'illah*) does not lead to the *ḥukm*, for it may not possibly contain the *ḥukm* (on account of its being an incomplete and not a complete cause). As a result, the cause does not lead to certainty about the desired *ḥukm*, which has to be based on *ijtihād* and derivation through *ra'y*. (2) Anything that gives rise to presumption without the existence of a cause, like *ijtihād* regarding time, direction of *Qiblah*, price of a commodity, etc. (3) Argument based on uṣūl for positing a *ḥukm* of the Sharī'ah.[39]

This statement is also objectionable; for, of the three points that which can relate to the technical sense of *ijtihād*, the first one — i.e., derivation of *aḥkām* by means of *qiyās* — is invalid from the Shī'ī point of view. The second meaning also is not right, as giving judgments about ordinary external details is not the duty of the *mujtahid*. In the third point, *ijtihad* is used in a general, non-specific sense, as it includes *qiyās* and other things also.

The great jurist Ākhund al-Kurāsānī has defined *ijtihād* as employment of one's powers for acquisition of *ḥujjah* regarding the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah.[40]

Another scholar has defined *ijtihād* as effort and endeavour made in deriving the *far'ī aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah, or securing legal validity through (the study of) its elaborate *adillah*. If the criterion of the validity of an act is considered acquisition of *ḥujjah*, the above given definition is safe from the objections raised against the earlier definitions, as *ḥujjah* is inclusive of: certainty; the *adillah* that lead to certainty (such as reliable uṣūl and dicta); and presumption, in accordance with the Sunnī outlook. Similarly the term *ḥujjah* covers presumption during the period of closure of doors of certainty, in accordance with the belief of those who believe in such a closure.

Accordingly, employment of effort for securing legal validity in regard to the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah is no doubt regarded as *ijtihād*, whether the *ḥujjah* leads to certainty or is based on a *dalil*; and it does not make any difference whether it gives rise to presumption or not. Accordingly, the earlier objections cannot be raised against this definition.

Objections Against the Definition:

It may be objected that the above definition is not logical or technical, for a technically and logically correct definition should closely correspond to the thing defined, whereas the said definition is rather loose. It states that *ijtihād* is to derive and determine *aḥkām* from the sources; it does not specify that the person performing derivation should also possess the capacity, whereas the *mujtahid* is one who possesses the capacity of *ijtihād*. This objection is valid, unless it is said that *ijtihād* depends on the capacity and it is not possible to derive *aḥkām* from reliable sources except through that capacity, and here possession of the capacity is taken for granted.

Note:

It is appropriate here to clarify one thing about the capacity of *ijtihād*: it is a capacity acquired through the knowledge of ten types of disciplines on which derivation and understanding of the *aḥkām* of the Sharī'ah depends. In this regard, the requirement of another faculty — the so-called *quwwah qudsiyyah* — is not essential, for the *ijtihād* which is acceptable to all means derivation of the Shar'ī *aḥkām* from the sources, and in the same way as a 'just' (*'ādil*) *mujtahid* can perform this task, it can also be performed by a *mujtahid* who is not 'just'.

Two Different Conceptions of Ijtihād:

The term *ijtihād* as used in the writings of scholars of different Islamic sects conveys two different meanings, each of which gives rise to different viewpoints regarding the sources of Shar'ī *aḥkām*. In the first conception *ijtihād* means derivation of Shar'ī *ḥukm* through personal judgement and ra'y for an issue for which the *mujtahid* does not find any express text in the Quran or the Sunnah. Such a meaning of *ijtihād* is found in the writings of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Khallāf and most of Sunnī fuqahā' also subscribe to this view.

Ijtihād in this sense is considered by most of Sunnī scholars as an independent source parallel to the Quran, the Sunnah, *ijmā'* and *'aql*, and is acknowledged as one of the bases for determining the *aḥkām*.

It means that in the same manner as a *mujtahid* relies on sources like the Quran, the Sunnah, *'aql* and *ijmā'* for deriving *aḥkām*, he can also rely on *ra'y* and subjective opinion by taking recourse to instruments of presumption (like *qiyās, istiḥsān, maṣāliḥ mursalah, istiṣlāḥ, madhhab al-Ṣaḥābī, fatḥ al-dharā'i', sadd al-dharā'i'*, etc.) for issues on which there is no express text in the Quran and the Sunnah.

In the second conception *ijtihād* means deduction of the *far'ī aḥkām* from the reliable sources (the Quran, the Sunnah, *ijmā'* and *'aql*). *Ijtihād* in this sense occurs in the writings of Aḥmad Muṣṭafā al-Zarqā', the author of *al-Madkhal al-fiqhī al-'āmm*, and Shī'ī fuqahā' have subscribed to this view long since. According to this conception, the activity of the *mujtahid* involves deduction of the laws of the Sharī'ah for emergent issues and new phenomena of life by employing general principles and rules. Thereby the *mujtahid* refers new secondary issues to the general principles and applies the general laws to their particular instances in external reality, thus obtaining the *aḥkām* governing them. According to this conception, *ijtihād* is not counted as an independent source of law parallel to the Quran and the Sunnah, but merely as a means for deriving and determining the *aḥkām* from the sources.

Ijtihād as an Independent Source in Sunnī Fiqh:

Leading Sunnī jurists have chosen the first conception of *ijtihād*, as an independent source parallel to the Book of God and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S). They have included *ijtihād* itself, besides the four sources of fiqh, as the fifth one. Accordingly, they have specified for it a separate section in their books of uṣūl such as *Uṣūl al-fiqh, al-Mustaṣfā, al-'Aḥkām* and other works — and have undertaken diverse discussions about it.

In accordance with this conception, al-Shāfi'ī considers *qiyās* to be same as *ijtihād* in his *Risālāh*. He writes:

> What is *qiyās*? Is *qiyās* the same as *ijtihād*, or are they different? I say, *qiyās* and *ijtihād* are two terms which convey the same meaning like 'man' and 'human being'.[41]

In *Risālah* he rejects the opinions of most of Sunnī fuqahā' who believe *istiḥsān* to be one of the sources of *ijtihād*,[42] for the majority of them believe *ijtihād* to be synonymous with *ra'y, qiyās, istiḥsān* and *istinbāṭ*.

Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Razzāq is one of them; he writes: The *ra'y* of which we speak is the *mujtahid's* reliance on his subjective opinion and judgement for obtaining a law of the Sharī'ah. This is what we mean by *ijtihād* and *qiyās*, which are synonymous with *istinbāṭ* and *istiḥsān*.[43]

This statement appears to be strange, for *ijtihād, istinbāṭ, ra'y*,

qiyās and *istiḥsān* are terms which are different from one another regarding their meaning. How can they be considered synonymous and equivalent terms, and how can it be said that these words convey the same meaning when there is nothing common either between the words or their meanings?

It may be said in justification of the above-mentioned statement that the equating of *ra'y* with *ijtihād* is for the reason that the personal judgement of a *mujtahid* in the event of absence of any express text of the Quran and the Sunnah is synonymous with *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* and hence this sort of *istinbāṭ* has been named *ra'y* as well. But other practices like *qiyās*, *istiḥsān*, *maṣāliḥ mursalah*, *istiṣlāḥ*, *sadd al-dharā'i'*, *fatḥ al-dharā'i'*, *madhhab al-Ṣaḥābī*, *Sharī'at al-salaf*, *'urf*, etc. (which shall be discussed in detail) each one of them is considered an instance of *ijtihād*, but is not equivalent to or synonymous with *ijtihād bi al-ra'y*. The reason for the error in equating *ijtihād* with *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* is that the meaning of *ijtihād* has been confused with that of one of its elements.

NOTES:

1 & 2. *Al-Nihāyah* vol. 1, p. 219.
3. *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 3, p. 133.
4. 9:79
5. *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 3, p. 133.
6. *Ibid.*,p. 135.
7 & 8.*Aqrab al-mawārid*. vol. 1, p. 144.
9. & 10. *Al-Miṣbāh al-munīr*, vol. 1, p. 144.
11, 12, & 13. *Majma' al-baḥrayn*, vol. 3, p. 32.
14. *Ṣiḥāḥ al-lughah*, vol. 1, p. 457.
15. *Ma'ālim al-'uṣul*, p. 232.
16. *Kifāyat al-'uṣūl*, vol. 2, p. 42.
17. *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, the chapter on the command to pronounce benedictions on the Prophet (S), vol.1, p.90; see also the *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 1, p. 199.
18. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, kitāb al-ṣalāt*, ḥadīth 207; *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 1, p.219.
19. *Muqaddimah* of *Sunan al-Dārimī*, vol. 1, p.100.
20. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, kitāb al-'i'tikāf*, ḥadīth 8; see also *Sunan Ibn Mājah,, kitāb al-ṣawm*, ḥadīth 1767.
21. *Sunan Ibn Mājah, kitāb al-ru'yā'*, ḥadīth 3925; *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 3, p. 163.
22. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 3, pp. 33, 138.
23. *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, vol.3, p. 136.
24. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, kitāb al-jihād*, vol.2, p. 93; *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 3, pp. 260, 283.
25, 26 & 27. *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol.1, twentieth of *abwāb muqaddamat al-'ibādāt*, ahādith 1, 11, 20.

28. *Al-'Iḥkām fī uṣūl al-'aḥkām*, vol. 4, p. 218. 18.
29. *Al-Mustaṣfā fī uṣūl al-fiqh*, p. 55.
30. *Al-Madkhal ilā 'ilm uṣūl al-fiqh*, p. 55.
31. *Majma' al-baḥrayn*, vol. 3, p. 32.
32. *Ma'ālim al-'uṣūl*, p. 232.
33 & 34. *Al-Mustaṣfā fī uṣūl al-fiqh*, vol. 2, p. 350.
35 & 36. *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, p. 357.
37. The journal *Ḥaḍārat al-'Islām*, No. 2, p. 2.
38. *Maṣādir al-tashrī'*, p. 7.
39. *Irshād al-fuḥūl*, p. 250.
40. *Kifāyat al-'uṣūl*, vol. 2, p. 422.
41. *Al-Risālah*, p. 477.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 504.
43. Tamhīd-e ta'rīkh-e falsafeh-ye Islāmī, p. 138.

قالَ عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ: سَيِّئَةٌ تَسُوءُكَ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ اللهِ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ تُعْجِبُكَ.

Alī (A) said: "A sin that makes you feel grieved is better near God than a good deed that makes you conceited."

(Nahj al-balāghah, ḥikam 46, p.477)

Taṣawwuf:
the Meeting Point of Tashayyu' and Tasannun

by Waḥīd Akhtar

Ṣūfism has been defined as the essence of Islamic morality by some eminent Ṣūfīs. There have been different views regarding the etymology of the term *taṣawwuf*, and its doctrines were, formerly, usually considered borrowed from non-Islamic sources. Among the orientalists, now, few are of the view that Ṣūfism is not derived from the core of Islamic teachings. Some eminent orientalists, such as Nicholson, Masignon and Henry Corbin, have been instrumental in removing the earlier misconceptions about its origins. Undoubtedly all religions have a mystical dimension that may be said to be the common element or essence of religion. Yet Islam is different from other religions because of its special nature. Except original Judaism no religion emphasized the organic unity of the worldly and the otherworldly and laid down a comprehensive law to govern human life and society. Morality may justifiably be considered to be the essence of Islam, because morality has two dimensions that are inseparable: individual and social.

Islamic teaching comprises three aspects: dogmas (*'aqā'id*), worship (*'ibādāt*) and social obligations (*mu'āmalāt*). The fundamentals of the faith were revealed to the Prophet (S), and he prescribed the details of ritual and worship, decreed by Allah in His Book in general terms. Hence the Quran and the Sunnah are two sources of the Muslim creed and practice. The path to attain perfection in piety is not isolated from social obligations; a Muslim has to reach the highest spiritual stage through his dealings with other human beings. Muslim theologians in general and Ṣūfīs in particular believe that Allah can forgive man's lapses with regard to His rights (*ḥaqq Allāh*), but will not forgive one's failure to fulfil his duties toward fellow human beings (*ḥuqūq al-nās*). Hence morality, which is possible in society alone, is as important as dogma and worship. From the Islamic viewpoint, the fundamentals of the faith and ritual worship also aim at perfecting morality. The Prophet (S) himself declared:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الأَخْلاقِ

I have been sent (by Allah) with the mission of perfecting morals.

It may therefore be concluded that defining Ṣūfism as the essence of Islamic morality is more compatible with the spirit of Islam and the content of Ṣūfism than any other definition of *taṣawwuf*. That is why, apart from linguistic controversies regarding the etymology of this term since the time the terms *ṣūfī* and *taṣawwuf* came into vogue, Ṣūfīs have been emphasizing *ṣafā'* (purity) as the main characteristic of a Ṣūfī. The Quran declares.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself.(87:14)

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا ﴿١٠﴾

He will be indeed successful who purifies it (the soul), and he will indeed fail who corrupts it. (91:9—10)

The verses preceding these say that God fashioned the human soul and inspired it with the understanding of what is right and wrong for it (91:7—8). The purification of the heart and the soul is not an end in itself, but a means to attain Divine good-pleasure, which is the Ṣūfī's summum bonum. The way to perfection passes through social life; it is not attainable in isolation. The Islamic conception of spirituality is grounded in man's social life, which provides him the possibility of winning Divine good-pleasure. The word *ṣūfī* does not occur in the Quran or ḥadīth, but the term *riḍā* (good-pleasure) occurs in many places in the Quran in its different forms:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾ فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

O soul at peace! Return unto thy Lord, well-pleased (with Him), well-pleasing (Him)! Enter thou among My servants! Enter thou My Paradise!(89:27—30)

The highest stage that man can attain in pleasing his Lord is that at which his will becomes one with the Divine Will:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

And among men is he who sells his self to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the servants. (2:207)

In my view the above two verses contain the truest definition of a Ṣūfī. I hold this view on the basis of the unanimous exegesis of the verse 207 of the *Sūrat al-Baqarah*, according to which this verse was revealed on the night of the Hijrah when 'Alī offered to sleep in the Prophet's (S) stead, risking his own life thereby. Incidentally 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (A) is accepted as the source and fountainhead of all Ṣūfī orders (*salāsil*) with the sole exception of a branch of the Naqshbandiyyah which, too, accepts him as its head after the first three Caliphs. 'Alī (A) is called *Sayyid al-'awliyā'* (the chief of all *walīs* and Ṣūfīs). Thus surrendering one's life to Allah is the only way to win Divine pleasure and, even, to becoming the instrument of Divine Will. The greatest sacrifice in the history of Islam is that of al-'Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) at Karbalā'. Many mufassirūn are of the view that the verses 27—30 of the *Sūrat al-Fajr* (cited above) refer to al-'Imām al-Ḥusayn's martyrdom. It is pertinent to note that the sacrifices of 'Alī (A) and al-Ḥusayn (A) were of great socio-political significance in the history of Islam as well as in human history as a whole. No honest historian can deny the high spiritual status of 'Alī (A) and al-Ḥusayn (A). What I want to infer from this rather lengthy introduction to Ṣūfism is that in Islam true spirituality is morality of the highest order in one's attitude towards Allah and His creatures. Ṣūfism, in whatsoever terms it be defined, is inseparable from this spirit. It is from this point of view that at the very outset I said that Islamic mysticism is different and distinguished from all other forms of mysticism which usually seek Divine good-pleasure, or in some cases oneness with God, in renouncing the world. On the contrary Islam explicitly prohibits and denounces asceticism and renunciation of social life: لارَهْبانِيَّةَ فى الإسْلام

What makes Ṣūfism distinct from the mystical dimension of all religions and religious philosophies is its basic social character. The Prophet (S) himself lived among the people and conducted their social and political affairs. He is the Perfect Man (*al-'insān al-kāmil*) in the view of all Muslims. No Ṣūfī in his spiritual ascension can claim a higher status than him. The Imams of his Family (*A'immat Ahl al-Bayt*) also had been always actively involved in instructing Muslims and seeking to uplift them morally and socially as the true servants of Allah. They are also held in high esteem by all Ṣūfīs, and some of the early Ṣūfīs are said to be direct disciples of one or the other Imam. Usually the orientalists have ignored the important role of the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt in the origin and development of Ṣūfism. In order to understand the socio-political aspect of Ṣūfism one has to study their relation to Ṣūfīs and Ṣūfī doctrines. Henry Corbin's observation in this regard is very

significant and relevant to this study. He observes that the distinction between *Sharī'ah* and *Ṭarīqah* is made by Sunnīs, while no such distinction was ever made by Shī'īs, for the former separated political leadership from spiritual leadership while the latter combined both forms of leadership in their conception of the Imamate. In the Sunnī world from the 3rd/9th century when Ṣūfism assumed the form of a movement, it was vehemently opposed by fuqahā' and 'ulamā', but among the Shī'īs no such opposition arose due to the Shī'ī belief in the Infallible Imams who combined both the esoteric and exoteric aspects in their persons.[1] Henry Corbin and Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, the author of *Tashayyu' wa taṣawwuf*, are unanimous that Ṣūfīs borrowed their notions of *quṭb* or *qhawth* from the Shī'ī conception of Imamate.[2] Ṣūfīs believe that the world can never remain without a *quṭb*, upon whom depends the preservation of the faith and the guidance of human beings. He is nearest to God, is the guardian of the faith, and receives instructions from Allah directly. 'Alī (A), addressing his pupil, Kumayl ibn Ziyād, one of the earliest Ṣūfīs,to whom some Ṣūfī orders attach themselves, says:

لا تَخْلُو الأَرْضُ مِنْ قائِمٍ لِلّٰهِ بِحُجَّةٍ، إمّا ظاهِراً مَشْهُوراً، وَإمّا خائِفاً مَغْمُوراً، لِئَلاّ تَبْطُلَ حُجَجُ اللّٰهِ وَبَيِّناتُهُ. وَكَمْ ذا وَأَيْنَ أُولئِكَ؟ أُولئِكَ ــ واللّٰهِ ــ الأَقَلُّونَ عَدَداً، والأَعْظَمُونَ عِنْدَاللّٰهِ قَدْراً. يَحْفَظُ اللّٰهُ بِهِمْ حُجَجَهُ وَبَيِّناتِهِ حَتّىٰ يُودِعُوها نُظَراءَهُمْ، وَيَزْرَعُوها في قُلُوبِ أَشْباهِهِمْ. هَجَمَ بِهِمُ الْعِلْمُ عَلىٰ حَقيقَةِ الْبَصيرَةِ، وَباشَرُوا رُوحَ الْيَقينِ، وَاسْتَلانُوا ما اسْتَعْوَرَهُ الْمُتْرَفُونَ، وَأَنِسُوا بِما اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجاهِلُونَ، وَصَحِبُوا الدُّنْيا بِأَبْدانٍ أَرْواحُها مُعَلَّقَةٌ بِالْمَحَلِّ الأَعْلىٰ. أُولئِكَ خُلَفاءُ اللّٰهِ في أَرْضِهِ، وَالدُّعاةُ إلىٰ دينِهِ. آهِ آهِ شَوْقاً إلىٰ رُؤْيَتِهِم! اِنْصَرِفْ يا كُمَيْلُ إذا شِئْتَ.

