

# AL-TAWHĪD

*A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Thought and Culture*

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Vol. VI, No. 1, Muḥarram-Rabī' al-'Awwal, 1409

(September - November 1988)

الامام الحسين : ...

اعتبروا ايها الناس بما وعظ الله به اوليائه ، من سوء ثنائيه  
على الاحبار ، اذ يقول : «لولا ينهاهم الربانيون والاحبار عن قولهم  
الامر ...» وقال : «لعن الذين كفروا من بني اسرائيل» الى  
قوله : «لبيس ما كانوا يفعلون» . وانما عاب الله ذلك عليهم ،  
لانهم كانوا يردون من الظلمة الذين بين اظهريهم ، المنكر  
والفساد ، فلا ينهونهم عن ذلك ، رغبة فيما كانوا ينالون منهم ، ورهبة  
مما يحذرون . والله يقول : «فلا تخشوا الناس واخشون ...» .

*O people! Take lesson from God's warning to His friends by His censure of the rabbis, when He says: "Why do the bishops and rabbis not forbid them (Christians and Jews) to utter sin" (5:63), and when He says, "Cursed were the unbelievers of the Children of Israel by the tongue of David and Jesus, Mary's son — that for their rebelling and their transgression. They forbade not one another any dishonour that they committed; surely evil were the things that they did" (5:78—79). God has reproved them because they saw the open vice and corruption of the tyrants, but did not forbid them from that on account of their love of their favours and fear of their malice, while God says, "Fear not men, but fear you Me."*

Al-'Imām al-Ḥusayn  
(*Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, p.171)

# *Al-Tawhīd*

Vol. VI, No.1, Muḥarram — Rabī' al-'Awwal 1409  
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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Merciful and the Compassionate*

## Editorial

After almost eight years of bloodshed and destruction the Iran-Iraq war has come — judging from the present appearances — to an end. Iraq and the superpowers failed to achieve the main objective for which the aggression was launched: the destruction of the Islamic Republic and the liquidation of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Aside from the initial crime of aggression, new records were set by Iraq and its patrons and partners in the history of war criminology. The international mass media also set a new record of callousness and connivance to crimes of genocidal dimensions. Both the initial aggression as well as the eight years of war crimes were tacitly condoned by the self-styled representatives of civilized and human values.

The massacre of pilgrims in Mecca, the chemical bombardment of Halabjah and Iraqi Kurdistan, the shooting down of the Iranian Airbus in the Persian Gulf, stand out in prominence against the medley of crime and vengeance against a people whose only sin was that they said 'Only Allah is our Lord, Islam is our *Dīn*, and justice and liberty are our objectives and ideals'.

It is true that the people of Iran had to pay a heavy cost for affirming the sovereignty of Allah and negating the sovereignty of the superpowers of the East and the West. Hundreds of thousands of youths in the prime of life were killed. Scores of Iranian towns and hundreds of villages were completely destroyed. Thousands became captives or were disabled physically. Thousands of families bereaved the loss of their dear ones. Billions of dollars worth of property was destroyed: homes, factories, schools, hospitals, mosques, historical monuments, bridges, equipment and what not; the list is long and a complete list of particulars will fill hundreds of volumes. But was it worth it? Was it worth it?

It all depends on what we mean by 'worth'. It all depends on what is worth what to whom. From the Islamic point of view the supreme worth and value is that man should be as God, his creator, wants him to be. He should live, think, act and behave in a manner which pleases God. To please God, without caring for material profit or loss or for the pleasure or displeasure of any creature, is the supreme worth. Everything else, every other value, derives its worthiness and value from this absolute, ultimate value.

Whatever the people of Iran may have lost in the path of pleasing God by defending their faith, their values, their independence and their liberty against aggression, all their losses were a price that they voluntarily paid for acquiring the Creator's good pleasure, that is, for aligning themselves with the sublime purposes and ends of creation itself,

towards which the entire universe is in motion. As a result, whatever they might have lost, they have not lost their honour, their human dignity, their ideals, their values and their liberty.

What did the superpowers and their henchmen gain by their eight-year criminal performance? Of course, they sold some arms and deadly chemicals. They indeed made some blood-soaked rubles and dollars (that too at the cost of some of their lackeys). But it was at the cost of many many horrendous crimes and atrocities against humanity and the order of creation. Nobody, not even the silliest of their henchmen, will assert that the superpowers have gained honour and dignity and made a better name in the last eight years. Nobody will claim that their world forums and media have not added enormously to their ignominy in the last eight years. After these eight years every honourable human being in the world regards the superpowers and their allies as the most despicable of entities.

Yes, the superpowers assume that honourable persons do not exist, and even if they do, they need not be taken into account. The superpowers assume that crimes, however heinous and horrendous, do not leave any retaliatory effect on the realm of being; like the surface of the Persian Gulf after the horrific Airbus tragedy of July 3, soon everything, they assume, returns to the normal as soon as the spots of blood have been washed away or bleached by sunlight and time. In fact the only purpose of being, they suppose, is to carry the burden of their filthy existence and to sustain the perpetuity of their destructive domination.

Such a thing, of course, is not true, and history, which has crushed tyrants into ignominious non-existence and grounded grand colossi into the anonymity of dust, is there to bear its silent testimony. And praise indeed belongs to God, the breaker of the tyrants and the avenger of the oppressed.

A war has raged for eight years; not unlike a great case being fought in the halls of a supreme court, the war too has been a case fought out in the grand high court of being. Here the criminals have produced the testimony against themselves in the factual form of the criminal acts themselves. The other litigant, the oppressed, has produced the facts of his victimization. The end of the war is beginning of the brief interval which precedes the issuance of judgement. The judgement is about to be handed out. It hangs in the air and is about to make its cataclysmic descent to reorder the realm of being in accordance with its verdict. We await that verdict, which shall, we hope, be one of the most significant verdicts in human history to be issued from the court of being.

The war despite its destruction has taught a number of lessons to foe and friend and unveiled many significant realities. First and foremost, it showed the great power of Islam as a mobilizer and sustainer of



peoples in their struggle against the enemies of humanity and God. All alone the Islamic Republic of Iran was able to put up a brilliant defence against the united forces of global *kufr*.

The war showed that if an Islamic people were determined to lead a proud and independent existence under the shadow of Islam and to negate absolutely the domination of the superpowers, there was nothing which could stop them.

The war proved that superiority of weapons and technology is of little consequence in confrontation with poorly-armed yet determined human beings of superior quality and morale.

This war proved that the rival superpowers, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., are equal enemies of the independence and dignity of the Third-World nations. There is no difference of opinion between them that weaker nations must be dominated, subdued, exploited and enslaved. The difference is confined to who shall enslave whom. Despite its hollow 'anti-imperialist' rhetoric the U.S.S.R. is as much an enemy of independent nations as the U.S. and its Western allies. Both are equally hostile towards Islam and dismayed at its emergence as a world force. The Iran-Iraq war showed that this is one area where the two can be eager collaborators and partners. They are as keen to stop Islam from becoming a unifying political ideology of an Islamic world extending from Indonesia to Morocco as they are keen to eliminate China as an emerging threat to their present and future interests in Asia and the Pacific.

This war also showed the depth of the abasement and wretchedness of the rulers of some Muslim countries. They pumped the resources of their countries into the coffers of the enemies of God and the Prophet (S), to fuel and sustain an aggression against those who sought to revive Islam and its laws, values and ideals. The world-eaters sold murderous arms and equipment and made some filthy dollars and rubles. But what did those wretches attain for themselves and their peoples by pumping their resources into the pockets of the merchants of death and by conspiring to bring down the price of precious oil? Indeed, by spending their countries' resources to deprive themselves and their people of an honourable existence in the shadow of Islam and Divine mercy, in the hope of some more years of the patronage of the feeble Archsatan, they have bought for themselves the blackest and ugliest kind of wretchedness imaginable at the greatest possible price. Such is the fate of those who oppose God.

... فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٥٩﴾

*Then take lesson O those who have insight. (59:2)*

Tehran

Muharram, 1409

Muharram—Rabi' al-'Awwal, 1409

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# Forty Ḥadīth: An Exposition\* Part 13

by Imām Rūḥullāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī

Translated from the Persian by Martyr Mahliqā Qarā'i

## TWELFTH ḤADĪTH (Contd. From the Last Issue):

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: كَانَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَقُولُ: نَبَّهَ بِالتَّفَكُّرِ قَلْبَكَ وَجَافَ عَنِ  
اللَّيْلِ جَنْبَكَ وَأَتَقَ اللَّهَ رَبَّكَ.

### The Virtues of the Midnight Prayer:

**N**ow remains the exposition of these two phrases of the ḥadīth: جَافَ عَنِ اللَّيْلِ جَنْبَكَ وَأَتَقَ اللَّهَ رَبَّكَ. In this blessed pronouncement, the Commander of the Faithful, al-'Imām 'Alī (A), has placed the actions of the heart, contemplative awareness, and the *taqwā* of God by the side of night vigils and keeping aloof from the bed for the sake of worship. This proves the distinction and merit it commands, and the practice has been greatly glorified in the traditions. The biographies of the Imams of guidance (A), and those of great sages and eminent scholars, indicate that they not only assiduously observed it, but attached great importance to the practice of staying awake until the late hours of night, aside from the aim of worship.

There are forty-one aḥādīth recorded in *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah* (the greatest of Shī'ī books, which is the pivot of the Shī'ī legal school and the source book of Shī'ī scholars and fuqahā') about the benefits and merits of observing this practice, and there are several aḥādīth about the undesirability of giving up this habit. There are, of course countless of similar traditions in the books of supplications and prayers, but we shall quote only a few in the following, as a token of *barakah* and blessing:

---

\*This is the exposition of the remaining part of the twelfth ḥadīth and relates to the virtues of night vigils and prayers. The first part of the ḥadīth, whose exposition appeared in the earlier issue of *al-Tawhīd* (vol.V, Nos. 3 & 4), related to the virtues of *tafakkur* (contemplation).

عَنِ الْكَافِي بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) يَقُولُ: كَانَ فِي وَصِيَّةِ النَّبِيِّ (ص) لِعَلِيِّ، قَالَ: يَا عَلِيُّ أَوْصِيكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ بِخِصَالٍ فَأَحْفَظْهَا ثُمَّ قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّهُ إِلَى أَنْ قَالَ: وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ.

It is reported in *al-Kāfi*, from Mu‘āwiyah ibn ‘Ammār, who said that he heard al-‘Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) say: “In the *waṣiyyah* addressed to ‘Alī (A) by the Prophet (S), he (S) said: ‘O ‘Alī, I enjoin you regarding certain habits that you must safeguard.’ Then the Prophet (S) prayed, ‘O God, succour him.’ Then (continuing his advice) he said: ‘Observe the midnight prayer. Observe the midnight prayer. Observe the midnight prayer.’”<sup>14</sup>

Its great significance may be understood from the entire tradition:

وَعَنِ الْخِصَالِ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع)، قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ لِحَبْرَائِيلَ عِظْنِي، فَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ عِشْ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَأَحِبِّ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مُفَارِقُهُ وَأَعْمَلْ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مُلَاقِيهِ وَأَعْلَمْ (أَنَّ) شَرَفَ الْمُؤْمِنِ قِيَامُهُ بِاللَّيْلِ وَعِزَّهُ كَفُّهُ عَنِ أَعْرَاضِ النَّاسِ.

In *al-Khiṣāl*, Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) is reported to have said: “The Prophet (S) asked Jibra’īl to exhort him about something. Jibra’īl said: ‘O Muḥammad! Live you as you wish, for verily you will die one day. And love whatever you like, for verily you will have to part from it. Act as you wish, for verily you will have to face it. Know that the distinction of a believer lies in his establishing the night vigil and his nobleness lies in refraining from (maligning) the people’s honour.’”<sup>15</sup>

The high degree of its significance can be understood from Jibra’īl’s especially recommending it to the Messenger of God (S); for had Jibra’īl (A) deemed anything else as more important, he would have mentioned it while giving advice.

وَفِي الْمَجَالِسِ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ فِي حَدِيثٍ فَمَنْ رُزِقَ صَلَاةَ اللَّيْلِ مِنْ عَبْدٍ أَوْ أَمَةٍ قَامَ لِلَّهِ مُخْلِصاً فَتَوَضَّأَ وَضُوءاً سَابِغاً وَصَلَّى لِلَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ بِنِيَّةٍ صَادِقَةٍ وَقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ وَعَيْنٍ دَامِعَةٍ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى خَلْفَهُ سَبْعَةَ صُفُوفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، كُلُّ صَفٍّ مَالِيحِي عَدَدَهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّهَ، أَحَدُ ظَرْفِي كُلِّ صَفٍّ بِالْمَشْرِقِ وَالْآخَرُ بِالْمَغْرِبِ، فَإِذَا فَرَّغَ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ بَعْدَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ.

It is reported in *al-Majālis* on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that the Prophet (S) said in a ḥadīth: “When God Almighty appoints the night vigil as sustenance for His slave, man or woman, when he/she wakes up at night with sincere devotion towards God, performs a full ablution, and says prayer for the

Almighty God with the purity of intention, with wholeheartedness and with tearful eyes, God Almighty appoints seven rows of angels (to pray) behind him/her. No one except God can count their number on each side of each row, which extends from the east to the west. When he concludes the prayer, God Almighty writes grades for him equal to their number.”<sup>16</sup>

وَعَنِ الْعَلِيِّ بِإِسْنَادِهِ إِلَى أَنَسٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ: الرَّكْعَتَانِ فِي جَوْفِ اللَّيْلِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَافِيهَا.

In ‘*Ilal al-sharā’i*’, it is reported from Anas that he heard the Messenger of God say: “Two *rak‘ah* of prayer performed in the middle of night are dearer to me than the entire world and everything therein.”<sup>17</sup>

In a number of aḥādīth it has been reported that the midnight prayer is the *mu‘min*’s honour and dignity, and his adornment in the Hereafter, in the same way as children and wealth are the adornments of this world.

وَعَنِ الْعَلِيِّ بِإِسْنَادِهِ إِلَى جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ: مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا إِلَّا لِإِطْعَامِهِ الطَّعَامَ وَصَلَوْتِهِ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسِ نِيَامًا.

In ‘*Ilal al-sharā’i*’, Jābir is reported to have heard the Prophet (S) say: “God did not befriend Ibrāhīm (A) except for his feeding people and offering prayers by night while the people were fast asleep.”<sup>18</sup>

Had there been no other merit besides this for the midnight prayer, it would have been enough — but for those alone who deserve to practise it, not the likes of me. We do not know what honour and distinction it is and what it means to possess the station of being befriended by God. All intellects fail to comprehend it. If all the adornments of Paradise were displayed before his eyes, such a man would not even glance at them. You also, had you a beloved dear to your heart, or a very dear friend, were he to be present in front of you, it will cause you to neglect all the good and delicious things, absorbing your attention entirely with the vision of the beloved and the radiance of the countenance of the dear one, though this similitude is out of proportion for describing this condition, to the extent that the east is far from the west.

وَعَنِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: مَا مِنْ عَمَلٍ حَسَنٍ يَعْمَلُهُ الْعَبْدُ إِلَّا وَلَهُ ثَوَابٌ فِي الْقُرْآنِ إِلَّا صَلَاةُ اللَّيْلِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يُبَيِّنْ ثَوَابَهَا لِعَظِيمِ خَطَرِهَا عِنْدَهُ تَجَافَا جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِنْ

From 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm who, with his chain of narrators, reports from al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) that he said: "For every good deed that a slave of God performs, the reward for it is specified in the Quran, except for the midnight prayer, which commands an unusually high reward on account of its great worth. (God says in the Quran): *Their sides shun their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and hope; and they expend of what We have provided them. No soul knows what delight is laid up for them secretly, as a recompense for that they were doing (32:16,17).*"<sup>19</sup>

What can be the delight that God Almighty has kept in store for them, concealing it from the eyes of all? Had it been something similar to the flowing streams, the magnificent mansions, and the diverse bounties of Paradise, He would have described it — as in the case of other deeds, of which (at least) the angels are aware. This shows that this reward is above all these and of a different kind; its greatness stands beyond that which can be communicated to anyone, especially the inhabitants of this lowly world. Do not liken the bounties of this world to those of the other. Do not imagine that the Paradise and the gardens therein are similar to the gardens of this world, only somewhat vaster and of a greater degree of grandeur. There is the abode of Divine beneficence and the house of the hospitality of the Lord. The entire world is not comparable in grandeur to a single hair of a houri of Paradise. Rather it is not comparable even to a thread of the garments made for its inhabitants.

Despite all this, God Almighty has named none of these as reward for the performers of the midnight prayer, and has only referred to the high station of theirs in the words of the above verse. But, alas, we are indolent, being not men of certitude. Otherwise, it would not have been possible for us to be neglectful to such a degree and to be so drowned in deep sleep till morning. If the night vigils were to make man aware of the mysteries of *ṣalāt*, were he to preoccupy his mind with the remembrance and contemplation of the Lord, and were his nights to become mounts of ascent into the Divine Proximity, his reward would be nothing other than the vision of the Absolute Beauty.

And woe to us, the negligent who do not wake up from slumber till the end of life and remain under the intoxication of nature! Woe to us, whom every day increases in stupefaction! Woe to us, who live on the animal plane, comprehending nothing but eating, drinking and lovemaking! Whatever we do, even if it is worship, that too is merely meant for catering to the needs of the belly and the underneath. Do you imagine that the *ṣalāt* of Khalīl al-Raḥmān, the Friend of the Beneficent (Ibrāhīm), was similar to that of ours? He did not speak of his wishes even to Jibra'il — and we? We do not hesitate to beg even

Satan (if we believe him to be mighty enough to grant our prayers) to fulfil our desires!

Yet there is no need to lose hope. It is possible that after a period of performing the night vigil and habituating ourselves to it God Almighty may gradually help you and cover you, with an invisible gesture of grace, with the robe of His mercy. But, on the whole, do not be oblivious of the mysteries of worship, and do not devote yourself merely to the outward refinements of Qur'ānic recitings. If you cannot perform it with a sincerity of intention, strive at least for the delight that God Almighty has kept hidden from all the sights. And remember in your prayers, should it be your wish, this rebellious and beastly sinner who has for-gone all higher stations to remain content to thrive on the animal plane. And chant with full attention and sincerity of intention this prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي التَّجَافِي عَنْ دَارِ الْغُرُورِ وَالْإِنَابَةَ إِلَى دَارِ الْخُلُودِ وَالِإِسْتِعْدَادَ لِلْمَوْتِ قَبْلَ حُلُولِ  
الْفَوْتِ .

My God, I implore Thee to rescue me from the house of illusion and this abode of delirium, and help me to return to the abode of eternity. Grant me the ability and preparedness to die before such an opportunity is lost.<sup>20</sup>

### What is Taqwā?

This should be known that *taqwā* (derived from *wiqāyah*, defence) is a kind of defence and shielding. In common speech, as well as in the vocabulary of traditions, it means to restrain or bridle oneself from violating Divine commands (*awāmir* and *nawāhī*) and from going against what is pleasing to God. It is usually used for efficacious guarding of the soul and total control of it from falling into illegal and illegitimate acts, by refraining from all that is suspect (i.e. not known to be permissible for certain):

وَمَنْ أَخَذَ بِالشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْمُحَرَّمَاتِ وَهَلَكَ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُ وَمَنْ رَتَعَ حَوْلَ الْحَمَى يُوشِكُ  
أَنْ يَقَعَ فِيهِ .

Whosoever pursues dubious things, falls into forbidden things (*muharramāt*) and is destroyed on account of his ignorance, such as an animal that grazes around a mire is liable to soon get entrapped in it.<sup>21</sup>

This should be known that although mere *taqwā* does not by itself constitute the higher stages of perfection and spiritual accomplishment, but reaching a high station is also not possible without it; for as long as the soul is smeared with commission of prohibited deeds, one cannot

enter the door of humanity and cannot be a wayfarer of its path. As long as man remains obedient to his carnal wishes and sensual pleasures and their sweetness hangs in his mouth, he cannot even reach the preliminary grades of human perfection. As long as he cherishes the love of the world in his heart and has the fondness for mundane things, he cannot reach the station of even those who are halfway on the road (*mutawassitūn*) and the *zuhhād*. And as long as self-love lies embedded in his essence, he will not reach the station of the sincere (*mukhliṣūn*) and the lovers of God. Until the love for the pluralities of the world (*mulk*) and the Hereafter (*malakūt*) is evident in his heart, he will not reach the high station of the *majdhūbūn* (those immersed in the Divine and detached from all worldly attachments). And until the plurality of the Names is manifest within the core of his essence, he cannot attain total annihilation (*fanāʾ*). As long as his heart is turned towards the spiritual station, he has not attained the station of complete extinction. And until his essence is prone to take up different colours (*talwīn*), he has not reached the station of stable endurance, and the Essence, as the referent of the Name of the Essence, will not cast Its eternal and everlasting radiance into his heart. Thus, for ordinary men *taqwā* is with respect to the forbidden things; for the elect it is vis-a-vis sensual pleasures; for the ascetics it is in relation to the world; for the sincere it is in relation to the love of the self; and for the *majdhūbūn* it is in relation to the plurality of Act; for the *fāniyūn* (those who have annihilated themselves in the Essence) it is in relation to the plurality of the Names; for the *wāṣilūn* (those who have reached the Essence) *taqwā* is in relation to absorption in the annihilation; and for the *mutamakkinūn* it is in regard to inner instabilities (*talwīnāt*), and hence the Quran enjoins:

فَأَسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ ...

*So be as steadfast as thou art commanded. (11:112)*

There is much that can be said for each one of these stations, the description of which would not lead the likes of us anywhere except into confusion and bafflement over terms, blind as we are to the meanings concealed by the veils of concepts, and there are a people who benefit every field. Now we shall turn our attention to *taqwā* in its elementary form, which is more significant for mankind.

#### Taqwā for the Common People:

Remember, my dear, that in the same way as there is health and sickness for the human body and remedies and cures for correcting it,



there is also health and disease and remedies and cures for the human soul as well. Its health and well-being is observance of moderation, it lies in treading the human path, and sickness and affliction is the result of deviating from the right path of humanity. The spiritual maladies and diseases are a thousand times more significant than the physical maladies; for at the most the latter ultimately lead to death. As soon as death approaches and the soul leaves the body, all physical maladies and corporeal defects and infirmities disappear for one, and one does not feel any bodily pain and affliction any more.

But if, God forbid, one is afflicted with spiritual maladies and diseases of the soul, the time of death is withdrawal of the soul's attention from the body and its redirection towards the domain of the spirit: that is the beginning of the experience of these sicknesses and afflictions. The similitude of attention toward the world and its attachments is like the narcotics which makes its addict oblivious of himself. The breaking of the soul's bonds with the realm of the physical world makes the soul gain self-consciousness. As soon as it becomes self-conscious, all the pains, diseases and indispositions that lie latent within the depths of the essence, now overwhelm it and each and every thing that remained invisible until that time, like fire smouldering under ashes, becomes evident. Those diseases and maladies either cannot be driven away and adhere firmly to one, or if they are remediable, it is only after being subjected to tortures, pains, fire and burning for thousands of years that they can be wiped away: *أَخِرُ الدَّوَاءِ الْكَيُّ*, 'the last cure is cauterization.' God Almighty says:

يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ ...

*...It will be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks and their backs will be branded therewith. (9:35)*

The apostles of God are similar to kind physicians who out of great concern for treating illnesses prescribe different remedies in accordance with the severeness of the disease. They have strived to guide mankind on the right path of genuine guidance (We are God-trained physicians). The effect of the spiritual deeds and actions of the heart, as well as the external deeds and actions of the body, is similar to that of a medicine. In the same way, the effect of *taqwā*, on each of its levels, is similar to abstaining from those things that aggravate the disease. Unless the sick man does not abstain from harmful things, it is not possible that his malady be replaced by well-being and the prescribed remedy be effectual. During physical illness, sometimes, despite a little intemperance, medicine and nature do their work and one may regain his health and well-being; for nature itself is a protector of health and medicine acts as

its assistant. But the matter is more serious in the case of spiritual maladies, as here the nature dominates the spirit from the very beginning, and the spiritual side heads towards corruption and decline:

... إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ ...

*Verily, it is the self which incites to evil. (12:53)*

Accordingly, the disease overwhelms it on the slightest indulgence and intemperance, making inroads and destroying its health and vigour completely. Therefore, anyone who is concerned with his spiritual soundness, will try to improve his condition after finding the ways of getting rid of painful chastisement. His well-being rests upon two things: one is to adopt those things which bring spiritual health, and the other is to abstain from things which bring spiritual harm and affliction.

It should be remembered that the spiritual harm inflicted by the forbidden things is greater than all other vices, and it is for this very reason that they have been forbidden. And to perform the obligatory and incumbent duties is also most necessary, and it is for this reason that they have been made obligatory and given priority over all other things. These have been considered as the foremost and the most essential steps in the direction of spiritual advancement.

Treading the path of felicity and reaching the highest human grades and stations depends upon having traversed these two stages. Anyone who observes them acquires felicity and salvation. Of these two, *taqwā*, or abstinence from *muharramāt*, is the more significant. The mystics and the wayfarers have also considered it more significant than the other step. A study of the traditions (of the Prophet [S] and the Imams [A]) and the sermons of the *Nahj al-balāghah* further confirms this that the Infallible Ones (A) also laid great emphasis on this step.

Therefore, O dear, consider the first stage to be of utmost importance and be greatly heedful and attentive regarding these matters. If the first step is taken rightly and this foundation is laid solidly, there is hope of reaching the other stations; otherwise it is impossible to attain the higher stations and very difficult and painstaking to obtain salvation. Our precious Shaykh used to enjoin us to attend constantly to the following verses of the *Sūrat al-Hashr*:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ لَا يَسْتَوِي أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَٰذَا

الْقُرْءَانَ عَلَى جِبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَشِيعًا مُتَّصِدًا عَامِنٍ خَشِيَةً اللَّهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ  
 لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ  
 ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ  
 الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ  
 الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

*O ye who believe! Observe your duty (taqwā) to God. And let every soul look to that which it sendeth on before for the morrow. And observe your duty (taqwā) to God! Verily, God is informed of what ye do. And be not ye as those who forgot God, and He caused them to forget their souls. Such are the evildoers. Not equal are the people of the Fire and the people of the Garden. The people of the Garden, they are the victorious. If We had caused the Quran to descent upon the mountain, thou (O Muhammad) verily hadest seen it humbled, rent asunder by the fear of God. Such similitudes coin We for mankind that haply they may reflect. He is God, than Whom there is no other god, the Knower of the invisible and the visible. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is God, than Whom there is no other god, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, Peace, the Keeper of faith, the Guardian, the Majestic, the Compeller, the Superb. Glorified be God from all that they ascribe as partners (unto Him)! He is God, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59:18—24)*

Our Shaykh would ask us to recite these verses after daily prayers and to contemplate over their meaning, especially in the late hours of night when the heart is relaxed, stating that it is very effective for curing the soul and for holding the mischief of the self and Satan at bay. He would recommend us to be with ablution (*wudū'*) all the time, for, he would say, it is like a warrior's armour.

In any case, beseech and entreat God Almighty with supplications and tears to succour you and assist you during this trial and to help you in acquiring the faculty of *taqwā*. Remember that in the beginning it will appear to be a little hard, but after strict observance of a few days discomfort will change into comfort and hardship into leisure and tranquillity; rather, it will give you a unique spiritual joy, which those who have tasted value higher than all other enjoyments.

God willing, after strict vigilance and total *taqwā*, you will progress towards the station of *taqwā* attained by the elect, which is *taqwā* against sensual pleasures. When you taste the sweetness of spiritual enjoyment, you will gradually turn away from physical pleasures and try to evade them. Traversing the path will become easier for you and you will not attach any value to transitory physical enjoyments; rather, you will abhor them. The worldly treasures will appear ugly and coarse to your

eyes.

In this state of consciousness, you will realize that each one of the worldly pleasures leaves its trace on the soul, a black blot on the heart: it intensifies the love for this world, which itself causes one to cling to this place, and, at the time of the wrenching away of the soul from the body, takes the form of the agony of death and its distresses and squeezes. Mainly, the anguish and agony of death and its severeness are the result of these pleasures and these attachments to the corporeal world, as said earlier. As soon as man gains consciousness of this fact, all the physical pleasures lose their significance in his eyes.

He becomes abhorant towards the world, its treasures and adornments. This itself is another success, whence the wayfarer advances towards the third grade of *taqwā*. Thereupon, treading the Path of God becomes easier for him and the road to humanness becomes illuminated and spacious. Every step that he takes carries him further on the way of Truth.

His exercises assume sacred validity. He becomes averse to the self, its ways and its demands. He senses within his being the love of God, and he is no more satisfied now with the promises of Paradise and the palaces and the houris thereof. He yearns for a higher ideal and end, hating his (earlier) self-seeking and self-love. His *taqwā* is now directed against self-love and he becomes *muttaqī* in regard to his own self-indulgence. This is a high and lofty attainment and the first step in the direction of sensing the fragrance of *wilāyah*. God Almighty specifies a seat for him under the shelter of His grace and succours him with His special favours.

The matters that the wayfarer on the Divine path experiences after this are beyond the ken of expression. And praise belongs to God, in the beginning and the end, outwardly and inwardly, and may His benedictions be upon Muḥammad and the pure of his progeny.

*To be continued—'in shā' Allāh.*

#### NOTES:

14. Al-Kulaynī, *Rawḍat al-Kāfi*, p.162; al-Ḥurr al-'Āmili, *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, V, 268; al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Man lā yaḥḍuruḥu al-faqīh*, I, 484; al-Kulaynī, *Furū' al-Kāfi*, I, 73.

15. Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Thawāb al-'a'māl*, p.63, ḥadīth 41; *Man lā yaḥḍuruḥu al-faqīh*, I, 471,

16. *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, V, 275.

17. Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *'Ilal al-sharā'i'*, p.138.

18. *Ibid.*, p.23; *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, V, 276.

19. *'Ilal al-sharā'i'*, p.23; *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, V, 276.

20. Shaykh 'Abbās al-Qummī, *Mafātīḥ al-jinān*.

21. *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*.

# Tadwīn al-Ḥadīth: A Historical Study of the Writing and Compilation of Ḥadīth *Part 3*

by Rasūl Ja'fariyān

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

**I**t was seen above that it is not possible to hold the Prophet (S) responsible for the failure to write ḥadīth; such a stand would raise such questions as have no answer. It was mentioned that some of the Caliphs interfered directly in this matter and forbade the writing of ḥadīth. Here, after mentioning the reasons given by them for taking such a step, we shall try to find an explanation for it. After evaluating a number of reasons that have been offered in this regard, we shall mention what we consider to be the main reason behind the prohibition, together with sufficient evidence to support our viewpoint.

## The Reasons Given for the Prohibition:

1. The first reason that is offered is the fear lest the people's failure to distinguish between the Quran and the Prophet's traditions should result in the corruption (*tahrīf*) of the Quranic text, an unforgivable offence.<sup>148</sup>

This argument, which is unacceptable, has been rejected by Ustādh Abū Riyyah in the following words:

Such a reason may appear as convincing to ordinary people, but it cannot be accepted by a researcher. Because it would mean that the eloquence of the Quran stands on the same level as that of ḥadīth.<sup>149</sup>

What he means is that if the miracle of Quranic eloquence is perceptible for the people, it cannot be claimed that they would have mixed the Prophet's traditions, which stand on a lower level of eloquence than the Quran, with the verses of the Holy Book. Such a viewpoint, in fact, amounts to a denial of the Quran's miraculous character.

Moreover, to believe in the possibility of mixing between the Quran and ḥadīth is to believe in the possibility of textual corruption

finding way into the Quran. Such a belief is unwarranted because the purity of the Quran has been guaranteed by God Almighty:

... إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

*Verily, We have sent down the Remembrance, and verily We are its protector.*  
(15:9)

It may be further pointed out that a group of Companions remembered the entire Quran by heart, and in view of their great care and devotion towards the Book it was not reasonable to entertain any fear of intermingling between the Quran and ḥadīth. The most that may be said is that the threat was only a possibility, which could not be given a weight equal to the certain dangers and harms which would follow due to not writing ḥadīth, harms which became obvious from the first day. The Companions disagreed amongst themselves from the early days about some laws of the Shari'ah, and it was obvious that if the Prophet's traditions were not recorded the extent of this variance would become more serious with time, as it did. Between a remote threat and a certain danger, they should have given more weight to the latter, although, basically, the former had no real weight at all.

2. The second explanation which Abū Riyyah offers after accepting that the prohibition came from the Prophet (S) is that the Prophet (S) wished to keep the commands of the Shari'ah within restricted limits and was opposed to the proliferation of religious dicta (*adillah*). This, according to him, is the reason which also lies behind the instances where the Prophet (S) detested questions being put to him. The same reason also holds true in case of traditions which were valid at a particular time after which it was not permissible to act upon them.<sup>150</sup>

We consider this argument to be very weak, as it is not possible to accept the claim that the Prophet (S) was opposed to the growth of legally significant traditions serving as the basis of the legal system of the Shari'ah. How can we accept it when the Quran and the Sunnah are together supposed to answer the variegated needs for law to the Judgement's Day and to offer perennial guidance to man? Moreover, we should point out once more that we do not believe that the Prophet (S) ever issued such a prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth.

3. Al-'Awzā'i, offering another explanation, writes: "The science of ḥadīth is a noble one when it is transmitted orally, always keeping the people engaged in recalling traditions to one another. But, when written, their light would fade and they would fall into unworthy hands."<sup>151</sup>

We may point out that although oral transmission is beneficial in constantly reminding people about the contents of traditions, its

utility as a precise, and sole, means of recording them is questionable. Actually, such a benefit was accompanied by a great number of harms. Moreover, this reason is one which al-'Awzā'ī has invented himself, and it is doubtful whether it was considered by those who prohibited the writing of ḥadīth.

4. Ibn 'Abd al-Birr, while offering an explanation similar to the above one, writes:

The writing of aḥādīth was prohibited so that individuals should not rely solely on what they have written, abstaining from memorizing them. In that case, the tradition of memorizing ḥadīth would have disappeared.<sup>152</sup>

This rationale is also unacceptable, because the harms resulting from the failure to write ḥadīth were incomparably too serious to be equated with such kind of benefits. Human civilization and culture have been guarded through the written word and not by the means of memory, although the memorization of ḥadīth is itself a good and significant practice.

5. Another reason that is given in this regard is that had ḥadīth been written down the people would have abandoned the Quran to give all their attention to ḥadīth.<sup>153</sup>

This argument is also not defensible, because the same thing might be said of oral ḥadīth and the Quran. It is true that exclusive attention to ḥadīth is a deviation which those who are prone to it must be warned against and asked to take an equal interest in the Quran. But prohibition on writing of ḥadīth, which inflicted irremediable damage on Islamic culture, was not a correct way of obtaining that result.

6. The author of *Abjad al-'ulūm* writes:

The Ṣaḥābah and the Tābi'ūn, on account of the purity of their faith and the blessing of their proximity to the Prophet's times, as well as due to the absence of disagreement and the opportunity of referring to reliable persons, had no need to write ḥadīth and the laws. But when Islam spread, they began to write and compile ḥadīth, fiqh and the tafsīr of the Quran.<sup>154</sup>

What the author states is not the reason for the opposition of some Companions to the writing of ḥadīth but only an explanation — and that too an incorrect one — of why ḥadīth was not written; because the real cause of it was opposition to the writing of ḥadīth, not absence of the need to do so. Moreover, the spread of Islam occurred in the first twenty, or at the most fifty, years after the Prophet's demise, whereas the writing and compilation of ḥadīth was delayed until the latter part of the first half of the 2nd/8th century. Aside from these two points it is well-known that the ascription of fabrications to the Prophet (S)

began in his (S) own lifetime, and it naturally assumed larger proportions in the absence of a written tradition. Also, it was a duty of the Companions, who differed amongst themselves over legal questions, to stop the growth of forgeries and further differences by committing ḥadīth to writing.

7. The actual reason that lay behind the prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth, I believe, was the one which has been advanced by a contemporary scholar Sayyid Ja'far Murtaḍā and which is confirmed by the evidence available. He says:

There existed two sects among the Jews, of which one believed in a written tradition. The other which did not, believed that nothing except the Torah should be committed to writing. This second group was called *Qurrā'* (Readers). This has been pointed out by Ḍādā in his book on Jewish religious thought. Ka'b al-'Aḥbār, a Jewish convert to Islam, belonged to this second sect. Once asked a question by 'Umar about poetry, of the things he says about Arabs is that a group of the descendants of Ismā'il carried the Gospel only in their hearts and spoke with wisdom.... It is probable that the Caliph had taken the idea (of not writing anything except the Quran) from Ka'b al-'Aḥbār, with whom he was on very intimate terms and whose opinions he respected.

Moreover, the prohibition on writing ḥadīth also went well with his state policies, for thereby he could curb criticism and further consolidate his own power. Such a step would have resulted in the effacement of the part of ḥadīth relating to the opponents' claims and merits and which served to lend strength to their position.<sup>155</sup>

The author, as his statement shows, considers probable that a number of reasons lay behind the prohibition on writing ḥadīth, of which the most important was the influence of the views of the Ahl al-Kitāb over the Second Caliph, who, it seems, had liked to read their books since the time of his conversion.

That which confirms this influence is the *riwāyah* of 'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, according to which the Caliph had first intended to have the '*Sunan*' compiled and he even consulted the Companions about his plan. They approved of it, but he changed his mind with the argument that the Ahl al-Kitāb had abandoned their scripture for other books that they had written and that he would not allow something similar to happen with the Quran.<sup>156</sup>

It is very probable that this argument of the Caliph was inspired by Ka'b al-'Aḥbār, who belonged to the sect of the *Qurrā'*, who refrained from writing anything besides the Torah. Ka'b had evil designs against Islam; although the Caliph may not have had similar intentions, he, unfortunately, failed to see through Ka'b's malice.

'Umar's argument against the writing of ḥadīth came to be echoed by others. Abū Burdah reports from his father that he said: "Banū



Isrā'īl wrote books and abandoned the Divine Scripture".<sup>157</sup> Ḥakam ibn 'Aṭīyah narrated from Muḥammad (probably, Muḥammad ibn Sirīn) that he used to say: "It has been narrated that Banū Isrā'īl were led into error on account of the books that they inherited from their ancestors."<sup>158</sup> Another scholar writes:

One of the major influences that the Jews exerted upon Muslims was the latter's practice of refraining from writing ḥadīth. It is written in the Talmud, "You have no right to write things which you narrate orally." It is not improbable that the Muslims were inspired by Ka'b al-'Aḥbār in this matter, although they set it forth in the form of a Prophetic tradition. An evidence of it is the declaration of the Caliph which he made after burning the traditions that had been collected: مَنَّاة كَمَثْنَاهِ (أَوْ مَشْنَاهِ) أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ. "A *Mathnāt* (or *Mishnāh*) like the *Mathnāt* of the People of the Book".<sup>159</sup> These words also indicate his adherence to the practice of the Jews.

Abū 'Ubayd, in his *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, writes:

I asked a scholar learned in the Torah and Gospel about the word '*Mathnāt*'. He said. "The rabbis and doctors of Banū Isrā'īl wrote certain books after Moses, aside from the Scripture, which they gave the name '*Mathnāt*'.

Obviously the Caliph was following the line of the Jews who were in an opposite camp to those mentioned here. Abū 'Ubayd further says:

After the above clarification I understood the meaning of this *riwāyah*. This was the reason why 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ was averse to taking anything from the Ahl al-Kitāb, although he possessed some books which he had come to acquire during the campaign of Yarmūk (from Jewish synagogues).

Abū 'Ubayd adds:

Of course, the prohibition (on writing and transmission) did not pertain to the ḥadīth and Sunnah of the Prophet (S), because how could it be prohibited when most of the Companions themselves narrated aḥādīth.<sup>160</sup>

This shows that the Second Caliph proscribed the Prophet's ḥadīth and Sunnah because he considered that writing them was similar to the writings produced by Jewish doctors. Thereby, instead of putting a check upon the diffusion of *Isrā'īliyyāt*, he was influenced by them, an influence that led to the destruction of the Prophet's Sunnah. It must also be added that 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr was himself one of the propagators of *Isrā'īliyyāt*, who was not at all averse to them. It was on account of his knowledge of the Torah that the people asked him to describe a prophet's characteristics for them.<sup>161</sup>

That which happened, in our view, is this: Ḥadīth was not generally written until the end of the 1st/7th century, although some Companions favoured its writing and a few possessed certain tablets. Scattered writings began to appear with the outset of the 2nd/8th century, but a thorough compilation started towards the end of the 2nd/8th and mostly in the 3rd/9th century. Accordingly, all of the six *Ṣiḥāḥ* date from the 3rd/9th century. Though it is possible that some of the compilers had random compilations at their disposal, it is evident that most of their traditions came from an oral tradition. The evidence of this is that except for some very short works — which cannot be compared with any of the great collections — there is little sign of the occurrence of writing during the 2nd/8th century. Hence it can be said that ḥadīth was not written for a long period of time and was mostly transmitted orally during that period.<sup>162</sup>

### The Consequences of Not Writing Ḥadīth:

The absence of a written tradition in the transmission of ḥadīth resulted in a number of harmful consequences. Here we shall briefly discuss a few of them.

#### 1. The Loss of a Great Many Aḥādīth:

This was a natural result of not writing ḥadīth. Because, although memorization did result in preserving a large number of traditions, it also resulted in the loss of many, for memory is only an imperfect means of preservation. The admissions of the muḥaddithūn in this regard are the best proof of it.

Ibn Qulābah says, "Books and writing are better for us than loss of memory and forgetting."<sup>163</sup> Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd writes, "I found the scholars in a state in which they detested writing ḥadīth. Had we been used to writing then, we would have now possessed a great deal of the knowledge (*ilm*) of Sa'īd ibn Musayyab and his opinions."<sup>164</sup> Yaḥyā here regrets the loss of the aḥādīth narrated by Sa'īd and that of his views.

'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr writes, "I wrote a great number of aḥādīth and later had them effaced. Now I wish I had not destroyed them but given away all my property and children for their sake."<sup>165</sup> Hishām ibn 'Urwah narrates, "My father burnt the books that he possessed during the episode of Ḥarrah (when in the year 63/283 the Syrian army attacked Madīnah and ravaged the city); later he said to me, 'Had I kept them, it would have been better for me than the property and children I now possess.'"<sup>166</sup> Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd has something similar to say.<sup>167</sup> These statements indicate the regret of some persons

who destroyed their books due to some reason or another.

Mu‘ammar says, “I narrated some traditions to Yaḥyā ibn Kathīr. He asked me to write for him the traditions of so and so. I told him that we detested the writing of *‘ilm*. He said to me, ‘Do write, for if you don’t you would definitely lose it.’”<sup>168</sup>

Al-Manṣūr says, “I wish that I had written down aḥādīth... for I have forgotten as much as I now remember. Alas, had I written them down! Now I remember only a half of what I have heard.”<sup>169</sup>

Ibn Rushd writes, “Had the scholars not preserved knowledge through writing and had they not defined the trustworthy from the untrustworthy, all knowledge would have been lost and there would not have remained any trace of the *Dīn*. May God give them the best of rewards.”<sup>170</sup> The commencement of the written tradition, despite the unfortunate delay, was a welcome development, especially when it followed an oral tradition that tried to preserve the trustworthy as well as the untrustworthy.

Rashīd Ridā writes, “We are certain that we have forgotten and lost a great number of the Prophet’s traditions, for the scholars did not write down what they had heard. But that which was lost neither belonged to the exegesis of the Quran nor was it related to religious matters.”<sup>171</sup> After admitting the fact of the loss of aḥādīth, he tries to play down its significance by the wishful conjecture that the lost part did not pertain either to Quranic exegesis or to religious matters. Such a view is inadmissible; is it possible that something should be a ḥadīth of the Prophet (S) and yet be irrelevant to religion? In any case, his statement affirms the fact that some Islamic sects do not possess all the teachings of the Prophet (S), which were preserved by his (S) Ahl al-Bayt (A).

Ibn ‘Abd al-Birr writes, “Today no one is averse to the writing of ḥadīth. If ḥadīth should not be written, a great amount of knowledge would be lost.”<sup>172</sup>

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said, “When I left Madīnah I was the most knowledgeable of men, but on reaching Syria I forgot what I knew.”<sup>173</sup>

Yazīd ibn Hārūn said, “I memorized three thousand traditions from Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd, but I forgot a half of them on falling sick.”<sup>174</sup>

Ibn Rāhewayh writes: “I remembered seventy thousand traditions by heart and could recall one hundred thousand of them. I would not hear anything without committing it to my memory. But after some time I forgot them.”<sup>175</sup>

Al-Sha‘bī says, “Until now I haven’t written a single page, and till now none has narrated a ḥadīth to me without my memorizing it, and I don’t like him to recite it to me twice. Yet I have forgotten a great amount of knowledge (*‘ilm*), to the extent that someone who knew it would be a scholar in his own right.”<sup>176</sup>

Ishāq ibn al-Mansūr writes, "I asked Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal as to who detested the writing of *ilm*. He said that some detested it and some recommended it. I remarked that had *ilm* been not written it would have been lost. He agreed, saying, 'Were it not for the writing of *ilm*, what would we have had today?'"<sup>177</sup>

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal says, "Some narrated to us from memory and some from their books. The ḥadīth of those who narrated from books was more precise."<sup>178</sup> Aḥmad himself never narrated traditions except from a book.<sup>179</sup>

Ibn Ṣalāh writes, "Had ḥadīth not come to be written down, all *ilm* would have disappeared during the latter era."<sup>180</sup>

These statements are sufficient to bear out our point.

## 2. The Diffusion of Lies:

Another evil consequence of not writing ḥadīth was the growth of fabricated traditions. It was not possible to keep the orally transmitted traditions in a precise, stable form. In the beginning, as is well known, even attention was not paid to *sanad* due to the general atmosphere of trust that prevailed. Nowadays the scholars of ḥadīth, in order to escape the implications of this fact, state that fabricated aḥādīth did not exist during the era of the Companions. But recent researches have proved that some individuals, like Abū Hurayrah, did forge a large number of traditions.<sup>181</sup> Of course, later much effort was made to separate reliable from unreliable traditions, but this was during a period when a considerable number of groups had emerged in the society along political and ideological lines, when even the criterion of what was trustworthy (*thiqah*) could be variously interpreted. It is obvious to what extent this effort could result in a correct evaluation of traditions and what kind of havoc it could play with them.

Writing on this topic, Abū Riyyah says, "When the Prophet's aḥādīth were left unwritten and the Companions took no step for their compilation, the door of narration was opened for the devout as well as the devious, who narrated whatever they wished without any fear of anyone."<sup>182</sup>

Another author writes, "One of the causes of the emergence of fabricators of ḥadīth was that ḥadīth had not been committed to writing and the Companions were satisfied with memorizing and narrating it orally."<sup>183</sup>

Abū al-'Abbās al-Ḥanbalī (d.716/1316) writes in this context:

One of the causes of the divergence of opinion among the 'ulamā' are contradictory traditions and texts. Some think that the Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was responsible for it, because the Companions asked his permission to write

ḥadīth but he stopped them, in spite of knowing that the Prophet (S) had ordered the sermon delivered on the occasion of the last pilgrimage to be written for Abū Shāt and that he (S) had said, قَيِّدُوا الْعِلْمَ بِالْكِتَابَةِ 'Preserve knowledge through writing.' Had every Companion written down what he had heard from the Prophet (S), the Sunnah would have been recorded without there being more than one link (in the chain of transmission) between the Prophet (S) and (the succeeding generations of) the Ummah.<sup>184</sup>

It is interesting to note that Abū al-'Abbās had been accused of *rafḍ* and *tashayyu'* for this statement of his!

Abū Riyyah in another statement of his, where he appears to reject the belief that it was the Prophet (S) who imposed the prohibition on the writing of ḥadīth, says:

Is it right that the Prophet (S) should have neglected a half of what had been revealed to him, leaving it unguarded in the memories of persons, of whom one remembers, another forgets and yet another one adds to that which had remained unwritten...? Where is the kind of care that the Companions exercised in a like case, the Quran, and why didn't they write it in the way they wrote the Quran? It is nothing but this that their negligence resulted in this half of revelation remaining unwritten, and all of them are sinful in this regard.<sup>185</sup>

Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'd is explicit that the writing of ḥadīth started when false and fabricated tradition became noticeable. He says, "Had it not been for the traditions which came to us from the east, we would not have written a single tradition, nor permitted the writing of ḥadīth."<sup>186</sup>

An exactly similar statement is ascribed to Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri. However, ḥadīth came to be written when it was already too late. How late it was can be inferred from the fact that al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* was selected out of seven hundred thousand traditions and Abū Ḥanīfah could accept only 150 out of a number of nearly one million traditions!

### 3. The Narration of Meanings:

One of the consequences of not writing ḥadīth was that the actual words of aḥādīth were generally forgotten and narration based upon meaning became a common practice. It is natural that one who had heard a tradition twenty years ago should remember only its meaning while narrating it. Additions and deletions are also frequent in such cases. However, had ḥadīth been committed to writing from the beginning, the probability of such a hazard was lower.

'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣayn says:

By God, had I wished I could narrate the Prophet's ḥadīth for two consequent days, but what stopped me was that I saw that those who heard as I had

heard narrated ḥadīth in a form which it did not possess originally. I was afraid lest I too should narrate ḥadīth in the same manner. But I tell you, they make errors in the narration of ḥadīth, though not intentionally.<sup>187</sup>

Sufyān says:

I heard through a certain chain of narration from Barā' ibn 'Āzib from the Prophet that رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِذَا افْتَتَحَ الصَّلَاةَ رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ ("I saw that the Prophet raised his two hands while starting the prayer"). When I went to Kūfah I observed that the narrator, Ibn Abī Laylā, added the phrase ثُمَّ لَا يَعُودُ ("then he did not repeat it") to it. It seems that his memory was better when he was in Makkah. I was told that his memory had undergone a change.<sup>188</sup>

Ibn al-Jawzī, in the biographical account of the narrators whose aḥādīth contain fabrications, writes:

The first kind are those who under the influence of asceticism gradually neglected memorization as well as the classification of ḥadīth and those who, in a faulty manner, narrated traditions from their memory after their books were lost, burnt or buried. These persons sometimes narrate a *mursal* ḥadīth as *marfū'*, a *mawqūf* ḥadīth as *musnad*, and sometimes insert one tradition into another.<sup>189</sup>

#### 4. The Divergence Amongst Muslims:

Another consequence of not writing ḥadīth was the diversity and divergence of legal opinion amongst the Muslims, to the extent that divergent *fatwās* and beliefs, based on differing aḥādīth, became a prevalent feature of the Muslim world. Following the early conquests Islam spread to new regions. The Ṣaḥābah and the Tābi'ūn who dispersed in different directions, each of them carried with him only that portion of the Prophet's ḥadīth that he had heard from the Prophet (S) or his Companions. From Madīnah, some of them went to Makkah and Yemen, some to Syria and Palestine, and some settled in the cities of Iraq, such as Kūfah and Baṣrah.

The result of this diaspora was that each of them adopted a legal approach that agreed with the aḥādīth that he possessed. Not knowing the aḥādīth that others possessed, each of them followed different and divergent *fatwās*. When this divergence came to be realized during the period of the Tābi'ūn, they began to undertake journeys to various cities, and this is how 'travelling in the search of ḥadīth' (*al-riḥlah li ṭalab al-ḥadīth*) came to be instituted. Most of these journeys occurred during the 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries, and even later. The real cause that lay behind them was the dispersion of ḥadīth through the different cities and the itinerant scholars endeavoured to bring about a uniformity and homogeneity between the aḥādīth of various lands; but sometimes

it happened that the result was that a single ḥadīth was narrated differently in different places — something of which we have cited an example above.

We are told that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mubārak travelled to Yemen, Egypt, Syria and Kūfah for the purpose of collecting ḥadīth.<sup>190</sup> Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī writes:

The first of my journeys in the search of ḥadīth took seven years. I calculated that the distance that I had travelled on foot added up to about a thousand parasangs. I kept on adding up in this way and would leave off when the distance reached a thousand parasangs.... Many a time I journeyed from Makkah to Madīnah and from Baḥrayn to Egypt, from Egypt to Ramlah, from Ramlah to Bayt al-Maqdis, from there to ‘Asqalān, Ṭabariyyah, Damascus, Homs....<sup>191</sup>

Ibn Musayyab says: “I would travel for days and nights in search of a single ḥadīth.”<sup>192</sup> These journeys were so widespread that al-Khaṭīb compiled a work on the topic with the title *al-Riḥlah fī ṭalab al-ḥadīth* and al-Rāmḥurmuzī assigned a chapter of his book *al-Muḥaddith al-fādil* to this topic.<sup>193</sup>

This travelling in search of ḥadīth became so important that Yaḥyā ibn Mu‘īn had to say, “There are four kinds of persons whom one cannot expect to attain any maturity.... Of them is the man who remains in his hometown, writes ḥadīth there, and has not travelled to other cities in the search of ḥadīth.”<sup>194</sup>

Such problems as these, which were a natural consequence of the failure to write ḥadīth, did not occur in the case of the Quran. Had the ḥadīth of the Prophet (S) been committed to writing from the beginning, with the cooperation of all the Companions, all the various legal — and even doctrinal and political — schools that emerged later would not have come into existence. Each of these schools based its beliefs on aḥādīth. But how far were those aḥādīth authentic? To what extent were they acceptable to others? To what extent others could accept their import in cases where narration had been based on meaning? These were questions to which no answer existed.

Abū Zuhrah writes:

When ‘Umar died and the Companions left for different towns, each of them founded a school of law for himself and each of them followed his own way. When the era of the Ṭābi‘ūn arrived, every town had its own school of law whose views were as removed from another as the cities were remote from each other.<sup>195</sup>

Al-Manṣūr once told Mālik ibn Anas of his intention to canonize Mālik’s *Muwatta’* by making a copy of it for every town and ordering its people

to teach only its contents and to refrain from referring to anything else (as legal authority). Mālik told him, "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn, don't do such a thing. These people have had their own beliefs, having heard and narrated some traditions, and each of them believes in that which he has had. Leave the people and the folk of every town alone with that which they have chosen for themselves."<sup>196</sup>

### 5. The Spread of Ra'y:

Another consequence of the failure to compile ḥadīth was the emergence and subsequent prevalence of the practice of *ra'y* (subjective judgement) among Muslim jurists, because each of them had access to only some of the aḥādīth, many of which were either lost or were inaccessible. The people pressed them to give *fatwās* while they did not have adequate amount of ḥadīth at their disposal. Thus they had to take recourse in *ra'y* in order to answer the people. Furthermore, a number of them were champions of *ra'y* due to their lack of confidence in aḥādīth, which was a natural offshoot of the absence of a reliable written tradition of ḥadīth. At times, in one city a *ḥukm* was based on an available ḥadīth, while elsewhere the *ḥukm* was based on subjective opinion. Unfortunately, after some time, those subjective judgements themselves assumed legal authority for others who too did not have adequate access to ḥadīth; they preferred to act according to the *ra'y* of their predecessors instead of formulating their own subjective opinions. The prevalence of the practice of *ra'y* to this extent amongst the Ahl al-Sunnah was due to the unavailability and inadequacy of ḥadīth, which in turn was due to the loss of a great number of the aḥādīth of the Prophet (S).

### The Prohibition on the Narration of Ḥadīth:

We have discussed above how the writing of ḥadīth was prohibited and what consequences resulted from it. Here our discussion relates to the fact that, as history reveals, certain Companions had tried to stop even its oral narration. While they stopped the writing of ḥadīth with the pretext of safeguarding the Quran, they prohibited its oral narration with the pretext that the attention of the people should be focussed mainly upon the Scripture, as if their sole aim was to make ḥadīth appear as something insignificant that did not deserve any attention whatsoever. It is probable that there were political reasons behind this attitude.

Qurzah ibn Ka'b says:

We set out to go from Madīnah to Iraq. 'Umar accompanied us until the out-



skirts of the city. He said to us, "Do you know why I have come?" We replied, "Perhaps you came to bid us farewell since we are Companions of the Prophet (S)". He said, "I have come to tell you that you should give greater exposure to the Quran and that you should narrate fewer of the Prophet's traditions. Now go, for I am your partner in this matter."

#### Qurzah adds in another *riwāyah*:

There I was sitting amongst some people who recalled ḥadīth to one another. It appeared to me that I remembered more aḥādīth than they did. But I kept my silence when I remembered 'Umar's advice.

In al-Dhahabī's narration, he is reported to have said, "When they asked me to narrate ḥadīth, I told them that 'Umar had prohibited me to do so."<sup>197</sup>

It has also been reported that when the Caliph sent Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'arī to Iraq, he told him, "Don't engage them in aḥādīth. I am your partner in this affair."<sup>198</sup>

These *riwāyāt* indicate that an attempt was made to stop the propagation of the Prophet's aḥādīth, not merely its writing. Ibn 'Asākir records this statement of Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān:

By God, 'Umar did not die before he summoned the Prophet's Companions, such as Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān, Abū al-Dardā', Abū Dharr, 'Aqabah ibn 'Āmir and.... He told them: "What are these aḥādīth that you have spread all over the horizon?" They said, "Do you stop us from narrating ḥadīth?"<sup>199</sup>

According to a *riwāyah* recorded by al-Ṭabarānī, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān used to say:

'Umar summoned 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn Mas'ūd al-'Anṣārī and Abū al-Dardā'. He told them, "What are these aḥādīth that you narrate so extensively from the Prophet (S)?" Then he detained them in Madīnah until his own death.<sup>200</sup>

Obviously these individuals were among the most well-known of the Prophet's Companions. The Ahl al-Sunnah have no doubts about the veracity of such men as Ḥudhayfah, Abū al-Dardā' and Ibn Mas'ūd. 'Umar himself had so much regard for Ibn Mas'ūd that while sending him to Iraq he wrote to the Iraqis, "I have preferred your benefit to my own harm by sending Ibn Mas'ūd to you."<sup>201</sup>

Ibn Ḥazm has taken note of the seriousness of the charge against the Caliph, but, daring not criticize the Caliph's act, he raises doubts about the veracity of the *riwāyah*. He says: "This tradition is *mursal*, and doubtful on account of Shu'bah in the chain of transmission. Hence it cannot possibly be cited as evidence." But we know that the tradition

has been narrated through several chains. In addition to this, Ibn Haytham, in *Majma' al-zawā'id* (vol.1, p.147), after classifying the tradition as *ṣaḥīḥ*, writes: "This statement of 'Umar is *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and it has been narrated through many chains of transmission."

However, Ibn Ḥazm, while examining the tradition, says:

This *riwāyah* is evidently false; for should we accept it we must say that its speaker is outside the pale of Islam, because his efforts were directed to the cover-up and negation of the traditions of the Messenger of Allah (S).<sup>202</sup>

The author of *al-Sunnah qabl al-tadwīn* writes:

The rationale that the detention (*ḥabs*) of the Ṣaḥābah (in Madīnah) was on account of their prolific narration of ḥadīth, is not correct. Because Abū Hurayrah was one of such individuals, yet he was not detained (by 'Umar).<sup>203</sup>

The above statement is not true, because Abū Hurayrah himself was one of those whom 'Umar had forbidden to narrate the Prophet's aḥādīth. Abū Hurayrah complied with 'Umar's instructions and narrated fewer traditions as long as the latter was alive.

*Concluded, wa al-ḥamdu lillāh*

## NOTES:

148. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, II, 82, *Fath al-Bārī, muqaddimah*, p.4; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 57; *Ta'riḥ al-fiqh al-'Islāmī*, 88.

149. *Adwā' 'alā al-Sunnat al-Muḥammadiyah*, 51.

150. *Ibid.*, 51.

151. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 81.

152. *Ibid.*, I, 82.

153. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 57.

154. *Abjad al-'ulūm*, 110.

155. *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ min sīrat al-Nabī al-'a'zam (S)*, I, 27, footnote.

156. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 51; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 64; *Kanz al-'ummāl*, V, 239.

157. *Sunan al-Dārimī*, I, 124; *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 56; see also *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 57, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 296.

158. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 61; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 65; *Husn al-tanbīh*, 92.

159. See *Buḥūth ma'a Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Salafiyyah*, 97; for the statement from Talmud, see *al-Tafkīr al-dīnī 'ind al-Yahūd*, p.79, from Talmud *Ḥittin*, 60/*bāb Tamūrā, bāb 14*; Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr says: "The number of aḥādīth became great during 'Umar's rule. He ordered them to be brought and set them on fire, declaring *مَشْنَاءَ كَمَشْنَاءِ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ*. See *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 188.

160. *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, IV, 282.

161. *Adab al-mufrad*, 69.

162. Although some of the compilers began their works of compilation during the 2nd/8th century, the dates of their death occur generally in the 3rd/9th century.

163. *Taqyīd al-'ilm*, 103.

164. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 141; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 81.  
 165. *Taqyid al-'ilm*, 60; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 75.  
 166. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 179; *Muṣannaf 'Abd al-Razzāq*, XI, 425; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 90.  
 167. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 89; *Taqyid al-'ilm*, 111.  
 168. *Muṣannaf 'Abd al-Razzāq*, XI, 259; *al-Kifāyah fī 'ilm al-riwāyah*, 106.  
 169. *Taqyid al-'ilm*, 60, *al-Muḥaddith al-fādil* from al-Rāmḥurmuzī.  
 170. *Al-Tarātib al-'idāriyyah*, II, 249.  
 171. *Tafsīr al-manār*, VI, 288.  
 172. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 84.  
 173. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 119.  
 174. *Ibid.*, I, 339.  
 175. *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahā'*, 78.  
 176. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 84.  
 177. *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 91.  
 178. *Taqyid al-'ilm*, 115.  
 179. *Al-'Imlā' wa al-'istimlā'*, 47.  
 180. *Tadrib al-rāwī*, II, 65.  
 181. See *Abū Hurayrah* by Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn and *Shaykh al-Muḍṭrah* by Abū Riyyah.  
 182. *Aḍwā' 'alā al-Sunnat al-Muḥammadiyyah*, 268.  
 183. *Ta'riḥ al-fiqh al-'Islāmī*, 68.  
 184. *Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq wa al-madhāhib al-'arba'ah*, I, 260.  
 185. *Aḍwā' 'alā al-Sunnat al-Muḥammadiyyah*, 52, 53.  
 186. *Al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'riḥ*, II, 762.  
 187. *Ta'wil mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 40; *al-Mawḍū'āt*, I, 93; *Ta'riḥ al-madhāhib al-fiqhiyyah*, 20.  
 188. *Al-Jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*, by Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī, I, 43, 44.  
 189. *Al-Mawḍū'āt*, I, 35, 36; *Ta'riḥ Ibn 'Asākir*, II, 10.  
 190. *Al-Jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*, I, 263.  
 191. *Ibid.*, I, 359, 360.  
 192. *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 120; *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 56; *al-Riḥlah fī ṭalab al-ḥadīth*, 127.  
 193. *Al-Muḥaddith al-fādil*, 230.  
 194. *Al-Riḥlah fī ṭalab al-ḥadīth*, 89; see *Fath al-Bārī*, I, 158, 159; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, I, 111, 113, *al-Majrūḥūn*, I, 57; *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 108; *al-Muḥaddith al-fādil*, 215, 223.  
 195. *Abū Ḥanīfah*, 59.  
 196. *Kashf al-zunūn*, II, 1908.  
 197. *Sunan al-Dārimī*, 79; *Ḥayāt al-Ṣaḥābah*, III, 257, 258; *Jāmi' bayān al-'ilm*, II, 120; *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, VI, 7; *Mustadrak al-Ḥākim*, I, 152, (al-Ḥākim says: "This ḥadīth is totally ṣaḥīḥ from the viewpoint of sanad"); *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 7; *Ta'riḥ al-fiqh al-'Islāmī*, 41.  
 198. *Al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah*, VIII, 107; the author says, "This ḥadīth of 'Umar is famous."  
 199. *Ḥayāt al-Ṣaḥābah*, III, 272; *Kanz al-'ummāl*, V, 239.  
 200. *Ḥayāt al-Ṣaḥābah*, from *Majma' al-zawā'id*, I, 149; *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, V, 239; *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 7; *al-Mawḍū'āt*, I, 94; *al-Muḥaddith al-fādil*, 133.  
 201. *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, I, 14.  
 202. *Al-'Aḥkām*, II, 139, from *al-Sunnah qabl al-tadwīn*, 108.  
 203. *Al-Sunnah qabl al-tadwīn*, 108.

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**On Blind Imitation:**

— عدّة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمد بن خالد ، عن عبد الله بن يحيى ، عن ابن مسكان ، عن أبي بصير ، عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال : قلت له : «اتخذوا أحبارهم و رهبانهم أرباباً من دون الله» ؟ فقال : أما والله ما دعوهم إلى عبادة أنفسهم ، ولودعوهم ما أجابوهم ، ولكن أحلّوا لهم حراماً ، وحرّموا عليهم حلالاً فعبدوهم من حيث لا يشعرون .

23/156 A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid, from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā,<sup>58</sup> from Ibn Muskān, from Abū Baṣīr:

Abū Baṣīr says, “I asked Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) about the verse, ‘They (Christians and Jews) have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God’ (9:31). The Imam (A) replied, ‘By God, they (rabbis and monks) did not invite them to their own worship, and had they invited them (the people), they would not have responded to them. Rather, the rabbis and the monks rendered permissible that which was *ḥarām* and forbade that which was *ḥalāl*. Thus they (Christian and Jewish laity) worshipped their doctors and monks without knowing it.’”

**On the Practice of Ra’y and Qiyās:**

— الحسين بن محمد الأشعري ، عن معلى بن محمد ، عن الحسن بن علي الوشاء ؛ و عدّة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمد ، عن ابن فضال جميعاً ، عن عاصم بن حميد ، عن محمد ابن مسلم ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : خطب أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام الناس فقال : أيّها الناس إنّما بدء وقوع الفتن أهواءٌ تتبّع ، وأحكامٌ تُبتدع ، يخالف فيها كتاب الله ،

يتولّى فيها رجال رجالاتاً ، فلو أن الباطل خُص لم يخف على ذي حجبى ، ولو أن الحق خُص لم يكن اختلاف ولكن يؤخذ من هذا ضغث ومن هذا ضغث فيمزجان فيجئان معاً فهالك استحوذ الشيطان على أوليائه ونجا الذين سبقت لهم من الله الحسنى .

24/159: Al-Husayn ibn Muḥammad al-'Ash'arī, from Mu'allā ibn Muḥammad,<sup>59</sup> from al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Washshā'; and a group of our companions from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from Ibn Faḍḍāl, and both of them from 'Āṣim ibn Ḥumayd,<sup>60</sup> from Muḥammad ibn Muslim:

Abū Ja'far (A) said: "Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A) in a sermon addressed the people, saying, 'O people, all misguidance (*fitnah*) originates from following false doctrines (*ahwā'*) and innovating laws which are contrary to the Book of God and wherein one man follows another. If falsehood were to appear in its unmixed form, it would not be hidden from any reasonable person. Similarly, if truth were to appear in its pure and unadulterated form, there would be no difference of opinion about it. But, something is taken from falsehood and something is taken from the truth; thus mixed with each other, they come together. It is here that the Devil secures his grip over his friends and only those to whom grace from God has gone forth secure deliverance."

— محمد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمد ، عن الوشاء ، عن مثنى الحنّاط ، عن أبي بصير قال: قلت لأبي عبد الله عليه السلام: ترد علينا أشياء ليس نعرفها في كتاب الله، ولا سنة فننظر فيها؟ فقال: لا، أما إنك إن أصبت لم تؤجر، وإن أخطأت كذبت على الله عز وجل .

26/169 Muḥammad ibn Yahyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from al-Washshā', from Muthannā al-Ḥannāt,<sup>62</sup> from Abū Baṣīr:

Abū Baṣīr says, "I said to Abū'Abd Allāh (A), 'Sometimes we are confronted with issues for which we do not find any solution in the Book of God or the Sunnah. Can we settle such issues by subjective judgement (*nazar*)?' The Imam answered, 'No; if you are right (in your judgement) you will not be rewarded, and if you go wrong you shall be guilty of attributing a falsehood to God Almighty.'"

— عدة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمد بن عيسى ، عن علي بن الحكم ، عن عمر بن أبان الكلبي ، عن عبد الرّحيم القصير عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله : كل بدعة ضلالة ، وكل ضلالة في النار .

27/170: A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Isā,



from ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥakam, from ‘Umar ibn Abān al-Kalbī,<sup>63</sup> from ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Qaṣṭr:<sup>64</sup>

Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) said: The Prophet (S) said: “Every *bid‘ah* (innovation in the *Dīn*) is misguidance and every misguidance is in hell.”

– محمد بن إسماعيل ، عن الفضل بن شاذان ، عن صفوان بن يحيى ، عن عبد الرحمن بن الحجاج ، عن أبان بن تغلب عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: إن السنة لا تقاس إلا ترى أن امرأة تقضي صومها ولا تقضي صلاتها يا أبان! إن السنة إذا قيست بحق الدين .

28/173 Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl, from al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān, from Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā, from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥajjāj,<sup>65</sup> from Abān ibn Taghlib:

Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) said: ‘The laws cannot be derived through *qiyās*. Don’t you see that women have to perform their fasts (missed during the month of Ramaḍān on account of periods) but not their daily prayers (so missed). The practice of *qiyās* in deriving laws would lead to the obliteration of the *Dīn*.’

– عدة من أصحابنا، عن أحمد بن محمد ، عن عثمان بن عيسى قال: سألت أبا الحسن موسى عليه السلام عن القياس فقال: ما لكم والقياس إن الله لا يسأل كيف أحلّ و كيف حرّم .

29/174 A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Isā:

‘Uthmān ibn ‘Isā says, “I asked Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā (A) about *qiyās*. He replied, ‘What do you have to do with *qiyās*. Verily, God may not be asked as to how He permitted one thing and forbade another.’”

Everything is in the Book and the Sunnah:

– محمد بن يحيى ، عن محمد بن عبد الجبار ، عن ابن فضال ، عن حماد بن عثمان ، عن عبد الأعلی بن أعین قال : سمعت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام يقول : قد ولدني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وأنا أعلم كتاب الله وفيه بدء الخلق ، وما هو كائن إلى يوم القيامة ، وفيه خبر السماء وخبر الأرض ، وخبر الجنة وخبر النار ، وخبر ما كان ، و [ خبر ] ما هو كائن ، أعلم ذلك كما أنظر إلى كفي ، إن الله يقول فيه : «تبيان لكل شيء» .

30/188: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār,<sup>66</sup> from Ibn Faḍḍāl, from Ḥammād ibn ‘Uthmān,<sup>67</sup> from ‘Abd al-‘Alā ibn

A'yan:69

'Abd al-'A'lā ibn A'yan says, "I heard Abū 'Abd Allāh say: 'I am born of the Messenger of Allah (S) and I know the Book of God. In it is the origin of the creation and that which is to occur until the Day of Judgement. In it are the tidings of heaven and that of earth, the tidings of Paradise and that of Hell, the tidings of that which was and of that which shall be. I know that all, as if it were in the palm of my hand. And indeed God Almighty has said, "In it (i.e. the Quran) is the exposition of all things.'"

— عدوة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمد بن عيسى ، عن علي بن النعمان ،  
عن إسماعيل بن جابر ، عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال : كتاب الله فيه نبأ ما قبلكم وخبر  
ما بعدكم وفصل ما بينكم ونحن نعلمه .

31/189: A group of companions, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isā, from 'Alī ibn al-Nu'mān, from Ismā'īl ibn Jābir: 69

Abū 'Abd Allāh (A) said: 'In the Book of God, there is the report of those who were before you and the tidings of those who shall come after you and the judgement (of the disagreements) between you, and we know all that.'

#### On Conflicting Traditions:

— أحمد بن إدريس ، عن محمد بن عبد الجبار ، عن الحسن بن علي ، عن  
ثعلبة بن ميمون ، عن زرارة بن أعين ، عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال : سألته عن مسألة  
فأجابني ثم جاءه رجل فسأله عنها فأجابه بخلاف ما أجابني ، ثم جاء رجل آخر  
فأجابه بخلاف ما أجابني وأجاب صاحبي ، فلما خرج الرجلان قلت : يا ابن رسول الله  
رجلان من أهل العراق من شيعتكم قدما يسألان فأجبت كل واحد منهما بغير ما  
أجبت به صاحبه ؟ فقال : يا زرارة ! إن هذا خير لنا و أبقى لنا ولكم ولو اجتمعتم  
على أمر واحد لصدقكم الناس علينا ولكن أقل لبقائنا و بقاءكم .  
قال : ثم قلت لأبي عبد الله عليه السلام : شيعتكم لو حملتموهم على السنة أو على  
النار لمضوا وهم يخرجون من عندكم مختلفين ؛ قال : فأجابني بمثل جواب أبيه .

32/195: Aḥmad ibn Idrīs,<sup>70</sup> from Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār, from al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī (ibn Faḍḍāl) from Tha‘labah ibn Maymūn,<sup>71</sup> from Zurārah ibn A‘yan:

Zurārah says, “I asked Abū Ja‘far (A) a question and he answered me. Then a man came and asked the same question. He gave an answer contrary to what he had given me. Then another man came in to whom he gave a reply different from mine and that of the second person. When the two departed, I said: ‘O son of the Messenger of Allah, two men of your Shi‘ah from Iraq come and ask you questions and to each you give an answer which differs from that given to the other?!’ He replied: ‘O Zurārah, verily, this is good for us, and safer for us as well as for you. If you (Shi‘is) were uniform in respect of some matter; your uniformity would convince the people that you follow us; but that would reduce our security as well as yours to a minimum.’

I said to Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A), ‘Your Shi‘is are such that if you send them against spears or drive them into fire they would go, and yet they go forth from you with differing answers.’ He gave a reply to my remark similar to that given (earlier) by his father (al-‘Imām al-Bāqir [A]).”

– علي بن إبراهيم، عن أبيه، عن عثمان بن عيسى، والحسن بن محبوب جميعاً  
عن سماعة، عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: سألته عن رجل اختلف عليه رجلان من أهل  
دينه في أمر كلاهما يرويه: أحدهما يأمر بأخذه و الآخر ينهاه عنه، كيف يصنع؟  
فقال: يرجئه حتى يلقى من يخبره، فهو في سعة حتى يلقاه؛  
وفي رواية أخرى: بأيهما أخذت من باب التسليم و سلك.

33/197: ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, from his father, from ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Īsā and al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb, both of them from Samā‘ah:<sup>72</sup>

Samā‘ah says, “I asked Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) about what a person is to do when he receives contrary narrations from two persons, one of them commanding something and the other prohibiting it. He said: ‘He ought to wait until he meets someone who informs him. Until that time he has a free hand (to accept any of the two reports).”

According to another tradition, the Imam (A) said: ‘You are at liberty to take any of the two as a token of obedience.’

– محمد بن يحيى، عن عبد الله بن محمد، عن علي بن الحكم، عن أبان بن عثمان  
عن عبد الله بن أبي يعفور، قال: وحدّثني حسين بن أبي العلاء أنه حضر ابن أبي يعفور

في هذا المجلس قال : سألت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام عن اختلاف الحديث يرويه من نثق به  
ومنهم من لا نثق به ؟ قال : إذا ورد عليكم حديث فوجدتم له شاهداً من كتاب الله أو  
من قول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وإلا فالذي جاءكم به أولى به .

34/202: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad,<sup>73</sup> from ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥakam, from Abān ibn ‘Uthmān (al-’Aḥmar), from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī Ya‘fūr,<sup>74</sup> and Abān says that Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-‘Alā’,<sup>75</sup> who was present on the occasion, also narrated it to me:

‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī Ya‘fūr says, “I asked Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) about the difference between traditions narrated by someone we rely upon and another upon whom we don’t rely (because we don’t know him well enough). The Imam (A) said: ‘When you receive a tradition, (accept it) if it is corroborated by evidence from the Book of God and statements of the Apostle of God (S); otherwise, he who has brought it is worthier of it.’”

— عدة من أصحابنا ، عن أحمد بن محمد بن خالد ، عن أبيه ، عن النضر بن  
سويد ، عن يحيى الحلبي ، عن أيوب بن الحر قال : سمعت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام يقول :  
كل شيء مردود إلى الكتاب والسنة ، وكل حديث لا يوافق كتاب الله فهو زخرف .

35/203: A group of our companions, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid, from his father, from al-Nadr ibn Suwayd, from Yaḥyā al-Ḥalabī, from Ayyūb ibn al-Ḥurr,<sup>76</sup> who said:

I heard Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) say: ‘Everything should be referred back to the Book and the Sunnah. Every ḥadīth that does not agree with the Book of God is a flowery fabrication (*zukhruf*).’

— محمد بن يحيى ، عن أحمد بن محمد بن عيسى ، عن ابن فضال ، عن علي بن  
عقبة ، عن أيوب بن راشد ، عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال : ما لم يوافق من الحديث القرآن  
فهو زخرف .

36/204: Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā, from Ibn Faḍḍāl, from ‘Alī ibn ‘Uqbah,<sup>77</sup> from Ayyūb ibn Rāshīd:<sup>78</sup>

Abū ‘Abd Allāh (A) said: ‘Every ḥadīth that does not conform to the Quran is a flowery fabrication.’ (for *zukhruf*, see 6:112)

To be continued— ‘in shā’ Allāh.

## NOTES:

58. 'Abd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā; since Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khālid (7/0) is his pupil, he cannot be the 'Abd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā al-Kāhili (5/VI,VII) from whom al-Bizantī (6/VII,VIII), Ibn Abī 'Umayr (6/VII,VIII) and Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā (6/VIII) have narrated; source of his *tawthīq* untraced.

59. Mu'allā ibn Muḥammad al-Baṣrī; 7/10; N418: *muḍṭarib al-ḥadīth wa al-madhhab*; however, he is among the *thiqāt* of 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, see his tafsr, I,160, 199,320;II,148,154,161,197,206,256,377,396.

60. 'Aṣim ibn Ḥumayd al-Ḥannāṭ al-Ḥanaḥī al-Kūfi; 5/VI; N301/A125: *thiqah, 'ayn, ṣādiq*.

61. Muḥammad ibn Ḥukaym; 5/VII; among the *rijāl* of Ibn Abī 'Umayr (*al-Wāfi*, I, 117), Ṣafwān (*al-Wāfi*, VI,20;XII,117,177,178,V,47,VI,15,20), see al-Tabrizī, *Mu'jam al-thiqāt*, 191—2.

62. Muthannā al-Walīd al-Ḥannāṭ al-Kūfi; 5/VI; among the *rijāl* of al-Bizantī (*al-Wāfi*, IV, 80, V, III, 184).

63. 'Umar ibn Abān al-Kalbī al-Kūfi; 5/VI; N283/A120; *thiqah*.

64. 'Abd al-Raḥīm (ibn Rūḥ) al-Qaṣīr al-'Asadī al-Kūfi; 4/V,VI; among the *rijāl* of Ṣafwān, see *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, *bāb anna al-'A'imma hum al-hudāt*.

65. 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Bajālī al-Kūfi; 5/VI,VII:N238/A113: *thiqah thiqah, thabtan wajhan*.

66. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār, ibn Abī al-Ṣahbān; 7/0; Tr423,435/A142: *thiqah*.

67. Hammād ibn 'Uthmān al-Farāzī, ibn 'Amr ibn Khālid al-Kūfi (d.190/806); 5/VI,VII,VIII:N143/Tf60/A56: *thiqah*.

68. 'Abd al-'Alā ibn A'yan; 5/VI; among the *thiqāt* of 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, see his tafsr, I,204.

69. Ismā'īl ibn Jābir al-Ju'fī al-Kūfi; 4/V,VI; Tr105/A8: *thiqah mamdūh*.

70. Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-'Ash'arī (d.306/918); 8/0;N92/Tf26/A16: *thiqah, ftashābinā faqṭhan, kathīr al-ḥadīth, ṣaḥṭh al-riwāyah*.

71. Tha'labah ibn Maymūn, Abū Ishāq al-Naḥwī; 5/VI,VII:N118/A30: *kāna wajhan ft ashābinā, qāri'an, faqṭhan, naḥwiyyan, lughawiyyan, rāwiyyan, ḥasan al-'amal, kathīr al-'ibādah*; K412: *thiqah*.

72. Samā'ah ibn Mihrān; 5/VI,VII:N193/A228: *thiqah thiqah*.

73. 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā (Bannān); 7/0; source of *tawthīq* untraced.

74. 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Ya'fūr al-'Abdī; 4/V,VI:N213/A107: *thiqah thiqah, jalīl fī ashābinā*.

75. Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-'Alā'; 5/VI; among the *rijāl* of Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā (*al-Wāfi*, VIII, 19,93,V,140,144) and Ibn Abī 'Umayr (*al-Baṣā'ir*, 32,485,etc.), and see al-Tabrizī, *Mu'jam al-thiqāt*, 162.

76. Ayyūb ibn al-Ḥurr al-Ju'fī; 5/VI;N103/A12/Tf16: *thiqah*.

77. 'Alī ibn 'Uqbah ibn Khālid al-'Asadī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Kūfi; 5/VI;N271/A102: *thiqah thiqah*.

78. Ayyūb ibn Rāshid, 5/VI; among the *rijāl* of Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā (*al-Wāfi*, X, 93).

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* has vouchsafed the sanctity of the Haram and the security of the *hujjaj* in the Qur'an. Yet on Friday, July 31, 1987 there occurred, in Makkah, a tragedy that has left the world of Islam in deep shock. More than 500 *hujjaj* were killed and nearly 4,800 were injured by the Saudi security forces. A number of troubling questions have been raised by the tragedy but the two that stand out most are: why did the massacre occur and how did so many people get killed in a matter of just one hour?

This book puts together the entire Makkah tragedy in its proper perspective. The author, Zafar Bangash, was present in Makkah on that fateful afternoon and was witness to the tragedy. He not only narrates what took place but he has also pieced together the story of how the Saudis pre-planned the massacre. The role played by the US and other external forces has also been analyzed.

Zafar Bangash is the editor of *Crescent International*, published from Toronto, Canada.

# The Makkah MASSACRE and Future of The Haramain

**Zafar Bangash**

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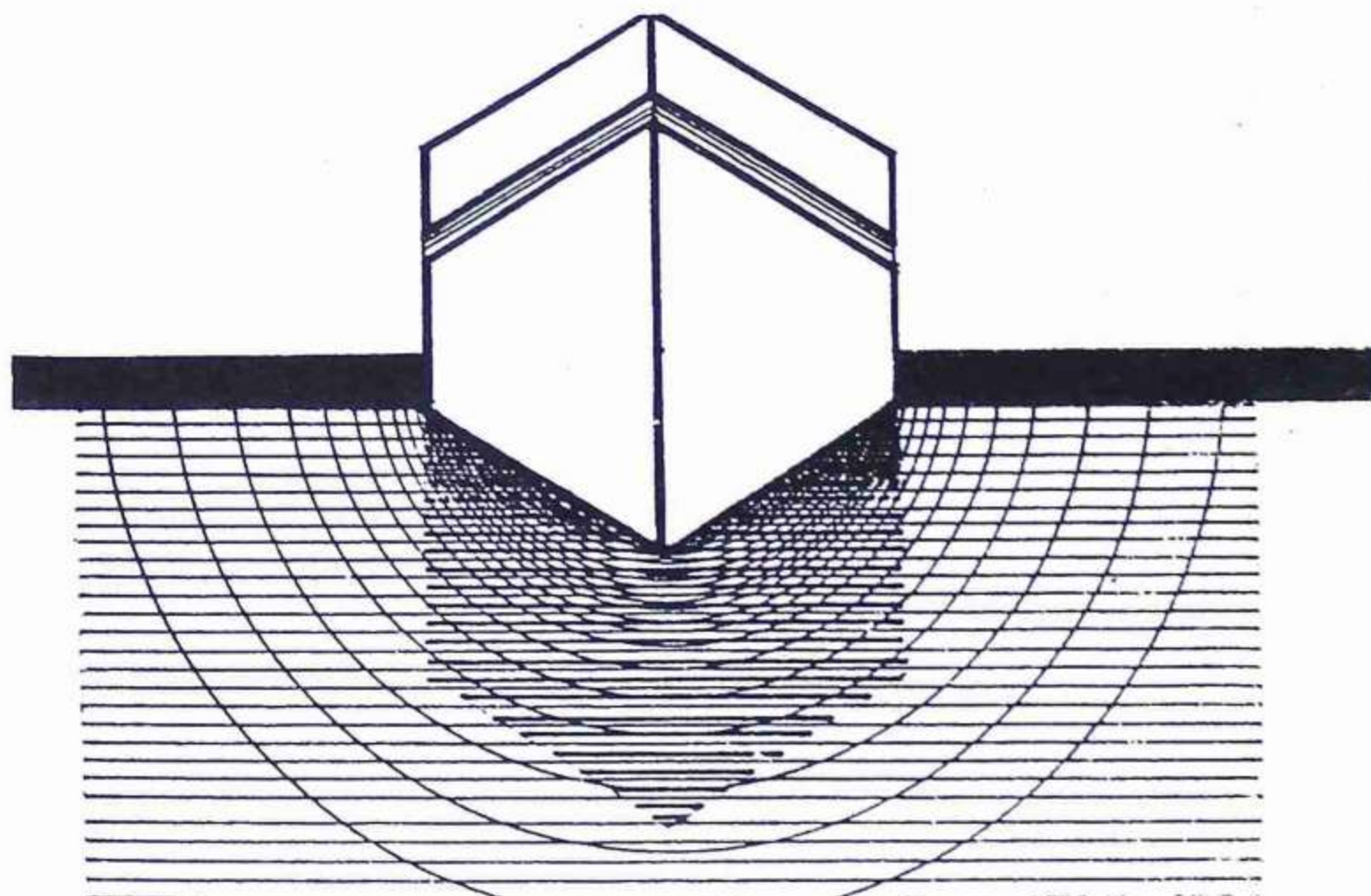
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## The Beginnings of Shī'ī Ijtihād\*

by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Jannāfī

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

**A**fter the demise of the Prophet (S) in the year 11/632, the need for *ijtihād* was felt acutely by the Sunnis, for they thought that the continuity of Divine guidance in the form of authoritative texts (*naṣṣ*) had ceased with his (S) demise and the only means of determining the Divine laws that remained was to search for them in the Book of God and the statements and acts of the Prophet (S). The Shī'ah, on the other hand, believed in the continuity of religious authority and *naṣṣ* after the Prophet (S), and they considered the Infallible Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) as embodying the Prophet's authority. Their statements (*qawl*), acts (*fi'l*) and approvals (*taqrīr*) were considered by them authoritative like those of the Holy Prophet (S), and hence as part of the Sunnah. Accordingly, the Shī'ah did not feel the need for *ijtihād* contemporaneously with the Sunnis; it was only after the Greater Occultation (*al-ghaybat al-kubrā*) of the Twelfth Imam (A) that the Shī'ah came to feel the need to practise *ijtihād* on an extensive scale.

Moreover, the Ahl al-Sunnah came to face various constrictions in the way of deducing laws of Shari'ah for contingent issues on account of distancing themselves from the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) after the Prophet's demise. This was because, on the one hand, about two-thirds of Quranic verses were seen to deal with doctrines, social principles, higher ethical values, historical events relating to past messengers and their peoples, and accounts of their struggle against the oppressors and *tāghūts* of their times; on the other hand, though the remaining one-third of them relate to legal matters (such as: *ṣalāt*, *ṣawm*, *khums*, *zakāt*, *Hajj*, *jihād*, *al-'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy'an al-munkar*, *tawallī*, *tabarrī*; legal contracts and economic deals, such as matters relating to

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\*This is third of a series of articles by the author which appeared in the Persian journal *Kayhān-e Andīsheh*, under the title "Sayrī dar manābi' *ijtihād*" (*Kayhān-e Andīsheh*, No.10, Bahman and Isfand 1365).

marriage, divorce, will and inheritance, sale, lease and mortgage; penal matters, such as those relating to *ḥudūd*, *diyāt* and *qiṣāṣ*; matters relating to government, judiciary, judgement, testimony, qualifications for judgeship; matters relating to the rights of parents, debts, etc.) they deal mostly with general principles, leaving the details and particulars to the Sunnah in accordance with the verse:

... وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ...

*Take whatever the Apostle brings you, and abstain from whatever he forbids you from. (59:7)*

### The Quran as the Source of Law:

It may be argued that the Quran and some traditions expressly state that the Quran contains everything and that there can be no shortage while we possess the Quran. Accordingly, it may be said, there is no reason why the Ahl al-Sunnah should have faced any difficulty in deducing *aḥkām* after the Prophet's demise.

In reply to this, we should say that it is undoubtedly true that: *وَلَا رَيْبَ وَلَا يَأْسَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ* (not a thing, fresh or withered, but it is in a Book Manifest), but the belief that everything has been mentioned in the Quran and that nothing has been omitted by it, in accordance with the verse: *مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ* (We have not omitted anything in the Book) does not imply that everyone, regardless of his qualifications, is capable of obtaining the pearls lying in the depths of its shoreless oceans. The belief that the Quran contains all the *aḥkām* and is capable of answering every question that can be raised by man does not conflict with the view that an extraordinary level of knowledge, effort and learning is essential for obtaining all the *aḥkām* of the Shari'ah from the Quran and for finding the answer to any question. Thus we find that some traditions that expressly declare that there is everything in the Quran also add that it is not possible to understand part of Quranic meanings without reference to someone who is infallible (*Ma'sūm*). *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* (vol. I, p. 62) records the following statement of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A) in this regard:

ذَلِكَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَنْطِقُوهُ وَلَنْ يَنْطِقَ لَكُمْ إِخْبَارُكُمْ عَنْهُ إِنَّ فِيهِ عِلْمَ مَا مَضَى وَعِلْمَ مَا يَأْتِي إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَحُكْمَ مَا بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيَانَ مَا أَصْبَحْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ فَلَوْ سَأَلْتُمُونِي عَنْهُ لَعَلَّمْتُكُمْ.

There is the Quran: ask it to speak, but it will never speak to you (because its profound speech is audible only to the *Ma'sūm* and it is he who can make it speak unreservedly), yet I will inform you about it; verily, in it is the knowledge of the past and the future up to the Day of Resurrection. In it is the



judgement touching whatever passes between you and the explanations of your differences. If you ask me about it, I will inform you.

### The Difficulty of Utilizing the Sunnah:

Some, while admitting that it has been a difficult task for Islamic scholars to deduce the *aḥkām* from the Quran — i.e. to make the Quran speak, in Imam 'Alī's words, the task lying basically beyond the powers of ordinary persons — may argue that the Ahl al-Sunnah did have access to the Prophet's traditions on legal issues and that such traditions were sufficient to meet their needs. In reply to this conjecture it must be said that unfortunately these traditions were very few in comparison to the number of contingent issues that arose, and therefore they were not sufficient to answer all the questions that arose.

It was exactly for this reason that terrible gaps appeared in the Sunnī fiqh of this period, and the inadequacy of the existing sources and foundations led to the invention of instruments for drawing legal conjectures (such as *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* and other instruments as *qiyās*, *istihsān*, *maṣāliḥ mursalah*, *istiṣlāḥ*, *madhhab al-ṣaḥābī*, *sadd al-dharā'ī*, *fath al-dharā'ī*, *sharī'at al-salaf*, *'urf*, *istidlāl*, etc.).

### The Need for Ijtihād amongst the Shī'ah:

As said above, the Shī'ah did not face any constriction in respect of legal source for finding answers to emergent issues after the Prophet's era. They did not face any vacuum in Islamic law after the Prophet's demise because of their belief that 'Alī (A) and his descendants had been invested by the Prophet (S) with Imamate, the authority to expound the Prophet's Sunnah and to perpetuate it, which to them was an inexhaustible treasure that had been left by the Prophet (S) for the Ummah. As a result of this belief the Shī'ah referred to the living Imam for the solution of new problems and obtained the solution in the form of an exposition of a verse of the Quran or through a tradition of the Prophet (S). They never felt any need to turn to *ijtihād bi al-ra'y* or to resort to conjectural methods.

The only time the Shī'ah met with any difficulty in this regard was with the beginning of the Minor Occultation of the Twelfth Imam (A), a period of 69 years from 260/874 to 328/940. During this period the Shī'ah could obtain replies to their queries through the deputies (*nuwwāb*) of the hidden Imam (A) who served as intermediaries. These deputies, one after another, were four: Abū 'Amr 'Uthman ibn Sa'id, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān (d. 304 or 5/916 or 7), Abū al-Qāsim Ḥusayn ibn Rūḥ al-Nawbakhtī (d. 326/938), and Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Samarī (d. 329/941). With the end of the

Minor Occultation and the beginning of the Major Occultation in the year 329/941, in the absence of access to the Imam (A) or his deputies, the Shi'ah were confronted with greater difficulty in regard to obtaining *aḥkām* for new issues, which increased with the passage of time and the growing distance from the era of *naṣṣ*, together with the growing variety of the emergent issues and problems created by new conditions of life. Moreover, with the passage of time, increasing number of doubts took the place of the previous certainty about the meaning and import of the texts which served as the bases of legal deductions. It was at this time that the Shi'ah began to search for ways to solve this problem by deducing the *aḥkām* for new issues from the available legal sources.