But the earth is never devoid of him who stands for God with a proof. He is either manifest and well-known, or afraid and concealed so that God's proofs and His clear signs should not disappear (or, be invalidated) (by his death). How many are they and where are they? By God, they are few in number, but great in esteem near God. Through them God maintains His proofs and signs, till they entrust them to others like themselves and plant them in the hearts of their likes. Knowledge has led them to the reality of understanding and they have attained the spirit of certitude. That which is hard upon the seekers of comfort comes easy to them. They endear what the ignorant regard with aversion. They live in the world with their bodies, but their spirits are in a higher realm. They are the vicegerents of God in His earth and His callers to His *Dīn*. Oh, how much I yearn to see them. O Kumayl, I have told you all that I had to say; you may go back whenever you like.[3]

No description of the Ṣūfī may be better than the one given in the above passage. It is generally believed that 'Alī (A), as his views men-

tioned in *Nahj al-balāghah* appear to indicate, was a person disillusioned with this world and hating it. On the contrary, he seems to anticipate the view of Leibnitz — the European rationalist philosopher who said that ours was the best of all possible worlds — in his following statement which he made when he heard someone accuse the world:

إنَّ الدُّنيا دارُ صِدْقٍ لِمَنْ صَدَقَها، وَدارُ عافِيَةٍ لِمَنْ فَهِمَ عَنْها، وَدارُ غِنىً لِمَنْ تَزَوَّدَ مِنْها، وَدارُ مَوْعِظَةٍ لِمَنِ اتَّعَظَ بِها. مَسْجِدُ أَحِبّاءِ اللّٰهِ، وَمُصَلّىٰ مَلائِكَةِ اللّٰهِ، وَمَهْبِطُ وَحْيِ اللّٰهِ، وَمَتْجَرُ أَوْلِياءِ اللّٰهِ. اكْتَسَبُوا فيها الرَّحْمَةَ، وَرَبِحُوا فيها الْجَنَّةَ. فَمَنْ ذا يَذُمُّها...

Verily this world is a house of truth for those who look into it deeply and carefully, an abode of peace and rest for those who understand its ways and moods, and it is the best working ground for those who want to procure provisions for the Hereafter. It is a place of acquiring knowledge and wisdom for those who want to acquire them, a place of worship for the friends of God and for the angels. It is the place where prophets receive revelations of the Lord. It is the place for the virtuous and the saints to do good deeds and to earn rewards for the same; only in this world they could trade with God's Favours and Blessings, and only while living here can they barter their good deeds with His Blessings and Rewards. Now who can speak ill of the world after all this?[4]

The above passage sums up the functions and the role of a Ṣūfī in this world, though apparently it seems different from what is generally believed to be the goal of a Ṣūfī.

At this juncture I would like to substantiate the thesis regarding the intimate relationship between the Shī'ī belief in Imamate and the Ṣūfī conception of spiritual leadership with reference to the history of Ṣūfism.

Henry Corbin, in his history of Muslim philosophy, Muṣṭafā Kāmil al-Shaybī, in *Tashayyu' wa taṣawwuf*, Shāh Walī Allāh, in *Hama'āt*, and I. P. Petroshvensky, in *Islam dar Irān*, holding the view that Ṣūfism is the natural outcome of Quranic teachings, maintain that it originated in the practice of the early Arab Muslims,[5] who, disillusioned with the corruption of Muslim society due to affluence resulting from immense, continuous flow of wealth into Arabia and its major cities and occupation of fertile lands by Muslims soon after the death of the Prophet (S), withdrew from the society, which had deviated from the ideals of Islamic justice and simple living, and concentrated only on worship and rituals. This tendency began during the regime of the Third Caliph and was strengthened further after the tragedy of Karbalā', the episode of Ḥarrah in Madīnah, and the carnage of Makkah. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī belongs to the first generation of *zuhhād*, *'ubbād* and mutakallimūn. Shāh Walī Allāh does not discuss these details in *Hama'āt*, yet he holds the view that Ṣūfism owes its origin to the *zuhhād and 'ubbād* among

the Companions and their successors (*Tābi'ūn* and *Tābi' al-Tābi'īn*). All of them, with few exceptions, were Arabs. This fact is sufficient to dispel the commonly held misconception that Ṣūfism was a reaction of the Iranian mind.[6]

Al-'Imām al-Ḥasan's surrender of the caliphate marked the beginning of the consolidation of the Umayyad's dynastic rule which was contrary to the Islamic ideal of a just socio-political order. After the tragedy of Karbalā' the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt withdrew from active politics and devoted themselves to teaching and developing the religious sciences with a view to preserving Islam and its spirit. Al-'Imām 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn's collection of supplications, *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-kāmilah*, is one of the most authentic sources of the mystic dimension of Islam in the first century of Hijrah.[7] After the greatly popular sermons and sayings of Imam 'Alī (A), which were a rich treasure house of Islamic spiritual and mystic literature, containing in itself most of the issues that later acquired significance in Muslim thought and provided the foundation for the development of kalām, 'irfān and the principles of Islam's socio-political philosophy, *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-kāmilah* is the first collection that embodies Muslim gnostic experience. 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn's son al-'Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A) started giving regular instruction in tafsīr, fiqh and 'irfān. His son al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) developed, what came to be called later, the school of Ja'farī fiqh, and is said to have trained and educated more than three thousand pupils in the fields of fiqh, uṣūl al-fiqh, kalām and 'irfān.[8] He refused to be drawn into politics after the fall of the Umayyads when the caliphate was offered to him by Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī. Thus he maintained and continued the tradition of his grandfather and avoided, at least publicly, the arena of politics. All other Imams of the Twelver Shī'īs followed this tradition and were known and revered for their great piety and learning. The Shī'ī belief in their infallibility has its origin in the Quranic view of the impeccability of the prophets, and as Donaldson holds, has nothing to do with the Iranian belief in the Divine origin of kings or the Isrā'īlī tradition.[9] These Imams were accepted as spiritual guides by some of the well-known Ṣūfīs of their times, such as al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī, Bā Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Sufyān al-Thawrī. Among the ladies of the Ahl al-Bayt some are known as the earliest exponents of the school of *'ishq* (love) in Ṣūfism. 'Ā'ishah, the daughter of al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A) and a contemporary of Rābi'ah al-Baṣrī, Nafīsah (2nd/8th century) and Fāṭimah (d.244/838) are prominent among them.[10] Though the Shī'īs and the 'Alawīs usually did not call themselves Ṣūfīs, there are some names from the family of the Prophet (S) that are mentioned in Ṣūfī *tadhkirahs*, such as: 'Abd Allāh, grandson of the Zaydī leader Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan (mentioned by al-Shi'rānī in *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*), Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Alawī (d.291/904) (mentioned

by al-Ḥujwirī in *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* and in *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣufiyyah* by 'Abd Allah al-'Anṣārī), Abū Ḥamzah al-Khurāsānī (d.290/903) (mentioned in *Tabaqāt* by Khwājah 'Abd Allāh al-'Anṣārī), Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-'Alawī, in whose house Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj stayed while in Kūfah (mentioned in *Kashf al-maḥjūb* by al-Ḥujwirī), Ḥamzah ibn 'Abd Allāh al-'Alawī, a disciple of Abū al-Khayr al-Tinatī, Ḥamzah ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh (mentioned in *Sharḥ Manāzil al-sā'irīn*), Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'd al-'Alawī (known as *al-Sayyid al-Zāhid*, Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz met him and narrated traditions from him — *Kashf al-maḥjūb)*, Zayd ibn Rifā'ah, a friend of al-Shiblī and supposedly one of the authors of the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (*Tatimmat Ṣawān al-ḥikmah* by al-Bayhaqī and *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*), and Muḥammad ibn Abī Ismā'īl 'Alī al-'Alawī (d.395/1004) (*Ta'rīkh Baghdād*).[11]

Despite the belief of some Ṣūfīs, like Khwājah 'Abd Allāh al-'Anṣārī, who held that the lineage of 'Alī (A) is incompatible with Ṣūfism, and the Shī'īs' reluctance to call themselves Ṣūfī, there has been a close connection between Ṣūfism and the Shī'ah and the 'Alawīs. Ṣūfīs invariably attached themselves and their orders to one or the other of the eleven Imams of Ahl al-Bayt. The Shī'ah did not establish any order for centuries, but in the course of time there emerged a number of purely Imāmī Shī'ī *salāsil* of Ṣūfīs, of which are Ṭayfūriyyah, Bektāshiyyah, Ṣafawiyyah, Ḥaydariyyah, Ni'matullāhiyyah, Jalāliyyah, Nūrbakhshiyyah, which also attracted hundreds of Sunnī followers. On the other hand, Shī'ī 'urafā' — who seldom used the term Ṣufī and usually called themselves *'ārif*, and their knowledge of the highest spiritual order *'irfān* — accepted the Ṣūfī teachings of al-Ghazālī and Ibn al-'Arabī. Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, in *An Introduction to 'Irfān*, says:

> The 'urafā' and Ṣūfīs are not regarded as forming a separate sect in Islam, nor do they claim themselves to be such. They are to be found within every school and sect; yet, at the same time they coalesce to form a distinct social group. The factors that set them apart from the rest of Islamic society are a distinctive chain of ideas and opinions, a special code governing their social intercourse, dress and even, sometimes, the way they wear their hair and beards, and their living communally in their hospices. (Persian, *khāniqah*; Ar. *zāwiyah*; Turk. *tekkiye*). Of course, there are and have been 'urafā' — particularly amongst the Shī'ah — who bear none of these external signs to distinguish them socially from others; yet, at the same time, they have been profoundly involved in the spiritual methodology of 'irfān (*sayr wa sulūk).*[12]

He makes distinction between ethics and *sayr wa sulūk* (*lit.* journeying), for, in his view, while ethics is static 'irfān is dynamic and progressive movement toward attaining and realizing the higher moral values through spiritual elevation. This distinction is made by Muṭahharī in his account of the difference between *Sharī'ah*, *Ṭarīqah* and *Ḥaqīqah*. It is important

to note that Muṭahharī traces back the origins of 'irfān to ḥadīth, tafsīr, fiqh, kalām and uṣūl al-fiqh.[13] This is a purely Shī'ī point of view, because Sunnīs separate Ṣūfism from Sharī'ah and do not accept the role of reason and philosophy in the development of *taṣawwuf*. Al-Ghazālī, when he turned to Ṣūfism, rejected philosophy altogether. On the contrary we find some eminent Shī'ī philosophers and fuqahā' who reconciled 'irfān with philosophy and kalām. Though al-Ghazālī is greatly respected among Shī'ī 'urafā', his rejection of philosophy, particularly that of Ibn Sīnā, was never accepted by them. The Shī'ī tradition of philosophical mysticism, known after Mullā Ṣadrā as *al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah*, developed on the basis of a wonderful synthesis of rational and spiritual tendencies, culminating in the metaphysics of al-Sabzawārī. As mentioned earlier, there has been no gulf between Shī'ī 'irfān and Sharī'ah; similarly the Shī'ī 'urafā' and 'ulamā' were never separated into two distinct groups. Even during the Ṣafawīd period, when al-'Allāmah Bāqir al-Majlisī made an all-out effort to demolish *taṣawwuf* and 'irfān in Shī'ī Iran, among his contemporary 'ulamā' some were of Ṣūfī inclination, such as al-Muḥsin al-Fayḍ al-Kāshānī. 'Irfān regained its foothold in Shī'ī Iran in the reign of the Qājārs. It is much more surprising that with the return of the Ni'matullāhī *pīrs* from India to Iran, other Ṣūfī orders were also revived irrespective of their Shī'ī or Sunnī origin. Muṭahharī, who separated Sunnī and Shī'ī muḥaddithūn, fuqahā', mutakallimūn and mufassirūn in his series of books entitled *Āshnā'ī bā 'ulūm-e-Islāmī* (An Introduction to Islamic Sciences), could not, or intentionally did not, mention any Ṣūfī or 'ārif as Shī'ī or Sunnī. This is in itself an evidence that sectarian differences disappear in the fold of Ṣūfism. Qāḍī Nūr Allāh al-Shūshtarī, known in India and Pakistan as Shahīd-e Thālith, despite being a staunch Shī'ī, included in his accounts of Shī'ī personages the names of Bishr al-Ḥāfī, Bā Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī, Shafīq al-Balkhī, Ibrāhīm ibn Adham, Yaḥyā ibn Mu'ādh al-Rāzī, Abū Sarī Manṣūr ibn 'Āmir, Sarī al-Saqaṭī, Junayd al-Baghdādī, al-Shiblī, Muḥammad Sawār, Sahl ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Tustarī, Ḥusayn ibn Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj, Shaykh Aḥmad Jāmī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, Sa'd al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī, Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, Shaykh Sa'dī Shīrāzī, Ḥāfiẓ, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Marāghī, 'Alā' al-Dawlah al-Simnānī, and many other Ṣūfī poets and saints along with certain known Shī'ī 'urafā' like Kumayl ibn Ziyād, Bahlūl al-'Āqil, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl, Sayyid Ḥaydar al-Tūnī, and Sayyid Ḥaydar al-'Āmulī.[14] It may be noted that Qāḍī Nūr Allāh al-Shūshtarī was executed on the charge of being a staunch defendant of the orthodox Shī'ī faith. His orthodox view is evident throughout his works, *Majālis al-mu'minīn* and *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*. But in the case of Ṣūfīs he set aside his prejudice against other sects. This is an indication how

taṣawwuf and 'irfān can provide a converging point for various sects. As for other Muslim sects, such as Zaydiyyah or Ismā'īlīs, it may be said that their approach is similar to that of the Twelver Imāmī Shī'ah in many respects. The Zaydiyyah do not accept the Imāmī view of the Imamate, for they accept the first two caliphs and do not accept the last eight Imams of the Twelver Imāmīs. The Ismā'īlīs believe in the same concept of Imamate as accepted by the Twelvers, with a greater emphasis on the esoteric aspect of the Quran, ḥadīth and Imamate, because of which they are known as *Bāṭiniyyah.*[15] Ibn Sīnā is said to have been of Ismā'īlī inclinitions. The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' are also believed to be of Ismā'īlī inclination. Nāṣir Khusro, an Ismā'īlī *dā'ī* and a great Persian poet-philosopher, was also of the same sect. The similarity between the Ismā'īlīs and the Imāmiyyah in their approach to 'irfān is very obvious, for both the sects synthesized reason, which is the source of intellection in kalām and philosophy, and inner spiritual experience of the totality of human existence. What distinguishes Shī'ī 'irfān from the general Ṣūfī approach to God and the human self is its acceptance of the role of reason in existential mystic knowledge. It is true that al-Ghazālī held that intuition (*kashf*) was the higher level of reason (*'aql*) and was organically united with it, but in his mystic experience he seems inclined to reject reason. Another contradiction in al-Ghazālī is his presentation of mystic experience and rejection of philosophy in a rigorous philosophical style. The Shī'ah, Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī rightly points out, reached theoretical Ṣūfism starting from kalām and passing through the crucible of philosophy. This point needs further elaboration.