This new path was that of "*ijtihād*" whose pioneer was the great *mujtahid* and creative jurist al-Ḥasan ibn Abī 'Aqīl al-'Umānī. After him, we can name al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, the great scholar and highly original *mujtahid* who employed the foundations built by Ibn Abī 'Aqīl for extensive deduction of *aḥkām* of the Shari'ah. In this way the difficulties lying in the way of Shi'i jurisprudence were removed and it overcame its hurdles.

#### The Difference between Shi'i and Sunni Ijtihād:

'*Ijtihād*' is a familiar term both in Shi'i and Sunni fiqh, but its meaning and characteristics are different in the contexts of the two. Whereas *ijtihād* in the Shi'i sense means deduction of *aḥkām* from the sources and through the principles of the Shari'ah, the same term in Sunni fiqh means deduction of *aḥkām* through such means as *ra'y*, *qiyās*, *istiḥsān*, *maṣāliḥ mursalah*, etc. Therefore, it has been said that Shi'i *ijtihād* does not involve legislation (*tashrī'*) of new laws as Divine commands regarding emergent issues and events; it confines itself to applying the unchanging general principles to emergent, changing particulars (*tafrī'*). The Shi'ah do not look upon *ijtihād* as an independent source of *aḥkām* but as the means of their identification through a study of the sources of the Shari'ah. The Ahl al-Sunnah, on the contrary, consider *ijtihād* as an independent source of legislation.

#### Ijtihād during the Era of the Imams (A):

Though it would appear that the Shi'ah had no need of *ijtihād* during the era of accessibility to the Infallible Imams (A), the fact is that some Shi'i jurists did confront the need to perform *ijtihād* occasionally under some special circumstances, and the path of deducing secondary *aḥkām* from the basic sources was open to them. The evidence of it is as follows:

1. There are traditions in which mention is made of certain com-

mon elements pertaining to the general principles of legal deduction. In these traditions, the Imams — particularly al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) — are reported to have been questioned about such principles (*uṣūl*) and rules (*qawā'id*), and they gave replies to such questions. These traditions by themselves indicate that issues related to *ijtihād* were relevant for the Shi'ah during that period. The Imams (A) propounded such *uṣūl* as that of *Barā'ah*, *Ihtiyāt*, *Istiṣhāb* and *Takhyīr* and such *qawā'id* as that of *tahārah*, *yad*, *ibāḥah*, *ḥilliyyah*, *ṣiḥḥah*, *tajāwuz*, *farāgh*, *lā ḍarar*, *lā ḥaraj*, etc. These *uṣūl* and *qawā'id* provide effective assistance to the faqīh in his effort to deduce the *ḥukm* of the Shari'ah about any contingent issue.

Historical accounts reveal that whenever the companions of the Imams (A) came across the texts of their aḥādīth — which differed from one another in respect to *'āmm* and *khāṣṣ*, *muṭlaq* and *muqayyad*, *mujmal* and *mubīn*, *ẓāhir* and *aẓhar*, *ẓāhir* and *naṣṣ* — they would try to reconcile them according to the rules of objective reconciliation (*jam' mawḍū'i*) so far as it was possible (such as between *'āmm* and *khāṣṣ*, *muṭlaq* and *muqayyad*, *mujmal* and *mubīn*). But if objective reconciliation was not possible (such as between *ẓāhir* and *aẓhar*, *ẓāhir* and *naṣṣ*) they would reconcile the tradition in accordance with the rule of *jam' ḥukmī* and remove their apparent conflict. When none of these two methods of reconciliation worked (such as when there were totally divergent narrations regarding a certain issue), the narrators would ask the Imams (A) to suggest some criterion for distinguishing between reliable and unreliable traditions. In this relation numerous traditions have been reported from the Imams (A) which are termed in 'ilm al-'uṣūl as *akhbār ilājiyyah* (remedial traditions). In *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* (vol. I), *'Awālī al-la'ālī*, and other works, there are chapters related to this topic and here we shall cite one tradition as an example.

In *'Awālī al-la'ālī* (vol. IV, p. 133) a tradition is recorded from Zurārah ibn A'yan:

Zurārah says: "I said to Abū Ja'far, 'May I be your ransom, if two conflicting traditions are narrated from you which one of them are we to accept?' The Imam (A) said, 'Take the one which is well-known among your companions (i.e. the Shi'is) and leave the one which is unfamiliar.' I said, 'What should we do if both of the traditions are equally well-known?' The Imam (A) replied, 'Take the one which seems more balanced (*a'dal*) and more reliable (*awthaq*) to you.' I said, 'What if both of them are equally balanced, acceptable and reliable?' The Imam (A) said, 'See which of them is in accordance with the standpoint of the 'Āmmah (i.e. non-Shi'i Muslims); leave it, and take the opposite of what the 'Āmmah hold, for the truth lies in that which contradicts them.' I said, 'Sometimes we come across two traditions both of which are in agreement with the 'Āmmah or both of them contradict with their standpoint; what are we to do in such cases?' The Imam (A) replied, 'Select the tradition which is nearer to caution and leave the other one.' I

said, 'What is our duty if both the traditions are in accordance with caution or if both of them are opposed to it?' The Imam (A) replied, 'In such a case, take anyone of the two and leave the other.'"

The traditions which deal with the resolution of conflict between traditions are great many and there is no need to cite them here. The aim of quoting the above tradition was to show that the principles of jurisprudence were often discussed during the era of the Imams (A) and that these principles were generally employed for the practice of *ijtihād*. On this basis, the practice of *ijtihād* was not limited to the period of inaccessibility to the Imams (A).

2. The presence of books dealing with some issues of 'ilm al-'uṣūl among the writings of the contemporaries of the Imams (A) is indicative of the fact that the practice of *ijtihād* was current and the principles of jurisprudence were relevant during the era of accessibility. We shall discuss this matter in detail while studying the various periods in the history of *ijtihād*; here we shall cite few instances of it for the sake of example:

(a) Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, a pupil of al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A), compiled a treatise on word usage (*alfād*).

(b) Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, a pupil of al-'Imām al-Riḍā (A), wrote a short treatise on *uṣūl al-fiqh*.

(c) Al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān al-'Azdi al-Nishābūri, a pupil of al-'Imām al-Hādī (A), was the author of a number of *fatāwā* issued on the basis of jurisprudential principles. For instance, he gave a *fatwā* upholding the validity of prayers offered in an usurped place, in accordance with his belief in the permissibility of the concurrence of *amr* and *nahy*. Apparently he was the first to believe in the permissibility of the concurrence of *amr* and *nahy* in matters of primary significance.

3. During the era of accessibility to the Imams (A), the Shī'is who lived in distant lands, such as Khurāsān and Ray, could not easily contact the Imam (A) and question him about the problems they came across. Although historical accounts show that the Shī'is sent their queries to the Imams (A) through travellers and pilgrims, who brought them the Imam's answers on returning, it should be noted that this method was not followed in respect to all the problems encountered. Secondly, the replies in such cases arrived after the passage of considerable time during which we cannot say that they remained without any obligation to fulfil. Thirdly, the travellers and the messengers sent were not always successful in getting access to the Imams (A), because most of the time the Imams (A) were either under surveillance or in the prisons of tyrannical caliphs, so that the Shī'is could not contact their Imam. For instance, al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) was under such strict and oppressive surveillance of the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Manṣūr that no one

could easily approach the Imam (A). The Shi'is had to resort to various kinds of tactics to approach the Imam's house in the garb of peddlers or tradesmen to ask questions while observing intense caution.

After al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A), the next Imam, Mūsā ibn Ja'far (A), spent long years in the prisons of Baṣrah and Baghdad until his martyrdom. During such periods, eminent Shi'i fuqahā', such as Zurārah, Muḥammad ibn Muslim, al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān, Ṣafwān ibn Yaḥyā and others fulfilled the legal needs of the Shi'is through their own *ijtihād*.

4. There are traditions which indicate that the Imams' companions and pupils were required to apply the general juristic principles to particular instances. The following tradition of *Safinat al-Bihār* (vol. I, p.22) is an example:

قال الصادق (ع): إِنَّمَا عَلَيْنَا أَنْ نُلقِي الْأَصُولَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تُفَرِّعُوا.

Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: "Our duty is to teach you the principles and your duty is to ramify."

*A'yān al-Shī'ah* records the following tradition of al-'Imām al-Riḍā (A):

عَنْ كِتَابِ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ أَبِي نَصْرِ الْبَيْرُنَظِيِّ عَنِ الرَّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: عَلَيْنَا إِلقَاءُ الْأَصُولِ وَعَلَيْكُمْ التَّفْرِيعُ.

From the book of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Naṣr al-Bizantī from al-Riḍā (A): "Our duty is to teach the principles and yours to ramify."

5. Another evidence of the existence of *ijtihād* during the era of accessibility to the Imam are the *fatwās* issued by the legists among the Imams' contemporaries, and the Imams' approval of their verdicts. The following tradition narrated by Mu'ādh ibn Muslim is recorded in *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah* (vol. 18, 11th of the chapters on *ṣifāt al-qāḍī*, ḥadīth 37):

Mu'ādh ibn Muslim said: "Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said to me, 'I have been told that you sit in the mosque and give *fatwā* to the people'. I said, 'Yes, I am doing it.' Then I said, 'Before I leave you I have to ask you a question: (My practice is that) When I sit in the mosque (giving *fatwās*) a man comes and asks me a certain question. If I know that he is one of your opponents and does not act according to your views, I narrate to him a *fatwā* which is acceptable in his legal school. If I know that he is one of your followers, I give a *fatwā* in accordance with the Shi'i school. But if I cannot find out to which group he belongs I explain to him various *fatwās* putting in your views amongst them.' The Imam (A) replied, 'Carry on in the same fashion, for such is also my method.'"

6. Some traditions show that the Imams (A) ordered the outstand-

ing among their companions to give *fatwās* to the people. In *Usd al-ghābah* (vol. 4, p.197) it is reported that Imam 'Alī (A), while appointing his cousin Qutham ibn al-'Abbās as governor of Makkah, said to him:

أَفِّتِ الْمُسْتَفْنِي وَعَلِّمِ الْجَاهِلَ.

Give *fatwā* to the initiated and teach the ignorant.

Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) is reported to have said to Abān ibn Taghlib (*Jāmi' al-ruwāt*, vol. I, p.9):

اجْلِسْ فِي مَسْجِدِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَأَفِّتِ النَّاسَ فَإِنِّي أُحِبُّ أَنْ يُرَى فِي شِيعَتِي مِثْلَكَ

Sit in the Mosque of Madīnah and give *fatwās* to the people, for I love the like of you to be seen amongst my Shi'ah.

7. Some traditions indicate that the Imams (A) referred some of their followers to some of their outstanding pupils in matters relating to ḥadīth and *fatwā*.

عَنْ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ بْنِ مُهْتَدِي، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا الْحَسَنِ الرَّضَا (ع)، فَقُلْتُ: إِنِّي لَا أَقْدِرُ عَلَى لِقَائِكَ فِي كُلِّ وَقْتٍ فَمِمَّنْ أَخَذُ مَعَالِمَ دِينِي؟ فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: خُذْ عَنِ يُونُسَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ.

'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Muhtadī said: "I asked Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A), 'I am unable to meet you every time, so from whom should I take my religious instruction?' 'Take if from Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān,' said the Imam (A)." (*Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 18, eleventh of the chapters on *ṣifāt al-qādī*, ḥadīth 34)

عَنْ شُعَيْبِ الْعَقْرَقُونِيِّ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: رَبِّمَا احْتَجَجْنَا أَنْ نَسْأَلَ عَنِ الشَّيْءِ فَمَنْ نَسْأَلُ؟ قَالَ: عَلَيْكَ بِالْأَسَدِيِّ.

Shu'ayb says: "I said to al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A), 'Often we have to ask about something; whom should we ask?' The Imam said, 'Ask al-'Asadī (Abū Baṣīr).'" (*Ibid.*)

عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مُسَيَّبِ الْهَمْدَانِيِّ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِلرَّضَا (ع): شُقْنِي بَعِيدَةً وَلَسْتُ أَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ فِي كُلِّ وَقْتٍ، فَمَنْ أَخَذُ عَنْهُ مَعَالِمَ دِينِي؟ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: زَكَرِيَّا بْنُ آدَمَ الْقُمِّيَّ الْمَأْمُونِ عَلَى الدِّينِ وَالدُّنْيَا. قَالَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ: فَلَمَّا انْصَرَفْتُ قَدِمْنَا عَلَى زَكَرِيَّا بْنِ آدَمَ فَسَأَلْتُهُ عَمَّا احْتَجَجْتُ إِلَيْهِ.

'Alī ibn Musayyab al-Hamadānī says, "I said to al-Riḍā (A), 'I have to come a long distance and I cannot reach you every time (when I have to ask you

something). From whom should I take the teachings of my faith?" The Imam (A) said, 'From Zakariyyā ibn Ādam; he is my trustee in regard to religious and secular matters.'" 'Alī ibn Musayyab adds, "On returning I went to Zakariyyā ibn Ādam and asked him whatever I needed to ask." (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p.67)

قَالَ الصَّادِقُ (ع): يَنْظُرَانِ إِلَى مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ قَدْ رَوَى حَدِيثَنَا وَنَظَرَ فِي حَلَالِنَا وَحَرَامِنَا  
وَعَرَفَ أَحْكَامَنَا فَلْيَرْضُوهُ حَكَمًا.

Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: "The two (Shi'i disputants) should look for one who narrates our traditions and has in view our *halāl* and *ḥarām* and who as well understands our *aḥkām*. Then (having found such a person) they should accept him as a judge." (*Ibid.*)

قَالَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ الْحَسَنُ الْعَسْكَرِيُّ (ع): ... فَأَمَّا مَنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْفُقَهَاءِ صَائِنًا لِنَفْسِهِ حَافِظًا لِدِينِهِ  
مُخَالَفًا لِهَوَاهُ مُطِيعًا لِأَمْرِ مَوْلَاهُ فَلِلْعَوَامِّ أَنْ يُقَلَّدُوهُ.

Al-'Imām al-'Askarī (A) said:..."As to the faqih who preserves the integrity of his self, defends his faith, opposes his lust and obeys the command of his Master (*mawlā*), then it is for the laymen (*'awāmm*) to imitate him." (al-Ṭabarsī, *al-'Ihtijāj*)

8. The traditions quoted above expressly indicate the permissibility of giving *fatwā* in accordance with the principles of Shi'i jurisprudence. There are other traditions which, though they do not expressly state such a sanction, are relevant in that we can infer such a permissibility from them.

Al-'Imām al-Bāqir (A) said: "Anyone who gives *fatwā* without knowledge or guidance is cursed by the angels of Divine wrath and mercy. The sins of those who act upon his *fatwās* also lie upon him." (*Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 18, fourth of the chapters of *ṣifāt al-qādī*, a *ṣaḥīḥ* tradition narrated on the authority of Abū 'Ubaydah)

Al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: "Anyone who acts upon *qiyās* destroys himself and others who act upon his verdict. Whoever gives *fatwā* without knowledge and without knowing *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* or *muḥkam* and *mutashābih*, brings perdition upon himself and others." (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, *bāb al-nahy 'an al-qawl bi ghayr al-'ilm*, ḥadīth 9)

The Prophet (S) said: "Whoever gives *fatwā* without knowledge or learning, his abode shall be hellfire." (*Tuḥaf al-'uqūl*, the *riwāyah* of al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Shu'bah)

9. In regard to the books of certain Shī'ī groups (such as Banū Faḍḍāl) and individuals (such as al-Shalamghānī), the Imams (A) are reported to have said: *خُذُوا مَا رَوَوْا وَذَرُّوا مَا دَرَوْا*, 'Take their narrations and leave their conclusions.' It can be inferred from this tradition that *ijtihād* was practised by the Shī'īs of that era. Banū Faḍḍāl and al-Shalamghānī had diverted from the right path, and, therefore, the Imams (A) forbade the Shī'īs from acting upon their verdicts, judgements and opinions.

#### Conclusion:

From the nine reasons given above it can be concluded that the practice of *ijtihād*, in the sense of derivation of *aḥkām* from Shar'ī sources, existed during the era of the eleven Imams (S). The companions of the Imams (A) derived secondary *aḥkām* from the legal sources, for issues for which there existed no *naṣṣ* either in the Book or in the Sunnah of the Prophet (S) or in *riwāyāt* of the *Ma'sūmūn* (A), and this practice enjoyed the approval of the Imams (A).

#### *Ijtiḥād*, a Perennial Spring:

The essential sources of Islamic law are the Quran, the Prophet's Sunnah, and the traditions of the Infallible Imams (A), which are the most vital source of man's spiritual life. This is because the life and continuity of human societies depends on the existence of proper laws and regulations. These fundamental sources of law are like precious deposits in which the higher, transcendental teachings are kept in the form of general, universal principles. In order to extract this vital material from the core of general and universal principles and to use it for the fulfilment of multifarious needs of man's spiritual and corporeal existence, there is the need of some instrument and means. Such an instrument is provided by *ijtihād*.

*Ijtiḥād*, on the one hand, gives vigour and viability to legal thought and, on the other, does not allow the *aḥkām* to remain in the outdated moulds of obsolete expressions and terms, by expounding them in the language of every age and in accordance with its needs.

Although the Divine laws are fixed and unchangeable, the mode of their expression and exposition is subject to variation. A part of the function of *ijtiḥād* is to recognize the consequences arising from this fact. Hence it has been said that *ijtiḥād* is an agent of renovation in fiqh, and that it is a force that operates in history by developing the scope of fiqh with the expansion of its applications. At the same time, *ijtiḥād* safeguards the stability of legislation through time. Since the Sacred Lawgiver knew that various aspects of human life are subject to change



and its multifarious needs are open to variation, He recognized the role of *ijtihād* as a force which should emerge with the emergence of fiqh and remain in its service throughout the course of history in order to enable fiqh to fulfil the human need for law. The *ijtihād* which the Lawgiver has sanctioned and which is to be employed in the service of fiqh, represents a specific meaning of the term '*ijtihād*'. In this particular sense it embodies one of the most outstanding characteristics of the spirit of Islam as reflected in Islamic legal studies, and it is in this sense that the Shi'ah have adopted the term.

If the practice of *ijtihād* is carried on in a correct manner, Islamic fiqh cannot remain static or face any kind of stagnation, nor will there appear any kind of deficiency or vacuum in any of its various branches.

The innate dynamism of Islamic fiqh became apparent when the great Shi'ī *mujtahid* al-Ḥasan ibn Abī 'Aqīl al-'Umānī, a contemporary of al-Kulaynī, gave a scientific structure to fiqh. The practical impact of his work became evident when the great Shi'ī legist Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī employed the groundwork prepared by him for deriving *aḥkām* from Shar'ī sources for new issues and problems. Thus it was by these two great minds that fiqh was set upon a course upon which it progressed with time and developed with historical change.

#### The Source of the Inadequacies:

That which is sometimes referred to as the inadequacy of fiqh is in fact a result of inadequate research effort undertaken in some of the branches of Islamic legal studies. In other words, the main cause of these inadequacies is the failure to study the general and particular elements relating to some branches of fiqh. The reason for this neglect was the absence of any practical background during the past ages.

Accordingly, these inadequacies do not relate to the essence of Islamic law as such. It is we who have not worked hard enough to explore its hidden treasures. Undoubtedly, had we explored them, there would not have remained any unanswered question in this domain. On this account, the inadequacy pertains to our performance, not to Islamic law.

For instance, some issues of fiqh either totally lacked practical relevance in the past before the establishment of the Islamic Republic, or their relevance was very limited. This was true of matters relating to land, limits of private ownership, *anfāl*, *jihād*, penal laws, judiciary, *qiṣās*, *ta'zīrāt*, etc., or issues pertaining to civil, economic and social legislation. As a result of the past irrelevance of these issues, due to the absence of any background necessary for implementation, sufficient work was not done on these topics and whenever some work was done

it was sketchy and perfunctory.

On the other hand, other kinds of legal issues, such as matters pertaining to *wudū'*, *ghusl*, *tayammum*, *ṣalāt*, *ṣawm* and so on, were studied in extremely meticulous detail due to the existence of a practical background, and now we don't face any kind of inadequacy with regard to the problems pertaining to these topics.

Today, with Divine succour, the background required for the implementation of all the Divine *aḥkām* in society has emerged with the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the realization of the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic. Now the theological centres should continue their endeavour by giving more attention to those branches of fiqh that were neglected in the past. This author believes that should a one-third of the research effort put formerly into such topics as *tahārah* (ritual purification) and *ṣalāt* be devoted to other branches of fiqh, all the inadequacies would disappear and we would obtain clear and unambiguous *aḥkām* in all the spheres.

#### The Qualifications Required for Ijtihād:

There are certain requirements which must be met in order to exercise *ijtihād* in economic, political, social, cultural, ethical and legal spheres. These are as follows:

1. The *mujtahid* should have sufficient knowledge and expertise in the field of *ijtihād* and must be thoroughly familiar with the statements of the Prophet (S) and the Imams (A). Otherwise he cannot be called a *mujtahid* or a *faqīh*:

لا يَكُونُ الْفَقِيهُ فَقِيهًا حَتَّى يَعْرِفَ مَعَارِيضَ كَلَامِنَا.

One is not a *faqīh* unless he understands the meaning of our statements.

In a tradition recorded in *Miṣbāḥ al-Sharī'ah* (p. 355, *bāb* 63), al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) is reported to have said:

وَالْمُفْتِي يَخْتِاجُ إِلَى مَعْرِفَةِ مَعَانِي الْقُرْآنِ وَحَقَائِقِ السُّنَنِ وَتَوَاطُنِ الْإِشَارَاتِ وَالْآدَابِ  
وَالْإِجْمَاعِ وَالْإِخْتِلَافِ وَالْإِطْلَاعِ عَلَى أُصُولِ مَا أَجْمَعُوا عَلَيْهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ثُمَّ إِلَى حُسْنِ  
الْإِخْتِيَارِ ثُمَّ الْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ ثُمَّ الْحِكْمَةِ ثُمَّ التَّقْوَى ثُمَّ حِينَئِذٍ إِنْ قَدَرَ.

The *mufti* (one who gives *fatwā*) stands in need of knowledge of the meanings of the Quran, understanding of the real meaning of *aḥādīth* and the inward meaning of signs and indications, and familiarity with matters relating to etiquette and conduct. He should have thorough knowledge of the points of consensus and disagreement and be well-informed about the essentials of

what they have agreed or disagreed about. Then he should possess the capacity to make a proper choice. Then he needs to be righteous in his actions, wise and pious. After possessing all these qualities, he may give *fatwā* if he has the capacity to do so.

Fiqh is like an ocean which does not yield its pearls and treasures to those divers who lack discrimination, knowledge, experience and expertise. Those who try to fathom it without possessing these qualities are drowned and destroyed.

2. The exercise of *ijtihād* should be in accordance with the criteria and principles of 'ilm al-'uṣūl; otherwise any claims to *ijtihād* cannot be recognized.

3. Perpetual research about the factors that relate to the process of ramification (*tafrī'*) of the principles and their application to particular cases. These elements are as follows:

(a) The *uṣūl* (fundamental principles) of *aḥkām*, in whose light the *aḥkām* for new *furū'* are obtained.

(b) The general rules of *aḥkām*, which are applicable to individual instances in external reality.

4. Perpetual research about the elements relevant to derivation of *aḥkām*, such as:

(a) The common (*mushtarak*) *uṣūlī* elements of derivation.

(b) The specific elements (traditions) related to derivation that do not contain the causes (*'ilal*) behind the *aḥkām*.

(c) The specific elements that do contain the cause underlying a *ḥukm* and which can be used for extending it to other cases. This extension of a law to similar cases is called *qiyās manṣūṣ al-'illah*, (i.e. extension of the jurisdiction of a law in cases where the cause underlying it has been stated by the Lawgiver). However, the *qiyās* based on analogy and similarity, which is considered valid by Ahl al-Sunnah with the exception of Ḥanbalīs and Zāhirīs, is rejected by the Shi'ah.

(d) Extraction of definite criteria of *aḥkām* from tradition through reason, as a result of which a *ḥukm* can be extended beyond the application mentioned in ḥadīth.

In the terminology of fiqh this is called *tanqīḥ al-manāṭ al-qat'ī* (isolation of the definite cause) and is considered valid by the Shi'ah. That which is considered invalid by the Shi'ah is deducing of the presumed cause of a *ḥukm* by rational means, which is termed *tanqīḥ al-manāṭ al-ẓannī* (isolation of the presumed cause).

(e) The isolation (*tanqīḥ*) of general subjects (*mawḍū'āt*) through the triple means of the *Shar'* (canon), *'aql* (reason) and *'urf* (custom).

This *tanqīḥ* is directed towards two things: (1) content (*muḥtawā*), (2) the legal application of the subject isolated to other general heads (*'anāwīn kulliyyah*) — such as the application of the subject of coopera-

tion (*ta'āwun*) to the matter of *ithm* and *'udwān* as a primary consideration and its secondary legal application to the use of tobacco (as during the Tobacco Movement), for instance. This kind of application is one of the special functions of the *mujtahid* (that is why we said 'isolation of general subjects', for isolation of particular subjects is not the *mujtahid*'s duty).

(f) The primary laws (*al-'ahkām al-'awwaliyyah*).

(g) The secondary laws (*al-'ahkām al-thānawiyyah*).

(h) The provision of legislative assistance to the ruler or *al-walī al-faqīh* within the framework of the sources.

If *ijtihād* is exercised in various branches of law in the light of these conditions, no law pertaining to any subject will remain unidentified nor there will remain any kind of legal inadequacy. Now it is up to the committed *mujtahids* and scholars to exercise *ijtihād* in these fields of law, wherein the way has been prepared for implementation through the establishment of the Islamic Republic, and thus satisfy the needs of Muslim communities.

Some persons, on account of their ignorance, think that in order to meet the diverse needs of changed conditions of life we should either turn to the use of conjectural instruments (such as *qiyās*, *istihsān* and *maṣāliḥ mursalah*) or to the legal systems of other countries of the east and the west. The above discussion shows the baselessness of such a suggestion.

Unfortunately, there is a group which on its first encounter with an inadequacy in some branch of law goes to the extreme and proposes such methods of legal deduction as are neither sanctioned by the Shari'ah nor agree with the rational criteria, and compromise the reputation of Islam in the eyes of non-Muslims.

### The Closure of the Gates of Ijtihād, a Conspiracy:

The issue of closing the gates of *ijtihād* emerged during the reign of the 'Abbāsids, and undoubtedly the enemies of Islam played an effective part in raising it. This was because the giving up of *ijtihād* meant blocking the source of dynamism and perpetual vitality of Islam and its law, which in turn implied the expulsion of Islam from the arena of temporal affairs and, following it, its elimination from the intellectual and spiritual spheres. Evidently, this was what the enemies of Islam aimed at.

The cause of the present inadequacies of Sunnī fiqh in most of the branches of law, as well as the issuance of incorrect *fatwās*, is the Sunnī belief in the end of *ijtihād*. However, the committed and aware scholars among the Ahl al-Sunnah should endeavour to reopen the gates of *ijtihād* and bring Islam out of its current state of isolation and decadence,

so that a spirit of vitality and dynamism is infused into Muslim communities. This is because so long as the *taqlīd* of the four Imams is considered binding, and new research, study and expression of views is regarded as impermissible, there appears to be little hope of any effective change.

### Difference of Viewpoints, a Bounty:

There is no doubt that disagreement in the sense of quarrel and hostility is an undesirable thing which has been prohibited by the sacred Shari'ah. But disagreement in the sense of difference of opinion is, in many cases, good and valuable, because the conflict of ideas leads to greater research and deeper investigation. Some have interpreted the following statement of the Prophet (S) in this sense:

اختلاف أمتي رحمة.

The difference of my Ummah is a mercy.<sup>1</sup>

In any case, *ijtihād* and undertaking of investigation for identification of Divine laws is considered a desirable thing by the Lawgiver. The tradition:

للمصيب أجران وللمخطيء أجر واحد.

The *mujtahid* who succeeds (in identifying the true law) gets two rewards and the one who errs gets one,

aims to encourage *ijtihād* as it leads to the development of thought and taps the resources of the intellect.

This admirable practice has been in vogue in Shi'i academies for ages, and throughout the seven epochs of the history of *ijtihād*, *mujtahidūn* welcomed the expression of diverse viewpoints regarding various issues. This is the reason why Shi'i fiqh has achieved its remarkable development in various fields and preserved the capacity to answer the problems and satisfy the diverse wants of man in every age. Farīd al-Wajdī, writing in *Dā'irat al-ma'ārif*, III, 197, under *j-h-d*, says:

The Islamic Shari'ah contains sufficient amount of primary principles suitable for legal deduction and which can meet the emergent wants and solve the problems of life. Therefore, in every age there should be *mujtahids* capable of making legal deductions. From the beginning of the Islamic era to the third/ninth century there did exist *mujtahids* who deduced the *ḥukm* for every event and eventuality through *ijtihād* from the primary principles of the Shari'ah. They were not afraid of divergence of viewpoints, which to them

was not only something ordinary and natural but a mercy of God, because diversity is one of the laws of nature and there is no community without divergence in some matters of religion, with the followers on every side defending their own viewpoint. But when the Muslims became rigid with regard to the understanding of the secrets and subtleties of their law, inadequacy and neglect became their lot. As a result they did not permit themselves to think about new realities. They would say that it was on account of the closure of the gates of *ijtihād*. But the fact is that according to the express texts of the Book and the Sunnah, the gates of *ijtihād* are open for all until the Judgement's Day.

In brief, social stagnation and intellectual decadence cast their shadow on Islamic communities when the road of *ijtihād* and thought was blocked and Muslims did not permit themselves to reflect about new realities and problems. As a consequence, their legal studies remained at the same point that they had reached twelve centuries ago.

### Traditional Fiqh or Progressive Fiqh?

Nowadays some persons want to draw a distinction between 'traditional fiqh' and 'progressive fiqh'. However, if we set aside the specific views and objectives of some groups and see things as they really are, we will see that there can be no distinction between 'traditional fiqh' and 'progressive fiqh' in Shi'i context.

This is so because traditional fiqh, when dealt with on the basis of *ijtihād* with all its conditions and criteria, has the capacity to solve all emergent problems and to march in step with all the manifestations of progress. However, if by 'progressive fiqh' be meant recognition of the right to violate Shar'i norms and requirements of *ijtihād* and the non-specialist's right to interfere in this discipline, and the exercise of *ijtihād* through the use of *qiyās*, *istihsān* and *maṣāliḥ mursalah*, it cannot be called Islamic fiqh, to say nothing of its being 'progressive'. This is so because 'fiqh' means the commands revealed by God to His Apostle, not laws determined by human thought and speculation. So also if traditional fiqh is taken to mean rigid adherence to the literal meanings of the texts (*ẓawāhir al-nuṣūṣ*) and the *fatwās* of predecessors and indifference to contemporary realities, such a static *ijtihād* cannot answer the diverse problems of life in every age and keep pace with changing times.

### Ijtihād, Legislation and Taqlīd:

*Ijtihād* from the Shi'i viewpoint is not a kind of legislation or something based solely on human thought, subjective judgement or provincial social, economic, cultural or political perceptions. *Ijtihād* is also not a kind of *taqlīd* in the sense of a passive acceptance of *aḥkām*,

in whose determination the *mujtahid* has no role. *Ijtihād* in Shī'ī view means intellectual effort based on the recognition of certain canonical sources and juristic principles and aimed at understanding and discovering the laws of God. Although a dynamic force in fiqh, *ijtihād* does not diminish the sanctity and stability of the legal content of the Shari'ah. Rather, throughout the seven epochs of its development *ijtihād* has always guarded the principal content of the *aḥkām* while at the same time extending its scope and application to the most distant horizons of human life on the basis of its general laws and principles. *Ijtihād*, it may be said, is making intelligent use of God's general grace whereby He has placed the laws of the Shari'ah in the bounteous domain of the intellect.

The first Shī'ī faqīh to open the gates of *ijtihād* as a comprehensive scientific discipline was Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-'Umānī, known as Ibn Abī 'Aqīl. He wrote a book on this subject entitled *al-Mustamsik bi ḥabl Āl al-Rasūl*, which is mentioned by al-Najāshī as being one of the most famous and well-known Shī'ī works. In this book Ibn Abī 'Aqīl examined all the various aspects of the principles of *aḥkām* and the rules of *ijtihād* as well as the common elements related to the process of legal deduction. Although he wrote many books, in almost all the fields of Islamic sciences, his fame rests mostly on his studies of *ijtihād*. He wrote his above-mentioned book during the era of the Minor Occultation of the Twelfth Imam (A). He is considered the pioneer in the field because no one before him had written such a work that treated Shī'ī fiqh in such a comprehensive manner with an approach based on *ijtihād*.

We do not know of any legist to have undertaken such a task before Ibn Abī 'Aqīl. Before him Shī'ī fiqh did not have the ability of entering the phase of *tafrī'* (i.e. the application of *uṣūl* for deriving answers to new *furū'* or secondary issues) on account of the absence of an elaborate and scientific method, without which *ijtihād* as a technique was not possible. This great legist filled this vacuum through his indefatigable efforts.

After Ibn Abī 'Aqīl, the next person to set forth fiqh in a scientific perspective based on *ijtihād* was Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Kātib al-'Iskāfī (d.381/991), known as Ibn Junayd. In his endeavour to establish legal studies on the principles and rules of *ijtihād*, he wrote a number of books on the subject. Two of them are: *Tahdhīb al-Shī'ah li aḥkām al-Shari'ah* and *al-Mukhtaṣar al-'Aḥmadī li al-fiqh al-Muḥammadī*. Abū Ja'far ibn Ma'd al-Mūsawī, who claims to have seen Ibn Junayd's work, says that he had not seen a better-written book among Shī'ī works. He adds that *al-Mukhtaṣar al-'Aḥmadī* was popular as a textbook during the days of the late 'Allāmah.

### *A Clarification:*

Here it is essential to clarify two points. It appears from the statements of some scholars that Ibn Abī 'Aqīl was the first to open the gate of practical *ijtihād* and to lay the foundations of *tafrī'*. This is not correct, because he was the founder of *ijtihād* as theory and not as practice.

Secondly, some scholars are of the opinion that Ibn Junayd was the pioneer of the theory and practice of *ijtihād* and Ibn Abī 'Aqīl continued his work. This is opposite of what we believe to be the case, because Ibn Abī 'Aqīl was a contemporary of al-Kulaynī (d.328 or 329/940 or 941) and lived during the era of the Minor Occultation. Although we don't know the exact date of Ibn Abī 'Aqīl's death, some indications lead us to believe that he died before or about the same time as al-Kulaynī. Ibn Junayd al-'Iskāfī died in the year 381/991, about 52 (lunar) years after Ibn Abī 'Aqīl's death.

### *The Practice of Ijtihād:*

The first legist to open the gate of practical *ijtihād* was the great legist and the unique scholar of his era Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (385—460/995—1068), who applied the general principles of jurisprudence to new and emergent *furū'*. We don't know of any Shi'ī *mujtahid* before him to have practically applied *ijtihād* in his manner to answer the multiplying needs of the Shi'ī world of the time. With his work he extended the scope of Islamic fiqh in a remarkable manner, for he fully utilized the theoretical foundations which had been laid by his predecessors in the field, such as Ibn Abī 'Aqīl and Ibn Junayd.

Al-Ṭūsī commenced this project in his precious work *al-Mabsūṭ*. In the preface to this work, while explaining his motives for writing it, he says. "Our opponents believe that the Imāmiyyah do not have the capacity to refer the *furū'* to *uṣūl*, and they confine themselves to the texts (*nusūṣ*) related by their traditionists". Such a view stimulated the Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah to rise to prove the Shi'ī prowess in the field of *ijtihād* and to fill the existing vacuum. Juristic thought and the theory of *ijtihād* made great advancement during his era, breathing a new life into the body of fiqh. *Al-Mabsūṭ* emancipated the studies of fiqh from their restricted confines — wherein their sole reliance was on the direct, literal interpretation of traditions — and brought them into a wide and open field. Al-Ṭūsī's *al-Mabsūṭ* represents the point of departure in the expansion of Shi'ī fiqh and *uṣūl* which was made possible by the preliminary work done by Ibn Abī 'Aqīl and Ibn Junayd.



### The Development of the Theory of Ijtihād:

Shi'i *ijtihād* at the outset of the Minor Occultation did not come across the kind of difficulty faced during later eras with regard to the deduction of *aḥkām* regarding new issues and problems. This was because, firstly, the Muslims of that time did not face the problems which emerged later. Secondly, due to the proximity with the era of *naṣṣ*, the availability of the Four Hundred Uṣūl (which contained the records of the statements of al-'Imām al-Bāqir (A), al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) and the other Imams made, made by their pupils), and the understanding of the actual context in which those statements were made, the need for *ijtihād* was not felt as acutely as during the later times. *Ijtihād* and legal deduction was a simpler affair, free of the later technical complexities, because the legists of that period did not face any great difficulty with regard to the identification of trustworthy traditions, the literal and legal meanings and significance of words used in traditions, and the specific features relating to them. However, the passage of time and the emergence of new issues with the advancement of civilization, on the one hand, and the obliteration of signs and indications which were instrumental in understanding the import and purpose of traditions as well as the complications arising from changes in general and legal usage of words, on the other — all these together made the task of deduction more difficult for the later *mujtahids* and jurists. To these must be added the difficulty arising from the forgeries and fabrications made by interested persons, which had affected the trustworthiness of many traditions.

Due to these causes, the practice of *ijtihād* for the deduction and discovery of the real *aḥkām* was not so simple a matter as before, and it was necessary to study various sciences for the purposes of (1) determining the meanings of words, (2) understanding of the literal meanings of the Book and the Sunnah, (3) determining the reliability of narrators by studying their biographies for evaluating the *asnād* of traditions as *ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḍa'īf*, *muwaththaq*, *mursal* etc., and (4) determining the traditional and rational criteria for giving precedence to a tradition and the rules for reconciling conflicting traditions (on the basis of *'āmm* and *khāṣṣ*, *muṭlaq* and *muqayyad*, *mujmal* and *mubīn*, *ẓāhir* and *aẓhar*, *ẓāhir* and *naṣṣ*).

The causes behind the conflict between traditions of legal significance were the following:

1. The loss of certain indications accompanying the texts of ḥadīth, caused at times due to the dismemberment (*taqṭī'*) of traditions and *asnād*, and at times due to the negligence of narrators.

2. The narration of traditions in reworded form by the narrator, in words different from that of the Imam.

3. The making of statements contrary to the real Shi‘i position on account of *taqiyyah*, which the Shi‘is were forced to practise as a safety measure to protect the Shari‘ah and their lives, property and honour.

4. The graded approach of the Imams in the exposition and communication of the *ahkām* to the people, for the sake of the consideration of specific conditions of a certain inquirer or certain special circumstances.

5. The treacherous interference of some anti-Islamic elements and mercenaries, against whose fabrications the Imams (A) warned their Shi‘ah.

Accordingly, anyone who engages in the deduction of Divine *ahkām* from the traditions should have the capacity to reconcile various kinds of contradictions arising from the above-mentioned causes.

#### NOTES:

1. This interpretation of the tradition is correct if ‘*ikhtilāf*’ is taken to mean ‘difference of opinion’. However, in some traditions a different meaning is given to the word.

(One of these traditions is the following from al-Shaykh al-Ṣādūq’s *Ma‘āni al-’akhbār*, Qumm, 1361 H.Sh., p.157:

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ — رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ — قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْكُوفِيُّ عَنْ أَبِي الْخَيْرِ صَالِحِ بْنِ أَبِي حَمَادٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَحْمَدُ بْنُ هِلَالٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْمُؤْمِنِ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنْ قَوْمًا زَوَّاءَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ قَالَ: «إِنَّ اخْتِلَافَ أُمَّتِي رَحْمَةٌ»؟ فَقَالَ: صَدَقُوا، قُلْتُ: إِنْ كَانَ اخْتِلَافُهُمْ رَحْمَةً فَاجْتِمَاعُهُمْ عَذَابٌ؟ قَالَ: لَيْسَ حَيْثُ ذَهَبَتْ وَذَهَبُوا، إِنَّمَا أَرَادَ قَوْلَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ» (٢) فَأَمَرَهُمْ أَنْ يَنْفِرُوا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَيَخْتَلِفُوا إِلَيْهِ فَيَتَعَلَّمُوا ثُمَّ يَرْجِعُوا إِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ فَيُعَلِّمُوهُمْ، إِنَّمَا أَرَادَ اخْتِلَافَهُمْ مِنَ الْبُلْدَانِ لَا اخْتِلَافًا فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ، إِنَّمَا الدِّينُ وَاحِدٌ.

...‘Abd al-Mu‘min al-’Anṣārī says: “I said to Abū ‘Abd Allāh: ‘The people narrate the Prophet (S) to have said: “The *ikhtilāf* of my Ummah is mercy”. (Is that true?)’ He replied: ‘What they say is true.’ I said, ‘If their difference is mercy, then their consensus should be a scourge?!’ He said, ‘It is not as you or they understand it. Indeed, what the Prophet (S) meant is the import of this utterance of God Almighty: “...But why should not a party of every section of them go forth, to become learned in the *Dīn*, and to warn their people when they return to them, that haply they may beware?” (9:122) (In this verse) God has commanded them to go forth (*yanfirū*) towards the Messenger of Allah (S) and to frequent (*yakhtalifū*) him so that they may learn and then return to their people to teach them. Indeed he (S) meant their departure from their places, not their divergence in the *Dīn* of Allāh. For, verily, the *Dīn* is one.”

— Editor.)

# Divorce, According to Five Schools of Islamic Law *Part 1*

by 'Allāmah Muḥammad Jawād Maghniyyah

Translated from the Arabic by Mujāhid Ḥusayn

## The Divorcer (al-Muṭalliq):

A divorcer should possess the following characteristics:

1. Adulthood: Divorce by a child is not valid, even if of a discerning age (*mumayyiz*), according to all the schools except the Ḥanbalī, which observes: Divorce by a discerning child is valid even if his age is below ten years.

2. Sanity: Divorce by an insane person is not valid, irrespective of the insanity being permanent or recurring, when the divorce is pronounced during the state of insanity. Divorce by an unconscious person and one in a state of delirium due to high fever is also not valid. The schools differ regarding the state of intoxication. The Imāmiyyah observe: Such a divorce is not valid under any circumstance. The other four schools<sup>1</sup> remark: The divorce is valid if the divorcer has voluntarily consumed an unlawful intoxicant. But if he drinks something permissible and is stupefied, or is coerced to drink, the divorce does not materialize.

Divorce by a person in a fit of anger is valid if the intention to divorce exists. But if he loses his senses completely, the rule which applies to an insane person will apply to him.

3. Free volition: All the schools except the Ḥanafī concur that divorce by a person under duress does not take place in view of the tradition:

رُفِعَ عَنْ أُمَّتِي الْخَطَأُ وَالنِّسْيَانُ وَمَا اسْتُكْرِهُوا عَلَيْهِ.

My ummah have been exculpated of genuine mistakes, forgetfulness, and that which they are coerced to do.

The Ḥanafis say: Divorce by a person under duress is valid.

The practice of the Egyptian courts has been not to recognize the

divorce by a person under duress or intoxication.

4. Intention: According to the Imāmiyyah, divorce pronounced unintentionally or by mistake or in jest is not valid.

Abū Zuhrah says (page 283): The Ḥanafī school considers divorce by all persons except minors, lunatics and idiots as valid. Thus divorce pronounced by a person in jest, or under intoxication by an unlawful intoxicant, or under duress, is valid. On page 286 he writes: It is the accepted view of the Ḥanafī school that a divorce by mistake or in a state of forgetfulness is valid. On page 284 he observes: Mālik and al-Shāfi'ī concur with Abū Ḥanīfah and his followers regarding a divorce pronounced in jest, while Aḥmad differs and regards such a divorce as invalid. Ibn Rushd states (*Bidāyat al-mujtahid*, vol.2, p.74): Al-Shāfi'ī and Abū Ḥanīfah have said, "Intention (*niyyah*) is not required in divorce".

The Imāmiyyah have narrated from the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A):

لا طلاق إلا لمن أراد الطلاق... لا طلاق إلا بنية.

No divorce (takes effect) except by one who intends divorce. Divorce does not take place except by intention.

The author of *al-Jawāhir* says: If one pronounces divorce and subsequently denies intention, his word shall be accepted as long as the divorcée is undergoing her *'iddah*, because the fact of his intention cannot be known except from him.

*Divorce by the Guardian (Ṭalāq al-Walī):*

The Imāmiyyah, the Ḥanafī and the Shāfi'ī schools state: A father may not divorce on behalf of his minor son, because of the tradition:

الطلاق لمن أخذ بالساق

The Mālikīs state: A father may divorce his minor sons's wife in the *khul'* form of divorce. Two opinions are ascribed to Aḥmad.

The Imāmiyyah observe: When a child of an unsound mind matures, his father or paternal grandfather may pronounce divorce on his behalf if it is beneficial for him. If the father and the paternal grandfather do not exist, the judge may pronounce the divorce on his behalf. As mentioned earlier, the Imāmiyyah allow the wife of a lunatic to annul the marriage.

The Ḥanafīs state: If a lunatic's wife suffers harm by living with him, she may raise the issue before a judge and demand separation. The

judge is empowered to pronounce divorce to rescue her from the harm, and the husband's father has no say in this affair.

All the schools concur that divorce by a stupid husband (*safih*) and his agreeing to *khul'* are both valid.<sup>2</sup>

### The Divorcée (al-Muṭallaqah):

There is consensus that the divorcée is the wife. For the validity of the divorce of a wife with whom intercourse has occurred, the Imāmiyyah require that she should not have undergone menopause nor she should be pregnant, that she be free from menses at the time of divorce, and that intercourse should not have occurred during the period of purity. Thus, if she is divorced during her menses or *nifās*,<sup>3</sup> or in a period of purity in which she has been copulated with, the divorce will be invalid.

Al-Rāzī, in his exegesis of the first verse of *Sūrat al-Ṭalāq*, يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ... , has said "By *'iddah* is meant the period of purity from menses, by consensus of all Muslims. A group of exegetes has observed that by divorce at the time of *'iddah* is meant that the wife may be divorced only during the period of purity in which intercourse has not occurred. In brief, it is compulsory that divorce occur during the period of purity, otherwise it will not be according to the Sunnah, and divorce according to the Sunnah is conceivable only in the case of an adult wife with whom marriage has been consummated, and one who is neither pregnant nor menopausal." For there is no *sunnah* concerning the divorce of a minor wife, a wife who has not been copulated with, or a wife in menopause or pregnancy. This is exactly what the Imāmiyyah hold.

In *al-Mughnī* (vol.7, p.98, 3rd. ed.) the author states: "The meaning of a *sunnah* divorce (*ṭalāq al-sunnah*) is a divorce in consonance with the command of God and His Prophet (S); it is divorce given during a period of purity in which intercourse with her has not occurred." He continues (p.99): "A divorce contrary to the *sunnah* (*ṭalāq al-bid'ah*) is a divorce given during menses or during a period of purity in which she has been copulated with. But if a person pronounces such a divorce, he sins, though the divorce is valid according to the view generally held by the scholars. Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn 'Abd al-Birr have said: None oppose the validity of this form of divorce except the heretics (*ahl al-bida' wa al-ḍalālah*)"! If to follow the command of Allah and the Sunnah of His prophet (S) is heresy and misguidance, then it is of course proper that following Satan be called '*sunnah*' and 'guidance'.

Whatever the case, the Sunnis and the Shī'ah concur that Islam has prohibited the divorcing of an adult, non-pregnant wife with whom marriage has been consummated, who is either undergoing periods or

has been copulated during her period of purity. But the Sunnī schools add that the Shari'ah's prohibition makes the divorce *ḥarām* (unlawful) but not invalid, and one who pronounces divorce in the absence of these conditions sins and is liable to punishment, but the divorce will be valid. The Shī'ah state: The Shari'ah's prohibition is for invalidating such a divorce, not for making it *ḥarām*, for the mere pronouncing of divorce is not *ḥarām* and the sole purpose is to nullify the divorce as if it had not taken place at all, exactly like the prohibition of sale of liquor and swine, where the mere recital of the contract of sale is not *ḥarām*, only the transfer of ownership fails to take effect.

The Imāmiyyah permit the divorce of the following five classes of wives, regardless of their state of menstruation or purity:

1. A minor wife under the age of nine.
2. A wife whose marriage has not been consummated, regardless of whether she was a virgin or not, and irrespective of his having enjoyed privacy with her.
3. A menopausal wife; menopause is taken to set in at fifty for ordinary women and at sixty for Qurayshī women.
4. A wife who is pregnant.
5. A wife whose husband has been away from her for a whole month and the divorce is given during his absence from her, since it is not possible for him to determine her condition (whether she is in her menses or not). A prisoner husband is similar to a husband who has been away.

The Imāmiyyah state: The divorce of a wife who has reached the age of menstruation but does not have menses due to some defect or disease or childbirth, is not valid unless the husband abstains from intercourse with her for three months. Such a woman is called *al-mustarābah* (a term derived from *rayb*, doubt).

### The Pronouncement of Divorce (al-Ṣighah):

The Imāmiyyah observe: Divorce requires the pronouncement of a specific formula without which it does not take place. This formula is *أنتِ طالقٌ* (you are divorced), or *فلانة طالقٌ* ('so and so' is divorced), or *هي طالقٌ* (she is divorced). Thus if the husband uses the words, *الطالقُ* or *المُطَلَّقةُ* or *طَلَّقْتُ* or *الطَّلَاقُ* or *مِنَ الْمُطَلَّقاتِ* etc., it will have no effect even if he intends a divorce because the form *طالقٌ* is absent despite the presence of its root (*t-l-q*). It is necessary that the formula be properly recited without any error in pronunciation and that it be unconditional. Even a condition of certain occurrence such as, 'at sunrise', etc. is not adequate.

If the husband gives the wife the option of divorcing herself and she does so, divorce will not take place according to Imāmi scholars.

Similarly, divorce will not take place if husband is questioned, "Have you divorced your wife", and he answers affirmatively with the intention of effecting a divorce. If the husband says, "You are divorced, three times", or repeats the words, "You are divorced", thrice, only a single divorce takes place if the other conditions are fulfilled. Divorce does not take place through writing or by gesticulation, unless the divorcer is dumb, incapable of speech. It is necessary that the divorce be recited in Arabic when possible. It is better for a non-Arab and a dumb person to appoint an attorney, if possible, to recite the divorce on his behalf. Similarly, according to the Imāmiyyah, divorce will not take place by an oath, a vow, a pledge or any other thing except by the word طالق, on fulfilment of all the limitations and conditions.

The author of *al-Jawāhir*, citing a statement from *al-Kāfi*, says: "There can be no divorce except (in the form) as narrated by Bukayr ibn A'yan, and it is this: The husband says to his wife (while she is free from menses and has not been copulated with during that period of purity): أنتِ طالقٌ (You are divorced), and (his pronouncement) is witnessed by two just ('ādil) witnesses. Every other form except this one is void". Then the author of *al-Jawāhir* quotes *al-'Intiṣār* to the effect that there exists consensus on this issue among the Imāmiyyah.

Consequently, the Imāmiyyah have restricted the scope of divorce to its extreme limits and impose severe conditions regarding the divorcer, the divorcée, the formula of divorce, and the witnesses to divorce. All this is because marriage is a bond of love and mercy, a covenant with God. The Quran says:

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْتُم مِّنْكُمْ مِّيثَاقًا  
غَلِيظًا ﴿٢١﴾

*How can you take it back after one of you hath gone in into the other, and they (the wives) have taken a strong pledge from you? (4:21)*

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً...

*And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find tranquillity in them, and He ordained between you love and compassion.(30:21)*

... وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعِصَمِ الْكَوَافِرِ ...

*...And hold not to the ties of marriage of unbelieving women....(60:10)*

Therefore, it is not permissible in any manner that one break this bond of love and compassion, this pledge and covenant, except with a

knowledge that leaves no doubt that the Shari'ah has surely dissolved the marriage and has broken the tie which it had earlier established and confirmed.

But the other schools allow divorce in any manner in which there is an indication of it, either by oral word or in writing, explicitly or implicitly (such as when the husband says: "You are *ḥarām* for me", or "You are separated" or "Go, get married", or "You are free to go wherever you want," or "Join your family," and so on). Similarly, these schools allow an unconditional as well as a conditional divorce (such as when the husband says: "If you leave the house, you are divorced," or, "If you speak to your father you are divorced," or "If I do this, you are divorced," or "Any woman I marry, she is divorced;" in the last case the divorce takes place as soon as the contract of marriage is concluded!). There are various other pronouncements through which divorce is effected, but our discussion does not warrant such detail. These schools also permit a divorce in which the wife or someone else has been authorized to initiate it. They also allow a triple divorce by the use of a single pronouncement. The legists of these schools have filled many a long page with no result except undermining the foundation of the family and letting it hang in the air.<sup>4</sup>

The Egyptian government has done well in following the Imāmiyyah in most aspects of divorce. Apart from this, the four schools do not consider the presence of witnesses a condition for the validity of divorce, whereas the Imāmiyyah consider it an essential condition. We hand over the discussion to al-Shaykh Abū Zuhrah regarding this issue.

### Divorce and Witnesses:

In *al-'Aḥwāl al-shakḥiyyah* (p.365), al-Shaykh Abū Zuhrah has observed: "The Twelve-Imāmi Shī'i legists and the Ismā'iliyyah state: A divorce does not materialize if not witnessed by two just (*ādil*) witnesses, in accordance with the Divine utterance regarding the rules of divorce and its pronouncement:

فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوَى عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا  
الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَن كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا  
﴿٢﴾ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ...

*Then when they (the wives) have reached their 'iddah, retain them honourably, or part from them honourably. And have two just men from among yourselves bear witness, and give testimony for Allah's sake. By this then is admonished he who believes in Allah and the Last Day. And whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will provide for him an outlet, and give him*



*sustenance from whence he never reckoned....(65:2-3)*

This command about the witnesses in the Quran follows the mention of divorce and the validity of revoking it. Therefore, it is appropriate that the calling in of witnesses should be related to divorce. Moreover, the reason given for calling in the witnesses, that God seeks thereby to admonish those who believe in God and the Last Day, confirms this interpretation, because the presence of just witnesses is not without the good advice which they would offer to the couple; and this could bring about for them an escape from divorce, which is the most hated of lawful things in the eyes of God. If it were for us to choose the law to be acted upon in Egypt, we would choose this opinion, which requires the presence of two just witnesses for effecting a divorce”.

Together with the restrictions that the Imāmiyyah have laid down for the divorcer, the divorcée, and the pronouncement of divorce, they have also laid down an additional limitation regarding the witnesses by demanding that if all conditions are fulfilled except that the two just witnesses do not hear the pronouncement of the divorce, the divorce will not take place. Therefore, a single witness will not suffice even if he is a good substitute, not even if he is an infallible (*ma‘ṣūm*) person.<sup>5</sup> Further, the witnessing of the pronouncement by one of them by listening and of the other by testifying to their admission (of having concluded the divorce) is not sufficient. The testimony of a group of people will also not suffice, even if it is big enough to make the divorce a known public fact. The testimony of women, with or without the testimony of men, is not sufficient. Similarly, if the husband pronounces the divorce and then brings in the witnesses, it will have no effect.

#### *The Case of a Sunnī Husband and a Shī‘ī Wife:*

If a Sunnī husband divorces his Shī‘ī wife, either through a conditional divorce contingent upon something, or in a period of purity during which sexual intercourse has occurred, or during menses or *nifās*, or without two just witnesses being present or by an oath of divorce, or by saying, *حَبْلُكَ عَلَيَّ غَارِبِكِ* “Go wherever you want,” or in any other form which is *vālid* in accordance with Sunnī law and invalid according to Shī‘ī law, is such a divorce considered valid by the Shī‘ah, so that the woman may remarry after completing her *‘iddah*?

The answer is that there is consensus among the Imāmi jurists that every sect is bound by its own precepts<sup>6</sup>, and that the transactions of its followers, as well as their affairs pertaining to inheritance, marriage and divorce, are valid if performed according to rules of their *sharī‘ah*. A tradition has been narrated from the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A):

الزُّمُومُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَا الزُّمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ.

Bind them with the laws with which they have bound themselves.

In another tradition, al-'Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) was questioned regarding a woman who had been divorced by a Sunnī husband against the principles of the Sunnah, whose compliance is necessary for the validity of a divorce according to the Shī'ah. The Imam (A) replied:

تَتَزَوَّجُ، وَلَا تُتْرَكُ الْمَرْأَةُ مِنْ غَيْرِ زَوْجٍ.

She will marry, and a woman shall not be left without a husband.

In a third tradition it is stated:

يَجُوزُ عَلَى أَهْلِ كُلِّ دِينٍ مَا يَسْتَحِلُّونَ.

For the followers of every religion, that which they consider lawful is permissible for them.

A fourth tradition says:

مَنْ دَانَ بِدِينِ قَوْمٍ لَزِمَتْهُ أَحْكَامُهُمْ.

One who follows the religion of a particular sect, is bound by its rules. (*al-Jawāhir*, vol.5, the discussion regarding *ṣ̣ighat al-ṭalāq*).

Consequently, if a Shī'ī husband divorces his Sunnī wife according to the principles of her school and not his, the divorce is invalid, and if a Sunnī divorces his Shī'ī wife according to the principles of his own school, the divorce is valid.

**Revocable and Irrevocable Divorce:**

A divorce is either revocable or irrevocable. The schools concur that a revocable divorce is one in which the husband is empowered to revoke the divorce during the *'iddah*, irrespective of the divorcée's consent. One of the conditions of a revocable divorce is that the marriage should have been consummated, because a wife divorced before consummation does not have to observe the *'iddah* in accordance with verse 49 of *Sūrat al-'Aḥzāb*:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُونَهَا ...

*O believers! When you marry the believing women and then divorce them before you touch them, you are not entitled to reckon for them an 'iddah....*

Among the other conditions of a revocable divorce are that the divorce should not have been given on the payment of a consideration and that it should not be one which completes three divorces.

The divorcée in a revocable divorce enjoys the rights of a wife, and the divorcer has all the rights of a husband. Therefore, both will inherit from each other in the event of death of one of them during the 'iddah. The deferred *mahr* payable on the occurrence of any of the two events, death or divorce, will become payable only after the expiry of the 'iddah if the husband does not revoke the divorce during that period. On the whole, a revocable divorce does not give rise to a new situation except its being accountable for ascertaining whether the number of divorces has reached three.

In an irrevocable divorce, the divorcer may not return to the divorced wife, who belongs to one of the following categories:

1. A wife divorced before consummation, by consensus of all the schools.

2. A wife who has been divorced thrice. There is consensus here as well.

3. A divorcée through *khul'*. Some legists consider this form of divorce void and say that it is not a divorce at all.

4. A menopausal divorcée, in the Imāmi school, which observes: She has no 'iddah and the rules applicable to a divorcée before consummation apply to her as well. According to it, in verse 4 of *Sūrat al-Ṭalāq*:

وَالَّتِي يَسُنَّ مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ إِنْ أَرَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ وَالَّتِي لَمْ  
يَحِيضَنَّ ...

*If you are in doubt concerning those of your wives who have ceased menstruating, know that their waiting period is three months, and (the same is the waiting period of) those who have not yet menstruated....*

the phrase وَالَّتِي يَسُنَّ does not imply those women who are known to have reached menopause but those whose menses have stopped and it is not known whether the reason is disease or age; consequently, their 'iddah is three months. There is no question of doubt regarding those whose menopause is certain. The doubt arises in cases of uncertainty, as indicated by the words إِنْ أَرَبْتُمْ (if you are in doubt) of the verse, because it is not the Lawgiver's wont when explaining a law to say: "If you are in doubt regarding the law regarding something, the law is that...." This confirms that the doubt mentioned in the verse relates to the fact of

menopause, in which case she is to observe an *'iddah* of three months. As to the phrase *وَاللَّائِي لَمْ يَحِضْنَ*, it refers to women who despite attaining the age of menses do not have them due to some congenital or contingent factor. Many traditions have been narrated from the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) with this interpretation of this verse.

5. The Ḥanafis say: Valid seclusion (*khalwah*) with the wife, even without consummation, requires the observance of *'iddah*. But the divorcer is not entitled to return to her during the *'iddah*, because here the divorce is irrevocable.

The Ḥanbalis state: Seclusion is similar to consummation in all respects so far as the necessity of *'iddah* and the right of revocation is concerned. As mentioned earlier, seclusion has no effect according to the Imāmiyyah and the Shāfi'i schools.

6. The Ḥanafis observe: If a husband says to his wife: "You are divorced irrevocably" or "divorced firmly," "(with a divorce as firm) as a mountain," and such similar strong words, the divorce will be irrevocable and the divorcer will not be entitled to return during the *'iddah*. Similarly, a divorce pronounced by using words which connote a break of relationship (such as, "She is separated," "cut off," "disassociated").

### *The Triple Divorcée:*

The schools concur that a husband who divorces his wife thrice cannot remarry her unless she marries another person through a valid *nikāh*, and this second person consummates the marriage, in accordance with verse 230 of *Sūrat al-Baqarah*:

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ...

*So if he divorces her, she shall not be lawful to him afterwards, until she marries another husband....(2:230)*

The Imāmi and the Māliki schools consider it necessary that the person who marries her (*muḥallil*) be an adult. The Ḥanafī, the Shāfi'i and the Ḥanbalī schools consider his capacity for intercourse as sufficient, even if he is not an adult. The Imāmi and the Ḥanbalī schools state: If in a marriage contract *taḥlīl* (causing the woman to become permissible for her former husband to remarry) is included as a condition (such as when the second husband says, "I am marrying you to make you *ḥalāl* for your divorcer), the condition is void and the contract valid. But the Ḥanafis add: If the woman fears that the *muḥallil* may not divorce her after the *taḥlīl*, it is permissible for her to say, "I marry you on the condition that the power to divorce be in my hands," and for the *muḥallil* to say, "I accept this condition." Then the contract

will be valid and she will be entitled to divorce herself whenever she desires. But if the *muḥallil* says to her: "I marry you on the condition that your affair (of divorce) be in your own hands," the contract is valid and the condition void.

The Mālikī, the Shāfi'ī and the Ḥanbalī schools state: The contract is void *ab initio* if *taḥlīl* is included as a condition. The Mālikī and Ḥanbalī schools further add: Even if *taḥlīl* is intended and not expressed the contract is void.

The Mālikīs and some Imāmī legists consider it necessary that the second husband (*muḥallil*) have intercourse with her in a lawful manner (such as when she is not menstruating or having *nifās*, and while both are not fasting a Ramaḍān fast). But most Imāmī legists give no credence to this condition and regard mere intercourse, even if unlawful, to be sufficient for *taḥlīl*.

Whatever be the case, when a divorcée marries another husband and is separated from him, either due to his death or by divorce, and completes the *'iddah*, it becomes permissible for the first husband to contract a new marriage with her. Then, if he again divorces her thrice, she will become *ḥarām* for him until she marries another. This is how she will become *ḥarām* for him after every third divorce, and will again become *ḥalāl* by marrying a *muḥallil*, even if she is divorced a hundred times.

But the Imāmiyyah state: If a wife is divorced nine times in the *ṭalāq al-'iddah* form, and is married twice (i.e. following *taḥlīl* after every third divorce), she will become permanently *ḥarām*. The meaning of *ṭalāq al-'iddah*, according to the Imāmiyyah, is a divorce in which the husband after divorcing returns to her during the *'iddah* and has intercourse with her, and then divorces her again in another period of purity, then returns to her and has intercourse, then divorces her for a third time and remarries her, after a *muḥallil* does the *taḥlīl*, by concluding a fresh contract, and divorces her thrice in the same manner, with a *muḥallil* doing the second *taḥlīl*, and remarries her again. Now if he divorces her thrice again, the ninth *ṭalāq al-'iddah* completed, she will become *ḥarām* for him permanently. But if the divorce is not a *ṭalāq al-'iddah* (such as when he divorces her, then returns to her and then divorces her again before having intercourse), she will not become *ḥarām* perpetually, and will become *ḥalāl* through a *muḥallil*, even if the number of divorces is countless.

#### *Doubt in the Number of Divorces:*

The schools (except the Mālikī) concur that he who has doubt regarding the number of divorces (whether a single divorce has taken place or more) will base his count on the lower number. The Mālikīs

observe: The aspect of divorce shall preponderate and the count will be based on the higher number.

### *Divorcée's Claim of Taḥlīl:*

The Imāmi, the Shāfi'i and the Ḥanafī schools state: If the husband divorces his wife thrice, and he or she knows nothing about the other for some time and thereafter she claims having married a second husband and separated from him and having completed the 'iddah, her word will be accepted without an oath if this period is sufficient for her undergoing all this, and her first husband is entitled to marry her if he is satisfied regarding her veracity, and it is not necessary for him to inquire further. (*al-Jawāhir*, Ibn 'Ābidīn, and *Maqṣad al-nabīh*)

### *Al-Khul':*

*Khul'* is a form of divorce in which the wife releases herself (from the marriage tie) by paying consideration to the husband. Here we have the following issues.

### *The Condition of the Wife's Detestation:*

When they both agree to *khul'* and she pays him the consideration to divorce her, though they are well settled and their conduct towards each other is agreeable, is their mutual agreement to *khul'* valid?

The four schools state: The *khul'* is valid and the rules applicable to it and their effects will follow. But it is *makrūh*<sup>7</sup> (detestable though lawful).

According to the Imāmiyyah, such a *khul'* is not valid and the divorcer will not own the consideration. But the divorce (so pronounced) will be valid and revocable if all the conditions for revocability are present. The proof they offer are traditions of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) and verse 229 of *Sūrat al-Baqarah*:

... فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يَفْقِرَ الْاِئْتِمْ حَدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ ...

...Then if you fear that they cannot maintain the limits set by Allah, there is no blame on the two for what she gives to release herself...

wherein the verse has made the validity of consideration contingent upon the fear of sinning in case the marital relationship were to continue.

### *Mutual Agreement to Khul' for a Consideration Greater than Mahr:*

The schools concur that the consideration should have material

value and that its value may be equal to, lesser, or greater than the *mahr*.

### *Conditions for Consideration Payable in Khul':*

According to the four schools, it is also valid to conclude a *khul'* agreement with anyone apart from the wife. Therefore, if a stranger asks the husband to divorce his wife for a sum which he undertakes to pay, and the husband divorces her, the divorce is valid even if the wife is unaware of it and on coming to know does not consent. The stranger will have to pay the ransom to the divorcer. (*Raḥmat al-'ummah* and *Farq al-zawāj* of al-'Ustādh al-Khafif)

The Imāmiyyah observe: Such a *khul'* is invalid and it is not binding upon the stranger to pay anything. But it is valid for a stranger to act as a guarantor of the consideration by the wife's permission and ask the husband, after the wife's permission, to divorce her for such a consideration guaranteed by him. Thus, if the husband divorces her on this condition, it is binding on the guarantor to pay him that amount and then claim it from the divorcée.

All that which is validly payable as *mahr* is also valid as consideration in *khul'*, by consensus of all the five schools. It is also not necessary that the amount of consideration be known in detail beforehand if it can be known eventually (such as when she says: "Grant me *khul'* for that which is at home", or "in the locker", or "my share of inheritance from my father", or "the fruits of my garden").

If *khul'* is given in return for that which cannot be owned, such as liquor or swine, the Ḥanafī, the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: If both knew that such ownership is *ḥarām*, the *khul'* is valid and the divorcer is not entitled to anything, making it a *khul'* without consideration. The Shāfi'īs say: The *khul'* is valid and she is entitled to the *mahr al-mithl*. (*al-Mughnī*, vol.7)

Most Imāmi legists state: The *khul'* shall be void and the divorce will be considered revocable if it is an instance of revocable divorce; otherwise, it will be irrevocable. In all the cases, the divorcer shall not be entitled to anything.

If the husband grants her *khul'* for a consideration that he believes to be *ḥalāl* and it later turns out to be *ḥarām* (such as when she says: "Grant me *khul'* for this jar of vinegar," which turns out to be wine) the Imāmi and the Ḥanbalī schools observe: He shall claim from her a similar quantity of vinegar. The Ḥanafīs state: He shall claim from her the stipulated *mahr*. According to the Shāfi'ī school, he shall claim from her the *mahr al-mithl*.

If she seeks *khul'* for a consideration she considers to be her property and it turns out to be someone else's, the Ḥanafī school and

most Imāmi legists observe: If the owner allows it, the *khul'* will be valid and the husband will take it, but if he disallows, the husband is entitled to a similar consideration either in cash or kind. The Shāfi'i school states: The husband is entitled to *mahr al-mithl*. This is in accordance with the Shāfi'i principle that when a consideration becomes invalid, it becomes void and *mahr al-mithl* becomes payable (*Maqṣad al-nabīh*). According to the Mālikis, the divorce becomes irrevocable, the consideration becomes void, and the divorcer gets nothing even if the owner permits (*al-Fiqh 'alā al-madhāhib al-'arba'ah*, vol.4).

If the wife seeks *khul'* by undertaking to nurse and maintain his child for a certain period, the *khul'* will be valid and she will be bound to nurse and maintain the child, as per consensus. The Ḥanafī, the Mālikī and the Ḥanbalī schools further clarify that it is valid for a pregnant wife to seek *khul'* from her husband in return for maintaining the child in her womb, on the same grounds on which it is valid for her to seek *khul'* by undertaking the maintenance of a born child. I have not come across in the Imāmi and Shāfi'i sources accessible to me anyone who has dealt with this issue, although the principles of the Shari'ah do not prohibit it, because the cause, which is the child in the womb, is present, and the wife's pledge is a condition by which she binds herself to the effect that in the event of the child being born alive she will be responsible for its nursing and maintenance for a specific period, and Muslims are bound by the conditions they lay down, provided this does not result in a *ḥalāl* becoming *ḥarām* or vice versa. Hence this condition is valid in itself, for it does not suggest anything legally void; therefore, its fulfilment is compulsory because it is part of a binding contract. The uncertainty concerning the child being born alive or dead, and its dying after birth before the stipulated period, is overlooked in a *khul'*.

The furthest one can go in asserting its impermissibility and invalidity is by likening a pledge to maintain with a discharge from maintenance. Therefore, when a discharge from maintenance is invalid because it is an annulment of something not binding, similarly a pledge to maintain is not valid because it is not presently *wājib*. But there is a great difference between a pledge and a discharge, because it is necessary that a discharge be from something present and actual, while a pledge need not be so. Apart from this, we have already discussed in the chapter on marriage regarding *khul'* in return for foregoing the right to custody of a child by the father or the mother.

#### *A Related Issue:*

If a husband grants *khul'* to his wife in return for her maintaining the child, she is entitled to claim the child's maintenance from its father on her not being able to maintain it, and he will be compelled to pay



the maintenance. But he can reclaim this maintenance from the mother if she comes to possess the means. If the child dies during the stipulated period, the divorcer is entitled to claim a compensation for the remaining period in accordance with the words of the verse (2:229) *فِيمَا أُفْتَدَتْ بِهِ*. It is better for a woman to undertake the nursing and maintenance of the child for a certain period so long as it is alive. Then the divorcer will not have the right to a claim against her if the child dies.

#### Conditions for a Wife Seeking *Khul'*:

There is consensus among the schools that a wife seeking *khul'* should be a sane adult. They also concur that the *khul'* of a stupid (*safih*) wife is not valid without the permission of her *walī* (guardian). The schools differ regarding the validity of *khul'* where the guardian has granted her the permission to seek *khul'*. The Ḥanafis observe: If the guardian undertakes to pay the consideration from his own personal assets, the *khul'* is valid; otherwise, the consideration is void, while the divorce takes place, according to the more authentic of two traditions (Abū Zuhrah).

The Imāmi and the Mālikī schools state: With the guardian's permission to her to pay the consideration, the *khul'* is valid by payment from her wealth, not his. (*al-Jawāhir* and *al-Fiqh 'alā al-madhāhib al-'arba'ah*)

The Shāfi'i and the Ḥanbalī schools consider the *khul'* of a stupid wife as invalid irrespective of the guardian's permission. The Shāfi'i school allows one exception to the above opinion, wherein the guardian fears the husband's squandering her wealth and grants her permission to seek a *khul'* from him for the protection of her property. The Shāfi'is then add: Such a *khul'* is invalid and the divorce is revocable. The Ḥanbalis say: Neither the *khul'* nor the divorce will take place except when the husband intends a divorce through *khul'* or if the *khul'* takes place in the words of a divorce.

If a woman seeks *khul'* during her last illness, it is considered valid by all schools. But they differ where she pays as consideration more than a third of her wealth or more than the husband's share to be inherited from her on assumption of her death during the *'iddah*. As said above, they inherit from each other in this situation.

The Imāmi and the Shāfi'i schools state: If she seeks *khul'* for *mahr al-mithl*, it is valid and the consideration is payable from her undivided legacy. But if it exceeds *mahr al-mithl*, the excess will be deducted from one-third of her legacy.

The Ḥanafis observe: Such a *khul'* is valid and the divorcer is entitled to the consideration if it does not exceed either one-third of her wealth or his share of inheritance from her were she to die during

the *'iddah*. This means that he will take the least of the three amounts: the consideration of the *khul'*, his share of inheritance from her, or a third of her legacy. (Therefore, if the consideration for the *khul'* is 5, his share of inheritance 4, and a third of her legacy 3, he shall be entitled to 3).

According to the Ḥanbalī school, if she seeks *khul'* in return for a consideration equalling his share of inheritance from her or something lesser, the *khul'* and the consideration are valid. But if she seeks *khul'* for a higher consideration, only the excess will be void (*al-Mughnī*, vol.7).

The Imāmiyyah moreover require the wife seeking *khul'* to fulfil all the requirements in a divorcee (such as her purity from menses, non-occurrence of intercourse in the period of purity if her marriage has been consummated, her being neither menopausal nor pregnant, her not being a minor below the age of nine). Similarly, they require the presence of two just witnesses for the *khul'* to be valid. But the other schools validate a *khul'* irrespective of the state of the wife seeking it, exactly like a divorce.

#### Conditions for a Husband Granting *Khul'*:

Excepting the Ḥanbalī, all the other schools concur that a husband granting *khul'* requires to be a sane adult. The Ḥanbalis state: *Khul'* granted by a discerning minor (*mumayyiz*) is valid, as is a divorce given by him. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter on divorce, the Ḥanafis permit a divorce pronounced in jest, under duress, or in a state of intoxication, and the Shāfi'ī and the Mālikī schools concur with them concerning divorce pronounced in jest. A *khul'* granted in a state of rage is valid if the rage does not eliminate the element of intention.

There is consensus among the schools concerning the validity of a *khul'* granted by a stupid (*safih*) husband. But the consideration will be given to his guardian, and its being given to him is not valid.

Regarding a *khul'* granted by a sick husband on his death bed, it is undoubtedly valid, because when his divorcing without receiving any consideration is valid, a divorce along with consideration would be more so.

#### The Pronouncement of *Khul'*:

The four schools permit the use of explicit words — such as derivatives of *al-khul'* and *al-faskh* (dissolution) — in the pronouncement, as well as implicit words (such as "*bāra'tukī*" [I relinquish you] and "*abantukī*" [I separate myself from you]). The Ḥanafis have said: The use of the words *al-bay'* (to sell) and *al-shirā'* (to purchase) is valid

(for instance, when the husband says to the wife: "I sell you to yourself for so much", and the wife replies: "I purchase", or when he says: "Buy your divorce for so much", and she replies: "I accept"). Similarly the Shāfi'i school accepts the validity of a *khul'* pronounced with the word *al-bay'*.

The Ḥanafīs allow the conditional *khul'*, the *khul'* by exercise of an option, and the *khul'* in which the pronouncement and the payment of consideration is separated by an extended time interval (such as, where a husband is away from his wife and it reaches him that she has said, "I seek a *khul'* for so much," and he accepts it). Similarly the Mālikīs also do not consider the time factor an impediment.

*Khul'* is valid according to the Ḥanbalī school even without an intention if the word used is explicit (such as, *al-khul'*, *al-faskh* and *al-mufādāt*); but it requires that the pronouncement and payment take place simultaneously and unconditionally.

The Imāmiyyah have said: *Khul'* does not take place by using implicit words or even explicit words other than *al-khul'* and *al-ṭalāq*. If desired, they can be used together or singly (thus, she may say: "I pay you this much for divorcing me", and he will reply: "I grant you *khul'* for it, and therefore you are divorced". This form of pronouncement is the safest and most suitable in the view of all Imāmi legists. It also suffices if he says: "You are divorced in return for it," or "I grant you *khul'* in return for it"). The Imāmiyyah require that *khul'* should be unconditional, exactly as in divorce, and consider necessary the absence of any time gap between its pronouncement and the payment of consideration.

*To be continued—'in shā' Allāh.*

## NOTES:

1. The Ḥanafī and the Mālikī schools are explicit regarding the validity of a divorce by an intoxicated person. Two opinions have been narrated from al-Shāfi'i and Aḥmad, the preponderant among them is that the divorce does take place.

2. Al-'Ustādh al-Khafīf writes in his book *Farq al-zawāj* (p.57): "The Imāmiyyah accept the validity of a divorce by a *safih*, if effected by the permission of his guardian, as expressly mentioned in *Sharḥ Sharā'i' al-'Islām*." There is no mention of this statement in the said book. Rather, such a statement is not present in any Imāmi book, and that which is mentioned in *Sharḥ Sharā'i' al-'Islām* is that the *safih* husband is entitled to divorce without the permission of his guardian. See *al-Jawāhir*, vol.4, "Bāb al-ḥijr."

3. '*Nifās*' means the vaginal discharge of blood at the time of birth or thereafter, for a maximum period of: ten days according to the Imāmiyyah, forty days according to the Ḥanbalīs and the Ḥanafīs, and sixty days according to the Shāfi'īs and Mālikīs.

4. The author of *Ta'sīs al-naẓar* (1st ed. p.49) has narrated from Imām Mālik that he has observed: If a person resolves to divorce his wife, the divorce takes place by mere resolution, even if he does not pronounce it.

5. The use of the expression 'infallible' (*ma'sūm*) here belongs to the author of *al-Jawāhir*.

6. In *Ta'sīs al-naẓar* of Abū Zayd al-Dabūsī al-Ḥanafī it is stated: "According to Abū Ḥanīfah the presumption *ab initio* is that non-Muslims living under the protection of an Islamic State will be left to follow their beliefs and precepts. But his two disciples, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad, say that they will not be left to themselves."

7. Al-'Ustādh al-Khafīf, *Farq al-zawāj* (1958), p.159.

## Imām Khumaynī's Message on the First Anniversary of the Makkah Massacre\*

*In the Name of God, the Beneficent and the Merciful.*

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ ...

*God has indeed fulfilled the vision He vouchsafed to His Messenger truly:  
'You shall enter the Holy Mosque, if God wills, in security....' (48:27)*

**A** year has passed since the tragic and merciless massacre of defenceless Hajj pilgrims, the devotees of One God and faithful visitors of His Shrine. The City of God (Makkah) and all His creatures remain in a state of shock.

The House of Sa'ūd has smeared not only the *Haram* but coloured the entire world of Islam with the blood of martyrs, causing deep grief to Muslims and world's free men by massacring the best of God's servants. For the first time, last year, the Muslims of the world celebrated the 'Īd of the Sacrifice in the slaughterhouse of love, at the Minā of God's good pleasure, with the martyrdom of the sons of Abraham (A) who had returned scores of times from the fields of battle with the world-eaters and their henchmen. For once again the U.S. and the House of Sa'ūd, in violation of all the canons of freedom, slaughtered our men

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\*This message of Imām Khumaynī, which was issued after the acceptance of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598, deals with the vital issues of the Islamic world and the Islamic Republic. "Kufr" and "shirk", the two terms which occur recurringly in the Imam's statements, should be understood to mean all kinds of world views which are based either on an outright denial of transcendence, whether express or implicit, or violate the principle of God's sovereignty over human affairs, as well as the ideologies and socio-political systems which incorporate such a denial and violation.

and women, fathers and mothers of our martyrs and our defenceless, crippled heroes of the war; in the most cruel and unmanly manner they brought down the lashes of their vengeance on the moribund bodies of the elderly and on the thirsty and parched lips of the moribund victims.

### The U.S. and the Sa'ūdīs Take Vengeance:

But on whom was this revenge being taken and for what crime? It was vengeance against those who had left their homes to migrate to the House of God and the House of people. It was vengeance sought against those who had borne the burden of God's trust and of struggle in His way on their shoulders. It was vengeance against those who, like Abraham (A), had broken idols and shattered the regime of the Shah. They had smashed the idols of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. and crushed the icons of *kufr* and *nifāq* (infidelity and hypocrisy). Barefoot and bareheaded, they had come a long way to gladden Abraham and to respond to the heavenly cry of:

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

*And proclaim (O Abraham) among men the Pilgrimage, and they shall come unto thee on foot and upon every lean beast, they shall come from every deep ravine. (22:27)*

Guests of God, they had come to wash the dust of journey from their faces with the waters of Zamzam and to quench the thirst of their spirit with the etherial waters of the Ḥajj rituals, to seek greater strength for carrying out their responsibilities. They were those who in the course and process of their everlasting journeying had discarded all the accoutrements of attachment to the world, not only in the *mīqāt* of Ḥajj but also in the *mīqāt* of life and action, putting on the *iḥrām* of martyrdom. They were those who had denied themselves all the comforts sought by the comfort-loving, for the sake of the deliverance of the deprived creatures of God. They were those who had firmly resolved not to be ever the slaves of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., not to submit to anyone but God. They had come to assure Muḥammad (S) that they have not become tired of struggle and that they knew well that the Abū Sufyāns, Abū Lahabs and Abū Jahls of the age sit in ambush to take their revenge, asking each other "Are there any Lāt and Hubal anymore in the Ka'bah?" Yes, there are! And more dangerous than those idols, though with a new face and with a new guile! They knew that today the Sanctuary is a place of safety, not for the people but for America: Anyone who refuses to say 'labbayk' to America and turns to the Lord of the Ka'bah deserves vengeance. So they took

their revenge upon the pilgrims who had with all their existence in all the moves and pauses of their revolution, revived the meaning of Abraham's rituals and proceeded to fill the atmosphere of their country and of their own lives with the fragrance of the eager call:

لَيْتَكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَيْتَكَ

Here we are! O God! Here we are!

Yes, in the logic of imperialism (*istikbār*) anyone who wishes to proclaim *barā'ah* (disdain) with *kufr* and *shirk* will be accused of being a *mushrik*, and the *muftīs* and their offspring — these progeny of Bal'am Bā'ūrā — will pronounce him *kāfir* and hand out his death sentence.

At last, the sword of *kufr* and *nifāq* concealed in the history of Islam under the deceitful garb of the *ihrām* of Yazidīs and Umayyad mercenaries — may God damn them — to kill and destroy the best of the progeny of the Prophet of Islam, that is Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn (A) and his loyal companions, had to come out once again from under the robes of the heirs of Abū Sufyān to pierce the sacred throats of the followers of al-Ḥusayn (A), in that heat in the slaughterhouse of the Sanctuary and the Karbalā' of the Ḥijāz. And again the same kind of accusations that the Yazidīs had levelled against those true sons of Islam, calling them *khawārij*, infidels, and polytheists deserving to be put to the sword, were levelled against those who had selected their path.

God willing, at the right time we shall appease our grief by taking revenge against America and the House of Sa'ūd and make them regret this monstrous crime. Then, we shall enter the Holy Mosque celebrating the victory of good over evil, the triumph of righteousness over the forces of *kufr* and *nifāq*, and the liberation of the Holy Ka'bah from the sacrilegious hands of its incompetent keepers.

#### The Mission of the Ḥujjāj This Year:

As to the pilgrims of other countries, who have no doubt set out for Makkah under severe intimidation and scrutiny of their governments, they will miss this year in their midst the presence of their true friends, brothers, supporters and fellow combatants. These pilgrims will find themselves under harsh bombardment of the propaganda of the Sa'ūdīs, aimed to cover up their last year's horrible crimes and to justify the obstacles created by them to bar people from the way of God (*ṣadd 'an sabīl Allāh*) and their ban on the participation of Iranian pilgrims in Ḥajj. The court mullās and self-sold *muftīs* — may God damn them — will resort, in all Islamic countries and especially the Ḥijāz, with the aid

of mass media and with the means of speeches and the deceitful pagantry of theirs, to diverting the minds of the pilgrims from the genuine philosophy of Ḥajj and to frustrate their attempts to discover the true facts of the last year's massacre of the *ḥujjāj* preplanned by the Arch-satan. In such conditions, the *ḥujjāj* have a greatly momentous mission to carry out this year.

### The Meaning of Ḥajj:

The greatest drawback of the Islamic communities is that they have not yet understood the real philosophy of most of the Divine commands. As a result the Ḥajj, with all its majesty and mysteries, has remained a dry ritual and a fruitless and futile exercise. One of the important duties of Muslims is to understand what the Ḥajj is for, and why should they perpetually expend a part of their material and non-material resources for its performance. That which has so far been projected as the philosophy of Ḥajj by ignorant or interested exponents or mercenaries is that the Ḥajj is a community ritual, a pilgrimage tour. What has Ḥajj to do with how we live? What does it have to do with any struggle? What does it have to do with the manner the Muslims should confront the capitalist and the communist onslaughts?

What does Ḥajj have to do with the imperative to recover the rights of Muslims and deprived human beings from the oppressors? What does Ḥajj have to do with the need to think out the means to relieve Muslims of the moral and material pressures weighing upon them? What does Ḥajj have to do with how Muslims can emerge as a major third force in the world? What does Ḥajj have to do with the need for Muslims to rise against puppet governments? They contend that all that there is to Ḥajj is a pleasure trip to visit the Qiblah and Madīnah. That is all there is to Ḥajj!

Ḥajj, however, is a means to bring man closer to the Master of the House. Ḥajj is not merely a sequence of movements, acts and words. For merely words and actions devoid of meaning cannot bring one close to God. Ḥajj is a storehouse of Divine teachings, from which we must draw the content of the outlook of Islam on all aspects of life. The message of Ḥajj is the imperative to create and build a society free of material and moral indignities. Ḥajj is the stage on which are recurringly projected all the love-inspiring scenes of the life of an individual and society in the search of perfection in this world. The rituals of Ḥajj are the vital rites of life. Since the Islamic community must transcend all race and nationhood to become Abrahamic in order to join the caravan of the Ummah of Muḥammad (S), the Ḥajj is an exercise for the achievement of a monotheistic pattern of life. The Ḥajj is the exhibition ground and the measure of the spiritual and material capabilities of Muslims.



Ḥajj is like the Quran, wherefrom everyone derives benefit.

If the thinkers of the Islamic Ummah familiar with its sufferings, were they to fathom fearlessly the depths of this ocean of Divine teaching, they will bring back pearls of guidance, wisdom and liberty, if they were not afraid to plunge into the rules (*ahkām*) and the social objectives of Ḥajj. Its fountains of wisdom will forever suffice to quench their thirst.

But what is to be done and to whom shall we speak of the grievous fact that the Ḥajj, like the Quran, has become a stranger amongst us? To the same extent that the Book of life, beauty and perfection has been concealed behind the curtains woven out by us, this precious treasure has been buried under the dirt of our perverse thinking. As a result, its message of love, guidance and life and its life-giving philosophy have been turned into the murmurs of terror, death and graveyard. The Ḥajj has fallen prey to the same fate.

Millions of Muslims go to Makkah every year to place their feet on the footmarks of the Prophet (S), of Abraham, Ishmael and Hagar, but no one asks himself as to who Abraham and Muḥammad — upon whom be peace — were, what did they do, what their objectives were, and what did they require of us. As if the only things which are not relevant are these! There is no doubt that a Ḥajj devoid of spirit and dynamism, a Ḥajj devoid of *barā'ah* and unity, and a Ḥajj bereft of the intent to abolish apostasy and polytheism — such a Ḥajj is not Ḥajj.

To sum up, all Muslims must strive for the resurrection of Ḥajj and the Noble Qur'ān, and endeavour to bring them back into the context of their life. The committed Islamic researchers, by presenting the real and genuine interpretation of the philosophy of Ḥajj, should expunge the absurd concoctions of court divines.

#### The Aims of Sa'ūdī Propaganda:

That which the good pilgrims should know is that the U.S. and the Sa'ūdīs have tried to depict the episode of Makkah as part of a sectarian conflict between Shī'ī and Sunnī Muslims, projecting Iran and its leaders as those who harbour dreams of a big empire. They do it in order that most of those unaware of the political developments of the Islamic world and the sinister designs of the world-eaters should imagine that our outcry of *barā'ah* against the *mushrikūn* and our struggle for the liberty of nations are ploys of ambition for political power, for the expansion of the geographical boundaries of the Islamic State.

Of course, for us, as well as for all thinking individuals aware of the degenerate aims of the Sa'ūdī establishment, it is not amazing that Iran and its government — which have been vocal champions of Muslim unity since the victory of the Revolution, equally sharing in the sorrows

and joys of all Muslims and having a stake in all the events of the Islamic world — should be accused of sowing disunity and discord amongst Muslims. Neither it is surprising that they should go so far as to accuse Iranian pilgrims — who had gone to the Ḥijāz for pilgrimage to the Divine Sanctuary and for their love of visiting the Prophet's tomb — of such things as hatching military plots aimed at seizing the Ka'bah, setting fire to the Divine Sanctuary, and demolishing the Prophet's Madīnah. All the evidence they had for this accusation was the presence of our country's officials, military men and members of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps in the Ḥajj ceremonies!

Yes, in the logic of the Sa'ūdīs, the soldiers of an Islamic country must be strangers to Ḥajj. The presence of civil and army officials in such journeys seems alarming and suspect to them. From their viewpoint and that of the imperialists, the officials of Islamic countries should go on trips and tours only to the West. What should they have to do with Ḥajj?! These U.S. stooges have branded the burning of the American flag as the attempt to set the Sanctuary on fire, and the slogan "Death to U.S.S.R., U.S., and Israel" proof of enmity with God, the Quran and the Prophet. So also our civil and military officials in the dress of *iḥrām* were introduced as leaders of a conspiracy.

#### Ḥajj and the Role of the Sa'ūdī Regime:

The fact is that the imperialist governments of the east and the west, especially America and Russia, have practically compartmentalized the world into two sections: the free world and the political quarantine. In the free part of the world, it is the superpowers who know no law or bound. Here encroachment on the interests of others, exploitation and enslavement are inevitables that have been completely rationalized and brought into conformity with their self-made international norms and principles. In the political quarantine, where, unfortunately, most of the weak nations of the world especially Muslims live in confinement, there exists no right to life or expression. Here, all the laws and regulations and formulae are those that are arbitrarily dictated by puppet regimes and which serve the interests of the imperialists. Sadly enough, of those who wield power in this part of the world are either despots imposed on their people or henchmen of imperialist policies. Here, within its walls, it is an unforgivable sin for the victims in chains even to cry out in pain. The interests of the world-eaters demand that no one here should have the right to utter a word that smells of opposition or which may disturb their comfort.

Since the Muslims of the world, on account of repression and threats of imprisonment and execution, do not have the power to speak about the misfortunes imposed on their countries by their rulers, they

must be able to speak in full freedom about their sufferings and hardships in the Divine Sanctuary, so that other Muslims may find ways of their rescue. Therefore we persist in insisting that Muslims should feel themselves free of every kind of restrictive or repressive measure at least within the House and the Sanctuary of God. There, being able to proclaim *barā'ah* against that which they abhor, they should examine every means for achieving their emancipation.

The Sa'ūdī government has assumed the responsibility (assigned to it by the imperialists) of controlling the pilgrims to the House of God. And this is why we say with confidence that the carnage of Makkah is not an incident separate from the basic repressive policy of the world-eaters in regard to Muslims.

By proclaiming *barā'ah* (against the *mushrikūn*, by holding the Barā'ah Rally during Hajj days) our purpose was to liberate the tremendous energies of the Muslim world. And a day will come when with the help of God Almighty this task will be accomplished by the true sons of the Quran. On that day, God willing, all the Muslims and all those who have suffered will raise their cry against the world's oppressors and affirm that the superpowers, their stooges and their hirelings are the most hated creatures on the face of the earth.

The massacre of the pilgrims of the House of God was a treacherous move aimed to sustain the imperialist policies and to check the spreading influence of the pristine Islam of Muḥammad (S). The black and shameful record of the callous rulers of Muslim countries forebodes the befalling of further pains and sufferings on the half-dead body of Islam and the Muslim world. The Prophet of Islam (S) has no need of pompous mosques and ornamental minarets. The Prophet of Islam (S) sought the glory and grandeur of his followers, which have been, sadly enough, allowed to sink into the dust of humiliation and ignominy as a result of the policies of foreign stooges.

Have the Muslims of the world forgotten the slaughter of hundreds of scholars and thousands of men and women of various Muslim sects that took place in the course of the ignominious lifetime of the House of Sa'ūd? Don't the Muslims see that the centres of Wahhabism have sprouted today throughout the world as nests of sedition and espionage, which on the one hand propagate the Islam of aristocrats, the Islam of Abū Sufyān, the Islam of filthy court mullās, the Islam of the silly pseudo-divines of theological centres and universities, the Islam of disgrace and wretchedness, the Islam of money and power, the Islam of deception, compromise and captivity, the Islam of the sovereignty of the capital and the capitalists over the oppressed and the barefoot, and in a word the American Islam, and, on the other hand, prostrate before the altar of their lord, the U.S., the world-eater?