Ṣūfī practices were in vogue even in the early part of the 4th/10th century among the Shī'ah, as Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī has referred to them. He has also referred to the tradition of *futuwwah* (chivalry).[16] Al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044), in *al-'Amālī*, Abū 'Alī al-Tabarsī (d. 548/1153) and some other early Shī'ī Imāmī 'ulamā' made sympathetic references to Ṣūfism, showing the extent to which they thought the Shī'ī faith to be compatible with the Ṣūfī approach.[17] Khwājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī defended Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj's utterance *'Anā al-ḥaqq'*. Al-Khwansārī regards Khwājah al-Ṭūsī as one in whom 'irfān and ratiocination were synthesized.[18] Of other Shī'ī 'ulamā' who had a predominant 'irfānī inclination some can be mentioned here. Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham ibn 'Alī ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 679/1280), in *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, has interpreted Imam 'Alī's words in terms of Ṣūfism. It was he who directed the attention of Muslims toward the significance of *Nahj al-balāghah* from the viewpoint of the doctrines of 'irfān. He claims that 'Alī (A) is the leader and master (*walī*) of Ṣufīs. Despite al-Ghazālī's criticism of the Shī'ah, he refers to him as an authority on the issues of 'irfān. He, in his *Sharḥ*, criticizes Ibn Abī

al-Ḥadīd for his hostility toward philosophers and Ṣūfīs.[19]

Among the Imāmī 'ulamā' of Ḥillah, the scholars of the Ṭāwūs family, viz., Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ṭāwūs, Majd al-Dīn al-Ṭāwūs, Raḍī al-Dīn al-Ṭāwūs, were all of a mystic disposition, particularly the latter, who was famous for his *taqwā* and *zuhd*. All the 'ulamā' of this family were considered men of supernatural powers and attached to Ṣūfism.[20]

The most eminent of Shī'ī fuqahā' to subscribe to the Ṣūfī approach and views was al-Ḥasan ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, popularly called al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī (648–727/1250–1326). He converted Khudā Bandeh to the Shī'ī faith after overcoming the arguments of Sunnī 'ulamā' and fuqahā', for which Ibn Taymiyyah condemned him. But al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī gently answered his criticism in one of his verses. He was a committed seeker of the path of love. He regarded Imam 'Alī (A) as the source of Ṣūfī teachings and as the leader of all Ṣūfī orders. He was very fond of Ibn al-'Arabī without being an advocate of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Unity of Being).[21] His son, Muḥammad, known as al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (682–771/1283–1369) was the teacher of the man who ultimately reconciled *tashayyu'* and *taṣawwuf*. This great and versatile scholar was Shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn Ḥaydar ibn 'Alī al-'Ubaydī al-'Āmulī (d. after 793/1391).[22]

Sayyid Ḥaydar was an 'Alawī and is the first Imāmī scholar who in spite of holding the status of *marji'iyyah* in the Shī'ī world linked himself to a Ṣūfī *silsilah* which reaches Bā Yazīd Bisṭāmī. He has given an account of his Ṣūfī lineage in *Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ*, a commentary on Ibn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-'Aḥsā'ī calls him "the culminating point of knowledge and possessor of the capacity (*quwwah*) of *kashf*." His major work in 'irfān is *Jāmi' al-'asrār wa manābi' al-'anwār*, in which he proved that the creed of the Ṣūfīs was compatible with the Imāmī faith. The writing of this book brought about a radical change in his outlook, as a consequence of which he gave up his prejudice against Sunnīs and embraced the liberal faith of the 'urafā'. He called the followers of *waḥdat al-wujūd* the 'People of Unity' (*arbāb al-tawḥīd*). It is his influence that restrains Shī'ī fuqahā' from refuting Ibn al-'Arabī's doctrine of *tawḥīd*. In his view the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) occupy the position of the spiritual leadership of both the Shī'ah and the Ṣūfīs. He maintains that the Shī'ah and the Ṣūfīs are closely related to each other, but are not fully aware of this fact. In order to prove his point he refers to the favourable views of the Shī'ah with regard to Ṣūfīs and the views of the Ṣūfīs supporting the Shī'ī stand on various issues. Quoting from Ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī's *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī's *Minhāj al-karāmah* and Khwājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's views reproduced in *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, and from among Sunnīs from the works of al-Ghazālī's and Ibn al-'Arabī, he posits the view that no one but 'Alī possessed Divine wisdom and the knowledge of the

truths embracing the entire span of time from eternity to eternity. He calls himself 'Shī'ah Muḥammadī', a term which was recently modified by Alī Sharī'atī, who claimed that *Tashayyu' 'Alawī* and *Tasanun Muḥammadī* were one and the same thing. With a view to bring the Sunnīs closer to the Shī'ah, Sayyid Ḥaydar al-'Āmulī, following Ibn Maytham al-Baḥrānī, says that *tabarra'* does not mean vilifying the first three caliphs, but implies emancipation from one's self and renouncing its worldly attachments. Similarly, he reinterpreted the term *taqiyyah*, explaining that it meant abstaining from disclosing the Divine mysteries to the vulgar public. He made a great contribution to Shī'ī-'irfānī literature reinterpreting many ideas of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A), particularly his views on *tawḥīd*.[23]

Sayyid Ḥaydar al-'Āmulī's influence paved the way for a tradition embracing in its fold Sunnīs and Shī'īs of various inclinations. In later periods, this tendency was extended by Shī'ī 'ulamā' of a Ṣūfī bent of temperament. As a reaction to Ibn Taymiyyah's vehement accusation of al-'Allāmah al-Ḥillī, many of his contemporary gravitated towards a liberal Sunnī view. For instance Najm al-Dīn al-Sarsarī (d. 716/1316), a Shāfi'ī-Ash'arī faqīh, declared himself a Shī'ah of 'Alī, and another, Qāḍī Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Mukarram al-'Anṣārī, dubbed himself a Shī'ī. In this period 'Shī'ah' became a term for those Sunnīs who accepted 'Alī's spiritual superiority over other Companions, while the traditional Shī'īs were called 'Rawāfiḍ.'[24] Between the fall of the Īlkhānīs and the emergence of Temur and the establishment of his vast empire, various political movements arose which were Shī'ī but in the grab of Ṣūfism. Ṣūfism provided these movements a secure ground to struggle against alien rule by attracting multitudes of followers. They also created an atmosphere conducive to the spread of the Shī'ī faith amongst Ṣūfīs, and, at the same time, weakened the common Shī'ī resistance to Ṣūfī teachings and practices. It was in the reign of the Īlkhānīs and the Temurids that Shī'ī orders came into existence.[25]

Ṣūfism, apparently an apolitical movement, was in reality an expression of the non-cooperation of pious Muslims with the tyrannical rule of the Umayyads. Metaphysical notions or spiritual tendencies do not arise in a vacuum. Howsoever removed from mundane realities a theory may appear to be, it is necessarily related to its contemporary historic situation and its demands. The Ṣūfīs consistently refused to accept favours from the rulers and sided with the masses in their struggle for attaining the rights accorded to them by Islam. The 'Abbāsid movement to overthrow the Umayyads also assumed a mystical character. The Ismā'īlī *dā'īs*, too, worked among people, organizing secret societies on the basis of esoteric ideas. The socio-political aspect and content of Ṣūfism needs to be discussed in a separate article or rather in a monograph. Here I will briefly mention the Ṣūfī movements that arose as a

result of the fusion of Ṣūfī and Shī'ī ideas of social justice culminating in revolutionary upheavals in the Muslim world.

The most successful of such Ṣūfī movements took the form of the Sarbadārid revolt in Khurāsān and soon spread to the other adjoining areas. This movement was initiated by Shaykh Khalīfah, a Ṣūfī shaykh of an unknown spiritual lineage. He organized his followers to revolt against Toghā Khān and Mīrān Shāh, successors of Temur, in whose regimes villages were devastated and farmers were forced to pay heavy taxes. The revolt started soon after the crucifixion of Shaykh Khalīfah at the hands of secret mercenaries of the rulers in 736/1335. His angered followers revolted first in Khurāsān from 738/1337 to 783/1381 under the leadership of Shaykh Ḥasan Jūrī, the successor of Shaykh Khalīfah, who claimed to be associated with a Ṣūfī order that attached itself to al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq through Bā Yazīd Bisṭāmī. Then it spread to Samarqand, Kirmān and Māzandarān between the years 738/1337 and 825/1422. This was a Shī'ī-Ṣūfī movement that succeeded in establishing its rule on the basis of the Islamic ideals of justice and equality. But differences plagued this movement and Ḥasan Jūrī was assassinated in the process. This regime continued for some time, but ultimately it fizzled out. Other similar movements emerged and failed in the course of time because of organizational weaknesses. Among such movements were the Ṣūfī movements of the Ḥurūfiyyah and the Nuqṭawiyyah, leaders of which were executed by the monarchs. The Ṣafwīd order, whose founder was a Sunnī Ṣūfī, Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn al-'Ardabīlī, was converted to the Shī'ī faith after a few generations. After capturing power, in order to stabilize their monarchy they tried to suppress other Ṣūfī movements and orders with a heavy hand. This policy of the Ṣafawīds resulted in a staunch opposition to Ṣūfism in Iran and India. Sayyid Dildār 'Alī Ghufrān Ma'āb, the first Shī'ī *mujtahid* in India, during the reign of the Shī'ī dynasty of Awadh,wrote a book *al-Shihāb al-thāqib* condemning Ṣūfīs under the influence of the short-sighted sectarian rule of the later Ṣafawīds, which broadened the gulf between the Sunnīs and the Shī'īs of the Subcontinent. Even today the Shī'ah unwittingly believe that Ṣūfism is incompatible with their creed. This breach was created by the divisive forces which wished to disturb communal harmony of the Muslim community. The Sa'ūdī-Wahhābī regime of the recent usurpers of the leadership of Muslims is trying to cash on this unfounded suspicion, expending billions of petro-dollars to divide Muslims. The only way to meet this challenge from within is to converge on Ṣūfism, which in the long course of Islamic history has been one of the great sources of strength for Muslims.

Ṣūfism, that is sticking to the true spirit of Islamic tolerance for other faiths, has been instrumental in the spread of Islamic ideals in the Subcontinent, and its composite culture has still retained its potential

to unite warring factions and sects of Muslims, and this potential may be actualized by giving up narrow sectarian prejudices and adopting the attitude that enabled 'Urfī to declare:

عارف هم از اسلام خراب است هم از کفر پروانه چراغ حرم و دیر نداند

The mystic is ruined by Islam and *kufr* equally:
The moth discriminates not between the mosque's lamp and the church's candle.

Notes:

1. Henry Corbin, *Ta'rīkh-e falsafeh-ye Islāmī*, Persian tr. Asad Allāh Mubashshari (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Amīr Kabīr, 1361 H.Sham.) pp. 50—96, 252—57.
2. *Ibid.*, 252—257; Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, *Tashayyu' wa taṣawwuf*, Persian tr. 'Alī Riḍā Dhakāwatī Qaragozulū (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Amīr Kabīr, 1359 H.Sham.)
3. *Nahj al-balāghah, Ḥikam* 147.
4. *Ibid., Ḥikam* 131.
5. Henry Corbin, *op. cit.*, p. 252—55; Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, pp. 30—35, Shāh Walī Allāh, *Hama'āt*, Urdu tr. Muḥammad Sarwar (Sindh Sagar Academy), introduction; Elia Pawlovich Petroshvensky, *Islām dar Irān* (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Payām, 7th ed., 1363 H. Sham.) pp. 319—25.
6. Refer to Ḥannā al-Fākhūrī and Khalīl al-Jarr, *Tārīkh-e falsafah dar jahān-e Islāmī*, Persian tr. 'Abd al-Muḥammad Āyatī (Tehran: Zamān, 2nd ed., 1358 H. Sham.)
7. Al-'Imām 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-kāmilah*, English tr. Sayyid Aḥmad Mūhānī (Tehran: Islamic Propagation Organization, 1984); Persian tr. Jawād Fāḍil (Tehran: Intishārāte-e Amīr Kabīr, 14th ed., 1363 H.Sham.).
8. Refer to Asad Ḥaydar, *al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq* (Dār al-kitāb al-Gharbiyyah, 2nd ed., 1971); Sayyid Aḥmad Ṣafā'ī, *Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam: mudāfi'-ye harīm-e wilāyat* (Tehran: Nashr-e Kawkab, 2nd ed., 1359 H.Sham.)
9. Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
10. Petroshvensky, *op. cit.*, p. 327.
11. For details see Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, *op. cit.*, pp. 64—65.
12. See Martyr Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, "An Introduction to 'Irfān", Per. tr., *al-Tawḥīd* (I.P.O.: Tehran), vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 74—75.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
14. Qāḍī Nūr Allāh al-Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-Mu'minīn* (Kitābfurūshī Islāmiyyah: Tehran, 1365 H. Sham.) vol. II, pp. 2—178.
15. See Henry Corbin, *op. cit.*, pp. 104—130.
16. Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, *op. cit.*, p. 69; cf. *Rawḍāt al-jannāt* and Ibn Bābawayh's *Ma'ānī al-'akhbār*.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 70—71.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 93; cf. *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 95—102.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 104—107.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 107—110.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 112—125.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 142—43; cf. *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, VI, 39.
25. Petroshvensky, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

Western Nationalism and Islamic Nationhood*

by Martyr Murtaḍā Muṭahharī

Translated from the Persian by Dr. Waḥid Akhtar

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

The relations, conflicts and clashes between various nations have in the present age become a daily issue which has acquired much greater significance than in any other epoch of human history. One of the problems related to it, or perhaps one of the most fundamental of them, is the problem of nationalism, its constructive elements, its scope and limits.

During the last two or three decades many new nations, whose number exceeds fifty, have come into existence, or have acquired a new shape and name. In some cases, a country or a nation was divided into two or more parts, each pursuing a different path. In some cases nations with specific ideological, religious and geographical characteristics have completely changed their philosophical and religious conditions to replace them by a totally different system of ideas and social institutions. All these changes and the birth of new nations accompanying them, were preceded by years of struggle, resistance, endeavour and bloodshed, which consumed immeasurable time, energy and talents of peoples and called for many sacrifices, small and great.

Did the nations that emerged during recent times have no existence in the past? Did the nations that were separated and divided not form a real, stable social unit in their previous state? Those nations that changed their system while preserving most of their specific traits such

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as language, race, ecological conditions and geographical boundaries, are they still what they were in the past? Moreover, all the main political, social, and military problems of our age are formulated in terms of nations and national interests. Nationalism is the most current and popular of all ideologies at present. Even those social and political ideologies that are opposed to nationalist tendencies, on initiating a movement, present themselves in nationalist garb and fall back upon nationalist slogans.

From a different point of view, for us Iranians, too, the issue of nationalism has contemporary relevance, in spite of the fact that our nation and homeland have not been attacked or occupied by any foreign power, and we see much difference and many contradictions between interpretations given by various individuals to nationalism. At present two factors are at work: first, there is the racial and hereditary factor which is related to our history preceding the last fourteen centuries; the second factor relates to the ideological, religious, social and cultural traditions formed and developed during the last fourteen centuries. As for our physical and racial roots, we belong to the Aryan race, and with regard to our ideological and cultural constitution, traditions and social institutions we are linked to Islam, which came to our land through a non-Aryan race. If we give basic importance to the factors of race and heredity in our definition of 'nation', it will, under the present circumstances, take our nation on a particular course in the future. However, if the social institutions and the ideological structure prevailing for the last fourteen centuries are considered to be of basic importance in defining our nationality, our policy and our future course will be something different. If we give priority to the Aryan factor in determining and defining Iranian nationality, its consequence in the last analysis will be to make us closely related to the Western world. And this affinity and relation to the West would influence our national and political policy, whose main result would be to break our relationship with our neighbours and non-Aryan Muslim nations and incline us towards Europe and the West. In this case, the imperialist West becomes our kin and Muslim Arabs will become strangers. On the contrary, if the ideological system, religion, and social institutions of the last fourteen centuries are regarded as the deciding factor in identifying our nationality, it will lead us to adopt a different course and policy whose basis is faith. In that case Arab, Turk, Indian, Indonesian and Chinese Muslims will be our own kinsmen, and the non-Muslim West will be alien to us.

Hence the issue of nationality is not a purely academic issue; it is a real issue of vital importance which determines the course of action and policy, the future and the destiny of a social and political unit known today as the Iranian nation. Hence it deserves to be taken up seriously and understood clearly.

The Historical Background:

Nationalism, in its present form and current sense, emerged in Germany, essentially as a consequence of and reaction to the French Revolution which overwhelmed entire Europe. The French Revolution itself was a reaction to and revolt against the old feudal thinking, which did not attach any value or importance to the masses and common people. It was from that time that 'nation' and 'masses', and individual's liberty and equality became central themes in the writings of authors, poets and philosophers. Liberty and equality, which the authors of the 'Declaration of The Rights of Man' claimed to have brought as a gift for mankind, in themselves did not recognize any boundary or nationality. It was due to this universal appeal that the light of the French Revolution, in the short period of a decade, crossed the frontiers of France and engulfed the whole of Europe and affected Germany in particular. In Germany, political philosophers and writers became so much enchanted with the ideas of freedom and liberty that they devoted all their energies exclusively to propagate those ideas. Fichte, the German philosopher, is among the forerunners of this new spirit.

Soon the Germans came to realize that the liberty proclaimed in the Declaration of The Rights of Man meant in Germany something reserved exclusively for the French, and the people of Germany had no share in it. Fichte was the first man to raise his voice against this discrimination. In the course of his famous fourteen lectures delivered at the Berlin Academy, while giving vent to his protest against this discrimination, Fichte, as a reaction to the French character of liberty and equality, advanced the myth of 'the German nation' as a real and indivisible unit which on account of its racial, geographical, linguistic and cultural character and traditions was endowed with an innate genius and an exclusive status. In this way German nationalism, which later on emerged as the progenitor of nationalism in the world, was born.

Nationalism, as conceived by its authors in the West, considers a people of a common race living together within particular geographical boundaries, with a common historical background, language, culture and traditions as a fundamental, indivisible unit. Accordingly, all that belongs to the orbit of the interests, advantages, status and worth of such a unit and contributes to them is considered 'friendly' and 'own', and all the rest is treated as 'alien' and 'hostile'.

In the nineteenth century, three basic reactions or tendencies emerged from the maxims of the French Revolution: 1. the nationalist response; 2. the conservative response; and 3. the socialist response.

The first two trends, in the view of political thinkers, are deviant and opposed to the spirit of revolution, while the third trend is considered to seek the goals of justice and equality.[1]

After Fichte, nationalism found its exponents among thinkers like Charles Moras (?) and Bares (?), who largely shaped and systematized the nationalist philosophy and beliefs of various European countries. Moras stretches the idea of indivisible national unit to the extent of advocating that the nation, as a real, collective entity, should govern all individual wills. He saw the embodiment of this collective personality in the State. It was this idea that proved to be the source of totalitarian regimes and provided a doctrinal basis to Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy.

Henceforth, the period covering the entire nineteenth century and extending up to the first half of the twentieth century is marked as the age of the emergence and development of nationalism in European societies. Though in the social and political spheres the socialist and conservative tendencies also exercised much influence on the thought of European intellectuals, nevertheless, the nationalist tendency in European States became so dominant that all other kinds of tendencies, including liberalism, conservatism and Marxian socialism, were overshadowed by it. It was the same nationalist spirit of European States which in its extreme form appeared as the ideology of ethnocentrism and racism, and gave birth to the two great wars. Over and above this, it was the same nationalism of Europe, which in spite of all the slogans of freedom and equality of human beings, defended and justified colonization of the countries of Asia, Africa and South America. The nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, being the period of intensive and extensive colonial exploitation of Asia and Africa, was a period synonymous and concurrent with the appearance and spread of nationalist ideologies.