## Does Anybody Care? Is Anybody There?

Is it not a matter of unbearable shame that the House of Sa'ūd, the self-appointed servants of the two Holy Shrines, should reassure Israel that they would never use their weapons against it, that they should break their relations with Iran in order to prove their contention? True, how warm and cordial should be the ties between the heads of Islamic states and the Zionists that even the formal and ceremonious mention of struggle against Israel be deleted from the agenda of the summit of Islamic countries!

Had they a particle of the Islamic or the Arab sense of honour in them, they would not have submitted to such a filthy political sell-out and betrayed themselves and their countries. Are not such things a matter of shame for the Islamic world? Is it not a sin and a crime to be a silent spectator of such scenes? Isn't there anyone amongst Muslims who should rise and not tolerate all this indignity? Must we sit idle and watch the leaders of Islamic countries ignore the sentiments of one billion Muslims, endorse the atrocities of the Zionists, and bring back Egypt and its like to the Arab fold?

Now, can the Muslims believe the propaganda that the Iranian pilgrims had risen to occupy the House of God and the Shrine of the Prophet (S)? That they wanted to steal the Ka'bah and take it away with them to Qum? If the Muslims of the world have been convinced that their heads of state are the true enemies of the U.S., U.S.S.R., and Israel, they will also believe their propaganda!

### Our Objectives:

Of course, we have openly proclaimed this truth many a time in our foreign policy statements, that we are and have been committed to the expansion of Islamic influence throughout the world and to the curtailment of the domination of the world-eaters. Now if the American lackeys consider this policy expansionism or the dream of creating a big empire, we not only don't care, we even welcome it. We declare that we are intent on eradicating the rotten roots of Zionism, capitalism and communism from the world. We are resolved, by Almighty God's grace, to destroy the systems based on these three foundations and to propagate the system of the Islam of the Messenger of Allah — upon whom and whose Household be God's peace and benedictions — in a world subjugated to imperialism. We hope that sooner or later the enthralled nations will witness this with their eyes. With all our existence, even if it has to be with violent means, we shall prevent the expansion of U.S. blackmailing and the immunity of American agents. God willing, we shall not allow the song

of compromise and conspiracy with America and Russia, with *kufr* and *shirk*, to be sung from the Holy Ka'bah and the precincts of Hajj, this exalted pulpit, as exalted as the peaks of human sublimity, from which the resounding cry of the oppressed should echo throughout the world and the message of monotheism be carried to its corners.

We implore God to grant us the strength to sound the death-knell of America and the Soviet Union from not only the Ka'bah of Muslims but from all the churches of the world. The Muslims and the deprived of the world must feel proud and elated at the sight of the unending inferno which our Islamic Revolution has created for the world-eaters. They should clamour for liberty and freedom in choosing their life and destiny and lay ointment on their wounds, for the era of deadlock and despair, the time of suffocating in the atmosphere of *kufr* is near its end. The rose garden of the nations is within sight. Let them rise to greet the fragrant spring breeze, the freshness of the roses of love, and the refreshing springs of their own effulgent will and determination.

We must come out of this mire of silence and stillness wherein the American and Russian policy-makers daily sprinkle the seeds of thralldom and death, to set out for the sea from which the Zamzam has sprung forth, and wash with our tears the coverings of the Sanctuary soiled by the filthy hands of America and its profane progeny.

O Muslims of all the countries of the world! You should overcome the fear of death, because you have already been caught up in the clutches of gradual death through the domination of aliens. You must deploy these enthusiastic and martyrdom-seeking youths who are ready to shatter the bastions of infidelity. You should not think of maintaining the status quo; rather, you should think of escaping from captivity and slavery and of assaulting the files of the enemies of Islam; for honour and life lie in struggling. The first step in this struggle is determination. Thereafter, you must resolve not to submit to the leadership of global *kufr* and *shirk*, especially that of the U.S.

Whether we should be in Makkah or not, our hearts and souls are with Abraham and in Makkah. Whether they should open the gates of the Prophet's Madinah on us or not, the bond of our love for the Prophet (S) will never weaken. We shall pray facing the Ka'bah and die facing the Ka'bah and thank God for keeping us firm in our compact with the Lord of Ka'bah and for enabling us to lay the foundations of *barā'ah* with *mushrikūn* with the blood of thousands of our dear ones, without waiting to see whether the paltry rulers of some Islamic or non-Islamic country support us or not.

We represent the oppressed of the history and its deprived and its barefooted. We have no one except God to assist us, and even if we should be torn to pieces a thousand times we shall not abandon our

struggle against tyrants.

The Islamic Republic of Iran thanks the emancipated Muslims of the world who despite repression exposed the crimes of the U.S. and the Sa'ūdīs by holding conferences, interviews and speeches, and demonstrated our *maḍlūmiyyah* to the world. The Muslims should know that as long as the balance of power is not established in their favour the interests of the aliens will always supersede their own interests. Every day the Archsatan or the Soviet Union create a disaster with the pretext of protecting their interests. Truly, if the Muslims fail to seriously seek a solution to their problems with the world-eaters, or if they fail to make themselves a formidable world power, can they hope to rest peacefully? Today if the U.S. razes to ground an Islamic country with the pretext of safeguarding its interests, who is there to stop it? Therefore, there is no alternative to struggle. We must break the teeth and claws of the superpowers, especially the U.S., and choose one of the two paths, martyrdom or victory, both of which amount to victory in our faith.

May God bestow upon all Muslims the power to shatter the very governing framework of the oppressive policies of the world-eaters and grant them the fortitude and courage to erect the citadels of human dignity. May He assist us all to ascend from the depths of disgrace to the heights of honour and glory.

Before the bittersweet episode of the last year's Ḥajj, some people had failed to understand fully the insistence of the Islamic Republic of Iran on holding the Rally of Barā'ah with *mushrikūn*. They questioned themselves and others about the need to hold a rally and chant slogans in that hot weather during the pilgrimage journey. How could slogans of *barā'ah* against *mushrikūn* affect the imperialists in any adverse way? they asked.

There were others who were so naive as to imagine that the so-called civilized world of the world-eaters shall not only be able to tolerate this kind of political expression, it may go even further in permitting its opponents to hold marches and demonstrations. To substantiate their claim, they cited as evidence the marches held in the so-called free countries of the West.

It should be clear that such marches entail no harm for the superpowers and other powers. It is the rallies of Makkah and Madīnah that will be followed by the closure of the Arabian oil flow. It is the rallies of *barā'ah* held in Makkah and Madīnah which lead to the destruction of American and Russian henchmen. It is for this that they try to stop such rallies by massacring emancipated men and women. It is in the shadow of *barā'ah* rallies against *mushrikūn* that even the simple-minded are made to understand that it is wrong to remain subdued to the U.S.

and the U.S.S.R.

The good and brave people of Iran should rest assured that the episode of Makkah will be the source of great changes in the Islamic world. It has prepared a suitable ground for the eradication of corrupt regimes from the Islamic world and the extermination of pseudo-mullās. Now that not even a year has elapsed since the epic declaration of *barā'ah* against *mushrikūn*, the perfume of the sacred blood of our beloved martyrs has winded through the globe and we are observing its effects in the distant parts of the world.

### The Struggle in Palestine:

The epic struggle of the people of Palestine is not an accident. Does the world know those who have staged this epic struggle? Does it know the ideals upon which the people of Palestine who resist the savage assaults of the Zionists with empty hands, have come to rely? Is it merely the cry of nationalism that has brought into being a mighty world of strength in their souls? Is this fruit of staunch resistance, this olive oil of light and hope, which the Palestinians joyously collect, a product from the tree of sold-out politicians. How could that be, for those wretches have for long been making their bread by the side of the Palestinians and in the name of the Palestinian nation!

There is no doubt that it is the cry of *Allāh-u Akbar* ("God is Greatest"), the same cry of our people, which infused despair in the hearts of the usurpers, once in Shah's Iran and now in the Bayt al-Maqdis. It is the materialization of the same cry of *barā'ah* that the people of Palestine gave in the Hajj rallies, walking shoulder-to-shoulder with their Iranian brothers and sisters, shouting for the liberation of Quds and chanting "Death to the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and Israel." And they too, with the generous bequest of their blood, in the ceremony of *shahādah*, lay down on the bed of martyrdom still wet with the blood of our martyrs.

Yes, the Palestinian found his lost way on our road of *barā'ah*. And we witnessed how the iron walls collapsed in the path of this struggle and how blood overcame the sword, how faith subdued blasphemy and how our cries overcame the bullets. We saw how the dreams of the Israelites, of a territory extending from the Nile to the Eurphrates, were demolished. Once again the shining star of Palestine drew its brightness and brilliance from the blessed tree of Islam, a tree that is neither of the east nor the west.

Today, the same widespread, world-wide attempts that aim to force us into a compromise with *kufr* and *shirk* are also under way in order to extinguish the flames of the wrath of the Muslim people of Palestine. This is only one example of the onward march of our revolu-

tion, while the number of those who believe in the principles of our Islamic Revolution continues to multiply throughout the world. We regard them as the potential assets of our revolution. Those who with their blood write their names in the scrolls of our support and accept the invitation of the Revolution with all their life and soul, by Divine help, will take control of the whole world into their hands.

A war between truth and falsehood, between poverty and wealth, between the oppressed and the imperialists, between the barefoot and the affluent has started today. I kiss the hands of all the dear ones all over the world who have taken the burden of the struggle on their shoulders, determined to fight in the way of God and for exalting the honour of Muslims. I shower my sincere salutation on all those buds of freedom and human edification.

I hereby declare to the beloved and brave people of Iran that God Almighty has already conveyed the blessed effects of your spirituality to other parts of the world. Your eyes and hearts glow with support and sympathy for the deprived. The sparks of your revolutionary disdain have dismayed the world-eaters of the right and the left.

#### **The Resistance and Steadfastness of the Iranian People:**

Certainly we all know that our country has faced hardship and distress in the course of war and revolution, and nobody denies that the deprived and low-income strata of society, especially the employee class, are in straitened circumstance economically. But that which all our people mind above everything is the safeguarding of Islam and the principles of the Revolution. The Iranian people have proved that they can bear hunger and thirst but they will never tolerate the defeat of the Revolution or injury to its principles. The noble people of Iran have always remained resistant against the severest attacks of global *kufr* upon the principles of their Revolution, and here we cannot go into all the details of this matter. But haven't the people of Iran bravely resisted the numerous U.S. atrocities in the Persian Gulf, including the military and intelligence assistance provided to Iraq, the attacks on oil platforms, ships and boats and its downing of a civilian passenger airliner? Haven't the people of Iran resisted the diplomatic offensives of the East and the West and the political gimmicks of the international bodies? Haven't the brave people of Iran remained resistant against the economic, propaganda and psychological warfare and the beastly attacks of Iraq upon their cities, in the rain of missiles on residential areas and its recurrent chemical bombardment of Halabjah and Iranian towns? Haven't the good people of Iran resisted the plots of the Munāfiqīn (M.K.O.) and the Liberals, the hoarding and profiteering of the capitalists and the ruses of the pseudo-divines? Were not all of these aimed to



attack the principles of the Revolution?

Had it not been for the political presence of the people, each of these plots could harm the principles of the system. We are grateful to God for His helping the Iranian people to stand, erect and resolute, their ground and to fulfil their duty.

#### The Real Pillars of the Revolution:

Our good people, who are true and genuine defenders of Islamic values, have fully realized that struggle and the love of comfort do not go hand in hand. Those who imagine that the struggle for independence and the emancipation of the world's deprived and oppressed is not inconsistent with the affluent and comfortable living are ignorant even of the ABC of struggle. Also, those who imagine that the unfeeling capitalists and the affluent can be brought to their senses by sheer admonition and exhortation and that they can be persuaded to join and aid those who struggle for freedom are for a futile exercise. Struggle and the love of welfare and wealth, activism and the love of comfort, the seeking of the Hereafter and that of the world are two categories that can never be reconciled. Only those will remain with us until the last who have tasted the misery and pain of poverty, deprivation and oppression. The poor and the penniless pious are the true starters and sustainers of revolutions.

We should do all within our power to safeguard the principle of the defence of the deprived. The authorities of revolutionary Iran must be cautious lest some impious elements, with the aim of destroying the Revolution, should immediately brand someone who intends to serve the poor and needy and tread the path of Islam and the Revolution as a communist and as eclectic. One should not be afraid of such accusations. Rather one should, with God always in one's view, strive with all one's strength for His good pleasure by helping the poor, without heeding any charge or accusation.

The U.S. and the imperialists have persons in all walks of life, in theological centres as well as in universities, whom they have earmarked as means for defeating the Islamic Revolution. I have recurringly warned against the danger of pseudo-clerics. They, with their deceit, can destroy the Revolution from within. Feigning advocacy of the faith and the *wilāyah*, they label all and the sundry as irreligious. We must seek God's refuge from the evil of these persons.

Similarly, those who indiscriminately attack every *‘ālim* and cleric, labelling him proponent of American Islam, are on a dangerous path which, God forbid, may lead to the defeat of the pure Islam of the Prophet (S). We shall stand for the realization of the rights of the poor throughout human society and defend them to the last drop of our

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blood.

The world today is thirsty of the purifying culture of Muḥammadan Islam. The Muslims will expurgate the pomp and pageantry of the White and Red Houses in a grand Islamic establishment. Today Khumaynī has laid bare his chest to face the arrows of hardship and affliction and to confront all the enemies' guns and missiles, eagerly awaiting martyrdom like all those who aspire for it.

### The Transcendent Value of Martyrdom:

Ours is a war of faith; it knows no geographic bounds or frontiers. We should embark on a great mobilization of Islamic combatants in this ideological war. God willing, the great people of Iran, with their material and non-material support for the Revolution, will make amends for the hardship of war with the sweetness of the defeat of God's enemies in the world. And what could be sweeter than this that the great Iranian nation fell on the U.S. like a bolt of lightning, watched the pillars and battlements of the monarchy sink to the ground, and severed the life-line of America in this country. And what could be sweeter than this that our good people have eradicated the roots of hypocrisy, nationalism and eclecticism — an undiminishing sweetness the rest of which, God willing, they will taste in the Hereafter. Not only those who have attained the station of martyrdom or injury or were present on the battlefronts, even those who strengthened the fronts with their sympathy and prayers have partaken of the great station of the *mujāhidūn* and their splendid reward. Happy are the *mujāhidūn* and happy are the heirs to the legacy of al-Ḥusayn (A).

The U.S.'s henchmen should know that martyrdom in God's way is not something which could be compared to victory or defeat on battlefields. Martyrdom is the apex of servitude to God in man's spiritual ascent. We must not bring martyrdom so low as to say Khurramshahr or some other city was liberated at the price of the martyrdom of our sons. Such thoughts surface in the perverse minds of the nationalists. Our goal is much higher than that. The nationalists imagine that our objective is to achieve pan-Islamic goals in a poor and hungry world. We say: As long as there is *kufr*, the struggle shall continue; as long as there is struggle we shall also be there. Our quarrel is not about some city or territory with anyone. Our purpose is to hoist the standard of *lā ilāha illā Allāh* atop the high peaks of man's nobility and dignity. So O my sons, from the Army, the IRGC, and the volunteer forces! Never mention the gain or loss of a position with sadness or joy, for these are as much insignificant in front of your objective as the whole universe is insignificant in front of the Hereafter.

The parents, wives and relatives of our martyrs, P.O.W.'s, those

missing and crippled in action, must remember that nothing has diminished from the achievements of your dear ones. They have taken their place by the side of the Noble Prophet (S) and the immaculate Imams (A) and there is no difference between victory and defeat for them.

Today is the day of guidance of the future generations. Tighten your belts, for nothing has changed. Today God has willed it this way, and He had willed that way yesterday. And we submit to whatever God has willed and submit to His command. That is why we aspire for martyrdom and that is exactly why we do not submit to disgrace and to servitude of another than God.

Of course in order to fulfil our responsibility we are duty-bound to carry out our tasks with utmost care and intelligence, in the best way. Everyone knows that we were not the initiators of the war and that we have fought in defence for the sake of preserving Islam. It was the nation of Iran which was made victim of the perpetual assaults of the world-eaters, launched against us by imperialism from all its political, military, cultural and economic bastions.

Our Islamic revolution has so far exposed the Satan's ambushes and revealed the hunters' traps to the peoples. The world-eaters and the capitalists and their henchmen want us to watch quietly, without sounding any alarm, the tender plants of freedom being destroyed and the victims fall into traps, whereas it is the primary duty of ours and our Islamic revolution to raise an outcry warning the entire world: 'O sleepers, awake and look around yourselves, for you have lain by the side of the den of wolves! Get up, for this is not a place to sleep'. Or to cry out: 'Rise quickly, for the world is not safe from the hunter's snares. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. sit in ambush, and they will not stop until your complete destruction.' Truly, had there been a world-wide mobilization of Muslims, who would have dared to show all this impudence and malice towards the spiritual progeny of the Messenger of God (S)?

#### A Warning:

It is a matter of great pride for our people that they have arrayed against the most massive display of power and against the formations of American and European armadas in the Persian Gulf. And I hereby warn the U.S. and the European governments to leave the Persian Gulf before it is too late and before they drown in the quagmire of death. It won't always be so that our passenger planes are shot down by your warships. May be the sons of the Revolution will send your warships into the depths of the Persian Gulf.

I say to the governments of the region, especially those of Arabia and Kuwait, that all of you shall be considered accomplices in the adventures and atrocities of the U.S. So far we have acted with restraint

lest the entire region plunges into an abyss of blood, fire and total chaos. Nevertheless, Reagan's crazy moves, to be certain, entail unexpected mishaps and dangerous consequences for all. Rest assured that you shall be the losers in this new game. Don't humiliate yourselves, your countries and your Muslim people this much in front of the U.S. If you have no faith, at least behave like free men.

Praise be to God that the windows of hope and light have opened in the faces of all the Muslims of the world through the blessing of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. It proceeds to the stage where the thunder and lightning of its developments will bring down the showers of death and destruction on the heads of the imperialists.

### Policy Vis-a-Vis the World-Eaters:

An important question that we all need to attend to concerns the principal bases of our policy towards the aliens: How far will our enemies, the world-eaters, tolerate us and to what limits they will accept our freedom and independence. The answer is that they will not, undoubtedly, accept any threshold except the complete disfiguration of our identity and the obliteration of all our spiritual and divine values. In the words of the Noble Quran, they will not desist from assaulting you unless they deviate you from your faith. Whether we like it or not, the Zionists, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. will continue to pursue us until they tarnish our religious identity and our ideological sublimity.

Some persons of dubious motives accuse us of pursuing a policy of hostility and disdain in international forums. With their pretended sympathies and childish objections they contend that the Islamic Republic has incited enmities and lost prestige in the eyes of the East and the West. They should be asked, 'At what time did the Third-World nations and Muslims, especially the nation of Iran, enjoy any esteem and credit with the East or the West so that they should lose them now?' Of course, if the Iranian people should set aside all Islamic and revolutionary principles and norms and demolish with their own hands the house of the honour and credibility of the Prophet (S) and the *ma'sūm* Imams (A), then it is possible that the world-eaters may accord to them official recognition as a weak and poor nation devoid of culture. But that too will be up to a certain level, at the level that they remain superpowers and lords and we mean servants, they guardians and masters and we their henchmen and base hirelings. That will not be an Iran with an Islamic identity, but an Iran whose identification card has been issued by the U.S. or the U.S.S.R.

Today all the grief and lamentations of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., of the East and the West are for this reason that Iran has not only gone out of their patronage but invites others to escape from the domination

of tyrants.

If there were any truth and sincerity in the talks to control and eliminate destructive weapons, that is what all the nations want. But that too is an old stunt. This is something which has been recently disclosed by the statements of the heads of state of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. and the writings of the statesmen. The recent summit meetings between the American and Russian heads of state were aimed at a tighter control over the Third World and a virtual banishment of the influence of the barefooted and the deprived from the world of the illimitable assets of the capitalists. We should prepare ourselves to form a powerful Islamic-humanistic front with the marks of our revolution and Islam against the united front of the East and the West, so that the supremacy of the world's deprived and barefoot may be celebrated.

Rest assured that the powers of the East and the West are nothing more than hollow manifestations of the material world, insignificant in comparison with the eternal and everlasting world of spiritual values. I declare in clear terms that the Islamic Republic of Iran will, with all its means, make investments for the revival of the Islamic identity of Muslims throughout the world. There is no reason why it should not invite the world's Muslims to adopt the principle of seizing the world's levers of power and put an end to the ambition and expansionism of the champions of power, money and fraud. We must make plans for the advancement of the objectives and interests of the deprived Iranian nation. We must do our utmost in relation to helping the world's people, in inquiring into the problems and difficulties of Muslims, and lending support to the activists, the hungry and the deprived, considering these to be one of the principles of our foreign policy. We declare that the Islamic Republic of Iran will always be the support and refuge of the world's freedom-loving Muslims. Iran in its capacity as an invincible bastion will meet the needs of the warriors of Islam and will familiarize them with doctrinal and educational fundamentals of Islam, in addition to familiarizing them with the principles and methods of struggle against the systems of *kufir* and *shirk*.

#### Iran's Acceptance of the U.N. Resolution 598:

As for the acceptance of the U.N. Resolution, which was truly a very bitter and unpleasant step for us all, and especially for me, until a few days ago I believed in the same mode of defence and in the policies announced during the course of the war, deeming the good of the system, the country and the Revolution to lie in implementing them. However, due to certain events and elements, which I do not wish to disclose at the present and which, God willing, will become clear in the future, and in consideration of the opinions of all highranking military and political

experts of the country, whose goodwill and sincerity I trust, I approved the acceptance of the resolution and ceasefire. At this juncture I consider that to be in the interests of the Revolution and the system. God knows that hadn't it been for the readiness that all of us as well as our honour and credibility should be sacrificed in the way of the interests of Islam and Muslims, I would never have agreed to it and death and martyrdom would have been more pleasant to me. But there is no option other than submitting to the will of God Almighty: undoubtedly such has been the attitude of the heroic and brave people of Iran and so shall it be. And here I offer my gratitude and respect to all my dear sons who in the fronts of fire and blood, and since the beginning of the war until today, have made efforts and endeavoured in relation to the war, and I invite all the people of Iran to vigilance, patience and resistance.

In the future, certain individuals, awaringly or otherwise, may raise the question amongst the people: What was the outcome of all that bloodshed, martyrdom and sacrifice? They are certainly unaware of the transcendental world and the philosophy of martyrdom. They don't know that one who sets out to wage *jihād* for the sole sake of God's good pleasure and lays down his head on the altar of sincerity and servitude, the events of this transitory world have no effect on the eternal and lasting sublimity of their act. We have to go a long way before we are able to perceive perfectly the worth of our martyrs and their path. We must look for it in the trails of time, in the history of the Revolution and the course of the future generations. Beyond doubt, the blood of the martyrs has insured the survival of Islam and the Revolution. The blood of the martyrs has given an eternal lesson of resistance to all the world's people. And God knows that the road of martyrdom can never reach a dead-end; it is the nations and the future generations who will follow this path. The sacred soil of their tombs will remain the site of the visits of mystics and lovers of God and a fountain of healing for the lovers of freedom to the Judgement's Day.

Happy are those who attained martyrdom. Happy are those who gave up their heads and their lives to join this caravan of light. Happy are those who nurtured those pearls in their arms. O God, keep this book of martyrdom open, as before, for its aspirers, and do not keep us out of it too. O God, our country and our people, still in the beginning of the road of struggle, stand in need of the torch of martyrdom. Protect this torch and keep it burning. Happy are you people, you men and women! Happy are the crippled, the prisoners of war, the missing and the honoured families of the martyrs! And woe to me who am still alive and have drunk the cup of poison of the resolution's acceptance. I feel ashamed of myself in front of the majesty of this great people and their sacrifices. Woe to those who did not join this caravan, and woe to those who passed by the great scenes of war, martyrdom and Divine tribula-



tion, silently and indifferently or disapprovingly and disdainfully.

Yes yesterday was a day of Divine test that passed and tomorrow there will be other trials, and we all await a greater day of reckoning. Those who during all these years of struggle and war evaded this great duty for some pretext or another, and kept themselves, their life, property and children away from the fire of events, they should rest assured that they have shunned God's covenant and earned a great loss and failure. They will feel the pinch of regret in the Hereafter, in the court of Divine judgement. I tell the people and the authorities again: These kind of people should not be treated at the same level as those who have fought in God's way. Do not allow these insipid claimants of today and the short-sighted dodgers of yesterday to return on the scene. Whether I remain amongst you or not, I advise you not to permit it that this Revolution should fall into incompetent, unworthy hands; don't allow the heralds of martyrdom to be forgotten in the meanders of everyday life.

My emphatic advice to the dear people of Iran is that they should be vigilant and watchful. The acceptance of the resolution by the Islamic Republic of Iran does not mean a solution of the problem of war. With the announcement of this decision we have taken the edge off the world-eaters propaganda against us. But one cannot predict the drift of future events with certainty. The enemy has not stopped his mischief yet, and he may continue hostilities under various pretexts and excuses. In all conditions, we should be prepared and alert to meet any possible assault of the enemy, and our people must not consider the war issue as something finished. Of course, we officially declare that our aim is not a new tactic for the continuation of war; for it is possible that the enemies would continue their attacks exactly with this pretext. Our armed forces must never be off their guard in regard to the enemies' tricks and stratagems. In all circumstances the country's military capability must be maintained in top condition.

All along the course of the war and struggle our people have tangibly felt the dimensions of the spite, enmity and hard-heartedness of their enemies, the enemies of God. Therefore, they must take more seriously the danger of the world-eaters' assaults in various forms and shapes. Presently, all the members of the militia, including the Army, the IRGC, and the volunteer forces must continue to be on their guard in defence against the devilries of imperialism and Iraq on the war fronts. After we traverse the present phase of the Revolution with its specific features and requirements, I shall have certain points to remind in relation to reconstruction and the general policies of the system and the Revolution, which shall be mentioned at the opportune time. However, at the present juncture I seriously call upon all orators, administrators and officials of the country as well as the managers of mass media and

publications to refrain from adventurism and to be careful lest they become unconscious instruments of rash and ill-considered points of view. Rather, together they should coolly watch the enemies' situation.

These days many persons may be impelled by their feelings and emotions to raise many a question about whys, oughts and ought-nots. Although in itself a value of high elegance, this is not the time to engage in such debates. It may happen that those who until yesterday talked of peace and pacifism, seeking only the downfall of the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran, may, with the same intention, raise some other diversive issues, and the imperialist mercenaries who until yesterday stabbed the nation in the back under the guise of peace may today turn jingoists, and the profane nationalists may commence their venomous propaganda in order to reduce the blood of the dear martyrs and the honour and pride of the people to nothing. Our good people, God willing, will answer to all such mischief with vigilance and discernment. I say it once again, the acceptance of this matter is more bitter to me than poison. But I have resigned myself to what may please God and I drank this cup for His good pleasure. A further point whose mention is essential is that the Iranian leaders took this decision on their own, without any intervention from anybody or any country.

Honourable people of Iran, I consider all of you as my children and you know that I love you and I know you well. You too know me well. That which prompted this step in the present conditions was the call of my Divine duty. You know that I had made a compact with you to fight until the last drop of blood and until the last breath. But the present decision was taken solely for the sake of expedience. I had to forego my earlier stance and relinquish my honour, if I had any, solely for the hope of winning God's mercy and good pleasure. My dear ones, you know that I have always sought not to prefer my comfort to God's good pleasure — not even to your comfort. O God, You know that we have no intent of compromising with *kufr*. You know that imperialism and the world-eater U.S. have crushed the tender roses of Your Prophet's garden. O God, You are our only support in this world of injustice and oppression. We are absolutely alone and we know none other than You, nor have we ever wished to know anyone but You. Help us, for You are the best of helpers. O God, make good the bitterness of these days with the sweetness of Your Nearness and the sweetness of the advent of the Imam of the Age — may our souls be sacrificed for the dust of his feet.

O my revolutionary sons, O those who will not give up their pride for even a moment! You should know that every single moment of my life passes in the path of the sacred love of your service. I know that it is hard for you. Is it not hard for me, this old father of yours? I know that martyrdom is sweeter than honey for you. Is it not the same for this servant of yours? Be patient, for God is with the patient. Preserve

your revolutionary wrath and resentment in your breasts. Look at your enemies with anger and disdain, and know that the victory is yours. Let me stress this once again that you should not think that I am not in the know of the affairs of the war and the work of the officials involved. They enjoy my trust. Don't reproach them for this decision that they have taken, for it has been very difficult and unpleasant for them too. May God grant us success in serving Him and winning His good pleasure.

#### The Youth and Higher Education:

I hereby advise the dear youths of our country — these great God-given assets and reserves, these fragrant blossoms of the Islamic world — to set store by the precious hours of their life and prepare themselves for a great struggle involving knowledge and action, to be waged until the realization of the Revolution's higher objectives. I advise all the officials and administrators to employ all the possibilities for providing the means of the moral, ideological, scientific and aesthetic development of your youth, to patronize them in attaining to the peaks of creativity and higher values, and keep alive in them the spirit of independence and self-reliance. This, lest some teachers and instructors, mesmerized by their trips to and contacts with the so-called civilized world, should humiliate and revile our youths, recently liberated from bondage and exploitation; or lest they should idolize the progress and prowess of the aliens, thus injecting in them the spirit of imitation and servility. Instead of saying, 'Look where we are and where others are going', such persons should pay attention to their own human identity and keep alive the spirit of self-confidence and independence. When under the conditions of war and embargo we could manage to produce so much creativity, innovation and progress, God willing, under better conditions we will be able to prepare adequate ground for the growth of talent and research in all spheres. The struggle of the youths in context of knowledge and science means reviving the spirit of inquiry and discovery. Their struggle in the context of action has taken shape in the most splendid fields of life, *jihād* and martyrdom.

#### The Committed 'Ulamā' of Islam:

Another point which I mention on account of my extreme love for the youths is that in the path of moral and spiritual values they should take advantage of committed 'ulamā' and Islamic clergymen. Never and under no circumstance should they ever consider themselves as not standing in need of their guidance and cooperation. Throughout history and under severest of conditions, the committed

and struggling Islamic scholars have always, with hearts full of hope and love, been the people's shield in times of distress and calamity. They have mounted the gallows, suffered deprivation, imprisonment, exile and, above all, have been made target of mockeries and accusations. Under the conditions when many intellectuals despaired and lost hope in the struggle against *tāghūt*, they revived the people's hope and vigour and defended the people's dignity and their real honour. At the present also, from the forefronts of battle to all other positions, they are by the people's side on every bulwark and have offered revered martyrs in every grievous and calamitous episode. In no country or revolution, excepting the revolutions of the prophets, the lives of the Imams (A) and the Islamic Revolution of Iran, do we find that the leaders have been made targets of vengeance and assault to this extent. This is because of the honesty and sincerity that are embodied in the committed 'ulamā' of Islam. Accepting responsibility in a country confronted with numerous embargoes and various economic, political and military problems is a difficult task. Of course, our committed clergy must be prepared to offer greater sacrifices and, in times of need, use their honour and credibility for the sake of safeguarding the honour of Islam and serving the deprived and barefoot. And we should be grateful that the mature and brave nation of Iran knows the worth of its true servants. The essence of the cause of their attachment and affection for the sacred institution of the clergy may be put in these words: The committed 'ulamā' and clergy of Islam have never betrayed, nor will they ever betray, the Islamic ideals, creed, identity and objectives of the people.

However, it is to be noted that whenever, in all my speeches and writings, I have mentioned the clergy and acknowledged its services, I mean the pious, committed and struggling 'ulamā'. There are impious and uncommitted persons in every group and the harm of clergymen in alliance with anti-Islamic forces is more than that of any other vile character. This kind of clergymen have always been the accursed of God, the Prophet (S) and the people. The major blows dealt to this Revolution have come from these affiliated, sanctimonious clerics who have sold away their faith. Our committed clergymen have always regarded these profane wretches with disdain and repulsion. Let me say in clear terms: Had the nationalists been in our place, they would have easily succumbed to the difficulties, hardships and strains and made a humiliating, disgraceful compromise with the enemies in order to relieve themselves from the day-after-day political stresses. They would have thrown away all patience, discarded resistance, and turned their backs on all their professed nationalist covenants and commitments. No one should imagine that we don't know how to compromise with the world-eaters; but how unbecoming and how unthinkable it is that the servants of Islam should betray their own people! We are very well

aware that even in these conditions those who have an age-old enmity with the genuine clergy will rebuke and revile it with their ill-concealed envy and ill will. But that which is certain is that the true clergy will never compromise with and submit to *kufr* and *shirk*. Even if they tear us into pieces, hang us from the gallows, and if they burn us alive or capture our wives and children and pillage our homes in front of our eyes we will never grant amnesty to *kufr* and *shirk*.

Hopefully, the 'ulamā' and the clergy are well familiar with all the dimensions and aspects of their duty. But I shall mention here some points for the sake of emphasis and reminder. Today, in the open atmosphere of our Islamic country many young intellectuals feel that they have some ideas to propound on various Islamic subjects and topics. They should be welcomed and listened to with appreciation. If they deviate, show them the right Islamic way, with affection and friendliness. Remember that their feelings and spiritual ardour may not be ignored and their writings cast into the valley of doubt and distrust with the labels of deviation and eclecticism. It is certainly on account of their ardour for Islam and passion for the guidance of Muslims that they bring up these issues today; otherwise they would not take upon themselves this trouble. They believe that the Islamic position on different issues is what they think it is. Instead of taking a belligerent stance against them or setting them aside, treat them with shrewdness and affection. Don't despair if they don't accept, for otherwise, God forbid, they may fall into the trap of the liberals or the nationalists or the leftists and the *Munāfiqīn*, the sin of which is not less than that of eclecticism. We can be hopeful of the country's future and its future makers only when we attach worth to them and their views on various issues, overlooking their small mistakes, while making ourselves fully cognizant of the principles and method of their correct training and education. The system of education in universities and non-religious academies has been more accustomed to the realities of life and experience than the education involving merely theoretical subjects and philosophy. By blending these two and through narrowing the gap, the theological centres and the universities should melt into one another, thus enlarging the scope for the expansion of Islamic teachings.

Another point is that I consider most of the achievements of the clergy as well as their influence in Islamic communities to lie in the value of their practical life and piety (*zuhd*). Today this value should not only not be allowed to fall into oblivion but should be given more attention than ever before. Nothing is uglier than a clergyman's worldliness and nothing can corrupt the clergy like worldliness. Some foolish friends, or clever enemies, may try to deviate the clergy from the path of ascetic living by showing pointless sympathy. Another group, out of ignorance or malice, may accuse the clergy of supporting capitalists and

capitalism. In these sensitive and decisive conditions when the clergy wields power in the country and the danger of other's misusing the clergy's station is real, one should be extremely careful of one's behaviour. It is possible that individuals from organizations, associations, political institutions etc. with a thoroughly Islamic appearance may attempt to compromise the repute and credibility of clergymen. In addition to furthering their own interests they may put clergymen at loggerheads with one another.

However, that which the clergy should never give up or abandon because of criticism by others is the support of the oppressed and barefoot. Since anyone who deviates from that goal has betrayed the Islamic ideal of social justice. At all conditions we should consider ourselves committed to this great responsibility, and any default in fulfilling it would be a betrayal of Islam and Muslims.

In conclusion, I thank God for vouchsafing His boundless grace to this people and implore the 'Remnant of God' (the Twelfth Imam) — may our souls be sacrificed for him — to assist us on our path and to guide us towards our goal.

May God Almighty grant patience and reward to the families of martyrs. May He heal the wounded and the disabled and bring home the POWs and the missing. O God, I ask You to decree that which is good for Islam and Muslims. Indeed You are near and respond to our prayers.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

5 Dhū al-Ḥijjah, 1408,  
29-4-1367 (July 20, 1988)

*Rūḥullāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī*

# The Nature of Moral Values: A Study of the Views of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Martyr Muṭahhari\*

by 'Alī Naqī Bāqirshāhī

**T**he problem of the eternity of moral values is an ancient problem traceable to the very beginning of the history of philosophy. Thinkers from all over the world have been interested in discussing this problem.

The origin of this subject in Muslim philosophy is traceable to the period of Ash'arite-Mu'tazilite controversies regarding ethical predicates. Later on scholars of uṣūl al-fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) also took up this issue at the philosophical level. 'Allāmah Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī (1902—1981), the most original thinker of the contemporary Muslim world, inspired by the scholars of uṣūl, particularly the late Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn Iṣfahānī, threw a new light on this issue in a manner unprecedented throughout the history of Muslim philosophy. The outcome of his philosophical contemplation is the sixth chapter of his book *Uṣūl-e falsafeh wa rawish-e riyālism* ('The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism'). Murtaḍā Muṭahhari, a pupil of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, wrote detailed explanatory notes on this book, adding his own views in the form of critical comments on Ṭabāṭabā'ī's views. He seems to have certain basic differences with Ṭabāṭabā'ī regarding certain moral issues.

**Speculative Wisdom and Practical Wisdom (Ḥikmat-e Nazārī and Ḥikmat-e 'Amalī):**

Reality is the subject of 'speculative wisdom' while ethics comprises a part of 'practical wisdom.' According to Muṭahhari, by reality we mean theoretical principles and by ethics we mean practical princi-

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\*What appears here is a chapter of the M.Phil. thesis of the author who is a research scholar at the Department of Philosophy of the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

ples. Practical wisdom consists of normative sciences, and the study of reality is included in speculative wisdom which may cover theories of positive science too. It is not possible to bring the principles of practical wisdom under the study of reality, for speculative wisdom addresses things as they are while practical wisdom addresses man's actions as they ought to be.

In the texts of Muslim thinkers, speculative reason and practical reason are regarded as two different types of man's potentialities, but they did not discuss in detail their features and differences. However, they did suggest that the former potentiality is inherent in the self, which by means of this potentiality attempts to discover the external world, whereas the latter consists of a series of perceptions controlled by the self, which is the administrator of the body. Practical reason is the physical aspect or power of the self, while speculative reason constitutes the metaphysical aspect or power of the self. Therefore, some thinkers are of the view that two forms of attainments are open to man, speculative attainment and practical attainment. Regarding the concept of potential and practical reason they hold that the self has a series of laws which enable it to administrate better. This is considered to be an elementary step towards attainment of perfection.<sup>1</sup>

Early Muslim philosophers defined justice in terms of freedom. Since the self fails to attain speculative perfection without the proper use of the body, the self ought to establish a balance between those two potentialities in order to utilize the body justly. The potentiality which establishes such a balance between self and body is an efficient or active force. In case the balance takes place, self is not dominated by body; contrarily body will be subordinated to self. They considered justice to be a kind of co-ordination between body and self in which body is controlled by self and self is kept in check by body.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Sīnā (980—1030), in his book *Kitāb al-shifā'* (The Book of Healing [of the soul]) divided philosophy into two branches: speculative and practical. He dealt with these issues in detail, yet there exists some ambiguity in his approach to practical reason. Some Muslim philosophers consider practical reason as the self's faculty of perception. They say that our reason is capable of two kinds of perception. One is the faculty of perception used in speculative sciences and the other is the faculty used in practical sciences. But others, like Mullā Hādī Sabzawāri (1833—1910), hold that the term 'reason' is used for both theoretical and practical aspects of the perceptive or cognitive faculty. But it can be maintained that it is an efficient faculty capable only of action.<sup>3</sup>



### 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī's Ethical Views and Muṭahhari's Critique:

'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī maintained that whatever we ascribe to practical wisdom is connected with the world of norms or non-factual ideas, which comprise commands and prohibitions and all those notions which are dealt with in 'ilm al-'uṣūl. By speculative wisdom is meant thoughts which consist of the ideas of facts, which are real representations of the actual things and the objective world. He thus makes a distinction between two types of philosophy, one which deals with "what is" and the other that deals with "what ought to be". Regarding the concept of 'ought' he says: Nature has in itself some ends towards which it moves. In the domains of inert things, plants, animals, and man, all activities so far as they fall in the domain of instinct, it is nature that moves towards its goal. At the human level also, so far as they are instinctive activities, it is nature that moves towards its goal. There is a set of acts at the human level which takes place by the means of volition and contemplation. In such acts, man has his own objectives which should be attained by volition. These ends are also the ends of nature, but nature cannot achieve them directly; it has to make use of man's will and thought. It is here that a need for "ought" or values arises and they come into existence automatically. For instance, man's nature, like that of plants, needs food, but he should acquire it by means of volition and contemplation. Unlike plants, which acquire food directly through roots, and animals, which are attracted towards food innately, man performs the same act by volition and not by instinct only. Here Ṭabāṭabā'ī says that instinct is not exactly defined so far. Man is unaware that the system of his ideas itself is constructed on the system of nature, and nature uses man as its instrument in order to achieve its goals. Man innately possesses some systems: the system of nature as well as the system of choice and will. The latter is subject to the former. The natural end is reflected in the form of a need or desire in man's soul (e.g. inclination towards food). Ṭabāṭabā'ī concludes that at the back of every voluntary act there is a hidden command of nature as to 'what one ought to do' or 'what one ought not to do'. It is this very 'ought to' which motivates a person to move towards his natural objective. Muṭahhari comments that Ṭabāṭabā'ī has probably reduced all willed acts to ideas or values. Muṭahhari also compares this view of Ṭabāṭabā'ī with the moral theory of Bertrand Russell, and is surprised to know that 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, without having read Russell, developed a theory similar to that of his, 40 years ago, probably at the same time when Russell was developing his moral philosophy.<sup>4</sup>

Russell in his *History of Western Philosophy* elaborates his view in the context of his analysis of Plato's view regarding ethics. He says that according to Plato, practical wisdom and speculative wisdom are identi-

cal. He holds that morality means that man should desire the good and the good is independent of the self; therefore, good is cognizable, such as the objects of the study of mathematics or medicine, which are independent of human mind.<sup>5</sup> Russell further says:

Plato is convinced that there is "the good" and its nature can be ascertained; when people disagree about it, one is making an intellectual error, just as much as if the disagreement were a scientific one on some matter of fact.<sup>6</sup>

Russell himself holds that "good" or "bad" are relative terms whose meaning is determined by man's relation to things or objects. When we have a goal to achieve, we say "it is good". Hence it is wrong to hold that "good" is an objective quality inherent in the nature of a thing like whiteness or roundness. Plato held a view opposed to this, for he regarded "good" as an objective fact. Muṭahharī concludes from this discussion that "goodness" and "badness" are not concrete and objective qualities of objects that can be discovered like other natural matters. If one treats moral issues like the objects of scientific study, he remarks, this error then gives rise to another issue: Whether such norms are mutable or are there two types of norms, one changeable and the other permanent? In this issue, Muṭahharī's view is opposed to that of Western Philosophers. Incidentally, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī is of the view that values are of two kinds: mutable and immutable. He has given the example of justice and cruelty and said, the beauty of justice and the ugliness of cruelty are self-evident. There are, hence, some values which are immutable, while there are other values which change with time.<sup>7</sup>

There is no doubt that some 'oughts' are particular and individual. For example, if one needs a certain kind of education, he might say, "I ought to study this subject", while another who does not need that education says, "I ought to study some other subject." Accordingly, individual and particular 'oughts' are relative.<sup>8</sup>

The question in ethics is: Is there any universal and absolute 'ought' which is generally shared by all human beings? Muṭahharī says that in case there is such an 'ought', as every ought is directed towards some goal, we have to ascertain if there is such a common goal that may be the basis of the universality of value. If we could prove such universality and eternity of values, we shall have to accept that they originate in an abstract self, and that man is not confined to physical nature only.<sup>9</sup>

'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī holds that animate beings and inanimate things are different in terms of their movement towards their objectives; i.e. inanimate things move towards their ends in one direction alone which is predetermined. Nature, in the course of its normal process, is equipped with the means through which it moves towards its goal. Animate beings

also, in respect of their physical being (not as mental and rational beings), in their own world move like plants directly towards their end. But as the laws and means of nature do not suffice to direct animate beings towards their desired goals, they employ their mental and perceptual faculties also to achieve their goals. In fact, there emerges a kind of harmony between physical nature (which is unconscious) and mental processes which enable a being possessing consciousness to attain the end desired by nature. Consciousness directs a being to move towards certain other ends also, which are supposed to be different from the ends of nature. Man thinks that perhaps the harmony between the movements towards natural and willed ends is accidental. But Ṭabāṭabā'ī believes in a kind of "pre-established harmony" between physical and mental processes.

The natural, mental makeup of man and animals is such that, as they perceive and conceive an object, there arises a desire for it, and they seek pleasure in attaining it. In case they fail to do so they feel some pain. For instance, by nature man seeks pleasure and avoids pain. The past experience of pleasure in eating some food stirs his appetite for it, and he moves in the direction of satisfying it. This act is governed by particular mental processes, but at the same time it also serves to attain the end of nature too, for a body requires food by its own nature. Eating serves both the ends; the person takes pleasure in it and at the same time nature satisfies its need also. Hence the question arises: Are these two acts unconnected with each other that accidentally occur together? Is it the natural urge to seek pleasure which requires certain natural means to serve it or is it the natural urge which makes a man feel pleasure in satisfying an appetite? In other words, it may be asked, does pleasure-seeking serve the end of nature or does nature serve the purpose of attaining pleasure? It is difficult to decide which one of the two is fundamental and which one is secondary. However, Muṭahhari holds that there is some kind of harmony between the natural and conscious ends, and this harmony is pre-planned and not accidental. Further, in dealing with this issue, he refers to Ibn Sinā's view according to which the purposive movement is confined to conscious beings only. Ṭabāṭabā'ī says that nature itself pursues certain ends, so all the beings move according to those ends. Hence all movements in nature are purposive, that is, governed by some ends. Man's purposive activity is also a part of the general purposive scheme of nature. But Muṭahhari does not agree with this generalization made by Ṭabāṭabā'ī.<sup>10</sup>

Ṭabāṭabā'ī says further that one of the values is that of 'employment' (*istikhdām*), which is concerned with man's relation to his limbs and faculties and this relation is objective, real and creative. The power of my hands is under my control, which is a natural matter; that is, this power is naturally and congenitally at my disposal. All bodily organs of

man are owned by man and form an integral part of his being and are at the service of man. He says that all external objects may be considered to be tools for survival used by man. Not only inanimate beings — plants, etc. — are means for man, but even other men are supposed to be at an individual's service. In other words, all beings, including men, who fall in the field of one's activity, are tools for a human being. Muṭahhari extends his limited existence to the spheres of other beings. Muṭahhari says that according to Ṭabāṭabā'i this human tendency or approach to other beings is instinctively natural, which is not confined to non-human beings but includes a man's attitude towards other men also. Muṭahhari does not agree with Ṭabāṭabā'i and remarks that the 'Allāmah, in this respect, seems to agree with the evolutionists and accept the Darwinian principle of the struggle for existence. In his view, Ṭabāṭabā'i has used a more respectable term for the Darwinian idea. In the struggle for existence every man uses others as his tools and makes them his employees.

Perhaps both Ṭabāṭabā'i and Muṭahhari were unacquainted with Heidegger's similar notion. According to Heidegger's existential philosophy, all other beings falling in the field of human existence are tools or means of extending and developing one's existence. The quality of other beings as distinguished from human beings is their 'Handiness' that is how far they are useful for a human being. Had Muṭahhari been familiar with this principle in Heidegger's philosophy, he would have claimed for him an affinity with the existentialists. It is to be noted that Ṭabāṭabā'i developed his principle of '*istikhdām*' in the course of about twenty years unaware of a similar theory being formulated by a European existentialist. Not only in his major philosophical work *Uṣūl-e falsafah wa rawish-e riyālism*, but also in his scholarly exegesis (tafsir) of the Qur'ān, *al-Mīzān*, he has referred to the principle of employment on many occasions in the course of dealing with various aspects of human existence. Muṭahhari seems to be more conservative on this issue, for his dubbing the 'Allāmah as a Darwinist shows his displeasure with the basic idea of employment of other human beings by every individual human being. Similarly, Muṭahhari's not accepting Ṭabāṭabā'i's doctrine of relativism of certain moral values reveals his adherence to the Platonic tradition as well as the traditional Islamic philosophy.

Muṭahhari infers the Darwinian principle of the struggle for existence from Ṭabāṭabā'i's philosophy in the context of his view that a man has to make adjustments with other human beings in the form of friendship and co-operation or other means, so that he is able to survive in the struggle in which every human being tries to use other men as his tools. Muṭahhari remarks that though Ṭabāṭabā'i has not said explicitly such a thing, his principle of employment leads to such a conception.<sup>1 1</sup>

Ṭabāṭabā'ī regards his principle of employment as the criterion of good and evil, right and wrong. Here two questions arise. One is whether man has a natural inclination towards evil, or in other words, is evil inherent in his nature? Muṭahhari answers that from Ṭabāṭabā'ī's viewpoint every individual has a natural tendency to attain his own desired ends, which makes him treat others as if they were his employees to serve his ends. This tendency not to treat other men as equals to one's own ends is in Ṭabāṭabā'ī's view nothing but evil.<sup>1 2</sup>

The other question is related to the possible identity of employment and the principle of the struggle for existence. Muṭahhari does not say that both are identical, but holds that as both of them lead to the same end, that is, an individual's growth (here, in the moral sense), they may be described as having a close affinity with each other.<sup>1 3</sup>

However, Muṭahhari does not totally reject Ṭabāṭabā'ī's views regarding man and morality. What he disagrees with is Ṭabāṭabā'ī's generalization of the principle of employment. Muṭahhari, while stating his own position, says that a distinction is to be made between inclination (natural tendency) and will. Animals act instinctively by natural inclination, while human beings act voluntarily. Muṭahhari makes a further distinction between two types of human acts by adding the element of will to man's instinctive acts; man can refrain from eating food or certain kinds of food willingly though he has an inclination to eat. Instinctive acts are passively done under the compulsion of nature; while performing these acts, man's reason is suspended. Therefore they are determined acts. On the contrary, voluntary acts are done under the guidance of reason. He, therefore, maintains that will is freedom. Man is free because he can act according to his will, and his acts are not deterministic like those of animals.

Muṭahhari makes another significant point regarding willed acts. He says that in his natural or impulsive behaviour man is under the control of the external world, while in willing he withdraws himself from the external world and internalizes his being to make a choice and a resolution. In willing, man re-collects his being together, while in acting impulsively his being is scattered. Regarding the question as to whether will is totally absent while acting impulsively, or it is only weak, Muṭahhari says that will is there, but it is weak. With the increase in impulse, will weakens proportionately. He criticizes Mullā Ṣadrā, Hādī Sabzawāri and Ibn Sinā for considering desire and will as one and the same thing. Though Ibn Sinā occasionally made some distinction between the two, his criterion of demarcation is ambiguous.

Now the question which arises is: How can ethical issues be demonstrated? How can we argue as to "What is good" and "What is bad"? 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī is of the view that these are undemonstrable, for non-factual matters cannot be proved either by deduction or

induction. We can only explain them on a linguistic basis, and that also would be relativistic with views differing from man to man. Moral values are not a factual or objective matter. We can prove rationally or empirically ideas or theories only concerning objective reality. On this basis he regards moral values as subjective and relativistic.

Practical philosophy is concerned with good and bad and these concepts are inferred from 'oughts' and 'ought nots'. These terms depend upon loving or desiring something or otherwise. In the matter of loving or liking, individuals differ from one another. Therefore, moral values, which depend upon loving or hating some objects, depend upon the individual's subjective experience. Hence they are both subjective and relative. Here it can be pointed out that 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i is close on the one hand to G.E. Moore, who regards values as indefinable, and is similar to Russell, on the other.

Bertrand Russell is of those thinkers who arrived at the same conclusion in his book *History of Western Philosophy*. He analyzes Plato's view regarding justice in the following words:

There are several points to be noted about Plato's definition. First, it makes it possible to have inequalities of power and privilege without justice. The guardians are to have all the powers, because they are the wisest members of the community; injustice would only occur, on Plato's definition, if there were men in the other classes who were wiser than some of the guardians. That is why Plato provides for promotion and degradation of citizen, although he thinks that the double advantage of birth and education will, in most cases, make the children of guardians superior to the children of others. If there were a more exact science of government, and more certainty of men following its precepts, there would be much to be said for Plato's system. No one thinks it unjust to put the best men into a football team, although they acquire thereby a great superiority.<sup>15</sup>

At another place Russell says:

The difference between Plato and Trasymachus is very important, but for the historian of philosophy it is one to be noted, not decided. Plato thinks he can *prove* that his idea of republic is good; a democrat who accepts the objectivity of ethics may think that he can *prove* the Republic bad; but anyone who agrees with Trasymachus will say: 'There is no question of proving or disproving; the only question is whether you *like* the kind of State that Plato desires. If you do, it is good for you; if you do not, it is bad for you. If many do and many do not, the decision cannot be made by reason, but only by force, actual or concealed.' This is one of the issues in philosophy that are still open; on each side there are men who command respect. But for a very long time the opinion that Plato advocated remained almost undisputed.<sup>16</sup>

There are two points on which Muṭahhari disagrees with 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i.<sup>17</sup>

(1) Muṭahhari holds that we cannot attribute value-oriented activity to all animate beings, as 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i does. Consciousness of value is confined to man, who possesses practical reason.

(2) Muṭahhari rejects the principle of employment as put forward by the 'Allāmah. His rejection of it is based on three arguments, which he elaborated in "*Akhlāq wa jāwīdānagī*." On the basis of these arguments he proved his idea of the universality and eternity of good and evil.

### The First Argument:

Man has certain motives which serve to fulfil his individual needs and demands. Human activity is also stimulated by another kind of motivation which is called by Muṭahhari species oriented motives. These are different from individual oriented motives which serve the interests of the individual only. They may be connected with one's mate and offspring. The species oriented motives are general and embrace the whole of humanity. These are not confined to a particular environment, situation or time period. Because of these motives, one can place the welfare and happiness of his fellow beings ahead of his own welfare. These motives may be described as humanitarian motives, due to which one is pained if he sees another man in pain. This kind of motive may be also defined as gregarious or social motivation. He commiserates with others, he rejoices at their joy and grieves at their grief. Muṭahhari says that if we accept the role of these species oriented motives, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i's view is refuted, for he believes that man's natural mental make-up acts in accordance with his natural and biological urges. Ṭabāṭabā'i considers his theory of employment to be applicable to all human beings as a general principle. According to Muṭahhari's view this principle conflicts with our accepted criteria of morality. It is generally held that egocentric or selfish motives and acts are morally inferior, or rather evil, as compared to altruistic motives and acts. Morality liberates man from the confines of his selfish interests and is, therefore, universally applicable to all cases, times and situations. Thus he affirms the principle of the universality and eternity of moral values. To the question "Why righteousness is good"?, the reply is: Because it fulfils the interests of all.<sup>18</sup>

### Second Argument:

While Muṭahhari based his first argument on the duality of motives, he bases his second argument in favour of the universality and eternity of morality on the duality of human self. This view is similar to that of some contemporary thinkers who hold that it is impossible to seek a

thing unless that thing is linked with one's own self. Whatever seems to be pleasant for the individual is ultimately accepted as good for the whole human species. Durkheim and some other sociologists argue on this basis that man has two selves: one is the individual self, while the other is the collective self. Man, from the biological point of view, is an individual, but from the social point of view he is a social being and has a social self also. Therefore, each man possesses two selves. Muṭahhari, with reference to Ṭabāṭabā'ī's writings, says that the latter also confirms this theory without being aware of sociological theories, and accepts that society has a real self, which is not relative. The sociologists also attribute a personality and self to society, which is real, objective, and independent of individual selves: It is not the sum total of the selves of its individual members, but something different from it. Every man is possessed of a social self alongwith his individual self.

Muṭahhari here refers to the mystical doctrine of a universal self. According to the Ṣufīs and other mystics, there is an underlying connection between human selves, of which man becomes aware when his self is purified. Sharing a universal self and realizing that through it all men are related to one another leads man to attain spiritual unity with the universal self.

Sociologists are of the view that society is constituted of individuals who have a common social or cultural self which is real. They say that sometimes man's acts are motivated by individual motives, while on other occasions his acts are prompted by social motives. The individual and social motives belong to the individual and the social self respectively. The former is natural and biological, while the latter is collective. It is here that from the duality of motives sociologists infer the notion of the duality of the self. Arguing from a sociological viewpoint Muṭahhari concludes that any act which stems from the social self is regarded as morally good and is determined by a universal and eternal value-system. Contrarily, any act that stems from the individual self is devoid of moral good. Hence morality cannot be relative, individual and changing. It is governed by values which are universally and eternally valid.<sup>19</sup>

### Third Argument:

Muṭahhari begins his third argument with the assertion that man does not do anything which is not related to the universe of his self. On this basis he refutes Ṭabāṭabā'ī's principle of employment, according to which human acts are imposed upon him by some other self. In elaboration of this argument he takes recourse to the traditional division of human existence into two selves, of which one is superior (spiritual) and the other is inferior (carnal). Man is also an animal, and his inferior



self is ruled by animal desires and motives. Morality consists in subordinating the animal self to the higher self. Whatsoever is done for the lower self is not moral. Moral acts have their origin in the higher self. Animal selves are subject to nature, while the higher self, which is universally shared by all men, is subject to a system of higher values. According to Muṭahhari the higher self is universal and the values to which it is subject are also universal and eternal. He wonders why Ṭabāṭabā'ī forgot to refer to this concept, though he was acquainted with it. He says that had he referred to it, he would have accepted that moral acts are those which are done for the satisfaction of the higher self. In that case he would have rejected the relativistic doctrine of morality as well as the principle of employment.

Furthering his argument, Muṭahhari says that he agrees with Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Russell and others that good and evil, 'oughts' and 'ought nots' are based upon man's love for certain ends and his dislike for other things. He asks, "But which self's love or hate is the criterion of good and evil?" and answers that if one says that it is the lower or animal self whose liking or disliking an object is the standard of morality, he is wrong, for he negates the very spirit of morality. The interests of the lower selves may differ from individual to individual, so on their basis there cannot be any universal and eternal moral value. But, on the other hand, if we believe that it is the higher self which is the basis of morality, we will have to concede that its values are universally and eternally valid.

Muṭahhari says at the end of his article "*Akhlāq wa jāwīdānagī*":

I would like to refer to an Islamic doctrine which is very significant for resolving the issue of morality, and is neglected by philosophers. That is, man has an innate nobility and excellency which may be defined as a spiritual faculty or a Divine spark. Every man unconsciously experiences it. While doing certain acts he contemplates whether they are compatible with his innate nobility or not. Whenever he finds an act compatible with it, he regards it as good and virtuous; if it is incompatible with it, it is regarded as a vice or evil. As animals know what is beneficial or harmful to them instinctively, the human self that has metaphysical virtues recognizes what is good and what is evil, what he ought to do and what he ought not.... Human beings are created alike so far as spiritual faculties and virtues are also alike, their views are also alike. Biologically and philosophically men may be different from each other, and under different conditions their physical needs may also differ. But so far as the ability to attain spiritual sublimation is concerned they are alike and necessarily have similar likes and dislikes as well as similar standards of good and evil. All moral virtues, whether individual or social, such as patience, can be explained from this view.<sup>20</sup>

Muṭahhari concludes that the above quoted principle can explain in a much better way the criteria of good and evil and social and individ-

ual virtues, as compared to all other moral theories discussed above. This principle also provides the most secure ground for believing in the eternity and universality of moral values.

NOTES:

1. 'Abd al-Karīm Surūsh, "Jāwidānegī wa Akhlāq" "*Yādnāmeḥ-ye Ustād-e Shahīd Murtadā Muṭahhari*", ed. 'Abd al-Karīm Surūsh, (Tehran, Sāzmān-e Intishārāt wa Āmūzish-e Inqilāb-e Islāmī, 1360 H. Shams.), vol. I, p.384.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 384.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 385.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 385.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 389.
6. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, (London, George Allen Enwin, 1984), p.133.
7. 'Abd al-Karīm Surūsh, *op. cit.* p. 392.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 392.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 393.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 398.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 400.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 402.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 402.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 407.
15. Bertrand Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
17. 'Abd al-Karīm Surūsh, *op. cit.*, p. 405.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 411.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 414.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 416.

# The Attributes of the Divine Being\*

by Sayyid Mujtabā Mūsawī Lārī

Translated from the Persian by Dr. Ḥamid Algar

## 1. How Does the Qur'ān Present God?

**W**hen we wish to assess the scientific personality and knowledge of a scholar, we examine his works and subject them to close study. Similarly, in order to measure the talent, creativity and ability of an artist to invent original images, we undertake the study of his artistic production.

In the same way, we can also perceive the attributes and characteristics of the pure essence of the Creator from the qualities and orderliness that pervade all phenomena, together with their subtlety and precision. Thereby, within the limits set by our capacity to know and perceive, we can become acquainted with God's knowledge, wisdom, life and power.

If it be a question of complete and comprehensive knowledge of God, then of course we must accept that man's ability to know does not extend that far. God's characteristics cannot be placed within given limits, and whatever comparison or simile we offer for them is bound to be false; for whatever is observable to science and thought in the natural realm is the work of God and the product of His will and command, whereas His essence is not part of nature and does not belong to the category of created beings. Hence the Essence of the Divine Being cannot be grasped by man by way of comparison and analogy.

He is, in short, a being for the knowledge of Whose essence no measure or criterion exists and for the fixing of Whose power, authority and knowledge, we have no figures or statistics.

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\*This is the second part of the first volume of the author's work in Persian *Mabānī-ye i'tiqādāt dar Islām* (The Foundations of Islamic Doctrines). Here he discusses the Divine Attributes of Omniscience and Omnipotence as well as other related issues.

Is man, then, too abject and powerless to perceive anything of the essence and attributes of so elevated a reality?

To concede the weakness of our powers and our inability to attain complete, profound and comprehensive knowledge of God does not imply that we are deprived of any form of knowledge, however relative. The orderly pattern of the universe loudly proclaims His attributes to us, and we can deduce the power and unlimited creativity of the Lord from the beauty and value of nature. Phenomena are for us an indication of His unique essence.

Contemplation of the will, consciousness, knowledge and harmony inherent in the order of being and all the various phenomena of life, makes it possible for us to perceive that all these qualities — together with all the other elements that speak of aim, direction and purpose — necessarily derive from the will of a Creator who Himself possesses these attributes before they are reflected in the mirror of creation.

That which comes to know God and to touch His being is the remarkable power of thought — a flash which deriving from that pre-eternal source shone on matter and bestowed on it the capacity of acquiring knowledge and advancing toward truth. It is within this great divine gift that the knowledge of God is manifested.

\* \* \*

Islam deals with the knowledge of God in a clear and novel way. The Qur'ān, the fundamental source for learning the world view of Islam, applies to this question the method of negation and affirmation.

First it negates, by means of convincing proofs and indications, the existence of false gods, because in approaching the transcendent doctrine of Unity it is necessary first to negate all forms of pseudo-divinity and the worship of other-than-God. This is the first important step on the path to Unity.

The Qur'ān says:

أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ ۗ إِلَهَةً قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ هَذَا ذِكْرٌ مِنْ مَعِيَ وَذِكْرٌ مِنْ قَبْلِي بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

*Have the ignorant polytheists abandoned the true God and chosen instead the false and powerless gods? Tell them: 'Bring forth your proof!' This call of mine to unity is my saying and that of all the learned men of the community, as well as the saying of all the prophets and learned men before me. But these polytheists have no knowledge of the truth and constantly avert themselves from it. (21:24)*

قُلْ اتَّعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾

*Say, O Messenger, 'You worship one other than God who has no power to help or to harm you. It is God Who is all-hearing and Who knows the state of all of creation.'* (5:76)

The one who has severed his connection with divine unity forgets, too, his own true position with respect to the world and being and becomes estranged from himself. For the ultimate form of self-alienation is the severing of all links with one's essential nature as man. Conversely, once man has become alienated from his own essence, under the influence of internal and external factors, he will also be separated from his God and become enslaved by other-than-God. Subordination to other-than-God then takes the place of all logical thought. This represents a reversion to the worship of phenomena, for worshipping an idol and according primacy to matter both are forms of regression that rob man of his innate capacity for growth.

Monotheism is the only force that makes it possible for man to recapture the creativity of human values. By regaining his true rank, he enters a state of harmony with his own human nature and the ultimate nature of all being, thus attaining the most perfect form of existence open to him.

Throughout history, all divine summons and movements have begun with the proclamation of divine unity and the exclusive lordship of God. No concept has ever occurred to man that is more productive of creative insights and more relevant to the various dimensions of human existence, or a more effective brake on human perversity, than the concept of divine unity.

Using clear proofs, the Qur'an shows man the way to attaining knowledge of the divine essence as follows:

﴿٣٥﴾ أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

*Did man emerge from non-being through his own devices? Was he his own creator? Did mankind create the heavens and earth? Certainly they do not know God. (52:35—36)*

The Qur'an leaves it to man's reason and commonsense to realize the falsity of these two hypotheses — that man came into being of himself, or that he was his own creator — by testing and analyzing them in the laboratory of his thought. By reflecting on the signs and indications of God he will come to recognize with clear and absolute certainty the true source of all being and to understand that no value can be posited for any model of the universe unless behind it an organizing and capable intellect is at work.

In other verses man's attention is drawn to the manner of his

creation and gradual emergence from non-being. He thus comes to realize that his remarkable creation, with all the wonders it contains, is a sign and indication of the infinite divine will the penetrating rays of which touch all beings.

The Qur'an says:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّنْ طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا  
النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ  
أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

*We created man out of an essence of clay, then We established him in a firm place in the form of sperm. Then We made the sperm into coagulated blood, and then into a formless lump of flesh. Then We made it into bones and then clothed the bones with flesh. Finally We brought forth a new creation. How well did God create, the best of all creators! (23:12-14)*

When the foetus is ready to receive shape and form, all the cells of the eyes, the ear, the brain, and the other organs, start to function and begin their ceaseless activity. This is the truth to which the Qur'an is directing men's attention. It then poses to man the question of whether all these wondrous changes are rationally compatible with the hypothesis that there is no God.

Is it not rather the case that phenomena such as these prove and demonstrate, with the utmost emphasis, the need for a plan, a design, a guiding hand inspired by conscious will? Is it at all possible that the cells of the body should learn their functions, pursue their aim in a precise and orderly fashion and crystallize so miraculously in the world of being, without there being a conscious and powerful being to instruct them?

The Qur'an answers this question as follows:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

*He it is Who creates and brings forth (the totality of parts), Who separates (the parts belonging to each organ), and Who gives form (to different aspects). (59:24)*

The Qur'an describes every sense phenomenon that man sees around him as something calling for reflection and the drawing of conclusions.

وَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧٣﴾ بِأَنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

وَأَخْتَلَفَ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالْفَلَكَ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِينَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

*Your God is but one God. There is no god other than Him, Compassionate and Merciful. In the creation of the heavens and the earth, in the alternation of night and day, in the ships that ply the seas to the benefit of man, in the water sent down from the heavens to revive the earth after its death, in the different species of animals scattered across the earth, in the rotation of the winds, in the clouds that are subordinate to God's command between heaven and earth — in all of this there are signs for men who use their intellects. (2:163–164)*

قُلْ أَنْظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُغْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

*Tell men to reflect with care and see what things the heavens and the earth contain. (10:101)*

The Qur'an also mentions the study of human history and the peoples of the past with all the changes they have undergone, as a special source of knowledge. It invites man to pay heed, in order to discover the truth, to the triumphs and defeats, the glories and humiliations, the fortune and misfortune, of various ancient peoples, so that by learning the orderly and precise laws of history he will be able to benefit himself and his society by aligning the history of his own age with those laws.

The Qur'an thus proclaims:

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

*Even before your time certain laws and norms were in force, so travel and examine the historical traces left by past peoples, to see what was the fate of those who denied the truths of revelation and the promises of God. (3:137)*

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنْشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا آخَرِينَ ﴿١١﴾

*How many were those powerful ones whom We destroyed in their cities on account of their oppression and wrongdoing, and We made another people to be their heirs. (21:11)*

The Qur'an also recognizes man's inner world, which it expresses by the word *anfus* ("souls"), as a source for fruitful reflection and the discovery of truth. It points out its importance as follows:

سُرِّيهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ  
أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

*We make Our signs and indications entirely manifest in the world and in the souls and inner beings of Our servants so that it should be clear that God is the Truth....(41: 53)*

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ ءَايَاتٌ لِّلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

*On the face of the earth there are signs for the possessors of certainty, and also in your own selves; will you not see?(51:20–21)*

In other words, there is an abundant source of knowledge in the beauty and symmetry of the human body, with all of its organs and capacities, its actions and reactions, its precise and subtle mechanisms, its varied energies and instincts, its perceptions, feelings and sensations, both animal and human, and most especially in the astounding capacity of thought and awareness with which man has been entrusted — a capacity which still remains largely unknown, for man has taken only a few steps in studying this invisible power and its relationship with his material body.

The Qur'an proclaims that it is sufficient to reflect on and examine your own self in order to be guided to the eternal, infinite source that is free of all need, has unlimited knowledge, skill and power, and a feeble reflection of which is manifest in your being. You will then know that it is that infinite reality which has thus brought together in one place so fruitful a compound of elements and brought it forth onto the plain of existence.

Given the existence of such vivid indications and decisive proofs, placed at your disposal and within your own being for you to seek the knowledge of God, no excuse will be accepted from you for misguidance and denial.

The Qur'an also applies the method of negation and affirmation to the question of God's attributes. Thus it describes the attributes that the essence of the Creator possesses as "affirmative attributes." Among them are knowledge, power, will, the fact that His existence was not preceded by nonexistence and that His being has no beginning, and the fact that all the motions of the world derive from His will and His power.

The Qur'an says:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عِلْمُهُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۖ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ  
الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ  
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾



*He is God, the One other than Whom there is no god, the knower of the hidden and the manifest, the Compassionate, the Merciful. He is God, the One other than Whom there is no god, the Commander, the All-powerful, Pure and Without Defect, the Bestower of Safety, the Protector, the Precious, the Mighty, the Sublime, the Most Elevated. Exempt and purified be He from the partners which they ascribe to Him.(59:22—23)*

The “negative attributes” are those from which God is free. They include the fact that God is not a body and has no place; His sacred being has no partner or like; He is not a prisoner to the limitations set up by the bounds of the senses; He neither begets nor is begotten; there is neither change nor motion within His essence, for He is absolute perfection; and He does not delegate the task of creation to anyone.

The Qur’ān says:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٣﴾  
لَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٥﴾

*O Messenger, say: ‘He is God the One, the God Who is free of need for all things and of Whom all beings stand in need. No one is His offspring, and He is not the offspring of anyone, and He has no like or parallel.(112:1—4)*

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

*Pure and exalted is thy Lord, God, the Powerful and Unique, Who is pure of what men in their ignorance ascribe to Him.(37:180)*

Human logic which inevitably thinks in terms of limited categories is incapable of sitting in judgement on divinity, because we must admit that it is impossible to perceive the ultimate ground of that Being for Whom no observable or comprehensible analogue or parallel exists in the world of creation. The most profound schools of thought and the greatest methods of reflection here fall prey to bewilderment.

Just as all existent beings must lead back to an essence with which existence is identical, to an independent being on which all other beings depend, so too they must derive from a source of life, power and knowledge, from the infinite being of which all these attributes and qualities surge forth in abundance.

## 2. The Conditions for an Ideal Object of Worship:

The Lord of the World, as presented in the Qur’ān, possesses all the necessary conditions of an ideal object of worship. He is the creator of love and all forms of beauty, the originator of all forms of power and energy. He is a vast ocean on the slightest ripple of whose surface the

swimmer of the intellect is tossed around like a plaything. It is He Who preserves the heavens from falling and the earth from collapsing. If for an instant He closes His eye of mercy or averts it from this world, the whole of the universe will perish and hurtle toward non-being in the form of dust. The existence and survival of every atom in the universe is therefore dependent on Him.

It is He Who bestows all bounties and all felicities, Who owns us and may freely dispose of us. When He commands and an order goes forth, as soon as He says "Be!" a creature comes into being.

Truth and reality derive their substance from His essence, and freedom, justice, and other virtues and perfections derive from the rays of His attributes. To take flight towards Him, seeking to draw near to His glorious threshold, is to attain all conceivable desire at the highest degree. Whoever gives his heart to God gains an affectionate companion and a loving friend; the one who relies upon Him has placed his hope on a firm foundation, while the one who attaches his heart to other-than-God is a prey to illusion and builds a foundation on wind.

He Who is aware of the slightest motion that takes place anywhere in creation can also determine for us a path leading to happiness and lay down a way of life and a system of human relations that conforms to the norms He has established in the order of creation. He is, after all, aware of our true interests, and it is even His right alone to lay down a path for us, as the logical outcome and natural consequence of His divinity. To act in accordance with the programme He lays down is the only certain guarantee for our ascent toward Him.

How is it possible that man should be so enamoured of truth and justice that he is ready to sacrifice his life for their sake, unless he is aware of their source and origin?

If a being is worthy of worship, it cannot be anyone other than the Creator Who is the axis of all being. No thing and no person has such a rank as to deserve the praise and service of man. All values other than God lack absoluteness and primacy and do not subsist in and of themselves; they are relative and serve only as a means for the attainment of degrees higher than themselves.

The primary qualities that elicit man's worship are being the bestower of all bounties and being aware of all the possibilities, needs, capacities and energies contained in man's body and soul. These qualities belong exclusively to God; all beings stand in need of and rely upon that being Who is existent by virtue of His own essence. The caravan of existence is constantly moving toward Him by means of His aid, and His commands descend unceasingly on every speck in the universe.

Absolute submission and worship belong then exclusively to His most Sacred Essence. His glorious presence, uninterrupted by a single moment of absence, is felt at the heart of each atom of being. All things

other than God resemble us in that impotence and deficiency prevail over them. They are therefore unworthy of our submission and are not worthy of usurping sovereignty over any part of God's realm, which is the whole broad plain of existence. Man too is too noble and valuable a being to be subjected and humbled by anything other than God.

In the whole broad plain of being it is God alone Who deserves man's praise. Man must grant to his love of God, and to his efforts to draw near to Him and earn His pleasure, precedence over all other beings and objects of love. This will result in the ennobling of man and the augmenting of his value, for man is but a small drop and if not united with the ocean he will be swept away by the storm of corruption, dried up by the burning sun of chaos. Man gains his true personality and becomes eternal when he attaches himself to that effulgent source, when God gives meaning to his world and becomes the interpreter of all the events of his life. It is in this sense that men's worlds may be either broad and expansive or narrow and constricting.

The Commander of the Faithful 'Ali — peace be upon him — says in discussing the weaknesses of man and his limited capacities:

How strange and remarkable is the affair of man! If he becomes hopeful with regard to a certain desire, greed will render him abject; desire will lead to greed, and greed will destroy him. If he falls prey to hopelessness, grief and sorrow will kill him. If he attains happiness and good fortune, he will fail to preserve them. If he falls prey to terror and fear, they will reduce him to utter confusion. If abundant safety is granted him, he will become negligent. If his blessings are restored to him, he will become arrogant and rebellious. If he is stricken with misfortune, sorrow and grief will disgrace him. If he acquires wealth, he will become overweening. If poverty lays hold of him, he will be plunged in misery. If he is weakened by hunger, he will be unable to rise from the ground. If he eats to excess, the pressure of his stomach will discomfort him. So all deficiency in the life of man is harmful, and all excess leads to corruption and ruin.<sup>1</sup>

Generally speaking, justice, nobility, virtue and other qualities that earn respect and praise, these values must either be illusionary and imaginary or we must consider them as real and necessary based on the perceptions of conscience and instinct. In the latter case we ought humbly to submit to that universal existence and absolute perfection which flows over with virtue, life and power, and from which all values derive.

\* \* \*

When we look into the matter carefully, we see that all the countless beings that exist in the world, as well as the love and aspirations that are rooted in the depths of our being, all converge at one point, all revert to one source — God. The very essence and reality of the world is

identical with its connection, relation and attachment to God. Being reascends by a different route to the point where it began and from which it descended, and that point alone is worthy of man's love and devotion. Once man discovers this point, he becomes so enamoured of its absolute beauty and perfection that he forgets all else.

We see that all phenomena have emerged from non-being into a state of being, and that throughout the period of their existence, whether short or long, they are dependent on a source external to themselves for aid and sustenance; they are marked indelibly with subordination and lack of autonomy.

If the ideal object of worship we seek and toward which we are attempting to advance were unaware of the pains we suffer and the nature of the world; if it were unable to satisfy our desires and longings, being replete with impotence and deficiency just like ourselves and belonging to the same category as us — it could not possibly be our final aim and ultimate object or possess absolute value.

When we seek the fulfilment of a wish by means of our worship, it is God alone Who can respond by meeting our needs.

The Qur'ān says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ فَأَدْعُوهُمْ فَلَيْسَ تَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ

كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

*Those whom you call upon other than God are servants like yourselves (i.e., they have no powers of themselves). (7:194)*

The Commander of the Faithful — upon whom be peace — said while supplicating his Lord in the mosque of Kūfah:

O my Master, O my Master! You are God the great and I am Your wretched and insignificant slave. Who can show mercy to His insignificant slave but God the Great? O Master of mine, O Master of mine! You are strong and powerful, I am weak and impotent; other than one strong and powerful who can show mercy to the weak?

O Master of mine, O Master of mine! You it is Who bestows generosity on the beggar, and I stand as a beggar at Your threshold. Who will show mercy to the beggar other than the generous and the munificent one?

O Master of mine, O Master of mine! You are eternal existence and I am a creature destined to perish. Who will have mercy on one destined to perish other than the eternal, everlasting essence?

O Master of mine, O Master of mine! You are the guide Who points out the way, and I am lost and bewildered. Who will take pity on the lost and bewildered if not the guide who points out the way?

O Master of mine, O Master of mine! Have mercy upon me by Your infinite mercy; accept and be satisfied with me in Your generosity, favour and kind-

ness, O God, possessor of generosity, favour and kindness, and in Your all-embracing mercy, O most merciful of the merciful!<sup>2</sup>

Thus to show reverence to other-than-God, to orient oneself to other than His pure essence, is in no way justifiable; apart from God, nothing can have the slightest effect on our true destiny. If an object of worship deserves man's devotion and love and is capable of lifting him to the peaks of felicity, that object of worship must be free of all deficiency and inadequacy. Its eternal rays must touch all creatures with sustenance and life, and its beauty must cause every possessor of insight to kneel down in front of it. Possessing infinite power, it quenches the burning thirst of our spirits, and gaining knowledge of it is nothing other than attaining the ultimate source of our true nature.

If we choose an object of love and worship other than God, it may have certain capacities and be able to fulfil our desires up to a point, but once we reach that point it will no longer be an object of love and worship for us. It will no longer be able to arouse and attract us; it will, on the contrary, cause us to stagnate. For not only will it not satisfy our instinctive desire to worship, it will prevent us from reflecting on any higher value and imprison us in a narrow circle, in such a way that we no longer have any motive to advance or ascend.

If the object we choose to worship and love be inferior to us, it can never cause us to ascend and refine our beings. Our inclination to it will, on the contrary, drag us down to decline, and we will then be like the needle of a compass which is diverted from the pole under the influence of a completely alien magnetic field. The result will be total loss of direction; eternal misery will become man's inevitable destiny.

#### *Worship, Man's Loftiest Expression of Gratitude:*

An object of worship can give direction to man's motion and light up his darkness with its brightness when it is able to give him ideals, is endowed with a positive and elevated existence, is the cause of effects, and is the very essence of stability and permanence. Then the object of worship produces inner effects in man and guides him in his thought and his actions. It facilitates for the essence of man, that part of him nurtured by the divine wisdom, its search for perfection.

Any effort or motion on the part of man to choose a false direction for himself, to take the wrong path in life, will result in his alienation from himself, his loss of all content, and the distortion of his personality. Man cannot possibly come to know himself correctly if he has separated himself from his Creator. To forget God means to forget oneself, to be oblivious to the universal purposes of human life and the world that surrounds one, and to be unable to reflect on any form

of higher values.

Just as attachment to other-than-God alienates man from himself and transforms him into a kind of moving biological machine, so too does reliance on God and supplication at His threshold draw mono-dimensional man, lacking all spiritual life, up from the oceanic depths of neglect, revive him and restore him to himself.

Through worshipping God, the spiritual capacities and celestial forces in man are nourished. Man comes to understand the lowliness of his worthless material hopes and desires and to see the deficiencies and weaknesses within his own being. In short, he comes to see himself as he is.

To be aware of God and take flight toward the invisible source of all being illumines and vivifies the heart. It is utterly pleasurable, a pleasure that cannot be compared to the pleasures of the three-dimensional material world. It is through orienting oneself to that abstract, nonmaterial reality that thoughts become lofty and values transformed.

The Commander of the Faithful 'Alī — peace be upon him — discusses the wonderful effect of awareness of God on men's hearts as follows:

The Almighty Creator has made awareness of Him the means for purifying the heart. It is through the awareness of God that deaf hearts begin to hear, blind hearts begin to see, and rebellious hearts become soft and tractable.

He says too:

O Lord! You are the best companion for those who love You and the best source of remedy for all who place reliance upon You. You observe them in their inner states and outer doings and are aware of the depths of their hearts.

You know the extent of their insight and knowledge, and their secrets are manifest to You. Their hearts tremble in separation from You, and if solitude causes them fear and unease, the awareness of You comforts them, and if hardship and difficulty assail them, You alone are their refuge.<sup>4</sup>

Al-'Imām al-Sajjād — upon whom be peace — that paragon of purity and justice who had an unbreakable bond with his Lord, demonstrates to us in his supplicatory prayers the highest expression of love. This was a sacred love that had enflamed all of his being, and although his spirit was sorely pressed by the mortal sorrow of separation, the powerful wing of love enabled him to soar up into the limitless heavens. With indescribable sincerity and humility he thus prayed at the threshold of God the Eternal:

O Lord! I have migrated to Your forgiveness and set out to Your mercy. I ardently desire Your pardon and rely on Your generosity, for there is naught in my conduct to make me worthy of forgiveness, and Your kindness is my only hope.

O God, send me forth on the best path and grant that I die as a believer in Your religion and be resurrected as a believer in Your religion.

O Lord Whom I worship! O You Whose aid the sinners supplicate through Your mercy! O You in the remembrance of Whose generosity the wretched seek refuge! O You in fear of Whom the wrongdoers bitterly weep!

O Source of tranquillity for the heart of those banished in fear from their homes!

O consoler of those who sorrow with broken hearts! O succourer of the lonely, helper of the rejected and needy! I am that servant who responded obediently when You commanded men to call on You.

O Lord! Here I am prostrate in the dust at Your threshold. O God, if You show mercy to whomever calls upon You in supplication, then let me be earnest in my supplications, or if You forgive whomever weeps in Your presence, then let me hasten to weep.

O God, do not make hopeless the one who finds no giver but You; do not thrust me away with the hand of rejection now that I stand here at Your threshold.<sup>5</sup>

Anyone who wishes to understand the profound meaning of supplication must realize that rational explanation and logical deduction are incapable of yielding a deep understanding of questions touching on spiritual illumination.

The Noble Qur'an describes the conduct and way of life of the unbelievers and materialists as follows:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَلُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيَعِهِ يَتَّخِذُونَ مَاءَهُ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا  
وَوَجَدَ اللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ فُوفًا هَائِلًا حِسَابُهُ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾

*The deeds of those who are unbelievers are like a mirage in a flat and waterless desert. A thirsty man will imagine it to be water and hasten toward it, but when he reaches it he will find no water....(24:39)*

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُم بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبْسِطٍ كَفْتِهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ  
وَمَا هُوَ بِيَبْلُغُهُ وَمَا دَعَا الْكٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلٰلٍ ﴿١٤﴾

*God and His Messengers summon mankind to the truth; other than God all claims are baseless and vain, for they are unable to meet any of man's needs. One who relies upon them will be like the one who dipped his hand in a well to drink from it but found his hand could not reach the water. The unbelievers summon men only to misguidance.(13:14)*

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ أَخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنَكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بِئْتًا وَإِنَّ

أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَيْتَ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

*The dwelling of those who choose other than God as friends and protectors is like the dwelling of the spider; were the spider to know, the weakest of dwellings is his. (29:41)*

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ  
مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿١٨﴾

*The deeds of those who disbelieve in God are like ashes that are swept away by a strong wind; they have no benefit from all their strivings. This is the path of misguidance, utterly distinct from the path of salvation. (14:18)*

The loftiest expression of thankfulness that man can make at the threshold of his true object of worship is supplication, the profession of love for His absolute perfection and devotion to it. This he does in harmony with all of creation, because all beings praise and glorify God.

The Qur'an says:

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ ۚ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ  
تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴿٤١﴾

*The seven heavens and the earth and all they contain praise God. There is no creature not engaged in the praise and magnification of its Lord, but you do not understand their praise. God Almighty is forebearing and most forgiving. (17:44)*

This worship and praise naturally do not bring God the slightest benefit, for He possesses all perfections to an infinite degree and neither the world nor man can add anything to Him or take anything away from Him. Is it at all conceivable that He would create man in order to benefit from his worship and praise? On the contrary it is man who by gaining knowledge of the Supreme Being and worshipping Him in His sublimity reaches his ultimate aim and true perfection.

Professor Rowaya, celebrated philosopher and physicist, has the following to say about consciousness in the universe:

The new cosmology says that atoms and molecules know what they are doing; in the normal sense of the word, they have awareness of the tasks they perform and of the course of their lives. This consciousness of theirs is superior to the knowledge of the physicist, because all the physicist knows of an atom is that if it were not tangible and recognizable no one would know anything about it.

Bodies, motion, speed, the concepts of here and there, radiation, equilibrium, space, atmosphere, distance, together with many other things — all came into



existence thanks to the atom. If the atom were not to exist, what would be the origin of all the remarkable phenomena of creation? There exists the same affinity between consciousness and body as there does between motion and motionlessness, or the positive and negative aspects of motion.

Now space, taken as a whole, is not blind. We demonstrated, if you remember, when examining the field of vision, that the eye is not the basic and determining factor. Since it is fixed at a given point on the globe, according to the limited circumstances of the human species and other terrestrial beings, it has a certain narrow physical field within which it operates. But as for the space between the earth and the sun, between the sun and the galaxies, and between the galaxies and remote gigantic planets, where huge forces with tremendous range are engaged in exchanging energy — there an organ such as the eye of terrestrial creatures has no opportunity to show itself or demonstrate its effectiveness.

But precisely for this reason we cannot believe that lack of consciousness and awareness prevail in that field of the exchange of vast energies and forces ruled by the laws of attraction, equilibrium, motion, light and centrifugal force. Blindness does not exist in these wondrous phenomena, and even particles of light cannot be regarded as something akin to the illiterate mailman whose only job is to deliver messages he cannot read.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. The Incomparability of the Divine Attributes:

In our efforts to describe the Creator and gain knowledge of His attributes we ideally need concepts and expressions that are beyond our reach. Those terms we do employ are unable to help us in reaching our goal, a true description of God, for our limited understandings cannot accommodate a perception of the nature of God's infinite attributes. He is exalted above all concepts coined and fashioned by the human mind.

Man who is created and limited in every respect should not expect to be able to assess and describe a non-material being by means of material attributes and characteristics.

A reality that is other than contingent beings and natural beings, whose absolute power and infinite knowledge encompass all things, who in the words of the Qur'ān "has no similarity to finite and deficient created beings" (42:11) — such a reality naturally cannot be discussed in the same breath as ordinary topics.

'Alī, the Master of the God-fearing — upon whom be peace — said:

Whoever compares and assimilates God to something or refers to His sacred essence has not, in reality, had Him in view. Whatever man knows to be the ground of His essence must necessarily be created. God is the Creator and maker. Whatever depends on other than itself is caused and created. It is God alone who is only a cause (and not an effect).

He undertakes creation without any means or instruments. He measures without having recourse to thought and reflection. He is free of all need and derives no profit from anything. Time and place do not accompany Him, tools

and instruments do not aid Him. His existence precedes all time and His pre-eternity precedes all beginning.

He is not limited by any limit, for it is phenomena that delimit their essence by means of the limits peculiar to them and it is bodies that indicate their likes. His sacred essence does not admit the concepts of motion and motionlessness; how is it possible that something created within phenomena should also exist in His being?

Were there to be motion and stillness in His essence He would be exposed to mutation and change; He would be divisible and the pre-eternity of His being would be negated.

He is the source of all powers, and hence no being can have any effect upon Him. Finally, He is the Creator Who does not change or disappear and Who is never hidden from the people of knowledge and insight.<sup>7</sup>

The fact that God's attributes are utterly separate from ours and cannot be examined through a comparison with our attributes is because the attributes of that fountainhead of being are different from the attributes of all other beings.

For example, we have the ability to perform certain tasks, but this is not the same as the power of God; in our case, the attribute is one thing and the entity it describes is another. When we boast of our knowledge, we are not one and identical with our knowledge. During infancy there was no trace of learning or knowledge in our beings, but later we gradually acquired a certain amount of knowledge by learning. Knowledge and power form two distinct corners of our being; they are neither identical with our essence nor are they united with each other in our being. The attributes are accidents and our essence is a substance; each is independent of the other.

But the case of the divine attributes is fundamentally different. When we say that God is all-knowing and all-powerful, what we mean is that He is the source of knowledge and power: the attribute is not something other than the entity it describes although it is conceptually distinct. In reality His attributes are identical with His essence; for His essence does not constitute a substance to which accidents might adhere. He is absolute being, identical with knowledge, power, life, stability and realization; He is not subject to any mental or external limit or restriction.

Since we are nurtured in the very heart of nature and are therefore familiar with it at all times, and since whatever we see has particular dimensions and shape, a time and a place, and all the other properties of bodies — in short, because of the habituation of our mind to natural phenomena — we try to measure all things with the criteria of nature, even intellectual and rational concepts. The criteria of nature thus serve as the point of departure for all scientific and philosophical investigations.

To imagine a being who has none of the properties of matter and

who is other than whatever our minds might conceive, and to understand attributes that are inseparable from the essence, not only requires great precision but also demands of us that we completely empty our mind of material beings.

'Ali, the leader of Islam — peace be upon him — has spoken eloquently, profoundly and meaningfully on this matter. He emphasizes that men cannot imprison God in a description, saying:

Pure monotheism and perfect faith lie in exempting, negating and excluding from His sacred essence all the attributes of created beings. God forbid that He should be described by any such attribute, because when He is so described it appears as if each attribute is separate from its possessor and alien to it. So one who says something in description of the Creator imagining Him to possess some attribute superadded to the essence has made Him the partner of something and suggested He consists of two parts. Such an attempt to describe God arises from ignorance and lack of awareness.<sup>8</sup>

Mental concepts cannot describe God by recourse to finite attributes; being limited, they are inapplicable to God's being. Each attribute, with respect to the particular meaning it conveys, is separate from all other attributes. For example, the attribute of life is quite different from the attribute of power; they are not interchangeable. It is possible that certain instances might gather all these attributes together in a single location, but each of them lexically has a different purport.

When the human mind wishes to ascribe an attribute to a certain thing, its aim is to establish in a given instance a kind of unity between the attribute and the entity it describes. But since the attribute is conceptually distinct from that entity, the mind inevitably decrees that they remain separate from each other. The only means for the knowledge of things is to describe them through the use of mental concepts, which are conceptually separate from each other and therefore necessarily finite. Those concepts cannot therefore be used to gain knowledge of that Most Transcendent Reality. He is exalted above the possibility of being known by description, and whoever limits God with a given attribute has failed to gain any knowledge of Him.

By mentioning a few examples we can understand to some degree how the attributes are not superadded to the essence. Take into consideration that the rays of heat proceeding from fire convey heat to everything, so one of the qualities and attributes of fire is burning and the distribution of heat.

Has this quality occupied one corner of the fire's being? Of course not; the entire being of fire has the attribute of burning and the distribution of heat.

Al-'Imām Ja'far al-Şādiq — upon whom be peace — said in answer to someone who was questioning him about the nature of God:

He is something utterly other than all things; He alone is identical with the very essence of being. He is not a body and has no form. The senses cannot perceive Him and He cannot be sought out. He escapes the grasp of the five senses; fantasy and imagination are unable to perceive Him. The passage of time and the succession of ages in no wise diminish Him and He is exempt from all mutation and change.<sup>9</sup>

### *The Unity of God:*

When the question of divine unity is raised in religious discourse, it is taken to include many topics including belief in the oneness of essence of the Creator, His oneness in creating the world, ruling over it and ordering it, and His oneness in receiving worship and praise.

Just as multiplicity is inconceivable with respect to oneness of the essence, so too the compounding of the attributes and the distinction between essence and attributes is totally excluded with respect to unity of the attributes. Distinctness and differentiation derive from limitation. If we posit a difference among the divine attributes, it is valid only from the point of view of our rational thought and reflection; a multiplicity of aspects and of superadded attributes cannot affect the divine essence as such.