Writers and historians of the West, in accordance with the same notions, call various movements in other countries nationalist movements. Intellectuals and thinkers of Asia and Africa, under the inspiration of Western culture and under the influence of Western education, apply this term to their own popular movements. They judge their own movements by the same criteria which were introduced by Western thinkers to differentiate and identify their own nations. Although since the end of the Second World War, nationalism and national interests have given way to regionalism and regional alliances—at least on the level of economic and colonial interests and to some extent in the social sphere—nevertheless, each of the countries of Western Europe and North America try to point out their national characteristics to Eastern and African visitors and students with a view to convince them that nationalism is still a revitalizing force which is instrumental in the advancements made by Western people and their culture. The aim is that on returning to their own countries they would follow nationalist ideas and

preach and propagate them among their own people, so that the countries of the Third World should always keep themselves apart from one another under banners of separate nationalities, races, languages and ancestral legacies, and engage in perpetual conflict and rivalry against their own neighbours and other countries which have also been suffering from the same kind of malaise left behind by Western colonialism.

While the Western countries, with all their power and cultural, political and economic domination, are united together to exploit other nations, the Third-World countries, with all their inadequacies and with all their political, cultural and economic backwardness, pursue separate paths isolating them from one another.

Let us examine whether the principle of drawing lines of demarcation and distinction between different human social units has any real grounds in the world of concrete actualities. In case it has a real basis, we have to examine whether the criteria of actual demarcation are the same as taught to us by Western nationalism.

The Classical Criteria:

We observe that the peoples of the world are different and distinct from one another, from Turkey, Persia and Arabia to the farthest corners of Africa, Europe and Asia. They are different not only in colour, features, language and physical characteristics, but are also different in their norms, traditions, cultures and even in their modes of thinking as well as their spiritual and psychological makeups. If we want to classify various kinds of people into independent social groups, we have to see whether colour, race, ecological conditions and geographical boundaries can suffice to serve as the sole criteria of differentiation, or if we have to take into consideration their traditions, historical backgrounds, cultural traits and other factors as well. The sense of nationhood, i.e. nationalism, is constituted by the existence of a common feeling, a collective consciousness, among a group of people bound together in a political unit forming a nation. This collective consciousness creates a strong internal bond and cohesion among the living members of a society and their ancestors and predecessors, determines the character of relations and associations among themselves as well as with other nations, and brings about a harmony in their aspirations and hopes.

According to the classical Western definition, this collective consciousness is a product of the conditions determined by regional and racial characteristcs, a common language, specific traditions, historical heritage and a common culture. A deeper understanding of the nature of individual and social behaviour of man indicates that the above-mentioned factors do not play a basic and vital role in the genesis of

collective consciousness and are incapable of serving permanently as a cementing force and the bond of integrity among the members of a nation.

Language:

It is evident that at early stages of the genesis of a nationality, common language and traditions contribute to bringing individuals together, inculcating in them a sense of shared identity, and serve as the channel that interconnects their hearts and feelings, and consequently leads to the emergence of a collective and national consciousness. But if we study the past of nations, we find that a common language is not a constituent element but a product of nationhood. None of these people had a common language from the early stages of their genesis. On the other hand, it was only after they had come together and become emotionally attached to each other in a particular region that they evolved a common language in the course of their own development. It gradually developed and evolved its grammatical principles in the course of centuries. In the process of interaction with the languages of other nations, their language underwent many changes and continuously evolved new forms until it acquired its present shape.

If in particular epochs of the history of a nation, for instance during the period of a nation's freedom struggle, its language or specific traditions find more forceful expression, becoming the symbol of its national inspirations–as happened in the case of Hindi[2] during the Indian Freedom Movement or in the case of Arabic during the Algerian struggle for independence—such a phenomenon is always transitory. In these instances, language is used as an instrument to motivate the nation's masses to act unitedly.

Race:

Researches in history and sociology indicate that all human races, under favourable social and moral conditions, are capable of developing all human qualities. As we know, the pre-Islamic Arabs were plagued by all kinds of prejudices, tribal conflicts, quarrels and superstitions, which were products of bigotry; but after embracing Islam and being infused with its moral virtues, its revolutionary spirit of *tawḥīd*, and its passion for social justice, they acquired the qualities that characterized them as the most civilized and advanced of all human societies of the time. If after some time their old racial prejudices once again raised their heads and reasserted themselves, it happened because of deterioration in conditions conducive to the moral, social and monotheistic values nurtured by Islam. This indicates that there are no national traits that

may be considered as permanent and unchangeable racial characteristics. As a matter of fact, all the traits and their influence can be modified under changed social and moral conditions. The Algerian people's example is a recent evidence of this fact.

What are the factors and circumstances that can help in preserving the desired social and moral conditions and whether it is possible to preserve them at all, are questions that fall outside the scope of our present discourse. However, it is admissible that the factor of specific racial traits has always played a vital and effective role in the history of nations in shaping their development and progress or causing their degeneration and decline. But to admit the role of this factor does not mean that it is also effective in bringing together a people and cementing their individual minds to produce a collective consciousness.

More often, the common elements produced by racial traits, instead of functioning as a factor of cohesion and integration and serving as a source of collective consciousness and national unity, either generate internal divisions and aversions, or render a nation weak, unstable and vulnerable. The nations which from the very beginning possessed martial qualities and engaged in constant wars, attacking and pillaging other nations, abided in conflict, either with others or within themselves, until they grew weak and exhausted, or some other factors, which were social and moral in essence, entered their lives in the course of history, providing them with ground for retaining their unity and cohesion:

وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا

...And remember God's blessing upon you when you were enemies, and He brought your hearts together, so that by His blessing you became brothers.... (3:103)

On the contrary, the nations that possessed the trait of peacefulness and adaptability, not only among themselves and with their living conditions and environment, but also in relation to all other peoples—even invaders, with whom they were inclined to mix, adjust and conform—such nations could not develop a feeling of nationhood or racial unity. In case they did develop such a feeling, it was colourless, ineffective, devoid of distinctive vitality and prone to weakness and decline.

Basically, it is one of the basic characteristics of every human individual that he, in his rationally thought out or emotionally directed relationships, tends to establish relations with those who, by fulfilling and satisfying his inner urges and aspirations, are in a position to compensate for his individual shortcomings. The firmest bond of love is one in which the lover feels that his most basic and profound needs can

find their fulfilment in the person of the beloved. Our day-to-day experience provides abundant evidence of this fact. Similarly, the strength of a group's internal bonds of social relationships and emotional cohesion is ensured only when various units constituting it are complementary and satisfy the needs of other units. It is in this context that the racial factor, with its fixed traits and characteristics, is of no consequence so far as unity and cohesion are concerned.

Traditions:

In different nations we find various common traditions which, in the same manner as language and race, distinguish them from others. But here a question arises: How far are they effective in making a nation? Customs and traditions, even cultures, are products and results of the voluntary and conscious activities of individuals of past generations. If there were no relation and connection between past and present generations and social institutions, these traditions would never be transferred from generation to generation. Unless there is a collective feeling and consciousness of unity, tradition and culture cannot be inherited by succeeding generations. Hence all existing national traditions themselves are rather products of national consciousness and human beings' life and activity in that direction, rather than being their basis and source.

Furthermore, the existing social traditions of a nation are of two kinds: firstly, those which emanate from higher moral values and sublime strivings and struggles of the past, embodying all sacred human virtues which are directed at establishing the rule of justice and good; secondly, those traditions that spring from ignorance and lust for worldly benefits and are derived from unjust social relations. The first kind of traditions are responsible for the continuity of the life, advancement, progress and prosperity of nations, while the second kind of traditions result in retrogression, decline, slavery and deception of peoples and are tools and instruments in the hands of the rich and the ruling class.

Since justice, piety, progress and development are the vehicles of life, good and healthy traditions are those that emanate from these values and are instrumental in strengthening the life and stability of a nation. On the other hand, undesirable or unhealthy traditions lead to the decline of a nation and even cause its destruction and death. For an evidence of this claim, it is sufficient to glance at history and study the fate of nations from the peoples of Lot, 'Ad, Thamūd, ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece up to the present nations of the world.

As a matter of principle, the evolution of living beings has been in the direction of attaining freedom from natural limitations, external

environmental conditions and internal instinctive urges. The primitive man, who emerged at the end of a long evolutionary process, was the freest of creatures from the shackles of nature. Nevertheless, this freedom was never absolute; it was relatively greater than that of other animals that existed before the emergence of man. Primitive human beings were still governed by the forces of instinct and physical nature, forces at work from within and without. With the gradual development of man's consciousness and his volitional faculties, man could attain greater and greater freedom from the bondage of physical and instinctive determinants. In human society, too, at early stages of its formation and evolution, individuals' relations with one another were determined by inner urges as well as by physical and environmental factors. In primitive societies, first environmental and physical conditions and subsequently emotional, familial and tribal associations had been basically instrumental in constituting social consciousness. But in developed and advanced societies, in which new emergent factors participate in moulding social consciousness and in determining social relations among members of society, the role of physical factors—including the factor of environment—decreased gradually and these factors became of lesser and lesser significance.

Today we find a large number of states and nations in a particular region and living under similar physical and geographical conditions that not only do not form a single national entity, but are at loggerheads and at times in a state of direct confrontation with one another. In the Indian Subcontinent, the Hindu and the Muslim communities, despite living under similar physical and environmental conditions, do not share similar national feelings and lack the bond of cohesion essential for a nation's solidarity. A similar example is that of the English and the Irish, who in spite of sharing the same historical, social and linguistic heritage, do not nurture the spirit of harmony and understanding that can make them a single nation. On the contrary, in our age we find many Third-World countries thousands of kilometres apart and peoples living in different physical and environmental conditions, with considerably vast differences of language, race and historical heritage, who have a profound sense of solidarity. For instance, the Algerians feel a sense of unity with the people of Cuba or Vietnam or with the Palestinians.

All the above factors mentioned by Western authors as the constituent elements of nationhood may form the elementary criteria for defining existing nations and for distinguishing them as distinct entities, in the same way as each of the hundred and odd elements found in nature are defined and differentiated according to their specific physical and chemical properties. But these properties which appear to be fundamental and innate at first on a superficial knowledge of things prove to

be essential at a later stage. A deeper insight into the inner world of the atom discovers that the apparent differences of elements are manifestations of the number of electrons constituting the atoms. In fact, it is the number of electrons in an atom that is responsible for the emergence and manifestation of various kinds of elements. A similar probe is to be conducted in order to find out more fundamental factors at work beneath the level of various factors and elements—some of which have been discussed above—that identify, distinguish, and define a national unit. We should conduct this research at a deeper level to discover the more fundamental factors which are real constituents of collective consciousness, or at least are closer to them than the factor discussed above. It is always some more basic and latent factor which is alive and at work in the consciousness of people and manifests itself as a life-stream in external forms. It externalizes itself from time to time in particular language patterns and specific national traditions. The main aim and objective of all research and investigation is to lead us to this basic reality and the hidden meaning underlying all external phenomena comprising things and temporal events, which are mere appearances.

Frantz Fanon, an African writer and sociologist who has done penetrating psychological and sociological researches on the development of national consciousness among various African peoples, arrives at the conclusion that the factors of common history, language and cultural traditions, along with geographical conditions, play only a transitory role in the birth of national awareness; these factors are not of permanent significance. He cites the examples of nations engaged in the struggle for freedom and independence from imperialism, and points out that in these countries the really basic human ideals and aspirations sometimes find expression in such commonly shared factors as tradition, history and language. But these are means only of attaining the desired goals. With the dawn of independence the points of division and conflict appear again. The nation's rich who struggled for freedom until last night, part their way from the deprived masses of the nation. While the former take the course of occupying positions of power in order to consolidate their political and economic privileges and to cash in on their past deprivations and sufferings borne during the freedom struggle, the latter take the path of resistance and struggle against the former in order to attain their rights. Ultimately these divergent paths divide them causing a new social stratification and class conflict. As a consequence of this conflict, the nation is again divided into two or more classes pursuing conflicting ideals, though its members have a common language, common customs, culture and history. There is abundant evidence of class conflicts and religious discords within the present nations, which is sufficient to show that the

factors of common language, history, culture and tradition do not have a permanent basis.

Political independence, which has been the strongest impetus for the awakening of nationalist sentiments and has been the common ideal of all the nations of the world, has lost its meaning in the present situation—at least for the countries of the Third World—due to the presence of world imperialism. In a large number of newly independent countries, as well as countries that have been independent for a long time, political organizations and even the political structure, disguise themselves as champions of national interests while operating in reality as agents of foreign powers and serving their exploitative interests. These foreign agents, armed and equipped with 'independence' and 'national sovereignty', serve foreign interests, although their organizations, parties and governing bodies are formed of members of that nation and share with its people the same language, culture and history.

Even in the advanced and powerful countries of the world today, the original meaning and import of political independence and territorial sovereignty have lost their former significance. Now these countries are realigning themselves in regional groups. This change in attitudes indicates that these countries consider their linguistic, traditional, cultural and racial differences to be inessential or insignificant in view of their present interests and goals. This unity expresses itself more prominently in the fields of economic, social and cultural cooperation. The present-day Western world, with regard to culture and economy, has emerged as a monolithic force against the Third World. As a consequence, Western countries have set aside their national identities and differences, at least in the area of the common economic interests of the region. In the countries of the Third World (the developing and the underdeveloped countries), also, on the one hand, the economy and the ruling elite are in the grip and under the domination of economic superpowers of the advanced world; on the other, their cultural leadership is in the hands of the so-called intellectual class that blindly follows the dominant Western culture and imposes it on their people.

The Role of Intellectuals:

In underdeveloped societies under the yoke of imperialism, it is usually intellectuals who try to awaken national consciousness among the people of their country. Since, in their view, the linguistic and cultural traditions of their country are synonymous with and responsible for the actual conditions of the life of their nation—which is an amalgam of misfortunes, backwardness, difficulties and deprivations—they abstain from emphasizing traditional culture. Therefore, they ask the people to give up their past and to turn to the advanced and dominant countries

as their ideal and model. They strive to inculcate those models as the ideal goal towards which the new national consciousness should evolve and develop.

Frantz Fanon, an enlightened sociologist, in the chapter on national culture of his work of lasting significance *The Cursed of the Earth (Les damn ées de la terre, de la culture nationale),* considers the emergence of such an ethos among intellectuals of the countries affected by colonialism as a raw and initial phase in the crystallization of national consciousness in this class. In this phase, in his view, the intellectual of a society affected by colonialism, while earnest in his endeavour to awaken national consciousness, is himself totally submerged in colonial culture. In every respect his ideas are true copies of his counterparts in the imperialist countries.[3] In other words, at this stage, although the thought of the intellectuals of exploited countries belongs to the realm of ideas, it is nothing but a commodity imported from the other side of the frontiers from the dominant countries of the West. The intellectual, at this juncture, is capable only of translating alien culture into his own language and actions.

His confidence in his information and the contents of his memory usually make him arrogant—an attitude strengthened by the general ignorance and backwardness of the people of his land that prevents him from closely and critically studying and analysing actual facts and events. It would take years, or perhaps centuries, of tragic events for such intellectuals and for the people, who have been spell-bound by them, to awaken from their complacent slumber and to realize the true worth of their ideas.

Apart from this, intellectuals of this brand direct their intellectual and practical efforts towards the awakening of national consciousness only at the initial stages of national movement. In a short course of time, because of the nature of their thought and spirit, they adopt the Western style of life and develop fondness for superficial aspects of Western culture which urge them towards affluent and comfortable ways of European life. This compulsive inclination towards the West, of necessity, makes them maintain silence, or occasionally even prompts them to compromise with the agents of oppression, exploitation and corruption. As a result, they are assimilated in the institutions of imperialism and become its obedient tools.

The second stage, in Fanon's analysis, comprises of a determined effort on the part of the intellectual to devote himself to the situation of his people with greater sincerity. But since the existing conditions of the nation present nothing but distress, anxiety, ignorance and backwardness, he turns his attention toward those epochs of the nation's past in which he sees grandeur, glory and greatness or at least pomp and pageantry. Thereupon, he at once breaks himself off from all

relations with the present and leaps across centuries—which, with the people who inhabited them and their long chain of causes and effects, have shaped the present—to some point thousands of years in the past. If the actual history of his nation fails to provide such a golden age, he takes recourse in myths and legends.[4]

The only worth of the ideas and efforts of this class of intellectuals is that they should be confined to the pages of books or entertain and comfort a limited group of people for a short period of time. Since they do not emerge from the present sufferings of human beings, they are absolutely incapable of arousing national and popular awareness among people.

The third stage of change commences when the intellectual liberates himself from fantasy and comes to terms with his people and acquaints himself with their hardships and sufferings. At this stage, the intellectual, having tasted the hardships and deprivations of the common people, shares with them their aspirations. He respects the beliefs and sentiments of the people, familiarizes himself with them and draws inspiration from them. It is at this stage only that an intellectual can play an effective leading role in making, arousing and moulding the national consciousness of his nation, provided he is sincere and free from blind imitation of his Western teachers. The more committed and flexible he is, the more rapid and far-reaching influence he can exercise in the realms of thought and action.

The Real Lines of Demarcation:

Now that the factors supposed to be effective, according to the classical definition of nationalism, in giving rise to national unity and collective consciousness have lost their relevance today, shall we assert that there are essentially no real lines of demarcation between various social units of mankind and, such being the case, all nations can, or rather should, merge together to form a single nation?