If in the world of nature we look at a body through different coloured pieces of glass, that body will appear to us in a succession of different colours. Similarly, when we contemplate the unique divine essence with our reason, we sometimes ascribe knowledge to that infinite being with regard to the fact that all creatures are at all times present before Him; we then say that He is all-knowing. At other times we are aware of His ability to create all things, and we then speak of His being all-powerful.

So when we perceive through these various apertures the different attributes which appear to resemble the properties of our limited beings, we attempt to separate them from His infinite essence. Objectively, however, all the concepts conveyed by the different attributes have a single existence and convey a single reality, a reality that is free of all defect and deficiency, that possesses all perfections such as power, mercy, knowledge, blessedness, wisdom and splendour.

‘Alī, the Commander of the Faithful — upon whom be peace — says in the first sermon of the *Nahj al-balāghah*:

The beginning of religion is the knowledge of the pure divine essence, and the perfection of such knowledge lies in faith in that sacred being. Perfect belief in turn lies in sincere devotion at His threshold, and perfect devotion is none other than the dissociation of that Unique Principle from all the attributes of contingent beings.

Beware, for He cannot be described with any attribute, for then difference

would appear between the name and the attribute . Whoever attempts to describe Him with an attribute is in effect creating a like and a partner for Him, or rather he is seeing God to be two. Whoever sees God to be two is attempting to divide His being. Such a person lacks all knowledge and insight into the nature of God's unique being and is blind and ignorant.

The one who is thus deprived of vision will attempt to point to God (i.e., restrict Him to a given time and place), and whoever does this posits imprisoning limits for the Creator of all being and makes Him finite. Whoever limits and restricts Him in this way regards Him as a measurable quantity. Whoever says: 'Where is God?' unintentionally makes of Him a body enclosed within another body, and whoever asks 'In what is God engaged?' unintentionally states that certain places are empty of His being.

So each attribute is infinite and coextensive with the infinitude of the essence. God is free of and exempt from finite attributes that might be distinct from each other and separate from the essence.

Once we realize that God's being derives from Himself, it follows that an absolute being is infinite in all respects. If being and non-being are equally conceivable for an entity, it must acquire being from some external cause to come into being: self-origination is after all impossible. It is then only absolute being that derives from itself; all other realities are subordinate to it and knowable only by means of it. Once an essence is identical with its own existence, it is infinite with respect to knowledge, power, non-origination and everlastingness, for all of these are forms of being, and an essence that is identical with existence must necessarily possess all these perfections to an infinite degree.

\* \* \*

The oneness of God is one of His foremost attributes. All the heavenly religions, in their original and undistorted teachings, have summoned mankind to a pure affirmation of God's unity, untainted by the ascription of partners to Him. Such ascription of partners, in all its forms and dimensions, is the most harmful error to which man is liable.

It has occurred throughout history as a result of ignorance, unawareness, and turning away from the guidance of reason and the teaching of the prophets.

If men believed in God according to correct thought, the proofs of reason and the guidance of the prophets, it would be impossible for them to accept any contingent phenomenon or created thing in His place, and to imagine that any other being might be His partner or equal in commanding and controlling the destinies of the world, or even have some share in administering the order of the universe.

If numerous gods ruled over the world and each of these gods acted and gave commands in accordance with his own will, the order of the

universe would dissolve into anarchy.

The Qur'ān says:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

*If there were numerous gods other than the one true God, the order of the heavens and the earth would collapse. So exalted be the Lord of the Throne above what they say concerning Him. (21:22)*

If we say that God is one, it is because He is not a body. A body is a compound of a series of different elements the union of which causes it to come into being. Compounding, division and generation are all attributes of contingent beings and bodies; we therefore negate them in the case of God and assert that whatever has come into existence as a result of compounding and generation neither is God nor resembles Him.

It is feasible to conceive of plurality within a given category once we speak of limitations such as quantity, quality and time. God, however, is not limited by any of these, and it is therefore impossible to conceive of Him having any like or congener.

If we try to imagine the essence of water, without any limiting attribute, and repeat this exercise several times, nothing will be added to our original conception. Because in the beginning we conceived of water in an absolute sense, not limited by any condition, quantity or quality, it is impossible that in our subsequent attempts to conceive of it a new hypothesis should occur to us.

But when we add to the essence of water certain limiting attributes which are extrinsic to it, different forms and instances of water will appear and with them, plurality. Examples of this would be rainwater, springwater, riverwater, seawater, all of these observed at different times and in different places, here and there. If we eliminate all these limiting attributes and look again at the fundamental essence of water, we will see that it is exempt from all duality and is a single essence.

We must be aware that any being which can be contained in a certain place necessarily has need of that place, and any being that be contained in a certain time owes its very existence to the defining conditions of that time: its existence will be realized only within the specific temporal framework where those conditions obtain.

So when we come to know a being that is present at all times and in all places and who possesses the highest conceivable degree of perfection, and other than whom nothing is perfect or absolute and free from defect, we must recognize that to impute duality to such a lofty reality is to make it finite and limited.

Indeed, God is not one in a numerical sense so that we might

imagine Him to be the first member of a category that is followed by a second. His oneness is such that if we imagine a second to exist with Him, that second must be identical with the first.

Since the multiplicity of things derives from the limiting circumstances that differentiate them from each other, it would be totally irrational to posit a second for a being that is free of all limits and bounds. The existence of a second would mean that the first had limits and bounds, and if limits and bounds are excluded we cannot possibly have two beings; our conception of the second will simply be a repetition of the first.

The doctrine of divine unity means that if we consider God alone, to the exclusion of all phenomenal being, His sacred essence is completely affirmed. Likewise, if we regard His being together with phenomenal being, again His existence will be completely affirmed. But if on the contrary we look at contingent phenomena to the exclusion of God, they cannot in any way be said to be existent, because their existence is dependent on the Creator for its origination and perpetuation.

So whenever we ascribe some limit and condition to God, it means that God will cease to exist whenever that limit and condition cease to exist. However, God's existence is not subject to condition and plurality, and reason cannot therefore posit a second member of His category.

Let us give an illustration. Suppose that the world is infinite — it has no bounds and in whatever direction we travel we never come to its end. With such a concept of the world of bodies, all of its dimensions being infinite, can we imagine another world to exist in addition to it, whether finite or infinite? Certainly we cannot, because the concept of an infinite world of bodies necessarily excludes the existence of another such world. If we try to conceive of another such world, it will be either identical with the first world or a segment of it.

So considering that the divine essence is absolute being, to posit the existence of a second being resembling Him is exactly the same as imagining a second world of bodies to co-exist with an infinite world of bodies. In other words, it is impossible.

It is thus clear that the meaning of God's being one is not that He is not two; it is that a second is inconceivable and that the exclusive possession of divinity is necessitated by His essence. He becomes distinct from other than Himself not by means of any limit but by means of His essence itself which can clearly be distinguished from all else. All other beings, by contrast, attain their distinctiveness not from their essence but rather from God.

\* \* \*

We see clearly that extensive interrelatedness and harmony exist among all the components of the world. Man produces a carbonic gas

that enables plants to breathe, and trees and plants reciprocally produce oxygen that enables man to breathe. As a result of this interchange between man and plants a certain amount of oxygen is preserved at all times; were it not to be so, no trace of human life would remain on earth.

The amount of heat received by the earth from the sun corresponds to the need of living beings for heat. The speed of the earth's rotation around the sun and the distance it keeps from that source of energy and heat have been fixed at a level that makes human life on earth possible. The distance of the earth from the sun determines a degree of heat that exactly corresponds to the needs of life upon earth.

Were the speed of the earth's rotation to be a hundred miles an hour instead of a thousand miles an hour, as it now is, our nights and days would be ten times as long, and the intensity of the sun's heat would rise to the point that all plant life would be burnt and the cold nights of winter would freeze all fresh shoots in the ground.

If, on the one hand, the rays of the sun were to be reduced by half, all living beings would be frozen in place by the extreme cold. If, on the other hand, they were to be doubled, the sperm of life would never come to fruition.

If the moon were farther away from the earth, the tides would become strong and fierce enough to uproot the mountains.

Seen in this light, the world appears to be a caravan in which all the travellers are joined together like links in a chain. All of its parts, big and small, are striving cooperatively to advance in a single direction. Throughout this organism, everything fulfils its particular function and all things aid and complement each other. A profound and invisible link joins every single atom to all other atoms.

A world that is thus replete with unity must necessarily be connected to a single source and principle. Being derives from a single origin; if the entirety of the universe is one, its creator must also be one. The fact that the Creator has brought forth unity within the multiplicity of the created world is in itself a convincing proof of His oneness, power and wisdom.

The Qur'an says:

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ شُرَكَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي  
السَّمَوَاتِ أَمْ آتَيْنَهُمْ كِتَابًا فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْهُ بَلْ إِنَّ بَعْدَ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَغْوَرًا ﴿٤١﴾  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْ تَزُولَا وَلَئِنْ زَالَتَا إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا  
غَفُورًا ﴿٤٢﴾

*Ask them, 'Show me these partners whom you worship in place of God. Have they created anything from earth or have they shared with God in the crea-*



*tion of the heavens?' Have We given them a Book, on which they rely in their ascription of partners to Us? No, the wrongdoers deceive each other with their false promises. Certainly it is God Who preserves the heavens and the earth from collapse and annihilation; were they about to collapse and be annihilated, there is none other who could preserve them. Know that God is most forbearing and forgiving. (35:40—41)*

Our innate nature, which is a fundamental dimension of our existence, also confirms the oneness of God. In severe crises and times of hardship our desires are all focused on one point; we turn in one direction and entrust our hearts to Him.

One of the pupils of al-'Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq — upon whom be peace — asked him, "What proof is there for the oneness of God?"

The Imam answered him: "The proof of His oneness is the inter-relatedness and continuity of all creation, the integral order of being that rules over all things. God says in the Qur'an: 'Were there a creator in the heavens and earth other than the One God, their order would vanish and the world would be destroyed.'"<sup>10</sup>

So the regularity and comprehensiveness of the order that rules over all things refute the theory that there might be several gods, ruling the same or different spheres.

\* \* \*

Although the Qur'an stresses the unity of God in creation and wisdom, it also mentions the role of the causes and means that implement divine command. It says:

وَاللَّهُ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

*God sent down water from the heavens and revived the earth thereby after its death. In that is a clear sign for men who pay heed. (16:65)*

Once we reach the conclusion that God alone is engaged in creating, ordering and managing the entire universe, and that all sources of effect and causality are subordinate to His will and command, each having its particular role assigned to it by God — once we reach this conclusion how can we imagine any other being to be on the same level as God and bow down in worship before it?

The Qur'an says:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ ...

*Some men regard other beings as equivalent to God and love them as if they*

*were God, but the believers devote all of their love to God.(2:165)*

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ لَا تَسْجُدُوا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ  
وَأَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

*Among His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Do not bow down and prostrate yourselves before the sun and the moon. Instead prostrate yourselves humbly before the God that created them.(41:37)*

#### 4. The Infinite Power of God:

The infinite power of God has no clearer proof than that furnished by the study and examination of the phenomena of the created universe and the multiple forms and colourations of nature that can never be fully described.

When we look at God's creation we find ourselves confronted with so vast an energy that no limit can be imagined for it. A look at creation and the millions of truths secreted in the wonders of nature and the depths of man's own being provides the clearest indication of the scale of the power of the One Who has created it, for the rich and complex order of being admits of no other explanation.

It is God's incomparable power that compels man to bow humbly before the Creator of this great scheme. There is no word to express the dimensions of His power; that unique essence has such power that whenever He wills a thing to come into existence it suffices for the command "Be!" to issue forth from Him and the object addressed will be.

The Qur'an says:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٨٢﴾

*When He wills a certain thing, He commands it 'Be!' and it is.(36:82)*

The law expounded in this verse is the best indicator of His limitless power and manifestation of His boundless power and splendour. It negates any limit that might be set on God's power and proclaims the inadequacy of all criteria and measures when confronted with this divine law.

The champions of the natural sciences, the men of the laboratory, despite all the advances they have achieved, have not yet gained complete knowledge of the inner secrets of a single one among the numerous and varied beings of the created universe. Nonetheless, the partial and defective knowledge that man has acquired concerning a few of the beings that exist in this world is enough for him to realize with all his

being that the great power that has created such variety and abundance in the universe must be infinite. Consider the range of His creation: tiny creatures and monstrous beasts with strange appearances, both dwelling in the depths of the ocean; delicate and melodious birds with multicoloured wings, the beauty of which skilled artists imitate as an adornment to their craft; stars that shine in the heavens and the sun that rises and sets; the dawn and the moonlight; the planets, galaxies and nebulae, each of which sometimes contains at its heart millions of great shining stars giddy in their apparent infinitude.

Does not a creation such as this, awe-inspiring in its splendour, indicate the infinite power of its Maker? Can one disregard the power of a Creator Who imparts such variety to life and made distinct, finite forms of it appear in all this vast range of phenomena?

Now given the fact that all these captivating forms of creation ultimately arise from the atom, the question of being cannot be explained except by reference to a guiding and infinite power.

It is He Who impels all things toward the assumption of life-giving form and possesses the power and intelligence to plan and design this vast and precise scheme.

\* \* \*

Large and small, difficult and easy, are properties pertaining to finite beings; in the infinite realm of God's essence and attributes there is no question of great and little, much and few. Impotence and inability are caused by the finiteness of the energy at the disposal of an agent, by the existence of an obstacle on his path, or by the absence of means and instruments; they are inconceivable in the case of an infinite power.

The Qur'an says:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا ﴿٤٤﴾

*Nothing in the heavens or on earth can induce weakness or impotence in God; indeed God is all-knowing and all-powerful. (35:44)*

Although God is capable of doing all things, He has created the world according to a precise and specific scheme in the framework of which a set role has been assigned to certain phenomena in the origination of others. Those phenomena are completely and unquestioningly subordinate to His command while fulfilling that role and never rebel against His orders in the slightest.

The Qur'an says:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ  
يَغْشَىٰ أَلْتَلِ النَّهَارِ يَطْلُبُهُ حَيْثَ مَا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ  
تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

*The sun, the moon and the stars are all at His command. Be aware that creation belongs only to God; it is His penetrating command that in its exalted purity creates the world and all it contains. (7:54)*

Strictly speaking, no creature in the scheme of the universe can be a manifestation of power or have any share in His will and command, for just as God has no partner in His essence, so too He has no partner in His agenthood.

Just as all creatures in the world lack independence in their essence and are dependent on Him, they also lack it in producing acts and effects. Every agent and cause derives the essence of its being from God and also its power to act and produce an effect.

Wherever He wills and necessitates it, the order that enframes all beings abandons its role, for that order is itself subordinate to His will, precious and firm though it may be. The Creator Who has assigned a particular effect to every factor and cause is able to neutralize and suspend that effect at any instant. Just as one command brought the order of the universe into existence, another command robs phenomena of their customary effect.

Thus the Qur'an says:

قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ  
إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

*They said, 'Burn Abraham and thus render help unto your gods, if you are men of action.' We commanded the fire, 'Be cool for Abraham and harm him not.' They sought a stratagem against him, but We made them the losers. (21:68—70)*

Although the powerful attraction exerted by the sun and the earth prevails over a vast space, both bodies are subordinate to His will. As soon as He gives a little bird the necessary power, the bird is able to resist the pull of the earth and take flight.

The Qur'an says:

الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ فِي جَوِّ السَّمَاءِ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ إِن فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ  
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

*Do they not look at the birds in the heavens and see how the skies have been subjugated to them? It is God alone Who keeps them aloft, and in this there is an evident sign of God's power for the people of faith. (16:79)*

Whatever phenomenon may be imagined to exist in the world of being finds its needs for sustenance and life met by the Creator. Therefore whatever power and capacity is found in the scheme of creation must necessarily go back to the infinite power of God.

'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful — peace be upon him — says in a sermon reproduced in the *Nahj al-balāghah*:

O God, we cannot penetrate the depths of Your splendour and majesty. We know only that You are living and self-subsistent, that You are exempt from eating and sleeping. No mind can perceive You and no eye can see You. But You see all eyes, You know the life span of all things, and You are all-powerful. Although we have perceived nothing of Your creation we are astounded by Your power and praise You mightily. That which is hidden from us and our eyes cannot see and our mind and intelligence cannot attain, which is concealed from us by veils of the unseen, is much greater than what we can see.<sup>11</sup>

When man decides to build something — for example a hospital — he assembles the necessary tools and pieces of equipment that do not have any essential relationship with each other, and then connects them with each other by means of a series of artificial relationships in order to reach his goal.

In order to create such artificial relationships he makes use of different forces and objects that he finds to be already existing. His work and activity are a part of the system of creation; they are not properly speaking creative activity, but only a form of motion that takes place within existing objects. Divine creation forms a quite different category from the production of artificial relationships between unrelated objects. God originates things with all their properties, forces and energies and characteristics.

When we say that God is all-powerful, we must be aware that His power relates only to things that are possible. Things that are rationally impossible are entirely outside the sphere of His power, and to use the word "power" or "capacity" in connection with things that are impossible is incorrect and meaningless. Although the power of God is indeed unlimited, the receptive capacity of things and their ability to serve as locus for the manifestation of divine power must be taken into consideration. The implementation of God's will is intertwined with the relations between cause and effect, with the complex network of reasons and causes. In order for a thing to become the object of the divine will it must not be impossible and must in its essence possess receptive capacity; divine will is accomplished by means of the receptivity of things. It is true that the divine effulgence is infinite and constantly overflow-

ing, but the ground destined to receive it may be defective and unable to absorb the infinite share that superabundant source offers it.

The ocean is an immensely abundant source of water, but a tanker has only a limited capacity to take on its water; in fact only a minute amount of that water can be loaded onto a tanker. Clearly enough, what is finite and limited in this case is the capacity of the tanker, not the water in the ocean.

Someone once asked 'Alī, the Commander of the Faithful, upon whom be peace: "Is your Lord able to fit the whole world into a hen's egg?" He answered: "God Almighty is indeed able to do anything, but what you ask is something impossible."<sup>1 2</sup>

So although God's sacred essence is utterly free of all impotence and inability, it is meaningless and irrational to ask whether God can do something inherently impossible.

\* \* \*

One whose heart beats with the love of God and flows over with belief in the Creator of all being will never be discouraged, lonely and hopeless even in the midst of the most complex difficulties. Whatever deed he undertakes he does so in the consciousness of being in the protective shade of a supreme power that can make him triumph over all difficulties.

A man who is aware of God and knows that he enjoys His support can resist and endure all kinds of hardship. Difficulties are for him like swift vanishing foam on the face of the waters. The fire that burns within him becomes ever brighter and he emerges stronger than ever from the crucible of hardship.

Throughout the toils he endures he is comforted and strengthened by God's kindness and favour, and it is this that forms the true motor of his activity. Failure does not block his path and cause him to surrender; instead, with sincere intention and diligent effort, he continues his strivings until final victory.

He understands well that his efforts cannot remain fruitless and that victory goes to the deserving. Whenever He wills, God takes the hand of the fallen and the oppressed who have no refuge other than Him and raises them up to the apex of power. Sometimes, too, He rubs in the dust of humiliation and disaster the noses of the powerful and arrogant oppressors who believe only in violence and the logic of force and treat men as if they were worthless.

How many arrogant tyrants have been cast down by disaster in the course of human history, sinking and vanishing in a tempest of shame!

The story of God's messengers represents in itself a complete and ideal model of human values. We all know how the messengers stood alone against the oppressive forces of their day in order to guide men to

salvation, reform their society, and inculcate lofty values in them. In so doing, they lit the first spark that ultimately destroyed polytheism.

The response aroused by their beliefs caused such a positive tumult that they were able to change the face and direction of history. They laid the foundations of monotheistic worship and established the principles of virtue in the most comprehensive way.

Who can deny the role played by their devotion and faith in the untiring struggle they waged? How far can willpower alone take man, and how much can it enable him to endure and sacrifice?

A cursory review of the proud history of the prophets' lives enables us all to behold, in the most vivid fashion possible, the sincerity and devotion they displayed, their mercy and forbearance, and their intense desire to guide and reform men. The fundamental secret of their success was the fact they never thought of themselves for a single instant; they sincerely renounced their own beings, making them a gift to God's cause. God then responded by bestowing immortality and everlasting fame on them.

#### 5. The Boundless Knowledge of God:

A Creator Who cannot be circumscribed by place, for Whose essence no limit is conceivable, of Whose being not a single part of the heavens and earth is empty — such a Creator is naturally aware of all things; there is nothing throughout the whole scheme of being on which the bright rays of His knowledge do not shine.

The events that occur in the most distant part of the universe, happenings that occurred billions of years ago or will occur billions of years afterwards in the future — all are contained in the sphere of His knowledge, and the most comprehensive attempts at interpreting His knowledge are therefore doomed to failure.

In order to understand the extensive scope of His knowledge, we stretch the limits of our thought, apply our intelligence to search and reflection, and try to advance to our goal with a clear mind. In the last resort, however, our mental apparatus lacks the skills required for reaching the goal.

If we were to exist everywhere in just the same way that we exist at a given place and in a given time, so that no place was deprived of our presence, nothing would be hidden from us and we would be aware of everything.

For us, the world of being has been divided into two sectors: the manifest and the hidden. Things are "hidden" in the sense that certain truths, being infinite and nonmaterial, cannot be perceived by the outer senses. It is important to remember that the entirety of existence does not consist of matters that lie within the range of the empirical sciences.

In order to understand the secrets and mysteries of creation we need, as it were, a launch platform. The elevation we are able to reach depends on the intellectual force we have at our disposal and the degree of understanding that propels our ascent. Once we have a suitable launch platform, many realities become knowable to us.

\* \* \*

Through its use of the term *ghayb* ("hidden") the Noble Qur'an sets before man a broad vision of reality. God's messengers have also striven to raise man's awareness of the created universe to a level that embraces infinite as well as the finite and the boundaries of the unseen as well as the dimensions of the manifest.

For God, the "hidden" does not exist; for Him, the universe is entirely "manifest." The Qur'an says:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾

*He is the Knower of the Hidden and the Manifest, the Compassionate and the Merciful. (59:22)*

Whatever is made by man derives from the skill, intelligence and knowledge of its maker. The more subtle and refined the product, the more clearly it displays the profound and extensive knowledge of its maker, and the more fully it proves his ability to plan and design.

Man's handiwork is not in any way comparable to the mysteries and splendour of creation. Nonetheless it suggests to us that the harmonious and orderly scheme of the universe, and the manifestation of intelligence in this vast, beautiful and astounding pattern of creation, must necessarily indicate that the one who plans it and endows it with order must possess boundless and comprehensive knowledge. The orderliness of the universe is the strongest proof for the existence of a being that overflows with knowledge, will, awareness and wisdom and has designed the wonders of creation in accordance with a precisely calculated plan. The signs of His infinite knowledge are to be seen plainly in every particle of every phenomenon.

The experiments and theories of scientists furnish proof for whoever desires it of the boundless knowledge of God and its countless manifestations in the insect, animal and vegetable realms.

God is aware of the course of the stars in space, the tumult-ridden world of the nebulae and the rotation of the galaxies; of all things from pre-eternity to post-eternity; of the total number of atoms in all the heavenly bodies; of the motions of the billions of creatures, large and small, that move on the face of the earth and in the depths of the oceans; of the norms and laws that unfailingly regulate nature;



of the hidden and manifest aspects of all things. He even knows the perplexities of the distraught better than they do themselves.

Listen again to what the Qur'an has to say:

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾

*Is not the one who created the world aware of the secrets of His own creation? Certainly He has knowledge of all the subtleties and mysteries of the world. (67:14)*

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٥﴾

*Nothing is hidden from God, neither on earth nor in the heavens. (3:5)*

Natural scientists are better acquainted than others with the subtle and precise mysteries that are implanted in every particle of creation. They are aware from their studies and researches of the various calculations that are built into things both living and lifeless, in cells and globules; of the various forms of action and reaction, outward and inward, that take place in them; and of the effects of various materials and substances. Thus they witness the signs of God's astounding wisdom and infinite knowledge in nature or, as the Qur'an puts it, "on the horizons" (41:53). More than others, they are exposed to the manifestation of God's attributes and perfections, including His unbounded knowledge, and if they do not reject the call of their conscience, they will also discern the existence of the Creator more clearly.

A certain thinker once said:

Our world resembles a great idea more than it does a great machine. As a theory or a scientific definition, it can be said that the world is the product of a great idea, the manifestation of a thought and an idea superior to our own. Scientific thought seems to be moving in the direction of this theory.

God's knowledge is not restricted to things past or to present events and objects; His knowledge of the future is exactly like His knowledge of the present.

God's knowledge is, so to speak, "immediate" in the complete sense of the word. It is not in the first instance necessary that there should be an object of knowledge to which His knowledge should attach itself. All things stand revealed before Him, for at the very same time that His sacred essence is utterly other than all creatures and phenomena, it is also not separate from them: all things past and future are in His unmediated presence.

'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful — upon whom be peace —

says:

He knows all things, but not through means and instruments the absence of which would entail the cessation of His knowledge. There is not some added entity called 'knowledge' interposed between Him and the objects of His knowledge; there is nothing but His essence alone.<sup>13</sup>

Here 'Alī — peace be upon him — is referring to the theological principle that God's awareness of things is direct and immediate. In His knowledge of phenomena, God has no need of the mental forms that are the basis of acquired knowledge. Were He to acquire His knowledge by means of those forms, need would arise in Him, whereas He is utterly free of need.

The one from whom the existence of the world and its inhabitants derives, who is capable of meeting every imaginable need, who grants every perfection and bounty — is it all conceivable that He should Himself be imprisoned by need?

Mental forms remain in our minds only so long as we wish them to exist; they disappear as soon as we withdraw our attention from them, because they are fashioned and created by us. This form of knowledge is not direct and unmediated and it is therefore termed "acquired knowledge," by contrast with "immediate knowledge," which has no need of a means.

The difference between us, who create our own mental forms and the Creator Who originated all being lies in this, that we owe our very existences to Him and therefore stand in need of Him, whereas He is the true Creator and vivifier of all things, is free of need and does not need the exercise of vision to acquire knowledge.

The delineation of past and future events that takes place on the horizons of our being and thought is inevitably limited, since we occupy a given time and space outside of which we have no existence. We are material phenomena, and matter, according to the laws of physics and relativity, needs time and place in its gradual and continuous processes of development and change. But past and future have no meaning for a being who is present from pre-eternity to post-eternity, in all places and at all times and free from the captivity of matter and its consequences.

Since every phenomenon relies on the infinite existence of the Creator for its origin and existence, no veil or barrier can be supposed to exist between God and that phenomenon; God encompasses its inner and outer dimensions and is utterly empowered over it.

Someone once asked 'Alī, the Commander of the Faithful — upon whom be peace — : "Where is God?"

'Alī answered:

It is not correct to ask where God is, because it is God Who made place place. Nor is it correct to ask how God is, of what nature is God, since it is God who created all nature. Further, it is not correct to ask what God is because it is God who created all quiddity.

Glorified be God Almighty in the waves of whose splendour the wise are unable to swim, the remembrance of Whose eternity halts all thought in its track, and in Whose vast heaven of sanctity the intellect loses its way!<sup>14</sup>

The Qur'ān says:

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلْمَتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

*God is aware of all that exists on the face of the earth and in the depths of the oceans. He knows of every leaf that falls and every seed that is hidden in the darkness of the earth. All things, fresh and dry, are clear and evident to Him. (6:59)*

Let us imagine that we are in a room overlooking the street and watching through a small window the mass of cars that swiftly moves down the street. Obviously we cannot see all the cars at once; we see them one by one as they pass in front of the window, and then they disappear from sight. If we knew nothing about cars, we might imagine that they gradually come into being on one side of the window and cease to exist on the other side.

Now this small window corresponds exactly to our field of vision; it determines a past and a future for the cars. Those who are outside the room standing on the sidewalk see all the cars moving along together.

Our situation with respect to the past and future of the world is like that of the person watching the cars through a small window.

Once we realize that God is above time and place, we understand that all past and future events are always present and existent in front of Him, like a painting.

We ought therefore to have a sense of responsibility toward a Creator Who is aware of the slightest act and deed of creation — as the Qur'ān says, “He knows all that you do” (2:283) — and avoid any sin or mistake that would cause us to become distant from Him. We ought to worship God, the possessor of absolute knowledge Who has caused us to traverse these various stages and to attain the capacities we now have. We ought not to disobey His commands which open up for us the path to true felicity and the ultimate aim of man, and we should accept no goal other than Him.

In order to reach God we must adorn ourselves with divine attributes and prepare ourselves, during our brief sojourn in this world, for

the meeting with Him. Then we may return to Him, the source, origin and beginning of our existence. This requires action and striving, effort aimed at refining the self, for the responsibility to act in this sense has been placed on man's shoulders as a divine trust.

NOTES:

1. Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd, *al-'Irshād*, p.142.
2. *Mafātīh al-Jinān*.
3. *Nahj al-balāghah*, sermon 220.
4. *Nahj al-balāghah*, sermon 225.
5. *Al-Ṣahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*.
6. *Do hezār dānishmand dar justujū-ye Khudā-ye Buzurg*, pp.61 and 99.
7. *Nahj al-balāghah*, sermon 181.
8. *Nahj al-balāghah*, ed. Fayz al-'Islām, p.14.
9. *Uṣūl al-Kāfī, kitāb al-tawhīd*, p.150.
10. *Uṣūl al-Kāfī, kitāb al-tawhīd*.
11. *Nahj al-balāghah*, sermon 159.
12. *Bihār al-'anwār*, IV, 143.
13. Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Tawhīd*, p.73.
14. *Bihār al-'anwār*, III, 297.

**Martyr Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr's  
Critique of Marxist Philosophy:  
A Critical Summary of His Book *Our Philosophy*  
by 'Alī Qulī Qarā'ī** *Part 1*

**OUR PHILOSOPHY.** By Muhammad Baqir As-Sadr. Translated from the Arabic with an introduction and notes by Shams C. Inati. Foreword by Sayyed Hossein Nasr. The Muhammadi Trust in association with KPI: London and New York, 1987. Pp. xvii + 295, ISBN 0-7103 0179-0. Distributed by Routledge & Kegan Paul, Associated Book Publishers (UK) Ltd., 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 9EE.

The present book was intended as first of a series that remained incomplete due to al-Ṣadr's martyrdom, which deprived the Islamic world of one of its most original and able thinkers. This work, with *al-'Usus al-mantiqiyyah li al-'istiqrā'* (The Logical Foundations of Induction), makes up the author's main contribution to contemporary Muslim philosophic thought.

It consists of an introduction and two parts. The first part deals with the theory of knowledge and the second with some problems of metaphysics.

*The Introduction:*

**The Social Problem:**

Here the author spells out his main aim for writing the book. It is not philosophy for philosophy's sake. The purpose is to present Islam as an alternative system superior to capitalism and secular democracy on the one hand and to Marxism and socialism on the other.

Although devoid of an articulate world view or ideology, capitalistic democracies are materialistic to the core. Dissociating themselves from all transcendental principles, they claim to promote the interests and rights of the individual and safeguard his economic, political liberties and freedom of expression and thought. The interests of the individual are regarded as primary and are emphasized at the cost of the interests of society. The assumption is that since all individuals seek their interests, the provision of individual freedom leads to the automatic fulfilment of the interests of society, which are regarded as the sum of individual interests. However, due to the dominant materialistic outlook on life in

capitalistic societies, the pursuit of individual self-interest does not transcend the purview of materialism. Nearly all moral values, most of which do not lie within the purview of materialistic self-seeking of individuals, are neglected, causing deep harm to society's welfare. The rights of the minority are neglected. Unlimited economic freedom permits a handful of capitalists to dominate the majority of people and to usurp their freedoms and rights. With the immense economic resources at their disposal, the wealthy capitalists take control of the mass media, government, legislature and judiciary. Even foreign countries and peoples are not secure from their greed for cheap raw materials, cheap labour, and markets for finished products. Imperialism, hence, is a direct outcome of capitalistic democracy.

In this dehumanizing hell of materialism and pursuit of individual self-interest there is no place for love, mercy, self-denial or any other higher human value.

Dialectical materialism sees all evils of capitalism to be rooted in the institution of private property. If private property is abolished and all property becomes public, passing from the possession and control of the individual into those of the community, individual ambition will die. All will voluntarily pool the fruits of their labour for the common benefit. The higher cultural values will be put within the reach of all alike through community support and the diffusion of education.

Although communism solved some of the problems of capitalism at the cost of immense human suffering, the remedy was only partial. Dictatorship, repression, deprivation of individual freedoms, constant fear of imprisonment, torture and execution for the dissidents, loss of economic vigour due to absence of individual initiative and motivation, the debasement of man's dignity — these are some of the outcomes of the socialist solution.

In the view of Martyr al-Ṣadr, the evil of capitalism lies not in private property but in the neglect of the spiritual dimensions of man's being. Moreover, self-seeking is inherent in human nature; it is not a product of the institution of private property, as alleged by Marx. The failure of secular democracies lies in their emphasis on individualism and their inability to stimulate and promote the higher spiritual aspect of man's self-seeking nature, whose activation is vital for arising man's altruistic potentialities so significant for society's welfare. Marxism makes the mistake of abolishing private property while keeping intact capitalism's destructive materialistic world view. As a result, it ends up substituting a handful of bureaucrats and party officials for a handful of capitalists who wield all power and control the society's wealth and resources.

Both capitalism and communism fail to present a correct world outlook and to formulate an ideology capable of solving the diverse

problems of human society. This failure is rooted in their materialist world view and their inadequate understanding of man's nature.

### The Islamic Solution:

There are no more than two alternatives for modern man to solve the basic problem of society: Either, he should somehow abandon his self-seeking character and become altruistic while keeping his materialistic world view; or, he should abandon his materialistic outlook and select a different metaphysical criterion and goal.

The communists select the first alternative because they do not believe that man is self-seeking by nature. They erroneously regard private property as infrastructure and man's self-seeking as its superstructure. This is putting the cart before the horse.

The second alternative is chosen by Islam. It does not abolish private property but gives a new meaning to human existence. It does not consider human nature a mechanical artifact of social and economic conditions, nor does it put the society at the mercy of the individual.

The Islamic outlook is based in faith in a transcendent source of life and existence. This world is a prelude to another. The highest value and criterion of all human activities and pursuits is the attainment of God's good pleasure and His approval. All human history testifies to the innateness of man's self-seeking character. Had it not been for this self-seeking and self-love there would have been no motive for the satisfaction of human needs. No school of thought or ideology can offer an ultimate solution to man's problems without taking into account his nature and without establishing a harmony between that which is and that which ought to be.

Offering a transcendental interpretation of life, a perspective in which this world is a prelude to the hereafter, Islam seeks to bring about a harmony between man's self-seeking nature and the good of society, by putting forward the criterion of the attainment of God's approval and good pleasure as the ultimate end in itself. As a result it eliminates the conflict between the good of the individual and that of society, and the individual is promised an everlasting reward in his struggle for the establishment of a prosperous and just society as a means for the attainment of God's good pleasure:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِيُرَوْا أَعْمَلَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ﴿٨﴾

*Upon that day men shall issue in scatterings to see their works, and whoso has done an atom's weight of good shall see it, and whoso has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. (99:6-8)*

Such a thing is not possible in the framework of a materialistic world view. The Islamic world view opens up an infinite vista before man's eye, and compensates his ephemeral losses with lasting benefits.

Apart from transforming human criteria through a transcendental world view, Islam offers a specific system of training for nourishing man's various spiritual, moral and emotional potentialities which lie latent in his being. Islam takes into consideration the welfare of both the individual and society, based as it is on a spiritual understanding and moral sense of life. Other systems either sacrifice the individual for society or society for the individual, and as a result they paralyze man's nature and expose social life to severe complications and perils.

Here, at the end of his introduction, the author spells out his objective, which is a comparative study of the philosophical viewpoints of Islam and other schools which confront it. Since the capitalist system lacks any philosophical basis, he proposes to examine in detail the philosophical foundations of dialectical materialism.

### *Part One: The Theory of Knowledge (Chapter I):*

#### Concepts:

The first chapter in this section is devoted to the epistemological problem of the source of concepts and judgements. First the author examines the Platonic doctrine of Recollection, then the rationalist theory, and following that the empirical theory.

The Platonic theory is false because soul does not exist in an abstract form prior to the existence of the body, being the result of substantial motion in matter. It is by means of this movement that it *acquires* an immaterial existence not characterized by material qualities and free from the laws of matter.

The rationalist theory that some concepts are innate or *a priori* is not refutable if interpreted to mean that innate ideas exist in the soul potentially, becoming actual as the soul develops.

The empirical theory, first propounded by John Locke, holds that there are no innate ideas; all our ideas without exception are derived from experience. It was adopted by Marxism. However, the empirical theory — as admitted by Hume — fails to explain how we form such concepts as that of causality; for that which is derived from the senses is succession, not causality. The rejection of the principle of causality by empiricists does not solve the difficulty, because the fact remains that we do *conceive* causality, which is not given in sense perception.

Al-Ṣadr then goes on to the Abstraction theory (*nazariyyat al-'intizā'*) favoured by the Islamic philosophers in general. According to this theory, concepts are of two kinds: primary and secondary. The



primary ones are products of sense-perception. The secondary ones are produced from the primary concepts by the mind through the means of 'abstraction.' The secondary concepts although derived from the primary ones transcend them and are the inventions of the mind.

### Judgements:

Moving from concepts to judgements, al-Ṣadr selects here the rational and empirical theses about the source of judgements for discussion.

1. According to the rationalists, knowledge (in the form of judgements or propositions) consists of two kinds. The first kind is primary, self-evident, and intuitive. It includes such propositions as the principle of contradiction, and such statements as 'The whole is greater than the part', 'One is half of two', 'A thing cannot have contradictory attributes at the same time', and so on. The other kind is what the author calls 'theoretical' knowledge, whose truth cannot be established except in the light of the first kind. Among the examples given are: 'The earth is spherical', 'Heat is caused by motion', 'Infinite regress is impossible', 'The angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles'.

The author does not seem to be right here in putting two different kinds of statements in one class called 'theoretical knowledge'. 'The earth is spherical' is not the same kind of judgement as 'The angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles'. The former requires observation and inference for its proof, while the latter can be established by pure reasoning. The same distinction applies to the two statements 'Heat is caused by motion' and 'Infinite regress is impossible'.

All knowledge is based on previous knowledge, which in turn depends on knowledge preceding it. The *a priori* or primary knowledge is that irreducible remainder which does not arise from any previous knowledge. A part of primary knowledge, consisting of such general principles as the law of contradiction, constitutes the basic condition of all knowledge. Without it no general proposition can be affirmed. It is this knowledge independent of experience that makes metaphysics possible.

The progression of thought is from universal to more particular propositions. This is true even in the experimental sciences, which cannot dispense with the universal principles of causality and uniformity of nature. Experimentation also, without the application of necessary rational laws, does not lead to general scientific truths. The Islamic philosophers, including al-Ṣadr, espouse this theory.

2. According to the empiricists sense experience is the primary source of all knowledge. They do not admit the existence of any necessary rational knowledge prior to experience. There can be no knowledge

of universal truths prior to experience. Their position makes metaphysics and deduction impossible.

The empirical doctrine has to be rejected for the following four reasons.

First, either the empirical doctrine is prior to experience or it is not. If it is, it refutes itself. If it is derived from experience, the validity of experience as a criterion of knowledge has not yet been established.

Second, empiricism fails to affirm the existence of matter and the external world, which cannot be affirmed except by primary rational knowledge. Thus the metaphysical realities are not the only ones which depend for their affirmation on the rational method.

Third, experience by itself is not sufficient to assert the impossibility of anything. All that experience can affirm is non-presence or at the most non-existence. The notion of impossibility can be accepted only on rational grounds, not on the basis of experience. If the notion of impossibility is denied, anything, including contradiction, becomes possible. The possibility of contradiction leads to the collapse of all knowledge and science.

Fourth, the principle of causality cannot be demonstrated by the means of the empirical doctrine. All that experience can affirm is succession and contiguity, not causal necessity.

The author then turns to the effort of Hume to show how the 'feeling' of necessary connection implicit in the concept of causality arises from experience: the theory of association of ideas. According to Hume, the habit of leaping forward to and expecting the sequent associated with the antecedent becomes so ingrained by continual repetition of their conjunction as to make the mind feel that when the one event occurs the other simply *must* follow it. Events so habitually conjoined and associated as to be accompanied by this feeling of *must* are called *cause* and *effect*, and the relation of simple sequence is turned into one of causation.

Al-Ṣadr offers five reasons for rejecting this explanation. First, if it were true, no scientist would be able to confirm a causal relation between two things in a single experiment, where there is no repetition of the conjoined events to produce the feeling of necessity. Similarly, many times, belief in a causal relationship is not strengthened by further repetition of events involving a cause and its effect.

Second, when we take the associated ideas of two events regarded as being in cause-effect relationship, is the relation between these two ideas that of mere conjunction or necessity? If it is mere conjunction, the element of necessity implied in their association is not explained.

Third, the necessity of the principle of causality is not a psychological necessity but an objective one.

Fourthly, the mind distinguishes between cause and effect even when they are completely conjoined (e.g. the movements of the pen and the hand while writing).

Fifthly, it often happens that two events are frequently associated without producing the belief that one of them is the cause of the other (e.g. day and night). Empiricism cannot provide the basis for the sciences, which are based on some rational principles that are not subject to experimentation, viz., the principle of causality, the principle of harmony between cause and effect, and the principle of non-contradiction. The scientist, in framing his theories, passes from these general principles to particular hypothesis through a process of syllogistic reasoning.

Of course, experience has a high value, but it itself stands in need of a rational criterion. This criterion is primary rational knowledge.

The rational theory of knowledge also explains the quality of necessity and certainty that distinguishes the propositions of mathematics from the propositions of the natural sciences. This is because mathematics is entirely based on primary rational principles. Some empiricists have tried to explain this difference by stating that mathematical propositions are analytic (tautological). Yet even mathematical statements would not be certain had it not been for their reliance on certain rational principles, such as the law of contradiction. Moreover, all mathematical statements are not analytic, such as, 'The diameter is shorter than the circumference'.

How does primary knowledge emerge when it is not present at birth and in all men at all times? The answer is that the primary judgements proceed from the innermost being of the soul after it has formed the necessary conceptions, directly or indirectly, as a result of experience. As the soul develops through substantial movement, the primary knowledge, which exists in it potentially, becomes actual.

### The Marxist Theory of Knowledge:

Here, the statement of the Marxist position by the author is, unfortunately, not based either on the original works of Marx or Engels or their authoritative interpreters. Perhaps due to the non-availability of translations, he bases his criticism on the writings of second-rate interpreters, such as Mao Tse-tung. The result is that the Marxist position stated is weak, weakening in turn somewhat the author's criticism of Marxist epistemology.

According to Marxism, all knowledge begins in experience. The next step is that of ordering of information, inference and application. It does not accept that some knowledge is independent of sense experience. Denying that there exists some primary knowledge which enables

the mind to move from the first to the second stage, it fails to explain how the mind can move from the stage of sense perception to that of theory and inference.

The conclusion is drawn that only the rationalist theory provides an adequate explanation of how the mind is able to move from the first to the second stage of knowledge. It is only the knowledge of the general rational laws that affords the scientist to develop theories and to draw inferences in his endeavour to discover the reality that lies beyond empirical phenomena. The rejection of primary rational knowledge, which is independent of experience, makes it impossible to go beyond the stage of sense-perception.

### Empiricism and the Possibility of Metaphysics:

Before the birth of empiricism, philosophy was considered responsible for discovering the general laws of being. Its tool was syllogistic reasoning and philosophic thought moved from general to more particular propositions. Not only metaphysics and ethics but also such sciences as physics and psychology lay within the sphere of philosophy. However, the experimental method and induction took the sciences, each of them devoted to a specific class of phenomena, out of the purview of philosophy, which was left to deal with issues which fell within the purview of pure reason. The empiricists claimed that there is no field of knowledge beyond the field of experimentation that the sciences have divided among themselves, leaving nothing for philosophy. The only scope that was admitted for philosophy by some schools was that of discovering the relations and links among the sciences and to postulate general scientific theories based on the outcome of experiments in various scientific fields. Foremost amongst them were the schools of Marxism and positivism.

The logical positivists were not satisfied with the empiricist attacks against metaphysics. They did not limit themselves, for instance, to the assertion that metaphysics was useless since its propositions could not be demonstrated by the scientific method. The positivists went on to assert that the propositions of metaphysics were meaningless. The criticism of the positivists against metaphysics can be summarized as follows:

1. Metaphysical propositions deal with matters that lie beyond the sphere of experience and experiment. Hence they cannot be verified.
2. Their being true or false makes no difference so far as the world of experience is concerned.
3. Metaphysical propositions are meaningless because they do not give any information about the world.
4. It is inappropriate to ascribe truth or falsity to them.

The author suggests the following lines for answering this criticism:

1. If we refute the empirical theory of knowledge and affirm the existence of a primary knowledge prior to experience in the core of the human mind, we can demonstrate that the mind has the capacity to confirm the veracity or falsity of metaphysical propositions.

2. Although metaphysical propositions have no direct bearing on the data of experience, these data are not altogether irrelevant to metaphysical statements. Further clarification to be given later.

3. The logical positivists describe a proposition as 'meaningful' if its truth or falsity can be affirmed within the limits of sense experience. This is equal to saying, "The content of metaphysical propositions lies beyond sense experience". With this, the positivists assert an indisputable truth, that the subjects of metaphysics are not empirical — something which the rationalists have stressed all along.

What would the positivist say about such propositions as relate to nature but cannot be verified by sense experience, such as a statement about the existence of mountains and valleys on the other side of the moon? Positivism revises its original position to assert that that which is important here is logical possibility, not actual possibility. However, the notion of logical possibility is a metaphysical notion, and thus positivism, in the last analysis, has to adopt a metaphysical criterion of 'meaning'. Metaphysical propositions are as meaningful as any other, in that they relate to realities independent of the mind and the logical possibility of being true or false holds in their case.

### Marxism and Metaphysics:

The Marxist position regarding metaphysics is essentially similar to that of positivism. Marxism rejects a higher philosophy above and over the sciences and independent of them. Marxist philosophy calls itself 'scientific', yet soon trespasses into other fields to judge metaphysical issues affirmatively or negatively. In violating its self-set limits it contradicts itself — a result of the Marxist mistake of basing its theory of knowledge on sense experience alone.

It is in the light of the rational theory of knowledge that philosophy and metaphysics rest on firm fundamental principles. The acceptance of primary rational knowledge relieves philosophy of bondage to the constantly changing theories of experimental science.

The link between philosophy and science is strong, for science furnishes philosophy with new facts that enable philosophy to obtain new philosophical conclusions. Yet in spite of this philosophy may at times not need any sense experience, nor is it necessary for philosophy to accompany the procession of science in its gradual march.