The experience of human history and the evidence provided by social conflicts and upheavals show that the human world has been divided into many groups and classes different and distinct from one another, each following a different path, and, therefore, the possibility of such a merger does not exist. Social, political and cultural changes taking place in the contemporary age are leading the Western world every day further away from the Third World in respects of understanding and unity. Despite much talk about coexistence, world peace and unity, the hard realities of the present situation and dynamics of change make such ideas appear far-fetched and impracticable. As long as there exist wolves and sheep in the world, there is no possibility of any unity between them. As soon as a group organizes itself in the form

of a political entity, whatever its basis, it attracts the greed of other groups and becomes prone to encroachment and aggression. Hence, it is compelled to protect its territorial, political and economic interests and defend its culture and ideology from its enemies' onslaughts.

We are not interested here in discussing the present differentiation of nations; our aim is to discover the elements and factors that form national awareness among a group of people and fuse them emotionally with one another in a way that a nation comes into being.

We have already seen that the factors usually known to be responsible for national integration, viz. language, cultural heritage, historical background and race, although, of initial effectiveness in the formation of a nation, fail to serve as a basic and permanent ground for national unity. For this reason, we do not consider them to be essential; they are rather accidental. The people who once fought together against foreigners for independence and dignity were, after reaching this goal, divided again into rulers and the ruled, into privileged and underprivileged, in accordance with their expectations, claims, interests and objectives. As a consequence of this, the national struggle against alien domination is transformed into an internal class struggle. The people sharing a common culture, language and race become divided and wage war against one another. The same people and the same individuals who were earlier united by a collective awareness now lose the sense of togetherness due to changed social relations. The question raised earlier still remains unanswered: What is the real basis and source of the formation of a national unit or a nation? What is the nature of the bond that cements together the hearts and feelings of various individuals, as a consequence of which common aspirations and ideals emerge?

As in the case of the Algerian people when they started their struggle against French colonialism, or as in the case of the Palestinians' struggle for regaining their legitimate right and human dignity, or as in the case of the Vietnameses, we observe that the commonly accepted factors of nationhood—that is common language, historical heritage and territorial and economic interests—were effective in creating a sense of affinity and mutual understanding among the individuals of a nation. But at the same time we also see that there are other peoples in various parts of the world whose sympathy with the cause of Algeria, Palestine or Vietnam is as intense as that of an Algerian, a Palestinian, or a Vietnamese. A strong sense of unity and a deeply-felt bond of sympathy for these people joins the peoples of different nations and regions. This sense of unity sometimes prompts a group of individuals to forget their women and children, environment and country, and to join the ranks of those struggling thousands of miles away from their homeland. They even sacrifice their lives for others with whom they have nothing common—neither language nor culture, nor historical

heritage. If you study the history of these freedom movements, you will see in their midst many individuals of "alien" nationality who fought for their cause, even performed heroic deeds, and, after the victory, became part and parcel of the freed peoples, merging with them to build a new nation.

On the other hand, we find diverse groups within a nation sharing a common language, tradition, culture and geographical conditions who are not bound to one another with a sense of oneness. Their ideals and aspirations for the future do not conform and are contradictory. If there is some semblance of a bond of unity, it is merely superficial and mechanical, contrived to meet the needs of their day-to-day life. Many a battle is fought by their governments and ruling cliques, of which their own people remain totally unaware or to which they show complete indifference. In our own history there are ample instances of such an attitude of indifference on the part of the people. On the contrary , it happens very often that the people of Africa or India express great interest, warmth and intense enthusiasm for the victory of the people of Palestine or Algeria or Vietnam. Hence, it may be concluded that neither the historical, geographical, political, racial and linguistic frontiers constitute any barrier between members of human species, nor do these factors constitute a bond of unity between them.

Common Sufferings:

How do the people scattered in different parts of the world evolve strong emotional ties and common ideals? What is common among them that unites people far away from one another and breaks them off from their own neighbours and even compatriots? The factor under question may be described as the experience of common sufferings, the common anguish arising from the oppression and encroachments of imperialism.

Incidentally, the birth of nationalist movements in various nations coincided with the period when the masses had a strong feeling of common suffering and a commonly shared sense of vacuum. German nationalism was born out of the discrimination practised by the French and their interference, which were felt painfully by the Germans. Nationalism in Italy, Hungary, India, Indo-China and Algeria also emerged as a movement at a time when these nations, or at least the majority of their people, were seized by a common feeling of pain and vacuum.

Western scholars of Iranian history say that nationalism or awareness of national unity in Iran came into existence since the beginning of the Tobacco Movement, that is at the time when a section of the Iranian people felt the pinch of colonialism. Hence, a collective consciousness, a sense of nationhood or nationalism, is born among a group

of people when they are possessed by a sense of common suffering combined with a common aspiration. The common aspiration gives rise to the common ideal, for attaining which a movement is initiated among the people, who strive and struggle together and are prepared to endure all kinds of injuries and deprivations. It is this aspiration which further strengthens their collective awareness at later stages, integrates them emotionally, and ultimately results in the nation's unification.

Factors of Unity:

If we study the sufferings that have been instrumental in the birth and emergence of nations up to our times, and compare them with each other, we find a common factor at work among all nations.

For instance, when we examine the circumstances that were responsible for the German philosopher Fichte's intense and enthusiastic campaign for arousing German nationalist sentiments, or the circumstances that compelled a Gandhi or a Garibaldi to struggle for the freedom of India or Italy, or the conditions under which the people of Vietnam and Palestine started their crusade for independence and liberty as remedies for the maladies afflicting them—these, and many other such instances, will show that whenever a people, or a group of it, arose in revolt and launched a struggle for freedom, two factors have been common in all the cases: firstly, a feeling of injury caused by the tyranny and domination of rulers and their institutions; and secondly, an urge to negate this domination. Fichte wanted to liberate the Germans from the political and cultural domination and influence of the French; Gandhi fought for freedom from British political, cultural and economic exploitation of his people and country; Algeria struggled against French occupation. Hence, the factor common among the sufferings and aspirations that lead to the emergence of the world's nations has been, on the one hand, the sense of suffering itself, and on the other, the will to eradicate injustice and establish a just order.

Why does it happen so often that nations are born during periods of unjust treatment, deprivation, oppression, aggression, exploitation and colonialism? It happens so because it is in difficult times, in deprivation, under denial of dignity and inhuman treatment and during endeavour and struggle for liberation from such circumstances that man's true nature is revealed to him; then he discovers his real identity and realizes the significance of sublime human values and merits. When man stands against tyranny, crime, oppression, unbelief and corruption and is moved to anguish and pain by them, the yearning for justice and truth is awakened in the depths of his being. These are the values that unite and integrate humanity. Man is a being that is a lover of justice,

piety and truth in the depths of his conscious being. This passion has been manifesting and expressing itself in all forms and colours at all points of space and time.

On this basis I feel inclined to say that it is the sense of deprivation, the realization of the gulf between the rulers and the ruled, which is the factor that demarcates human groups from one another and draws the real barriers between them.

Tiburmund,[5] a Western writer and researcher, also divides the present nations of the world into two camps, the deprived and the privileged, or the backward and the industrially advanced countries. This division and distinction, though it corresponds to the reality of our times, is not the whole truth. If we agree to divide humanity into the ruled and the ruling nations, we have to see if all the deprived nations stand in one camp. Frantz Fanon says in this matter:[6]

> ...Black chauvinism in Black literature is an emotional—if not logical— antithesis of the indignities that are heaped up on humanity by the White man. A revolt against the white man's contempt, it is, in some cases, the best means of overthrowing the restrictions and insults imposed upon the Blacks. As the intellectuals of Guinea and Kenya have more than anything else seen themselves face to face with total rejection and all round humiliation by the dominant power, their reaction is that of self-praise and self-glorification; the unquestioned justification of the African culture takes the place of unconditional affirmation of the Western culture. The poets of the Black movement array the old and worn-out forces against the young Africa, morbid reason against poetry, and oppressive logic against ebullient nature. On the one side is violence, hostility and skepticism, and on the other purity, fervour, unity, freedom and the fertility and bounteousness of the earth, but also irresponsibility...

The irresponsibility pointed out by Fanon results from the fact that the common suffering and aspiration that have emerged in African society are still weak in respect of perception of goals and objectives. The anti-imperialist movement of the Black continent against the injustice and oppression of the Whites, so far as it aims at uprooting injustice and discrimination and winning human rights, is sacred; but when it assumes the form of vengeance, pride and ambition and seeks privileges of a new kind, it also, in its own turn, lays down the foundation of a new injustice which has not yet found any outlet.

Hence the question of objectives also gains importance with regard to deprivation and slavery of nations. If the Black movement were to mature into devotion to truth and justice, then a rightly directed and blossoming movement will be its fruit. Therefore, the movements and struggles motivated by common sufferings and aspirations are to be judged by their objectives: Whether they are governed by righteousness, justice, and freedom, or their objective is domination, new privileges

and acquisition of benefits and advantages. This is something which is derived from the ideology, faith and outlook of the leaders of a national movement.

The Western culture excludes the above-mentioned factors from those which constitute collective consciousness and national awareness. The Eastern intellectual, too, be he a Muslim or an African, drenches his nationalism in the same colour and sees it with the eyes of the West. That is, with the same tools and weapons that are sold to him by the enemy he wants to build his nation and defend it. What a foolishness to buy one's weapons from the enemy!

Fortunately, in all nationalist movements and class struggles we witness another factor at work along with the awareness of common suffering and aspiration, and that is a yearning and love for justice, truth, and freedom. These two factors combined together can provide the criterion of a movement's rightfulness and legitimacy. German nationalism could not inspire and influence the people of other countries because it emerged with the objective of racialism and expansionism. Zionism, which appeared in its beginning as a movement for the liberation and freedom of the Jews from homelessness and international humiliation, has now assumed the form of an aggressive, racist and oppressive ideology. This movement, despite being the expression of the common suffering and aspirations of the Jews, due to its imperialist and exploitative objective of promoting the interests of twelve million Jews at the cost of the deprived people of the world, not only has no sympathizers but also invites the hatred of the freedom-loving people of the entire world. The nationalist resistance in France, with all its heroic tactics, not only failed to build any ideology or movement of liberation due to the source of its inspiration, which was French chauvinism, but also justified aggression against Algeria, its exploitation and the ruthless suppression of its liberation movement. The more prominent and dominant the elements of justice and righteousness in a nationalist movement, the greater was its universal appeal and the more did it contribute to the sources and foundations of universal human thought and civilization.

Hence, for determining and distinguishing different human societies with a view to determining their national identity and its boundaries, we should take into consideration all the factors; that is, their sufferings, the degree of their consciousness of their deprivation, the intensity of aspirations awakened by them, and, at last, their ultimate objective in its proper perspective. Then we will find that these are the factors which constitute the fountainhead of the life of a group of people and their movement and dynamism.

It is evident that these fundamental and essential factors, once they inspire the collective psyche and feelings of a people, prepare the

foundation and the spirit of a nationalism. This foundation and spirit need a form and a body, which of necessity constitute the conventional natural and physical frontiers of a nation. The safeguarding of these fundamental and essential factors depends on the security of those frontiers against the infiltration and encroachments of the foreign elements that are opposed to the very essence of a nation and either do not understand its sufferings and objectives or are hostile towards them.

The Birth of a New Nationality:

In our search for the basic factors that produce collective consciousness, we arrived at two points: common suffering and common aspiration in the face of domination and exploitation of man by man or his institutions. We also observed that these factors are not permanent unifiers unless infused by the yearning for justice, righteousness and piety (in the terminology of Western writers, the human and progressive objectives). It is this vital essence which like life itself is living and is the augmenter of life, the *élan vital*. When this essence is injected into the body of a people or a group, it stimulates a collective movement, dynamism and evolution, resulting in the creative development of its culture and traditions, which are manifestations of a nation's independence and its distinct character.

In a considerably large part of our world, we see different nations with different languages, traditions, racial descent and living in geographically diverse conditions, which have formed numerous political units and separate and independent states. These are the world's Islamic nations. The classical Western criteria see them as different nationalities as alien to each other as they are to other nations and countries. Accordingly, these criteria require them to retain their separate identities and remain alien to one another. The consequences of this separation and alienation are observable for all. But despite the apparent differences they share certain elements that unite them. Among these people, the most prominent common factor is their faith, Islam, which is a world in itself, rich in culture and specific traditions.

We have to see how their attachment to Islam serves as a ground of common consciousness and unity; that is, what are the common goals and objectives which are taught and inspired by Islam as a creed and a world-view. Secondly, we have to find the common malaise that affects these nations despite their adherence to Islam. Let us review the teachings of the Quran in this regard:

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَسْمَآءً سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ

إِنِ ٱلْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۚ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

That which you serve apart from Him, is nothing but names which you have named, you and your fathers; God has sent down no authority touching them. Judgment belongs only to God; He has commanded that you shall not serve any but Him. This is the right religion; but most men know not.(12:40)

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُوا۟ ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ ٱجْتَمَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ ۖ وَإِن يَسْلُبْهُمُ ٱلذُّبَابُ شَيْـًٔا لَّا يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ ٱلطَّالِبُ وَٱلْمَطْلُوبُ ﴿٧٣﴾

O Men, a parable is set forth, so give you ear to it. Surely those whom you call upon, apart from God, shall never create a fly, though they banded together to do it; and should a fly snatch away from them aught, they would never rescue it from it. Feeble indeed alike are the seeker and the sought! (22:73)

وَجَٰهِدُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِۦ ۚ هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ مِن قَبْلُ وَفِى هَٰذَا لِيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَنِعْمَ ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

And struggle for God as is His due, for He has chosen you, and has laid on you no impediment in your religion, the creed of your father Abraham; He named you Muslims aforetime and in this, that the Messenger might be a witness upon you, and that you may might be witnesses upon mankind. So perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and hold your fast to God; He is your Protector—an excellent Protector, an excellent Helper.(22:78)

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَٰكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

O mankind, We have created you of a male and a female, and made you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you. God is All-knowing, All-aware.(49:13)

وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

And hold you fast to God's bond, together, and do not scatter; remember

God's blessing upon you when you were enemies, He united your hearts, so that by His blessing you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it; thus does God make clear to you His signs that you may follow the right way. (3:103)

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم مِّنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

You are the best nation raised up for men; you enjoin what is good and forbid the wrong and believe in God. Had the people of the Book believed, it were better for them; some of them are believers, but most of them are transgressors.(3:110)

Those who have studied the history of liberation movements know that the independence of nations and peoples essentially depends upon an individual or a group, howsoever small it may be, that has completely liberated itself from the bondage of worldly temptations and attachments; these are the men who tell the people that if they wish to be dominated and ruled by the worldly powers they shall remain under their subjugation, but if they resolve to be free, all the rich and the powerful shall melt like ice and be destroyed. The basis of liberation is the conviction of the oppressed in their rightfulness and deprivation on the one hand, and the weakness and vulnerability of the forces of untruth on the other. What ideology can teach humanity the fundamentals of freedom in clearer and more evident terms? *Tawḥīd* and Islam mean liberation and freedom, freedom from all chains and bonds and opening of the avenues of man's evolution and upliftment towards the Divine.

Islam tells its followers that all the distinctions of colour, race and language that are observed among the nations of the world, and which have been made the criteria of their separation, are accidental, having no essential reality. On the whole, those people are noble and honourable who are advancing on the path of human perfection. The plurality of colours, languages and traditions in human society, and all the other differences observable in nature, are manifestations of the richness and variety of being and forms of a single reality. Every flower has its own colour and odour, its own properties and uses. But all are to be evaluated and measured according to the criterion of their contribution to man's advancement towards his Supreme Source.

These differences and distinctions cannot be regarded as divisive factors; rather it is their coming together and getting to know one another (*ta'āruf*) that gives birth to material and spiritual development.

Whatever your race, territory or language, you share a common Law (*Dīn*), and it is your duty to safeguard this Divine Law with firmness and not to let yourselves be divided. Always remember God's blessing that earlier you were enemies of one another but after the spirit of Islam and *tawḥīd* was infused into you, you were united together. The fruit of this unity was a world full of knowledge, merit and moral excellence, which you brought as a gift for entire humanity. If you preach and defend virtue and fight against evil and corruption, you shall be the best of all nations. Either this material and social existence of yours will lead you to commit aggression against one another and oppression and exploitation of one another, or the same material and social existence of yours will become the source of your life, development and growth:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّمَا بَغْيُكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُم ۖ مَّتَٰعَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُكُمْ

O men your insolence is only against yourselves; the enjoyment of this world's life, then unto Us you shall return....(10:23)

On the other hand, this very material existence is the source of your life and its development and evolution at both the individual and collective levels.

إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَٱزَّيَّنَتْ ...

The likeness of this world's life is only as water which We send down from the heaven, then the herbage of the earth, of which men and cattle eat, grows luxuriantly thereby, until when the earth puts on its golden raiment and becomes garnished....(10:24)

Now since this worldly existence of yours in society is an admixture of evolution and transgression, in order not to give injustice and aggression any chances of growth, your remedy lies in this: With complete and perfect faith in the Unity and Sovereignty of God, with self-denial and willingness to sacrifice, take up arms and wage a perpetual, unceasing struggle against the sovereignty of wealth and against egoism.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَٰرَةٍ تُنجِيكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

O believers, shall I direct you to a commerce that shall deliver you from a

painful chastisement? You shall believe in God and His Messenger, and struggle in the way of God with your property and your lives. That is better for you, did you but know. (61:10,11)

In this way, the basis of your nationhood and the constituent of your collective consciousness is, firstly, faith in God (the objective), and, secondly, your *jihād* (the common anguish, which at the level of action is translated into insurrection against untruth and preparedness for self-sacrifice).

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَٰهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَاوَوا وَّنَصَرُوا أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَّهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

And (as for) those who believe, and have migrated and struggled in the way of God, and those who have given refuge and help, those in truth are believers, they shall have forgiveness and generous provision.(8:74)

Study the history and fates of past and present nations; whatever they were and whatever they became was a result of their own individual and collective endeavours;you, Muslims, are also governed by the same law.

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

This is a nation that has passed away; they have what they earned, and you shall have what you earn, and you shall not be called upon to answer for what they did. (2:134)

In the end your destiny as human beings depends upon your efforts made in the way of sublimation towards your Lord, who is the highest representative of justice and truth, virtue and beauty. It is only after effort and endeavour that you will achieve the ultimate success of attaining His vision:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الْإِنسَٰنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلَٰقِيهِ ﴿٦﴾

O Man! Thou art labouring unto thy Lord laboriously, and thou shalt encounter Him.(84:6)

The different Muslim nations, with all their present separation from each other, live under the influence of this kind of teaching so far as their world-view and objectives are concerned. And it is this teaching which forms the common culture of these peoples. It is this Islamic and *tawḥīdī* culture that has produced their heroes and martyrs, and has preserved the legacy and memorable epics that were woven into the

fabric of their collective Islamic consciousness.

In the first century of the Islamic era the principles and objectives of Islamic *tawḥīd* were conveyed to the world in such clear and unambiguous terms that all the civilized people of those days, with all their fervour and awareness, embraced these teachings. Very soon the Islamic nation or rather the Islamic cosmopolitan society came into being. But this unity disappeared soon and divisions emerged, because the men who wielded power could not or did not wish to understand the real meaning of Islamic objectives. The Islamic international movement was perceived as an Arab empire and caliphate—a perception which was a flagrant violation of Islamic objectives. Because of this, the unity which was achieved was soon squandered, a defeat in whose wake appeared many upheavals, weaknesses and deviations, until, subsequently the Muslims went into a long and deep slumber.

Concurrent with this slumber was the awakening of the Christian West. By making abundant use of the Islamic traditions in culture, social life and science, the West laid the foundations of its own culture, a culture which, apart from its indebtedness to the traditions and the scientific endeavours of the Islamic world, was motivated by worldly ambition, greed for wealth, urge for aggression and quest for worldly power. As a consequence, a few centuries ago the Islamic world came under the attack and exploitation of the enemies from the West. At first their cultural, moral and religious existence was threatened; then their material and economic resources were pillaged and plundered. The prolonged state of slumber, on the one hand, and the colonial onslaughts, on the other, intensified the captivity of Muslim nations producing a defeatist mentality in them.

Now it is a hundred years that the cultural, social and political changes in the world have been shaking these nations and ringing the bell of alarm for them. They are, on the one hand, understanding the import of *tawḥīd*, Islam and its objectives from a new angle, and a new world of fresh truths is dawning upon them; on the other hand, the observation of the present conditions of Muslims and their misery, deprivation and backwardness is generating a fresh urge and aspiration among the Muslim masses. We are witnessing an awakening and movement in the captive Islamic countries. The liberating slogans and objectives of *tawḥīd* and Islam inspire and stimulate not only Muslims but also every oppressed people who become acquainted with Islamic teachings. Both in the newly-formed African countries and the Arab countries under the yoke of imperialism, Islam has emerged as a militant ideology of revolt and struggle for the oppressed people of the world.

Western civilization, which for centuries has been waging war openly as well as covertly against Islam, has sprung to its feet at the emergence of this phenomenon. As a result, the bourgeois imperialist

West has adopted the stance of peaceful coexistence with the Marxist Eastern bloc. With its innate affinity with Zionism, it established a Zionist state in the heart of the Muslim world. On the other hand, it endeavours to win the hearts of the followers of other faiths, such as Buddhists and Zoroastrians. Today it appears that the West is busy in uniting all the forces opposed to Islam and justice and equipping them against the Muslims. It is for this reason that every now and then we see steps being taken and conspiracies being hatched, in every nook and cranny, to weaken the impact of Islamic slogans and teachings. As a consequence of all these conspiracies and unholy alliances, the sense of common anguish is growing amongst Muslims, strengthening further the fabric of their collective consciousness.

The Islamic outlook and the sense of suffering is expanding today and the Islamic nationhood is in the process of a rebirth, a nationhood that transcends the conventional age-old frontiers and embraces all Muslims, or rather all free and God-loving human beings. It is a nationhood which negates the sovereignty of every nation, tribe and family and is founded upon the freedom and liberty of man from every kind of intellectual, social and political bondage and upon his ascent to the heights of the abode of the Divine.

Men like 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Asadābādī, Muḥammad 'Abduh, Nā'īnī, Iqbāl and Bashīr Ibrāhīmī are the pioneers of this new outlook of *tawḥīd* and Islam. They were the first to feel the new anguish and to spouse the Islamic aspiration; they were the founders of a new nationhood based on *tawḥīd*. It is the lament of Iqbāl Lāhūrī which like morning breeze awakens the slumbering hearts and unites the divided consciousness of the Muslim world, reminding it of its mission of magnanimous service to God's creation and bringing the good tidings of man's freedom and liberation:

ای غنچهٔ خوابیده چون نرگس نگران خیز — کاشانهٔ مارفت به تاراج غمان خیز
از نالهٔ مرغ سحر، از بانگِ اذان خیز — وزگرمیِ هنگامهٔ آتش نفَسان خیز
از خوابِ گران، خوابِ گران، خواب گران خیز

دریای تو دریاست که آسوده چو صحراست — دریائی تو دریاست که افزون نشد و کاست
بیگانهٔ آشوب و نهنگ است، چه دریاست؟ — از سینهٔ چاکش صفتِ موج روان خیز
از خوابِ گران، خوابِ گران، خوابِ گران خیز

فریاد از افرنگ و دل آویزیِ افرنگ — فریاد زِ شیرینی و پرویزیِ افرنگ
عالم همه ویرانه ز چنگیزیِ افرنگ — معمارِ حرم باز به تعمیر جهان خیز
از خواب گران، خوابِ گران، خوابِ گران خیز
از خوابِ گران خیز

O sleeping bud, wake up to a narsissus-like vigilance over the world,
Rise, for griefs have devastated our haven;
Let the lament of the morning fowl and the dawn call of prayer wake you up;
Rise, the fire-eaters are at work and the fire-balls hang in the air.
Rise from heavy slumber, from heavy slumber arise!
What an ocean is thine that is silent like a desert?
What an ocean is that which swells not and falls like a lake?
What an ocean is it that knows no storms and whales?
Rise like a tidal wave from the split breast of the ocean!
Rise from heavy slumber, from thine heavy slumber arise!
Beware of the West and its bewitching coquetry!
Beware of its disloyal charm and its Michiavellian malice!
The world lies desolate from the savagery of the West!
O builder of the Sanctuary, take up the task of building a new world!
Rise from thine heavy slumber, from thine heavy slumber arise!
From thine heavy slumber arise!

NOTES:

1. J. J. Chivallier, *les grandes oeuvres politiques troisieme partie.*

2. *Translator's note:* Martyr Muṭahhari has referred to the common Indian language as 'Hindi', but what he really means here is the expression of nationalist sentiments in Urdu during the Indian Freedom Movement. Usually no distinction is made in the Middle East between Urdu and Hindi. By 'Hindi' the people of this region mean the 'Indian language'.

3. In this context, refer to the writings of such intellectuals as Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ and Fatḥ 'Alī Ākhūndzādeh from the early days of the Constitutional Movement and then those of Farīdūn Ādamiyyat, or the steps taken by the government of Atāturk in modern Turkey.

4. Refer to such works as: *Parwīn :dukhtar-e Sāsān, Az in Awestā, Do qarn-e sukūt, Māh-e Nakhshab, Majmū'ah-ye Īrān-e bāstān,* and *Majmū'ah-ye Īrān kūdeh.*

5. Triburmund, *Jahānī miyān-e tars wa umīd* (Persian translation).

6. Frantz Fanon, *Les damn'ees de la terre: de la culture nationale.*

Contextualization:
A New Missionary Approach to Muslims*

by Ishtiyãq Dãnish

Modern Christian missions started their activities in the 16th century and entered alien lands, including the Crescent, under the umbrella of colonial powers. In African animistic societies missions achieved encouraging results. However, in countries like India and China, the homelands of great ancient civilizations, Hinduism and Buddhism, Christian missions failed badly.The Crescent proved more barren. If Christianity was able to win a few converts from the Crescent, at the same time, it yielded many of its adherents to Islam. However, the failure of the missions did not benight their ardency and sanguinity. Missionaries have been in search of new methods for Muslim outreach. Their newest discovery is contextual approach which has been much debated in some theological books and journals which throw ample light on its theological and practical implications.

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* Christian evangelism, despite consistent organized effort in the Muslim world since the beginnings of the colonial era, has made little progress. The turnout of the resources put in is so low that according to statistics reported by Church sources, on the average one Christian priest in his entire life achieves one convert from Islam. Unable to reverse the tide of paganism and materialism in its quarters, due to its own inherent theological weakness, Christianity has been struggling to expand in Africa and Asia. While believing Christians have become a diminishing minority in the West itself, Church authorities have looked hopefully to Africa and Asia, encouraged by the high illiteracy rates and rampant poverty there, both of which are a legacy of the colonial era during which the Christian countries devastated these lands.

Reportedly, Muslims have increased in the last fifty years by 235%, whereas the corresponding increase in the Christian world has been 47% a figure which includes the statistical Christians of the capitalist world as well as the populations of the Eastern European countries of the

Arguments For Contextualization:

The term 'contextualization' as a specific missionary term came to the fore in 1972 when the Theological Educational Fund (TEF), sponsored by the World Council of Churches (WCC), published its report "Ministry in Context", in which churches were strongly urged to introduce some radical reforms in theological education. Since then there has been heated controversy representing a very wide divergence of opinion on the issue. However, it has been used in some parts of the world as a successful method for missionary outreach and this has imparted to it further significance and validity.

In 1972, contextuality was a somewhat complicated nuclear concept. However, in 1988, after a period of sixteen years in which it has been much debated, it looks somewhat comprehensible, though some serious practical questions still remain. Is it a new terminology to express the old concept of indigenization or does it mean something more or is it a totally new concept? And if it is fairly a new terminology, how can it be defined and what are the parameters to distinguish it from being a syncretism? These are some of the questions which figure in all discussions.

Indigenization and contextualization, in fact, are not contradictory to each other. However, the later has a wider meaning than the former. The concept of an indigenous church came to the fore in the nineteenth century when Christianity was severely criticized as the white man's religion in Africa and charged with foreignness in Asia. As the Africans and Asians were required to embrace the paganized Christianity of Europe and denounce their own culture and with the local churches under the direct control of the white foreigners, who were obsessed with a sense of racial superiority and administrative wisdom, the aforesaid Afro-Asian criticism contained a great deal of truth. Moved by such 'allegations' some church leaders, determined to bring some dignity to the national and regional churches, conceived the idea of an indigenous church. Indigeneity was then defined as to establish a self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating native church. Much the same idea was expressed in 1938 when the Madras Conference defined indigeni-

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communist bloc. The high population growth rates in Muslim countries as well as the world-wide resurgence of Islam in recent years have deeply disturbed Christian organizations, leading them to devise new missionary approaches to Muslims. One of such approaches, which is more an antic than evangelism, is 'contextualization'.

The author has worked as Research Associate at the Islamic Foundation, Leicester, and is presently Research Scholar at the Centre of West Asian Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, India.

zation as follows:

> An indigenous church, young or old, in the East or in the West, is a church, rooted in obedience to Christ, spontaneously uses forms of thought and modes of action natural and familiar in its own environment.[1]

However, it should be quite clear that such a native church will remain very much an inseparable part of the universal church. Indigenization, in fact, includes three things: "(1) relatedness to the soil-ability to make elements of local churches captive to Christ; (2) possession of an adequately trained ministry, a ministry adapted to local requirements; (3) an inner spiritual life, nurturing the Christian community, witnessing to the unevangelized."[2]

Contextualization includes, in sum, all that is implied in indigenization and a bit more. It is, in fact, an activity to engage in constructing or developing a national theology or making Christianity relevant to a provided group of people. Kato remarks:

> We understand the term to mean making concepts or ideals relevant in a given situation.... Since the Gospel message is inspired but the mode of its expression is not, contextualization of the modes of expression is not only right but necessary.[3]

In "Contextualization: Theory, Tradition and Method", Buswell proposes to break down the term into three categories: "contextualization of the Witness, contextualization of the church and its leadership and contextualization of the Word".[4] Contextualization of the Witness, Buswell explains, is a kind of inculturation, that is "to make the Gospel message intelligible in the idiom of the language and culture of the receivers".[5] Buswell finds no significant difference between contextualization and indigenization. To contextualize the church and its leadership means to indigenize both. Contextualization of the Word, according to Buswell, implies translation of the Logos and doing an ethnotheology in the context of this or that ethnic group. Buswell further adduces his point of view by quoting Flonde Efefe.

> To Africanize Christianity cannot be an occasion for prefabricating a new theology. The purpose of the Pan-African movement or African theology is to promote an African expression of the interpretation of the Gospel.[6]

Bruce Fleming, another missiologist, explains contextualization with reference to the following three terms: supracultural, transcultural and cultural.[7] Supracultural, Fleming explains, is the framework revealed in the Scripture. In other words, it is the Biblical Christianity and truth that can never be compromised during the course of cross-cultural

communication. While Christian experiences learnt through history—Christian tradition—are termed 'transcultural', 'cultural' simply implies the construction or development of a native Christian theology.

However, Charles R. Taber offers a more lucid definition. "Contextualization", he says, "is the effort to understand and take seriously the specific context of each human group and person on its own terms and in all its dimensions—cultural, religious, social, political, economic—and to discern what the Gospel says to people in that context". Thus contextualization for Taber is "to discover in the Scripture what God is saying to these people". "In other words", Taber adds, "Contextualization takes very seriously the example of Jesus in the sensitive and careful way he offered each person a Gospel tailored to his or her own context".[8]

Contextualization is, no doubt, a fairly new missionary term. However, its germs are found in the past, especially in the life and activity of the early Church. St. Paul, in particular, was a perfect contextualized preacher. He expresses, in fact, a contextual theology and approach when he says:

> I am a free man, nobody's slave; but I make myself everybody's slave in order to win as many people as possible.[9]

As the Jews were reluctant to give up their Law, Paul did not demand that they abandon it. Instead, he acknowledged their world-view and invited them to believe in Jesus without abandoning the Torah. He dealt with the Gentiles in a similar way when he took the Gospel to them. The Law and other Jewish traditions were absolutely repugnant to the pagans; so Paul abolished the Law for the sake of their conversion. He held that Biblical Christianity was not related to any particular culture. The basic Christian truth is one: faith in Christ. Whoever accepts this truth enters the Christian fold, whatever his culture.

The Church seems to have been conscious of the significance of a contextual approach throughout its history. In the days long past, in 1659, the Roman Papacy had prepared some instructions and guidelines for Christian missionaries working in China which anticipate contextuality:

> Do not regard it as your task and do not bring any pressure to bear on the peoples to change their manners, customs and uses, unless they are evidently contrary to religion and sound morals. What could be more absurd than to transport France, Spain, Italy or some other European country to China?... Do not draw invidious contrasts between the customs of the peoples and those of Europe; do your utmost to adapt yourself to them.[10]

The last of the Papal instructions: "do your utmost to adapt yourself

to them" is, in fact, the core of the contextualized witness. It involves respect and love extended to the local culture and customs. Furthermore, a missionary is required not only to respect the national culture but to identify with and adapt himself to it as much as possible.

A far better example of contextuality is, however, found in the personality and work of Robert de Nobili (1577–1665), an Italian Jesuit of noble birth who arrived in India in 1605. Within a few months of his arrival he learnt Tamil, one of the four ancient Dravidian languages, on the Fisher Coast. He then went to Madurai, then a great centre of Tamil thought, literature and culture. There were already some missionaries in Madurai and a church functioning under the leadership of Father Fernandez, a Portuguese Jesuit. These missionaries were working along the traditional lines they had inherited from Goa, the centre of the Catholic mission in India. Their manners and customs were purely European, hence alien and quite abhorrent to the Indians. These missionaries mistook the European culture as an inseparable part of the Christian faith which made it impossible for affluent and higher Indian castes to embrace it.

Nobili observed the weaknesses of the Catholic mission and the need for a new method for missionary outreach. He realized that the Brahmins could be evangelized only by way of an identification with their culture and life style. As a result he cut himself off from the rest of the missionaries, studied the Brahmin culture, their prejudices and Tamil classics. Brahmins should not be asked, Nobili said, to abnegate the special privileges they had in the society or to give up their cultural habits unless they were obviously idolatrous. To identify with them Nobili became a Sanyasi guru, a priest and teacher who renounces the luxuries of the material world and adopts an ascetic way of life. As soon as he did so many Brahmins flocked to him to listen to his message. The resulting conversion was encouraging. He baptized several hundred Brahmins in Madurai, Trichinopoly and Salem.

However, Nobili's fellow missionaries were not happy with his method of evangelism and his toleration of certain Hindu taboos. They reported to the Holy Roman See "that he was tolerating Hindu superstition, that he was deceiving the people and that by segregating his converts, he was creating a schism in the Church."[11] Whether a deceiver, a hypocrite or the reverse of both—let it be judged by theologians—from the viewpoint of contextual theology he was a perfect contextualized preacher.

As can be ascertained from the above discussion contextualization of the Gospel in any provided group is a risky and difficult task. It "requires a profound empirical analysis of the context in place of a flip or a priory judgement."[12] This is the reason some theologians and missiologists, especially of the Third World, argue that nationals are

best suited to do contextual theology. Foreign missiologists, even trained missionaries, often fail to understand the given situation and as a result commit serious mistakes.

Western missiologists are also divided on this issue. The findings of a survey conducted by the Association of Evangelical Professors of Mission runs:

> Though the larger block of votes affirmed this (i.e. encouraging nationals to develop their own theologies) as desirable (27), a significant number were not sure (10), and a slightly large group (17) denied it. The combined total of the 'no' and 'not sure' equated that of the affirmative vote.[13]

However, both nationals and foreigners have been engaged in the task of developing contextual theology and approaches to reach the unreached.

Contextualization, as stated above, is a risky enterprise. For, if not carefully done, it might lead to syncretism. Apprehensive of it, many theologians have rejected the whole concept of contextualization and branded it as un-Christian. They believe that Christianity and Western culture are inseparable and Christianization necessarily warrants Westernization. However, the contextualists hold all such notions as baseless and un-Christian. They point out that Western Christianity itself is paganized and its many postulates have no grounding in the Bible. However, with a view to overcoming the fear of syncretism, advocates of the contextual approach offer a theory of critical contextualization. It implies that every culture will be critically examined and all that is un-Biblical or contradictory to the basic Biblical teachings will be rejected. It naturally implies that whatever corresponds to the Christian truth will be accommodated and adjusted. Norman R. Ericson prescribes three criteria to contextualize the Gospel in given situations in a way that might reduce the possibility of syncretism:

1. "Truth. There is a body of truth which is assumed. This truth, whether implicit or explicit, forms the absolute standard by which everything must be evaluated.

2. Meaning. The Christians in society must so contextualize that the right meanings are delivered through the cultural forms and ideology. We must be continually aware that the meanings of actions or objects in Western society will not regularly have the same meanings in the Third World. The Christian must then be careful not to deliver the wrong meaning by his mode of behaviour or cultural participation. The question must always be asked: What does this mean to the people?

3. Communication. At the verbal-ideological level, consistent attention must be given to effectiveness. How is our Gospel communicated?...How are the people to know that God is love if there is no

activity which in culturally meaningful ways demonstrates the love of God in the lives of the evangelizers."[14]

But the main and most important question, the contextualization of the Gospel message in a given Muslim society, remains unresolved. There are certain basic differences in the fundamental beliefs and world-views of both Christianity and Islam. Islam believes in an uncompromising monotheism *par excellence*, whereas Christianity, though originally a monotheistic religion, has drifted into a trio: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Unlike the animistic and other religious communities and their cultures, Islamic culture is shaped, in large measure, by its faith in one God, the Hereafter and the institution of prophethood, of which the final member was our beloved Prophet Muḥammad (S). The contextualization of the Gospel message in such a society will lead either to sheer syncretism or to the further distortion of Christianity.

However, the contextual theologians argue that such a pure Muslim society no longer exists in the world today. The existing Muslim societies are greatly influenced by animistic taboos and superstitions. They also differ from each other in life-style , language, dress, food, manners, attitudes, and even in certain beliefs. Along with these facts, the poverty, religious ignorance and widespread illiteracy of the Muslim world, missionaries believe, provide unprecedented opportunities to win the Muslims for Christ through contextualized witness.

Requirements for a Contextual Missionary:

With such ideas in mind, as mentioned above, contextual missiologists propose certain requirements for missionaries to be deputed to Muslims. They are, first of all, required to acquire some good attitudinal qualities. For the relationship between the two major world communities, Christians and Muslims, has been extremely strained in the past and at present it is not wholly good owing to several factors, especially the Palestinian and Jerusalem question. There has been a spate of literature despising Islam, denigrating the Prophet (S) and defaming the Muslim world. It is therefore considered indispensable for all missionaries to be extremely different from common Westerners and to "abandon triumphalism and develop sincere respect, appreciation and sensitivity for all Muslim persons, for their faith and for their way of life",[15] not because the Islamic faith merits such esteem and veneration but because it is an unavoidable necessity for genuine communication of the Gospel message to Muslim peoples. Hence no wonder that today some missionaries are found disregarding the medieval crusades, criticizing the excesses of the colonial period and the pioneer colonial missionaries and expressing their disapproval of Zionism and the official terrorism of

the Israeli government.

Language: Acquiring the language of the target people is indispensable for a contextual missionary, because effective communication of the Gospel in a given situation is impossible without linguistic proficiency. There are certain other advantages. In most ethnic groups proficiency in the local language is regarded as veneration for and a complement to the culture, while improper language use, in certain cases, smacks of contempt and revilement of the culture. Expertise in the language of the target group also enables a missionary to avoid committing an offence—instances of which are numerous—against the addressees and to evangelize them in the best way possible.

Food: Contextuality is involvement in an alien culture and adoption of its customs without compromising the basic Christian faith. It necessarily includes, among other things, food and dress, etc. Should the Americans and Europeans give up popular Western dishes like ham, bacon and pork-meat—all despicably unclean and prohibited for Muslims—and eat *ipso facto* dishes like curry, which is full of spices and chillies? It is not of course binding on any contextual missionary to do so, but if he does it is greatly appreciated. Missionaries are instructed to deal tactfully and politely with their target people in the matter of foods they find unbearable to eat and never to reject any foods or demand that the nationals give them up as being un-Christian. Rejection of one's food when offered in some Muslim societies is considered a most damaging insult. Missionaries must always be conscious of the fact that a society cannot be evangelized by way of denigration.

Dress: Contextual missionaries are generally encouraged to wear the local dress and to show veneration for it. Missionaries, especially women, usually strongly react when asked to put on Muslim-style clothes, especially a veil. However, women missionaries are strongly encouraged to overcome their objection to the veil and other 'conservative' dresses of the Muslim women in the interest of Gospel evangelism. For, missionaries believe, the women workers practising *purdah* would receive an encouraging response from their Muslim sisters.

Masjid-e 'Īsā (Jesus Mosque): According to the contextual missionaries, Muslims are hostile to every thing Christian and unless this hostility is reduced to a normal human relationship, no proper evangelism can take place. What irks Muslims most is a Christian church. Would it not be better, the contextualists propose, to call christian churches 'Jesus mosques' or even erect a church on the pattern of a mosque. After enumerating many differences between a church and a mosque, Robert

S. McClenahan remarks:

> The whole construction, furnishing and conduct of the churches, traditional and man-made, the ecclesiastical system, environment and organization, present many an occasion to dissuade, not to attract the Moslem, and to make him declare that if this is Christianity, then the farther he remains from it, the better.[16]

To solve this problem missionaries present the idea of Jesus mosque which, they hope, would reduce the Muslims' abhorrence to the church. A Jesus mosque, the contextualists assert, is not un-Christian as the New Testament speaks of no particular directive to be observed regarding the outer form and structure of a church. The contextualists also say that there is no harm from the Biblical point of view in using a mosque or any such building for Christian service.

A Jesus mosque, if it ever comes into existence, would adopt everything from structure pattern to administration, which are considered, scripturally or traditionally, to be necessary for a mosque. A *masjid* by virtue of its meaning is a place of prostration. In its visible physical form, however, a *masjid* is the name attributed to some building constructed or adopted for offering prayers *(ṣalāt)* five times a day. Generally it contains a *minbar*, the pulpit from where the Friday sermon is delivered, a place of ablution—the washing of prescribed parts of body which symbolically means the purification of the soul—domes and minarets, but none of them are an essential part of the mosque. The only condition required for the erection of a mosque is that it should face Makkah *(Qiblah)*. It is and should be simple as enjoined by the Prophet (S) and free from unnecessary decoration. It should be neat and clean where believers come for no other purpose than the worship of God, their Maker and Lord.

A church, on the other hand, is a highly decorated building, with a cross up-front, elaborate setting of chancels, choirs, pulpit, pews, altar, baptistry, confessional, icons and images, but none of them are, of course, enjoined by Jesus or commanded in the Scripture. The Scripture's silence regarding the structure of a cathedral or a church has been taken by the contextualists as unconditional permission to construct any kind of church, including one on a mosque-like pattern.

Likewise the Scripture has set no particular forms for Christian service. Most of the forms practised by the Western churches are traditional and culture-oriented. The contextualists, especially the Third World theologians, argue that if Europe is free to develop its own forms of worship, why should a Muslim convert not be given the same freedom and right in order to pray to his Lord in his own familiar cultural form: *ṣalāt*. Bashîr 'Abd al-Masîḥ, a convert, remarks:

> Muslim converts who state that their deepest experience of worship to Jesus is in kneeling with their heads to the ground are free to worship just that way, structuring their place of worship accordingly.[17]

Moreover, the contextualists say, the churches in Africa and India frequently use the local forms of worship. If they are accepted as Christian, why are Muslim forms of worship, like *ṣalāt*, rejected as false syncretism? However, if the *ṣalāt* is adopted as a Christian form of worship there would arise many a serious question. For instance a Muslim offers his prayer five times a day and recites aloud three times some verses from the Holy Quran. What should the contextualized missionaries and Muslim converts do? Will they recite verses from the Bible? If so, in what language? The following answer was once suggested by a Muslim convert:

> A catechism can be developed where Bible verses are recited at appropriate times during prayer. Verses which commence on standing, kneeling, bowing and prayer with uplifted hands can be spoken by the worshipper as he makes each change in position. This would give prayer a Biblical flavour rather than being a carbon copy of Western cultural forms.[18]

The whole emphasis in missionary literature is placed on efforts to find similarities between Friday prayer and Sunday worship. Sunday has come to be accepted—though not clearly commanded in the Bible—as the day of worship throughout the Christian world. However, according to the contextualists, it would not be a sin if a church, located in a Muslim community, chooses Friday as the day of worship. Again the differences between Friday prayer and Sunday worship have not been properly discussed. In other words, means for the Christianization of Muslim Friday prayer have not been clearly worked out and many serious questions remain unresolved.

Christian Fasting: Fasting, one of the five pillars of Islam, is another obligatory Islamic worship. Ramaḍān, the ninth month of the Hijrah calendar, has been specified by God for keeping fast every day from dawn to sunset. The whole month is filled with spirituality throughout the Muslim world and stamps a profound influence on the believers. What should a contextualized missionary and Muslim converts still living in a Muslim country do? Should they abstain from fasting as it has not been commanded in the Scripture? As in the past, traditional missionaries still ask converts not to fast in the month of Ramaḍān. The convert is also to denounce the other forms of Islamic worship. However, the contextual missionaries, though they offer no dogmatic answer, exhort converts to fast to give an impression to the Muslims that Christians are not spiritually weak. With this purpose in mind, the

contextualized missionaries have been observing the prescribed fast of Ramaḍān. As a result, they have won appreciation from their neighbouring Muslims. It is worth noting that in uneducated Muslim societies where Islam is mostly understood through the cultural norms of family or the society rather than the Quran and the Sunnah or where the populace depends greatly on their 'Ulamā' (religious scholars) for guidance in religious affairs, such contextualized missionaries, often in the garb of a Muslim religious leader, have been highly successful, if not in winning converts, at least in minimizing the 'hostile and stern resistance' which, according to them, overwhelmingly characterizes the Muslim world.

Bible Recitation: The Muslims' love and reverence for the Quran and Quranic recitation is evident from the fact that in all parts of the Muslim world there are dedicated persons called *ḥuffāẓ*, persons who have memorized the whole Quran. Good Muslims are supposed to read the Quran in Arabic, whatever their mother tongue. For this reason Muslim parents are anxious that their children should be taught to read the Quran properly. In recent years Quranic cassettes have become widely popular and this has further increased the Muslims' attachment to the Quran. Even persons unable to understand the Arabic language delight in listening to Quranic cassettes. Because the "efficacy of canonical prayers, litanics, invocations, etc. is contained not only in the content but also in the very sounds and reverberation of the sacred language."[19]

Observing Muslims' veneration for and interest in Quranic recitation missionaries working in the United Arab Emirates once proposed to prepare Biblical cassettes:

> The oral communication of the Gospel in tape, radio or memorized form will probably best facilitate evangelization of the nomads. Expressive, poetic translations of the Scripture that can be chanted are needed to fully communicate to Koran-steeped Arab hearts.[20]

Whether Bible-cassettes have been prepared or not, it is quite evident that to what extent a contextual missionary can go to evangelize and convert Muslims to the Christian faith.

Christian 'Īds: Every group in the world has some religious or social and cultural festivals which are celebrated in a unique manner. Muslims celebrate two festivals, *'Īd al-Fiṭr* and *'Īd al-'Aḍḥā*. However, these festivals are purely of a religious nature, full of meaning and not just occasions provided for merry-making and exultation. It is suggested in missionary literature that the contextualized missionaries should

celebrate the two Muslim festivals as Christian *'Īds*. "On the Christian Id days," remarks a convert, "new clothes would be purchased for the family, a great feast would be served and special portions of food would be allotted for the poor. The focus of the day would be a special open-air church service where the Good News of the Gospel would be openly proclaimed."[21]

In the light of what has been discussed in the preceding pages it can be said that contextualization of the Gospel in any provided group involves an in-depth study of its world-view, system of values and behaviour. This is the reason that both evangelicals and missiologists who advocate a contextual approach to Muslims urge the missionaries to make a comprehensive study of Islam and the world Muslim *Ummah*, especially of the group they choose to evangelize. Such an all-embracing study of Muslim culture and societies is held as a prerequisite for the missionaries who are to be deputed to some Islamic country. Such a study, inter alia, enables a missionary to understand the differences between Islam and Christianity, of his culture and that of the target group and discern what the Gospel says to Muslim peoples in their own context. And this, in sum, is the contextual approach. A remarkable difference between the old traditional method of preaching and the contextual approach is that while in olden times missionaries went to the Muslim world with a sense of racial superiority, a different hostile culture and an easily distinguishable Christian message, attacking openly the 'falsity' of Islam, the backwardness of Muslims and demanding that they enter the Christian fold as a semi-European or American, in contextualized witness, on the contrary, Muslims are not required to give up their culture; the missionary himself changes and adapts to the Muslim culture, if not contradictory to the basic tenets of the Bible.

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Islam: Total and Permanent Revolution*

by Melika Salihbegovic

Allah, "who did not originate from anything, nor did He bring what exists into being from anything,"[1] created the world and mankind with the word *kun* (Be).[2] After that He sent us information (*'ilm*) of Himself and His creation, in the form of words too, through His prophets (A), and most of all, through His Last Prophet, Muḥammad (S), honoured by Him "with the Faithful Spirit, the Illuminating Light, and the Manifest Book."[3] His practising of Islam as total and permanent revolution even today actively lives on in humanity as an illuminative example. "One having a light walks (with ease) in darkness",[4] is a saying of the Prophet himself, the meaning of which has been echoing down through the ages.

There stands as a password over the entrance into the most perfect house—that of Islam—the formula (*kalimah*):

لا إله إلا الله

(There is) no god but Allah.

A brief historical, philosophical and linguistic analysis of the content of the *kalimah* is necessary for understanding Islam as total and permanent revolution. Fourteen centuries ago there rushed throughout the world the most radical, most universal and most uncompromising revolution ever recorded in human history. Behind it stands a metahis-

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* The authoress, a Yugoslav Muslim scholar, studied political science and philosophy at Zagreb, Sarajevo and Paris. Her publications comprise numerous books and articles on art, philosophy and literature. Having undergone constant persecution and harassment and imprisoned twice for her Islamic activities in Yugoslavia, she now lives as a political refugee in England.

torical act of the contract between human souls at the moment of their creation and their Creator, acknowledging His absolute Lordship.[5] In front of it stands a transcendental perspective heralded by eschatological visions of the Day of Resurrection, Recompense and Punishment. Its actual historical scene was the time of the worldly life of the most perfect *Muḥammadan Reality* in the shape of the Prophet Muḥammad (S) himself. The world was populated by costumed phantoms called by the names of a variety of deities, more frightening then calming to the human being of Muḥammad's time, a human being overtaken by oblivion (*ghaflah*). First, oblivion of *Tawḥīd* and then oblivion of the agreement entered into by God with the soul before assuming the worldly dress of birth, growth, tribulation and death. The Prophet (S) stepped into this world, a world of illusions and fictions transformed into small and big deities, comical, grotesque or serious, even edible divinities, deities which fell sick of small and big pox and other human sicknesses.

It had been a long time since the advent of the last of Muḥammad's predecessors—enough time for the human hand to pervert a previous message of Allah, enough time for Falsehood to resume control over the human mind. Falsehood, that common name for all Olympuses populated by the same sick consciousness with a plethora of divinities, phantoms engaged in mutual disputes. In such an historical environment, the Last Warner came, holding the flag of Islam in his hand, and bearing a motto of which the first word was *Lā* (No!). That one word at the beginning of the testimony, *No god but Allah*, contains the whole destructive but also the entire constructive power that Islam came out with in the shape of revolution. Allah had kept sending His messengers to people to teach them about His Unity and His Oneness. But Muḥammad's prophecy was sent to the whole world and remains valid till the Last Hour, being superior to all others in virtue of its universality and totality. Islam demonstrated not only how to demolish the statues of false gods as artifacts of the sick and forgetful human mind, not only how to destroy but how to heal the mentality which has been a creator of those same gods.

The universality and totality of the revolution which Islam originated and all its permanency issue from its primary modality, as a revolution in the sphere of knowledge. This fact is a result of the creative act of the Creator Himself, an act which a tradition of the Most Noble prophet Muḥammad (S) refers to, part of which is relevant here: "Our Lord, the Eternal (*al-Qadīm*) unstitched (the heavens and the earth) through the subtlety (*luṭf*) of His lordship, and the knowledge within His omniscience created all that He created through the laws of His power (*qudrah*) and split (the darkness) with the light of the dawn."[6]

Metaphorically, Allah's sending Islam in the form of a book and its

living model, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad (S) and the Imams (A), unstitched the darkness of ignorance and unconsciousness and made reason (*'aql*) a light of dawn for new human history. But returning to the linguistic analysis earlier proposed of the *shahādah*, the testimony enduring throughout ages as a solid foundation of uninterrupted, living and permanent revolutionizing of the human mind and the human world, the question arises: Why did Islam appear first with a word such as *Lā* (No)? How does it come about that this word occurs at the beginning of the sentence which has as its goal the affirmation of Allah's *Waḥdāniyyah* (Unity, Oneness)? A simple linguistic explanation would reside in the fact that negative syntactic form is more effective for an affirmation of the subject than a positive one would be. But this linguistic formula, with its prodigious psycho-cognizant results, is simultaneously an ontological formula. We are meant to remind ourselves that from the aspect of the speech of God there is no difference between word and action — Allah's speech and the existence of the thing He orders by His word to exist. For Him it is enough to say 'Be', and it is.[7] Consequently, for Him it is enough to negate, and it isn't.

Negation of Nothing and sending a thing back to Nothing is possible with a word, that is by action by one Creator only. Otherwise, Being and Nothing would be unimaginable if they were dependent on affirmation and negation by two or more speakers/creators, a plurality of gods. Divinity, both on a lexical and an ontological plane, implies perfection, indivisibility, absoluteness, unity, oneness.

Thus *Lā* (No) on the flag of Islam was not meant for some existing deities. Not only because they are not in existence but also because their existence is not possible at all. It was therefore sent to the human intellect, reason, knowledge, cognition, putting forward first of all the semantic and ontological absurdity of the existence of plurality in the concepts of Perfection, Unity, Oneness, Sovereignty, Creator, God.

So Islam and its *No* first revolutionized the human intellect itself. Ontically, no other deity can compete with Allah. However, in a misshapen consciousness they have been competing with Him as materialized ghosts, phantoms, deaf and dumb idols whose brittle nature was shown by Prophet Ibrāhīm's (A) breaking them into pieces. But behind these artifacts there stood the more resistant Olympians: divinities with a face of passions, fears, likings, objects of the will and objects of yearning, spectacles of the surrounding world, idols fashioned on the streets of human quotidian happening. This is why Islam appeared as a revolution in the realm of reason first and foremost. And reason is followed by understanding, understanding by religion, religion by ethics, ethics by actions, actions by politics, politics by authentic life, authentic life by proximity to God, proximity to God by true existence, and true existence by the *real* being predicable only of

Allah. In this wise Islam announced itself as total revolution.

It gave back to man a feeling of ontological unity and a transcendental perspective, the sense of the perpetual validity of the original agreement (*alast*), of the resumption of interrupted dialogue between God and Man, of the continuity between Individuality and Substantiality, the general and the particular, the Internal and the External. It performed the greatest and the most radical disalienation of the human being, restoring the integrity of man, in believing, thinking, feeling, willing, and in fusing action with responsibility. It made relative every authority save the absolute authority of Allah, or of those established through His investiture. It brought forward a law for each and every aspect of individual and social life, regulating man's relationship toward his Creator, himself, other men and other parts of creation. It brought a measure and a consequence for everyone and everything. Coming out with a Book, Islam prescribed a Law for human society every bit as valid as the laws the life of nature is founded on. Failure to obey it is followed by apocalyptic personal and social consequences similar to ecological catastrophes in the sphere of nature.

But the world of nature and all the rest of creation compose the horizontal branches of the tree of the divine family of creatures. Only man, through a trust taken in charge from God, composes its verticality. And for the verticality he has to thank his reason, his intelligence, which Allah through His Omniscience and His Mercy bestowed upon him together with the possibility of choice. This possibility of choice, freedom,is grounded in the Law itself. In the paradigm of the Devil's disobedience to Allah when he refuses to bow down before God's creation and in Allah's postponement of his punishment until the Last Day and in his undertaking to misguide the slaves of God, is contained the essence of Islam as permanent revolution.[8]

What is this permanency manifested in? First of all, it emerges from Islam's revolutionary nature. Islam is firstly destructive and afterwards constructive power, two logical aspects of any truly revolutionary act. It appeared on the human stage not as a fact accomplished once and for all but as a task binding on one and all. Islam is not to be received but attained. It is not waiting but endeavouring.

It appeared fourteen hundred years ago in its ideal form, with the Book and its living model, the Prophet Muḥammad (S), and with a vision of an ideal Islamic society described in this book. It replaced Falsehood with Truth, which Allah has promised to maintain until the Day of Judgement. It completed a faith. It made man competent to make choices through his own reasoning and by it installed him in a true human history in which recompense will take place through principles of divine justice, principles which are at work in his history, both in individual and social destiny. Therefore, Islam did not come to

be a station but a journey, *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, until the Day of Judgement, *Yawm al-Dīn*, the day of *Ta'wīl* (hermeneutical liberation of the Truth from the larva of this world), the Day of complete manifestation of reality.

For fourteen centuries millions of people have been making the revelation of the Quran a permanent act, the Prophet's challenge permanently audible, and human history a permanent battlefield between Reason (*'aql*) and Ignorance (*Jahl*).

Islam is the future of the world because submission (*islām*) is the primordial state of the human essence, for in the greatest submission exists the greatest freedom. Thus aspiration after Islam is aspiration after perfection, and freedom from imperfection. Perfection is incorporated in the potentiality of human being, for man was created with the Greatest Name of Allah, *al-'Ism al-'a'ẓam*. Islam is therefore aspiration toward one's original nature, toward original perfection. A permanent revolutionizing of the imperfection of individuals and societies in accordance with the criteria of the Holy Book of Allah and of the Sunnah of Prophet Muḥammad (S) and his Progeny (*Āl*) (A) is the mission of Islam as religion, view of the world, philosophy, ethics, politics, etc. There is no aspect of life devoid of Allah's interference and authority (*amr*), because nothing came into existence that He did not engender. Thence emerges the totality and permanency of Islam as revolution, and thence too the necessity of Islamic revolution.

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2. The Qur'ān, 2:117, 3:47, 6:73, 36:82.
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4. *Al-Mīzān: An Exegesis of the Qur'ān*, by al-'Allāmah as-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, vol. 1, trans. by Sayyid Sa'īd Akhtar Riḍwī, WOFIS, Tehran, 1982, Foreword.
5. The Qur'ān, 7;172.
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8. *Ibid.*. 4:117—121; 7:11—17.

Book Reviews

SHI'ISM, RESISTANCE, AND REVOLUTION. Edited by Martin Kramer. Westview Press: Boulder, Colorado; Mansel Publishing Limited: London, 1987. pp.324. ISBN 0-7201-1866-2.

Nine years ago when the Islamic Revolution triumphed in Iran, it was felt by Israeli leaders as a 'sudden' earthquake whose epicentre lay in Tehran. The dreams of a permanent entityhood for Israel were shattered by the unexpected furious death call that rose from every corner of a country that was a kind of second homeland in the Middle East for the Zionists.

That and the 'unexpected' outcome of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, launched with the purpose of destroying Palestinian resistance there, have greatly deflated the confidence of the Zionists. As if that was not enough, the Zionists are now faced with an 'undreamt of' country-wide uprising throughout Palestine, to which they respond with their traditional brutality. To criminals death is an unexpected visitor, and the Zionists have seen its arrows shot from the most 'unexpected' directions.

The present book is the product of an international conference convened by the Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel Aviv University in December 1984. The purpose was to understand the causes of the Earthquake (whose epicentre should now appear to the Zionists as to have shifted into the heart of Palestine), which if understood would also suggest ways of putting an end to it.

Although the tectonics of earthquakes may be understandable, it is not always possible to find the causes of such events whose causes lie deeply inside the human spirit. Only the pure in heart are able to see and understand what moves deep inside the hearts. Crime against man and God deprives one of the ability to see not only into the hearts of others but also within one's own self. Those who prostitute scholarship by loyally serving the ends of criminals are also deprived of true understanding.

It was such blind scholarship that the Zionists had at their disposal at the conference, a scholarship whose loyalties–loudly mute through-

out the papers, which should be read for what they don't say–lie with Western dominance and with the oppressive status quo, and which is, by inbuilt necessity, deeply hostile to Islam and the Islamic revival. It is a hostage of a disintegrating world which having decayed to the core comforts itself with the apparent intactness of its shell. It sells its wares in the marketplace of the blind.

The papers are mostly 'security' oriented, a fig-leaf term which, like 'peace', masks repression and its paraphernalia. The constant need to maintain a sharp divorce between the formal and the real meaning of words is a stigma of much of the fraudulent journalism of the West; also of its scholarship. Of course, it is not a healthy condition to have such a horror of truth. Once they were afraid to speak of the problem of Palestine as a Muslim-Zionist conflict. They were afraid even to mention the name of Islam in relation with Palestine. Now they are afraid of the name of Iran and Persia; hence the Persian Gulf is referred to throughout much of the book as 'Arab Gulf'!

The book contains sixteen articles covering various topics: "The Shi'a in Islamic History" by Bernard Lewis, "Western Studies of Shi'a Islam" by E. Kholberg, "Shi'ism as Interpreted by Khomeini: An Ideology of Revolutionary Violence," by Marvin Zonis and Daniel Brumberg, "Mahmud Taleghani and the Iranian Revolution" by Mangol Bayat, "Islam and Social Justice in Iran" by Shaul Bakhash, "Repetitions in the Iranian Revolution" by M.M.J. Fischer, "The Iraqi Shi'is and their Fate " by Elie Kedouri, "The Islamic Republic's Foreign Policy in the Gulf" by Shahram Chubin, "Shi'i Unrest in the Gulf" by Joseph Kostiner, "The Shi'is and the Lebanese State" by Joseph Olmest, "The Origins and Resurgence of Amal" by Augustus Richard Norton, "Lebanon's Shi'is after the 1982 War" by Clinton Bailey, "Syria's Alawis and Shi'ism" by Martin Kramer, "The Iranian Revolution and the Afghan Resistance" by Zalmay Khalizad, "The Shi'is of Pakistan" by Munir D. Ahmed, and "Shi'i Identity and the Significance of Muharram in Lucknow, India" by Keith Hjortshoj.

Martin Kramer in his introduction surveys the papers from his own point of view. His words at the conclusion will give some idea of the strategic purposes of the 'scholarship' reflected in the book. He says:

> It is too early to say whether Shi'is today are on the verge of a lasting split between adherents and opponents of revolutionary Shi'ism as propagated by the Islamic Republic. No development in modern times has had so great a potential for dividing Shi'ism, especially along the modern *fault lines* of language and nationality. Yet it is undeniable that the message of revolutionary Shi'ism has an appeal capable at times of spanning these same divisions. All depends on the fortunes of clerical rule in Iran, a rule that puts the preeminence of Iranian Shi'ism at great risk. For nearly five hundred years, Iran has stood at the centre of Shi'i Islam. But should the Islamic Republicans

> somehow lead Shi'is elsewhere into disaster, the faith will certainly not be abandoned, but the age of Iranian primacy in Shi'ism may well come to an end.

When decoded–that is read without the divorce in the formal and real meaning–this paragraph reads as follows:

> It is too early to say whether the covert efforts of intelligence departments guided by U.S. and Zionist intelligence agencies and financed by the Sa'ūdīs will bring about a lasting split in Shī'ism by inciting and strengthening opposition to the Islamic Revolution. No development in modern times has compelled the imperialists to find strategies for dividing Shī'ism along fault lines of language and nationality. It is undeniable that the message of revolutionary Islam has an appeal transcending these and other kind of divisions. All depends on the fortunes of the Islamic Republic in Iran, a phenomenon which compels the enemies of resurgent Islam to seek ways of curtailing the age-old preeminence of Iranian 'ulamā' in the Shī'ī world. But should the Islamic Republic be made to face defeat, either in the war or on the economic front, it would not only undermine the traditional prestige of Shī'ī 'ulamā' and scholars centred in Iran, but might also cut off the world's Shī'īs from their centres of learning now situated in Iran.

The article by Bernard Lewis is an attempt to correct the Western perceptions of Shī'īs and Shī'ī history, but brings its own distortions, subtler ones intended to replace the former cruder misrepresentations. Feigning utter blindness to the recent facts of the Islamic Revolution of Iran (which was the least violent and the least bloody of the great revolutions that occurred in modern history, and in which an unarmed people, returning flowers for bullets, heroically overthrew the Shah's bloodthirsty regime which was armed to the teeth, a revolution whose battle cry has been "blood is victorious over the sword") the author, with his inbuilt compulsion for blindness to facts and to do disservice to understanding, joins the anti-Shī'ī propaganda choir by proposing to explain the relationship between Shī'ī history and "outbreaks of violence and terrorism". It is the greatest irony of modern times that the infamous merchants of death and destruction, the planters of the seeds of conflict and war and the harvesters of destruction and misfortune, the dispensers of violence and corruption, the world-eaters whose every morsel drips of the blood of the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the militarizers and the arch-terrorists whose missiles and armadas, whose submarines and aircrafts are harbingers of universal death and destruction, should accuse the Shī'īs—the greatest victims of injustice and violence, of oppression and repression, of discrimination, and state terrorism, a fact to which many articles even in this dismal collection bear testimony—of violence and terrorism!

Accordingly, the contradicting demands of understanding and propaganda, of accuracy of observation and deliberate misrepresentation

constitute another dilemma of many of the authors. Indeed their situation is much worse than that of those blind men of the story who wanted to find out what an elephant was like.

The article "Shi'ism as Interpreted by Khomeini: An Ideology of Revolutionary Violence", as the title warns, is almost thoroughly an exercise in misrepresentative propaganda. The incompetence of the authors does not deter them from plunging intrepidly into a topic which is beyond their ken. Ignorance, falsehood and malice run deep and are visible despite attempts to conceal. An obvious example of ignorance: "This last Imam (i.e. the Twelfth Imam) is said to have gone into occultation to return on the Day of Judgement." (p.49). An Example of crude falsehood: "Khomeini believes violence should be diverted not only against Sunni governments, but also against their foreign supporters, the superpowers" (p.52). Nothing has caused so much consternation and fear in the hearts of the enemies of God and the people as the Islamic ideal of martyrdom. But the authors' silly attempt to pose as authorities on Islamic teachings is really hilarious: "This legitimation of suicidal behaviour by Khomeini constitutes a unique innovation in Shi'i thought....Khomeini's collapsing of the concepts of suicide and martyrdom may seem logical, but it is worth noting that while Islam commends the giving of one's life to defend Islam *if it is in fact necessary*, the deliberate quest to commit suicide and the use of suicide as an essential *offensive* weapon in the struggle to defend Islam is not condoned by tradition" (italics the authors' own, pp.54,56). It would have been more in order, and within the authors' competence, to put a similar argument before the U.S. Congress recommending it to abolish the Medal of Honor awarded to members of the U.S. armed forces for deeds which must involve a risk of life and self-sacrifice.

No Muslim in his right mind is "in delibrate quest to commit suicide", although every true Muslim yearns to achieve martyrdom while fighting for a righteous cause. Death is certain for all, and what is better than martyrdom in God's way? Suicide on the other hand is a pathological phenomenon and, as the statistics show, is a disease of the modern Western culture, which seems determined (and it appears to be the only case in which it shows any signs of resolution) to commit a collective suicide. Islám is a religion of life, and martyrdom knows not the threshold of death. Martyrdom and bravery appear to be death and suicide to those who have never known real life, for they are as if they had never lived: they stumble from death to death.

The article on Āyatullāh Ṭāleghānī by Mangol Bayat, full of resentment and regret, is a compound of some truth, much half-truth, and a good deal of nonsense. It is written from a viewpoint sympathetic to the secular nationalists and the Munafiqin (M.K.O.). Blind to the

great spirit of the late Ṭāleghānī, the author struggles unsuccessfully to put together the puzzling schemata of his statements. Shaul Bakhash's article concentrates mainly on the important question of land-reform legislation but leaves out other matters, as if there were nothing more to social justice. Moreover, the author neglects to put his account in its real context, against the background of a post-revolution country engaged in a long, bloody and expensive war imposed upon it, as if that should not make the slightest difference to the Revolution's quest for and commitment to social justice. Thus he inadvertently ends up paying the greatest compliment to the Islamic Republic.

The article by Fischer mixes some history and much anthropological dope to create a psychedelic scenario too bizarre to be even of any propaganda value. The author is partly aware of that; hence his remark:

> Anthropologists are often accused of reveling in exotica, in trivia of local color, of rooting about in the rubbish and ruins of the past....In constructing this paper I have been struck by the possibility that a single device of such rooting about–looking for repetitions–can help enlighten some of the dynamic instabilities of the Revolution that otherwise simply get pigeonholed in premature or speculative scenarios.(p.131)

The rest of the articles relate to topics that possessed strategic priority for U.S. and Israel back in 1984. That was of course the time when the Zionists, even in their nightmares, did not think of the proximate possibility of a popular Islamic uprising within Israel itself and staged by Sunnī youth! Right now the Zionists have enough problems on their hands to be thinking of Shī'īs in distant India and Pakistan. And, yes, it is time for the 'scholars' to meditate seriously over their own personal salvation instead of posing as trouble shooters of earthquakes. Time rapidly runs out as the Twelfth Hour draws nearer.

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا اَىَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ *

And those who do wrong shall surely know by what overturning they will be overturned.(26:227)

—Shahīd Naqawī

Readers' Forum

Lars Mahinske
Editorial Division
Encyclopaedia Britannica, INC.
310 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, Il. 60604

This is in response to the lengthy critique of various discussions in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on subjects related to Islām.

A few of the Micropaedia entries in question have been revised or rewritten since 1977, the printing year of the set reviewed by Muḥammad Sorūsh. The entry of 'Alī ar-Riḍā, for example, no longer describes him as the "Ḥasanīd *imam* of 'Alīd Muslim." Nor does the current entry state that he "was forced to withdraw by an Arab-Persian coalition." The expanded entry now indicates, as you pointed out, that "Shī'ī historians attribute his death to poison, possibly administered by the Caliph himself." Another example is that the reference to the *Fātiḥah* as a possible translation of a Christian prayer has been deleted from the entry "fātiḥah."

We readily agree with some of the assertions regarding the need to revise other material. The suggestion that Abū Bakr is "said to have been the first male convert to Islām" is true, but it is also somewhat misleading. It would appear that the statement that 'Alī "was adopted by Muḥammad" should also be reworded, and the proposal that the discussion on Adam and Eve include mention of the Islāmic version of the story is surely a reasonable one. We shall be in contact with our adviser in such matters, and all of the points raised will be given consideration. Our information will be amended where necessary in future printings.

Thank you for taking the time to inform us of the opinions expressed in the critique of *Britannica*. This criticism will assist us in the difficult task of keeping the encyclopaedia as accurate as possible.

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