*The Value of Knowledge (Chapter 2):*

**The Possibility of Knowledge:**

In this chapter Martyr al-Ṣadr is concerned not with the 'value' of knowledge but rather with the possibility of knowledge as such. To what extent does 'knowledge' (i.e. that which is considered to be knowledge) capture the essence of reality and the secrets of the external world?

Marxism believes in the possibility of knowledge of objective realities and rejects skepticism and sophistry: The world does not contain anything that cannot be known. But is it appropriate for Marxism to claim that definite knowledge is possible? Can it escape skepticism in the ultimate analysis?

In order to understand the Marxist and Islamic positions on this issue, the author considers it essential to review important doctrines formulated by philosophers, beginning with the Sophists.

**Greek Philosophy:** In the fifth century B.C. a class of teachers emerged in Greece that devoted itself to teaching of rhetoric and giving professional advice to their clients in matters of law, court procedure and politics. Protagoras (b.c. 500 B.C.) and Gorgias (fl.c. 427 B.C.), two major skeptics, were the products of this class. Gorgias, for instance, taught that the Real, about which the pre-Socratic philosophers had argued, does not exist. If a world-stuff existed we could never know what it was like; it is not what it appears, since the senses lie. Even if Reality could be known, knowledge is incommunicable; for, language, being mere noise, cannot convey the knowledge of reality to other minds.

The Sophists rejected the possibility of knowledge and made truth a purely subjective and relative affair. Hence metaphysics is idle speculation and its results are worthless. There is no reality that reason can know except the ever-changing flux of sensible experience.

Sophistry wished to destroy what philosophy had built hitherto. They were opposed by Socrates (d.399 B.C.), Plato (428–347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), who tried to maintain reason on its throne. Aristotelian epistemology validated reason and recognized the value of experience, and posited the possibility of certain knowledge.

The skepticism that reemerged after Aristotle was a compromise in that it did not deny reality but denied the possibility of certain knowledge. However, skepticism could not prevail in philosophy, and reason mounted the throne offered to it by Aristotle, until skepticism emerged again in the 16th century in an atmosphere of doubt and rebellion against the authority of reason. Descartes emerged in this

atmosphere and he tried to bring back certitude to philosophy.

**Descartes:** Descartes (1596—1650) began his philosophy with sweeping doubt. Ideas, he reasoned are susceptible to error and sense perception is often deceptive. The point of departure for philosophical certitude was the existence of his thoughts, which leads him to infer his own existence: 'I think, therefore, I am'. This statement is true because it is clear and distinct. He therefore adopts as a general rule the principle that all things that we conceive very clearly and distinctly are true. Ideas seem to be of three sorts: (1) those that are innate, (2) those that are foreign and come from without, (3) those that are the mind's constructs. Descartes disposes of skepticism by first proving the existence of God, whose idea belongs to the first class. Since we as imperfect beings are not sufficient reason for the idea of perfection we entertain — the idea of God being the idea of an absolutely perfect being — the idea of God must have been caused by Him. God is thus the first objective reality posited by Descartes. Now since God is good, the innate ideas (which include the ideas of external bodies) which we have such strong inclination to believe must be true. This is how Descartes posits external reality and the possibility of science.

Al-Ṣadr points out that 'I think, therefore, I am', contains a concealed syllogism: 'I think, every thinker exists, therefore I exist'. Moreover as pointed out by Ibn Sinā, this argument from thought to existence is invalid; for the thinking subject admits his existence in the first phrase 'I think'.

Secondly, Descartes confuses between the idea of a perfect being and the objective reality it represents. It is God, not the idea of God, which is more sublime than human beings.

Descartes bases the whole edifice of existence on the proposition: "It is impossible for God to deceive". He confuses between 'deception is impossible', and 'deception is abominable', which is not a metaphysical (judgement of fact) but an ethical (judgement of value) proposition. In any case, the author's purpose is not an elaborate criticism of Descartes' philosophy but to present his view regarding the possibility of knowledge. Descartes accepts the validity of innate rational knowledge.

### John Locke:

Locke (1632—1704) is the founder of modern empiricism. While he claims that all knowledge is derived from experience — there being no innate ideas or principles — he divides knowledge into three types: (1) by intuition, (2) by rational demonstration, (3) by sensation. Our knowledge of our own existence is intuitive, our knowledge of God's existence is demonstrative, and our knowledge of things present to

sense is sensitive. This division of knowledge into three groups is inconsistent with his empirical doctrine.

Locke makes a distinction between what he calls primary and secondary qualities. The primary ones are inseparable from bodies, such as solidity, extension, figure, motion or rest, and number. The secondary qualities are only in the percipient, such as colour, sound, smell, etc. Since there is no way, according to Locke, of knowing the primary qualities except through the senses, this division is also inconsistent with his empirical doctrine.

### The Idealists:

The Platonic theory of Ideas, generally called 'realism', is referred to as 'idealism' by the author. Whatever we may call it, it did not involve any denial or doubt about reality. In metaphysics, idealism is the theory that reality is of the nature of mind or idea. To al-Şadr, it is an attempt to shake the foundations of objective reality and to exterminate certainty. In order to study the role of idealism in the theory of knowledge, he proposes to examine three tendencies in idealism. These he calls 'philosophical', 'physical' and 'physiological'.

**Philosophical Idealism:** Its founder was Berkeley, who declared, "To exist is to know or to be known". He denies existence to objective realities existing independent of minds. Mind and its ideas exist. All we know of 'matter' are the qualities of our sense (the secondary qualities of Locke). Berkeley's idealism has been interpreted differently and al-Şadr has selected an interpretation that he considers best-known. He cites Berkeley's proofs in support of his doctrines.

The first one is intended to prove that all knowledge is based on and comes from the senses. The main criticism against Berkeley is that he takes for granted the law of contradiction in his proofs while denying that there is any knowledge not rooted in sense experience. The author interprets Berkeley as denying the independent existence of things and offers reasons for rejecting this alleged denial of Berkeley.

The fact is that Berkeley's position is not understood clearly by the author. Berkeley does not deny the reality of external objects. What he denies is that such objects could exist by themselves and independent of the Divine mind. That is, existence for him is synonymous with being the object of consciousness. Things cannot exist except as ideas inside minds. Why does Berkeley deny what Locke calls primary qualities? That is because he is reluctant to recognize such qualities as extension, number, motion, solidity and figure as being attributes of the Divine mind, perhaps in accordance with the theological notions of the scholastics. If external objects are to be conceived as



ideas in the Divine mind, there is no place for matter and materiality in the external world, matter being the main obstacle in the way of conceiving external objects as Divine ideas. Hence he denies the primary qualities as representing attributes of material bodies, and thus he annihilates matter. In some ways Berkeley's thesis that existence is mental is similar to the theory of God's 'knowledge by presence' (*ilm ḥuḍūrī*) propounded by some Muslim philosophers. In both the cases, things are conceived as objects of knowledge, not as things-in-themselves independent of a perceiving mind. On the whole, one may say that the reasons behind Berkeley's denial of matter and corporeality are mainly theological, because he regards the idea of material substratum as the base on which the concept of thing-in-itself rests. Since corporeality cannot be a quality of Divine ideas, Berkeley will not have any things-in-themselves. According to him everything that there is is thing-in-consciousness.

#### The Nature of Judgement:

However, to return to al-Ṣadr's criticism of Berkeley, it is obvious that Berkeley's denial of the objectivity of thought leads to solipsism. Berkeley's proofs involve a misunderstanding of the nature of knowledge. Knowledge has two main divisions according to al-Ṣadr: conception and judgement. The forms of objects exist on three levels in our intellect: (1) as percepts, on the level of sense perception, (2) as images, on the level of imagination (and perhaps memory), and (3) as concepts, on the abstract level of intellection. Mere concepts, in isolation from one another, do not ensure the mind's movement from the subjective to the objective realm. The presence of the form of an essence in our intellect is one thing, while the objective presence of that essence in the outside is something else (it is not clear whether this is true of sense perception or only of imagination and conception).

Judgement, however, is different from conception. It is the point of departure for the movement from conception to objectivity.

1. Judgement does not arise in the mind by way of senses. It is rather an act of the knowing mind.

2. Most importantly, it is an inherent property of judgement to reveal a reality beyond the mind. Although the mind has no direct conjunction with anything except its knowledge, it is inherent in judgement to be essentially disclosive (*kashfan dhātiyyan*) of something outside knowledge.

Berkeley's argument is based on a confusion between conception and judgement. The empirical doctrine that all knowledge arises from perception relates to the stage of conception. By failing to recognize the difference between concepts and judgements, it makes it impossible

to move in the direction of objectivity.

### Answers to Objections:

(1) It may be said that if it is inherent in judgement to essentially disclose reality lying beyond knowledge, then all judgements must be true, which is not the case. To solve this difficulty al-Ṣadr explains the meaning of 'essential disclosure'. It is inherent in judgement to point towards a reality independent of itself. Whether true or false, it discloses other than itself. Thus essential disclosure of judgement is not detached from judgement itself, even when there is error and ambiguity (the author uses the word 'knowledge' instead of judgement in this statement, which does not agree with the conception that knowledge is something always true).

(2) The second objection is that if judgement may be erroneous, its property of essential disclosure being unable to protect it from error, how can we rely upon it? The answer is that if human thought did not possess a number of judgements of indubitable certainty, no judgement would be free of doubt and it would be impossible for us to know any reality. It is here that the doctrine of necessary primary knowledge comes to our rescue. This doctrine asserts that there is a knowledge whose truth is secure and which is completely free from error. Error occurs in inferring secondary judgements on the basis of primary knowledge. Even Berkeley unconsciously believes in a store of certain knowledge, for no one can demonstrate anything unless he bases his demonstration on the fundamentals contained in primary knowledge — such as the law of contradiction and the principle of causality and necessity.

This discussion of philosophical idealism enables us to draw two conclusions: (1) the acceptance of the essentially disclosing nature of judgements, (2) the acceptance of basic principle of human knowledge whose truth is necessarily secure. Even Berkeley's belief in the existence of other minds and his proofs in favour of idealism assume the acceptance of these two notions.

Realism (which in metaphysics means that reality is not reducible to mind and thought, and in epistemology means the doctrine that objects of knowledge and experience exist independently of their being known or experienced) bases its arguments on these two principles.

### Idealism in Physics and Psychology:

The nineteenth-century physicist explained nature in terms of mechanical laws involving material bodies, particles and waves. The developments in atomic physics abolished the classical conception of matter. Matter was no more indestructible; mass and matter became

convertible to energy. As a result of this, the materialistic conception of the world became inconsistent with the findings of empirical science. The discoveries in subatomic particle physics lead to an idealistic tendency among some physicists. The concepts and theories of science, they said, were only convenient ways of discussing reality, whose true nature escaped the categories of thought and knowledge. This idealism, or absence of faith in the objective value of knowledge was, according to Martyr al-Ṣadr, the result of a philosophical error. They perceived the debate between realists and idealists as revolving about the choice of one of these two alternatives: Either the world is attributable to mind and consciousness, or to a material reality existing outside them. This is a fallacious formulation of the primary issue involved, that is whether the world has an objective reality independent of mind and consciousness (which in the last analysis may not be material).

As a result, when they failed to posit the fundamental reality of matter, they came to doubt the possibility of knowledge. However, realism and materialism are not synonymous. If science is led to discard the materialistic view of the world, or if any of its scientific axioms collapse as a result of experiments, it should not lead us to reject realism and deny the objective value of knowledge.

The evaporation of matter as a fundamental reality existing independently of mind was a deadly blow to materialist philosophies, including Marxism. However, the Marxist ideologues, such as Lenin, tried to save face by insisting that the philosophical conception of matter is different from the matter of science. The only necessary quality of 'matter', they pleaded, was its existence independent of mind, not the corporeal qualities traditionally ascribed to matter. This is a futile play with words, for it does not conceal the fact that Marxism has to abandon its philosophical position. If to exist independently of mind is the only necessary quality of matter, then theological metaphysics, according to this new definition of matter, is a materialistic philosophy!

The tendency towards idealism and agnosticism among the physicists was the result of a psychological crisis that came due to the collapse of certain scientific axioms. Materialism was such an axiom, but realism is not. Realism is not the result of empirical proof or experiments; its acceptance is inherent in human nature.

A similar skeptical tendency arose among the physiologists studying the physiology of perception and the causal processes related to it. They suggested that the objects given in sense perception are symbolic, not representative of the external objects. This tendency was a complication of the materialistic notion that knowledge was purely a physiological act conditioned by the nature of the nervous system.

### Skepticism:

Modern skepticism has its progenitor in the post-Aristotelian Greek school of skepticism headed by Pyrrho (b.c. 360 B.C.). It did not confine itself to showing the contradictions of sense perception but went on to an analysis of knowledge to assert the impossibility of certainty. Hume took Locke's and Berkeley's empiricism to its logical conclusion by throwing doubt on causality and induction and abolished the distinction between rational belief and credulity. Not only God but also the self, other minds and external reality fell prey to a skepticism based on the denial of the principle of causality, which was again based on the empirical theory of knowledge. Hume's explanation of causality, as pointed out before, is unsuccessful.

### Relativism:

Relativism, in the context of metaphysics and epistemology, is, according to al-Ṣadr, a doctrine which asserts the existence of independent reality and the possibility of knowledge, but a relative knowledge that is not free from subjective attachments. Hence the author proposes to discuss certain main relativistic tendencies, beginning with Kant's philosophy.

### Kant's 'Relativism':

Kant believes that propositions are of two kinds: analytic and synthetic. An analytic proposition is one in which the predicate is part of the subject; for instance, 'The triangle is three-sided'. The synthetic propositions are those which are not analytic; they give new information.

Propositions are also distinguishable into two other kinds: *a priori* and empirical. *A priori* judgements, though they may be elicited by experience, have a basis other than experience, unlike empirical judgements which are rooted in experience. Some *a priori* judgements are synthetic. All the propositions of pure mathematics are *a priori* in this sense. The propositions of sciences are synthetic and empirical. Kant believes space and time to be formal attributes of the perceiving subject which give a spacial and temporal structure to all experience. He agrees with Berkeley that matter is not given in knowledge and sense experience, but disagrees with him in holding that external reality cannot exist independently of mind. Things independent of mind, the things-in-themselves, do exist. Percepts are caused by things in themselves and are ordered by our mental apparatus in space and time. Things-in-themselves, which are the causes of sensations, are unknowable; they are not

in space or time, nor are they substances.

In addition to the subjectivity of space and time, Kant believes in the subjectivity of these twelve categories divided into four sets of three: (1) of quantity: unity, plurality, totality; (2) of quality: reality, negation, limitation, (3) of relation: substance-and-accident, cause-and-effect, reciprocity, (4) of modality: possibility, existence, necessity (of these, al-Ṣadr mentions only causality). These, like time and space, are subjective; i.e. our mental constitution is such that they are applicable to whatever we experience, but there is no reason to suppose them applicable to things-in-themselves.

Mathematical propositions are all *a priori*. These are the only synthetic judgements which are *a priori*, because they rest not upon the variable and contingent content of experience but upon the unchanging forms of space and time in which all experience is given.

The statements of natural science, which are empirical and synthetic, are composed of two elements, one of which is empirical and the other rational. The empirical aspect relates to the content or stuff of experience, whereas the rational element relates to mind and its forms and categories. The natural sciences, according to Kant, do not describe the external order of things-in-themselves, but are valid and trustworthy within the realm of experience, i.e. the experienced order of 'things-in-us'.

Here al-Ṣadr does not appear to appreciate the depth of Kant's skepticism regarding the knowledge of the external world, which he interprets as a kind of relativism. Hence these statements of his: "Knowledge (in Kant's philosophy), therefore, is a mixture of subjectivity and objectivity", and "That is why relativity is imposed on every truth representing external things in our knowledge, in the sense that our knowledge indicates to us the thing's reality in us, and not the thing's reality in itself". He does not seem to notice that Kant's extreme subjectivism makes not only metaphysics impossible but so also natural science, which is reduced to some kind of phenomenology. Kant's subjectivism makes his realism altogether ineffectual. The things-in-themselves are shadows that lurk on the boundaries of his system, which is idealist and subjective through and through. His realism is as useless for science as his rationalism is useless for metaphysics and theology.

Al-Ṣadr's criticism, however, is addressed mainly to Kant's denial of the possibility of metaphysics. According to Kant, there can be no synthetic judgements relating to metaphysics. Empirical synthetic judgements, like that of the sciences, involve mind's formal modes and categories: space and time and the categories of quantity, quality, relation and modality. These finite categories apply to sense-experience and phenomena, not to things-in-themselves, the noumena. God, soul,

and the noumenal world lie beyond experience, and hence there can be no empirical [synthetic] judgements about them. Also, since the noumenal world transcends mind's *a priori* concepts, *a priori* synthetic judgements, like that of logic and mathematics, which are purely formal and empty of content, cannot pertain to metaphysics. Accordingly there is no room in metaphysics for anything but analytic judgements, which do not constitute any real knowledge at all.

Al-Ṣadr, it seems, does not notice that Kant has built the realm of the mind and experience into an almost autonomous and self-contained world by itself (almost, we said, allowing for Kant's inconsequential belief in the unknowable things-in-themselves, which cause sensations). This is shown by the 'two basic errors' in Kant's theory that he points out. Firstly, he points out, Kant considers mathematical science to 'produce' mathematical truths and principles, which are above error and contradiction, whereas every realistic philosophy must recognize that science does not 'produce' or 'create' truths. Science is revelatory of what transcends the limits of mind. The propositions of mathematics reflect an objective reality and are, in this sense, similar to the laws of natural science. Secondly, "Kant considers the laws that have their foundation in the human mind as laws of the mind, and not scientific reflections of the objective laws that govern and regulate the world as a whole. They are nothing but relations present in the mind naturally, and used by the mind to organize its empirical knowledge." Such a position, al-Ṣadr says, leads to idealism, "for if the primary knowledge in the mind is nothing but dependent relations awaiting a subject in which to appear, then how could we move from conception to objectivity? Further, how could we prove the objective reality of our various sense perceptions — that is, the natural phenomena whose objectivity Kant admits?"

The fact is that Kant's position is already deeply steeped in idealism. In his system extreme rationalism leads to an inscrutable subjectivism. Kant, in the ultimate analysis, is not a relativist but a skeptic, if not altogether a sophist. Objectivity for him lies *within* the inner realm of experience. Knowledge, he would say in reply to al-Ṣadr, is indeed revelatory, but revelatory of that which is *within* this realm.

### Relativism in Philosophy and Sciences:

After discussing Kant, Martyr al-Ṣadr directs his attention to other relativistic tendencies in philosophy and sciences. 'Subjective relativism' is such a tendency in philosophy (viz. in James, Schiller, Vaihinger), which asserts that truth is nothing but what is necessitated by an individual's specific circumstances and conditions of knowing. It is supported by physiological idealism which asserts that sense perception

is symbolic, not representative, its quality being determined by the workings of the nervous system, not external reality. This kind of outlook makes all knowledge relative without exception, even mathematics, which was excepted by Kant. Also, unlike Kant, it makes truth vary with individuals.

In the field of science, there are some theories which lead to skepticism despite the intention of their proponents. These are behaviourism, Freudianism and historical materialism. Behaviourism, which regards external stimuli and physiological conditioning as preceding the mind and consciousness and as determinants of its contents, unavoidably leads to a denial of the value of knowledge. The author has discussed it elaborately in Chapter 5 of Part 2 of the present work.

According to Freud, the contents of the conscious mind are determined by the appetites, urges and instincts hidden in the unconscious, which rule conduct and the conscious mind and its ideas. The Freudian view of the mind as an instrument of the unconscious and its instincts leads to skepticism by denying its function of mirroring and reflecting objective reality. The author, here, promises to deal with Freud's views touching upon the theory of knowledge in a future book, *Our Society*, which he did not succeed in writing.

Historical materialism, which may be regarded here as a sociological theory, also leads to skepticism by treating knowledge and ideas as part of social composition. According to this theory, economic condition, determined by the means of production, is the determining basis of society. Knowledge and thought are thus linked to social structure and the economic forces. Economic forces occupy the same position here as unconscious urges in Freud's theory; both lead to loss of confidence in the possibility of knowledge. The inevitable links between thought and the economic factor in historical materialism contradicts with the Marxist theory of knowledge which asserts confidence in the possibility of knowledge.

Here the author makes an important remark: All theories that argue against the objective value of knowledge involve a contradiction; by eliminating confidence in knowledge they destroy their own foundation and condemn themselves. In the light of this, behaviourism becomes a product of Pavlov's physiology and stimuli; Freud's theory a product of his unconscious urges; historical materialism also becomes a product of the economic conditions in which Marx lived.

### Knowledge in Islamic Philosophy:

At this point Martyr al-Ṣadr again recapitulates the main points in the theory of knowledge of Islamic philosophers. These points are as follows.

1. Human knowledge is of two kinds: Conception and judgement (or assent). Conception, in its various forms, has no objective value (not in the sense that concepts are not derived from perception of reality, but in the sense that they by themselves are not sufficient to take hold of objective reality in the sense that judgements do). Only judgement has the quality of essentially disclosing reality.

2. All knowledge of judgement type can be attributed to necessary primary knowledge, whose necessity cannot (and need not) be proved and whose truth cannot be demonstrated (on account of its self-evidence). However, the mind is conscious of the necessity of accepting it. Examples of such knowledge are the law of contradiction and the law of causality. It is on these principles that all other judgements must be based. The objective value of judgements depends on the degree to which they rest upon these principles. It is possible in the light of these principles to acquire knowledge in metaphysics, mathematics and natural sciences. In the natural sciences knowledge is acquired by applying the primary principles through the mediation of experiment, which is not needed in mathematics and metaphysics. This is the reason why the conclusions of metaphysics and mathematics are, for the most part, certain, in contrast to those of the natural sciences.

Sometimes the drawing of metaphysical conclusions may depend on experimentation. In that case a philosophical theory has the same value and rank as a scientific theory.

The concept we form of an external reality is two sided. One side is the form of the thing it represents. In the other respect, it is fundamentally different from the objective reality of that thing; it enjoys none of the effectiveness and activity of the thing represented. This difference between the idea and reality is the difference between quiddity and existence, as described in Part 2 of this work.

### Knowledge in Dialectical Materialism:

Dialectical materialism asserts the possibility of knowledge and rejects idealism and relativism, as well as skepticism and sophistry. It is here that the author, for the first time in his book, takes up Marxist epistemology for a critical study. All that which was said hitherto on the theory of knowledge, about the views of the Sophists, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Kant was a preparation for examination of the Marxist viewpoint on knowledge. Basing as it does its theory of knowledge on the empirical doctrine, on dialectical movement of thought and synthesis of contradictions, can it refute idealism and avoid relativism and skepticism? The author's purpose is to show that it fails in this venture.



### Marxism and Refutation of Idealism:

Marxism fails to refute idealism by its stand that all knowledge is derived from experience. It fails to notice that in the dispute between idealism and realism sense experience cannot be a judge, for the idealist claims that things exist only in sense experience while the realist asserts that they exist independently of sense experience. The realist cannot demonstrate the objectivity of sense experience — i.e. of its being representative of another independent reality — by sense experience itself. So also arguments from science can be valid only if the objectivity of experience and experiment has already been posited.

The efforts of Marxist ideologues like Engels, Lenin, Roger Garaudy and Georges Politzer are naive in that they try to refute idealism with arguments from science, which are pointless as long as the objectivity of science has not been established on philosophical grounds. Yet this is something that Marxism cannot do, because:

(1) It does not accept necessary rational principles. According to it, the principle of causality, for example, is an empirical principle. Therefore, it cannot be considered a basis for the validity and objectivity of sense experience.

(2) The dialectic explains external events by contradictions internal to matter: natural events do not require an external cause. The idealist can assert the same thing about phenomena and claim that knowledge and experience arise out of their inner contradictions without the need of any external cause in the form of an independent reality.

The author cites some naive arguments advanced by Marxists against idealism which are derived from science or commonsense, but which in fact side step the real issue or beg the question. Once again al-Ṣadr concludes that it is not possible to base a sound realism except on the basis of the rational theory of knowledge which asserts the presence of necessary rational principles independent of sense experience.

### Sense Experience and the Thing-in-Itself:

Al-Ṣadr here quotes Marxist texts that state that there is no basic difference between the thing-in-itself and the phenomenon, between outward reality and the manner in which it appears to consciousness. But there is a duality here, between appearance and reality, for according to empiricism the senses perceive only the phenomena. Can Marxism eliminate this duality and prove that external reality appears to us in our percepts and ideas *as it is*?

The answer is, No, because knowledge according to materialism is purely a physiological act. Unlike mechanical materialists, the dialectic

tical materialists claim that the idea of a thing is not its pure mechanical picture. Since qualitatively different forms of motion can transform from one to another, the physical motion of a thing changes into a physiological motion in our senses. Then the physiological motion changes into the psychological motion of the idea. To begin with such changes are not admissible, and even if they be admitted it means that Marxism does not succeed in revealing the relation between a thing and its idea except as a relation between a cause and its effect or at the most that of a reality and its reflected picture.

But why should we assume that this effect and cause differ from other effects and causes and are distinguished from them by a special characteristic, namely that the effect pictures its cause faithfully? Of course, there are many physiological events that are effects of external causes without having the capacity of picturing their causes. Even if such a thing were admitted, how do we know that the idea (percept) fully corresponds to the objective reality?

The Marxists answer this objection by asserting that thought is a part and product of nature; rather its highest expression. Our knowledge is nothing other than a superior product of nature; it cannot but reflect the laws of the motions of matter. The products of thought, being the products of nature, are not in contradiction but in agreement with the rest of material nature.

Yet this is not sufficient for proving the possibility of knowledge. Aren't idealist thought and theological and metaphysical thought as much part of nature and products of it as dialectical materialism?

### Truth and Dialectical Movement of Thought:

Marxism rejected the relativity theory of truth as a kind of sophistry, but it itself admitted relativity by asserting that:

(1) there are no absolute truths; truth grows and develops in a way that reflects the growth and development of external reality; (2) truth and falsehood may come together; there is no absolute incompatibility between truth and falsity as asserted by formal logic; (3) all judgements, regardless of how truthful they may appear, involve contradiction and hence an aspect of falsity. It is such a contradiction that makes knowledge and truth grow. Al-Ṣadr now proceeds to refute each of these notions.

Truth, according to realism, is an idea that corresponds to a reality that exists independently of mind and consciousness. There is a second definition of 'truth' given by subjective relativists, according to which it is something which is consistent with the mind's formulations. The third definition of truth, advanced by the pragmatists and instrumentalists, is that it is some idea whose benefit or utility is demonstrated by

practical experience. Bergson described truth as a creation not discovery. Schiller and Dewey proposed nearly similar definitions of truth.

Pragmatism involves a clear confusion between the meaning of truth and the motives behind attempts to attain it. Moreover: (1) to give truth a pure practical meaning and to strip it of the quality of disclosing independent reality is an unrestricted admission of skepticism; (2) secondly, it is not clear whether the benefit of individual or that of society is to be the criterion of truth. If the criterion is the former, it would lead to a social chaos. If the latter, a long social experience is required to affirm the validity of any statement. This would apply to the pragmatic doctrine itself, whose truth cannot be determined without the test of experience. (3) That an idea is beneficial is not sufficient for its acceptance. For instance, a disbeliever cannot accept religion even if he agrees that it is effective in rectifying human conduct.

If Marxism is to assert the possibility of knowledge, it cannot do so without adopting the correspondence theory of truth on which realism rests. For it is impossible on the basis of this theory to hold that truth develops and grows. Marxism understands neither motion nor truth when it holds that truth is subject to movement, and motion and becoming involve contradiction.

In the description of a process involving motion, change or becoming, a statement describing a certain momentary state is absolutely true at that moment; it cannot, after that, become contrary to that reality at that specific stage.

Moreover, Marxism abolishes itself by applying the law of movement to truth. If movement is a general law governing truths, then it is impossible to affirm any absolute truth, including the judgements of logic and mathematics, to say nothing of the doctrine of dialectical materialism itself.

Marxism finds fault with formal logic for accepting absolute opposition between truth and falsity. The Marxist notion of the union of truth and falsity is based on two misconceptions. One of them is the notion of the development and movement of truth and the other is that motion is nothing but a series of contradictions. The author postpones the study of the second issue to Part 2 of this work. Nevertheless, it is evident even at this stage of the argument that application of the laws of the dialectic to the realm of knowledge undermines the foundations of all rational knowledge.

**Science and Absolute Truth:** Al-Ṣadr cites here an argument of Engels wherein the latter criticizes the principle that truth is absolutely incompatible with falsehood. Engels cites the example of a general scientific law (Boyle's law) which is not true in certain cases to assert that if the metaphysicians were correct in their assertion that truths are

absolute and totally incompatible with falsity, then they would have to reject every scientific law because it is not true in some cases. Al-Ṣadr points out that Engels does not understand well the phrase 'absolute truth'. He explains that propositions are of two types: simple (e.g. 'Plato died before Aristotle') and composite (e.g. 'Bodies expand by heat'). A simple proposition cannot be true in one respect and false in another. But since a composite proposition is really a bundle of numerous simple propositions, it is true in some cases and false in other. But this does not mean that truth and falsity unite. A composite proposition is completely true in the case that it is true, and completely false in the case that it is false.

Following conclusions are derived from this study:

1. Truth is absolute and unprogressive, even though the objective reality develops and changes.

2. Truth is fully incompatible with falsity. A simple proposition cannot be both true and false.

3. The application of dialectic to truth leads to complete skepticism. By regarding truth as in continuous change and development, the dialectic sentences itself to death.

**The Marxist Relapse into Subjectivism:** Despite claiming an objective character for its own relativism, Marxism relapses into subjective relativism by linking consciousness with class. Although this is class subjectivity, and not the individual subjectivity of subjective relativists, no one can secure in its light the truth of any philosophical or scientific judgement in the sense of its correspondence to objective reality. As long as Marxism upholds the necessity of class character, it cannot offer a world view of universal validity. (Here Part 1 ends).

Here at the conclusion of the summary of Part 1 of *Our Philosophy*, some relevant remarks may not be out of place. It is true that Marx, Freud and the Behaviourists are wrong in regarding the economic factor or the urges of the unconscious or the physiological factors as the exclusive determinant of thought and consciousness but it would also be wrong to refuse to acknowledge the influence, no matter how undesirable, of these factors on consciousness and thought. The history of human thought, more than being a history of intellectual health, is an account of monstrous perversions and deviations. Correct, clear and healthy thinking has been and remains an exception rather than the rule.

In this regard, the Holy Quran, also, refers to the role of tradition and desire (*ahwā'*) in deviating men from the course of true intellection, and considers ethnic, social, political and economic factors as the causes behind social conflict, division and diversity. To recognize the causes

which lie behind deviant thought is as important as the necessity of defending the value of human knowledge. And perhaps it is only after we have fully recognized these deviating factors that we can fully appreciate the possibility of certain knowledge.

*To be continued — in shā' Allāh*

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## Book Reviews

**THE ELEVENTH HOUR: The Spiritual Crisis of the Modern World in the Light of Tradition and Prophecy.** By Martin Lings. Quinta Essentia: Cambridge, 1987. Pp. 124, ISBN 0-946621-07-1, £ 10.50. Distributed by Element Books Ltd., Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8PL, England.

Martin Lings belongs to a modern school of mystic thought whose central ideas are derived from the Islamic mystic tradition and which closely follows the inclinations and emphases in the thought of its 'founder', René Guénon. Titus Burckhardt, Ananda Coomaraswamy, Frithjof Schuon and Sayyid Ḥusayn Naṣr are some of its leading proponents, who have expounded the Eastern mystic traditions and directed a scathing criticism against the modern civilization, its world view and values.

Guénon was perhaps the first in the 20th-century wilderness to cry out with prophetic conviction that the 'end' was near. He set down his fears and hopes, his evaluation of the past and his predictions of the future in *The Crisis of the Modern World* (1927) and his other writings. The present book is another echo of the same warning: The end is already in sight, though not immediately imminent.

Actually, it is almost an hour since the 'eleventh hour' struck and the world holds its breath, having closed its ears, for the twelfth to strike.

The author begins by pointing out, in the preface, how the word Intellect lost its original sense since 'the Enlightenment'. In the next chapter, "Signs of the Times", he points out that unlike the past centuries during which human generations, one after another, have been expecting the 'end' of the world, the present century is unique in that it is less expectant of the end today than ever before. Yet 'the end is in the air, existentially sensed....It is as if the souls and bodies of men were woven of finality'.

The next chapter, "The Vineyard and the Marketplace," is an invitation, and an exhortation, for the would-be 'workers' to take up esoteric labour, not thinking that it is too late; for, as in the parable, those who began work only at the eleventh hour shall receive the same wages as those who have 'borne the burden and the heat of the day'. Guénon also wrote about the need for a Western esoteric elite. Lings hopes that there is yet time for an elite to emerge. He gives reasons as to why the last should be first and invites the would-be worker 'to turn

his back on the 'marketplace' more implacably than ever before. But in order to do so, he says, 'it is necessary to see the modern world's enormities as such and to be actively and vigilantly opposed to them, instead of being, if only subconsciously, their passive accomplice.'

Accordingly, next three chapters are devoted to these enormities. 'What is it about our times rather than any other which has brought "the cup of God's anger" to the brink of overflow?' asks the man of today. The very putting of the question is itself the answer to the question, Lings points out. In the former generations men did fall short of the human norm, 'but modern man is unique in falling so far as to lose sight of it, to the point of questioning its existence, and even fabricating a new 'norm' out of the limitations of his own decadent experience.' Lings proceeds to discuss the modern dogmas of scientism and evolutionism, the pseudo-religion which nourishes modern man's destructive complacency, not only in communist countries where Providence is officially excluded but also in so-called Christendom where the Vatican is so eager to prove that it is no longer 'behind the times.'

In the next chapter, "The Political Extreme" the author interprets Plato to suggest a classification of different types of governments representing different stages of decline from the ideal: Theocracy, principled autocracy, democracy, dictatorship (or unprincipled demagoguery). Politically, also, the modern world is undergoing the last steps of decline, as 'we are living in the very age of democracy and dictatorship, since these are the inevitable outcome of moving away from the principles.' The difference between modern democracies and dictatorship is 'the difference between allowing evil...and enforcing evil.'

The West, Lings points out, is no longer theocratically governable, for 'no community in the West is sufficiently open to transcendent truths for there to be so much as a necessary minimum of individuals capable of discerning the difference between a legally enforced restraint based on those truths and a tyranny based on arbitrary human opinion.' From the viewpoint of secular democratic education, both the restraints in question are tyrannies. Lings laments the fall of theocracy in Tibet but is hopeful of the East's future. 'The fact...that such a theocracy could have existed so recently suggests that the situation in the East is still different from that in the West'...and 'it would also probably be true to say that the mass of the people is still theocratically governable in most Islamic countries.' However, no effective return to the Islamic civilization in the true sense is possible as long as the modern civilization still exists, since the two are incompatible.

Martin Lings here takes no notice of the Islamic Revolution in Iran which took place eight years before the publication of this book — something which makes one doubt that he is not certain of the 'traditional' basis of this movement. And, as if nothing is to be made of all these



decades since Guénon first talked about 'the elect', Lings remarks, 'A whole network of far-reaching changes would be necessary if the civilization were to be spiritually operative. Meantime a minority of intellectuals might re-establish a traditional framework for themselves and have the spiritual benefits it offers, while keeping the modern world at bay by all sorts of compromises which only they would know how to make.' 'Whole nations could become traditionally civilized only if and when the modern 'civilization' is taken from them by force.'

In the last chapter, "The Restorer", about the Restoration to be brought by the Mahdi, whose coming would mark the fulfilment of the Messianic hopes of various religious traditions, Lings quotes this passage of Guénon written in anticipation of the global Messianic redress:

For that redress the way will have to be prepared, even visibly, before the end of the present cycle; but this can only be done by him who unites in him the forces of Heaven and Earth, of the East and the West, and who shall manifest in the domains both of knowledge and of action the two-fold power of priest and of king which has been preserved throughout the ages in the integrity of its one principle.(p.97)

Lings' book is surely a part of this effort in paving the way for the Restorer. How much of the forces of heaven and earth the message of Guénon's school unites in itself, it is for the heavens to judge. But in uniting the 'forces' of the East and the West, he and his followers seem to have failed to avoid the perilous path of eclecticism, of collecting handy doctrines now from here now from there, making as if the intellect the sole criterion of the truth. This is inconsistent with their own admission of the transcendence of the source of the principles.

Yet despite such faults they have presented a piercing and profound exposition of esoteric teachings and the most objective and intelligent criticism of the Western civilization, which is not merely 'Islamic' in the narrow sense but universal in the Islamic sense.

— 'Alī Qulī Qarā'ī

## Readers' Forum

'Abdallāh E. Sodagar  
Laranjeiro, Portugal

Thanks for *al-Tawhīd*, which is certainly a good source of information about Islam, and I read it with great interest and admiration and pass it on to my Muslim brothers and learned friends.

Before the formation of Pakistan, I was a staunch and militant supporter of Muslim League in India. We gave sacrifices and fought to save our Islamic identity and culture. Over a million Muslims abandoned India, left behind their homes, assets and comfort, but they were all disappointed in a few years, for Islam was not practised in Pakistan. Forty-two years after the independence, they have not been able to present an Islamic constitution. I have travelled almost throughout the Middle East (Islamic countries) but did not come across any Islamic government. On the contrary, I saw brother exploiting brother; there was no limit to corruption, alcohol was a part of life, and dictatorship prevailed everywhere. I was always confused, not knowing the reason for all that mess and not knowing the answer. Fifty years after, I found an answer in *al-Tawhīd*: I mean the article on the identity crisis of modern Muslim nations and states. It was useful and enlightening.

In 1980 I left Mozambique and arrived as a refugee in Lisbon. I am not sorry to have lost all my assets in Africa, for now I got my Islam in Portugal, due to the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

Susanne Ayob  
Burlingame, CA, U.S.A.

The unprecedented, immoral and

illegal shooting down of Iran Air Airbus (Flight 655) by the U.S. warship Vincennes sent the Muslim world into mourning and shock. Sister Mahliqā Qarā'ī was one of the 290 innocent victims murdered on that day of July....Sister Mahliqā Qarā'ī was a sincere servant who dedicated her life to the propagation of Truth through her talent in Persian and English. Yes, many know her through the outstanding English translations she provided to the world via her work with *al-Tawhīd*....

Sisters and brothers, we have indeed suffered a heavy loss through the murdering of Sister Mahliqā. Let us send a message to those repulsive murderers, who are the same as those who were at the helm of the Makkah Massacre. They are the same murderers who have been navigating through a sea of blood in order to take control of Lebanon and Palestine. They are the same murderers who are always busy in killing the spirit of Truth in people through mass media, drugs and corruption....

Sisters and brothers. We must take action. We should do what Sister Mahliqā did and thousands of true believers continue to do. We must replace each murdered, dedicated servant with ten dedicated ones. This means that if I am currently an inactive Muslim, I must become active. Activity comes in many forms and we must analyze our abilities the Merciful God has bestowed upon us and put ourselves to work in His cause. This will make the murderers know that their strategy is self-defeating, if each time they murder one Muslim it leads many more Muslims to awaken....

Let us all hold on tightly to the

rope of unity, so that it becomes a noose around the necks of the murderers of Sister Mahliqā and those aboard Flight 655, who ambushed the unarmed *hujjāj* in the Holy Makkah last year and continue to victimize thousands upon thousands, physically and mentally....

May Allah's peace be upon all those who have given their life in His cause and may He reward all those who strive in the way of Truth and righteousness.

**In Memory of Sister Mahliqā Qarā'ī**

*These few words we offer  
Somehow don't compare  
To all the words you translated  
With dedication and care.*

*In service to Allah you fought  
to further dear Islam  
With translated contributions...  
Like Forty Ḥadīth by Imam.*

*It was through your work with words  
That you chose to give  
And it is through these very words  
Your memory will live.*

*You were our beloved  
On Iran Air 655  
Your destination you have reached  
A martyr, still alive.*

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			31	9685		39	Iraq-Syria-Lebanon-Occupied Palestine-Jordan
			41	7230		38-39	Iraq-Syria-North Saudi Arabia-Egypt
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French	06:30-07:30	-	41	7110	100.7	27-28-37	West Europe
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German	18:00-18:45	-	49	6080	100.7	27-28-37	West Europe
			31	9022		27-28-29-37-38	West Europe - North Africa - West U.S.S.R.
Spanish	20:30-21:30	-	49	6080	100.7	27-28-37	West Europe
			31	9022		27-28-29-37-38	West Europe - North Africa - West U.S.S.R.
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Russian	13:00-14:00	702	-	-	-	29-40	Southwest U.S.S.R. - North Iran
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Turkish	04:00-05:00	-	41	7110	100.7	39	Turkey - North Middle East
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			31	9685		39	Iraq - Syria - Lebanon - Occupied Palestine - Jordan
			41	7215		39	Saudi Arabia - North & South Yemen - North Ethiopia
			41	7230		40-41	Afghanistan - Pakistan
	14:30-15:30	765	-	-	-	39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
	15:30-16:30	765	-	-	-	39-40-41	Indian Subcontinent - Persian Gulf Littoral States - East Iran
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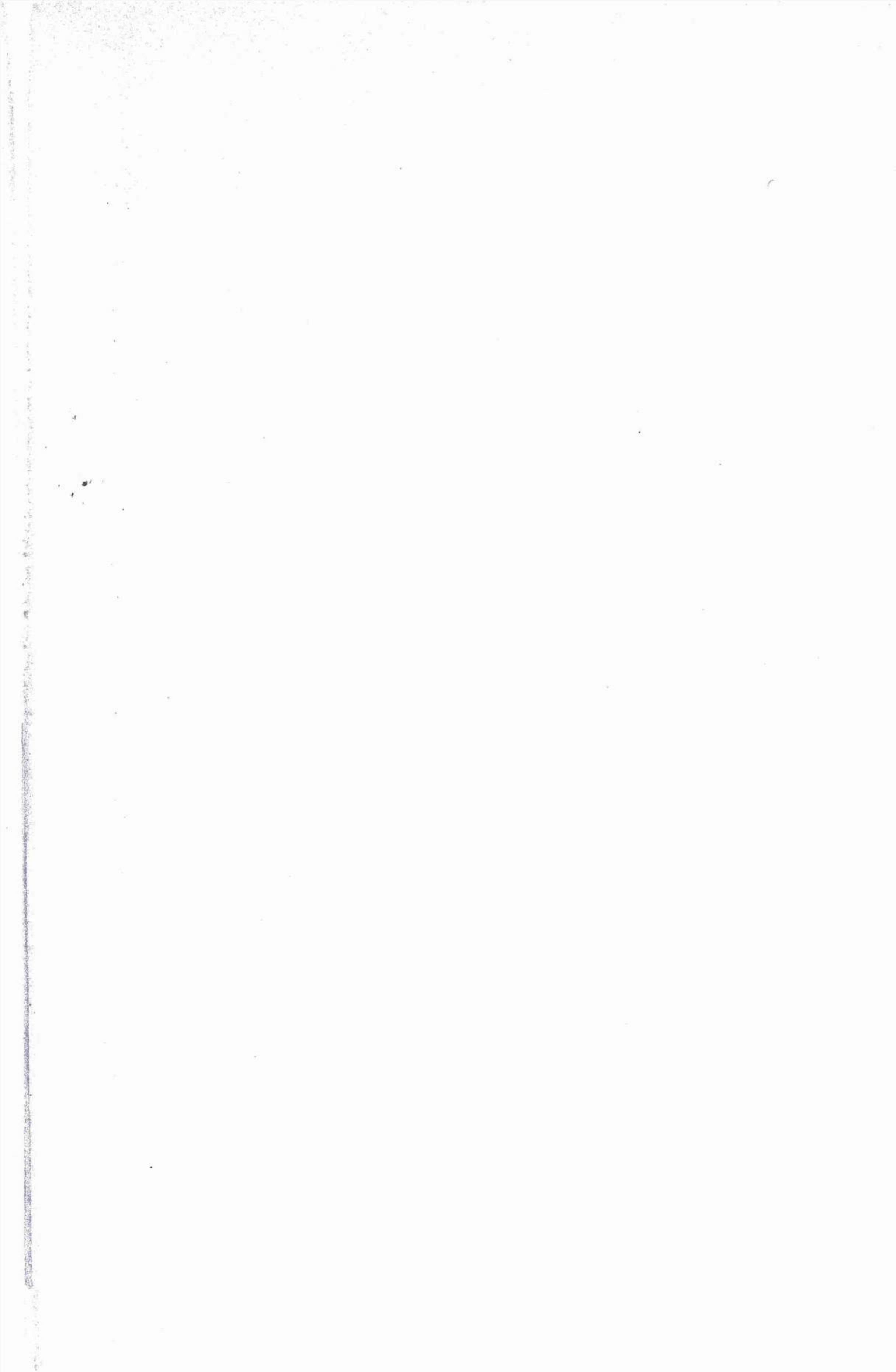
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		-	-	-	95.5	40	Isfahan
Arabic	21:30-22:30		31		100.7	27-28-29-37-38	West Europe - North Africa - West U.S.S.R.
	02:30-03:30		31		100.7	27-28-29-37-38	West Europe - North Africa - West U.S.S.R.
			19			8-9-27-28	Eastern Part of American cont. - western & Central part of Europe
	03:30-07:30		49		97.7	38-39	Egypt - South Middle East
			49			39	Iraq-Syria - Lebanon - Occupied Palestine - Jordan
			49			39	Saudi Arabia - North and South Yemen - North Ethiopia
			41			38-39	Iraq - Syria - North Saudi Arabia - Egypt
	03:30-04:30	1386				39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
	05:30-07:30	1386				39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
	09:30-11:30		49		97.7	39	Saudi Arabia - North and South Yemen - North Ethiopia
			31			39	Iraq - Syria - Lebanon - Occupied Palestine - Jordan
			41			38-39	Iraq - Syria - North Saudi Arabia - Egypt
			31			38-39	Egypt - South Middle East
	09:30-12:00	1220			97.7	39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
		1386				39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
		1220				39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
		1332				40	North, South and West Iran
	16:45-21:30	1359				40	Tehran
		1566				39-40	Arab Middle East - Southwest Iran
		1386				39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
17:30-21:30		1386				39-40	Arab Middle East - West Iran
17:15-21:30		49		97.7	39	Iraq - Syria - Lebanon - Occupied Palestine - Jordan	
		41			39	Saudi Arabia - North and South Yemen - North Ethiopia	
		41			38-39	Iraq - Syria - North Saudi Arabia - Egypt	
17:15-20:30		31			38-39	Egypt - South Middle East	
17:30-20:30	765				39-40-41	Indian Subcontinent - Persian Gulf Littoral States - East Iran	
18:30-21:30	1197				39-40	North Middle East-Northwest Iran	

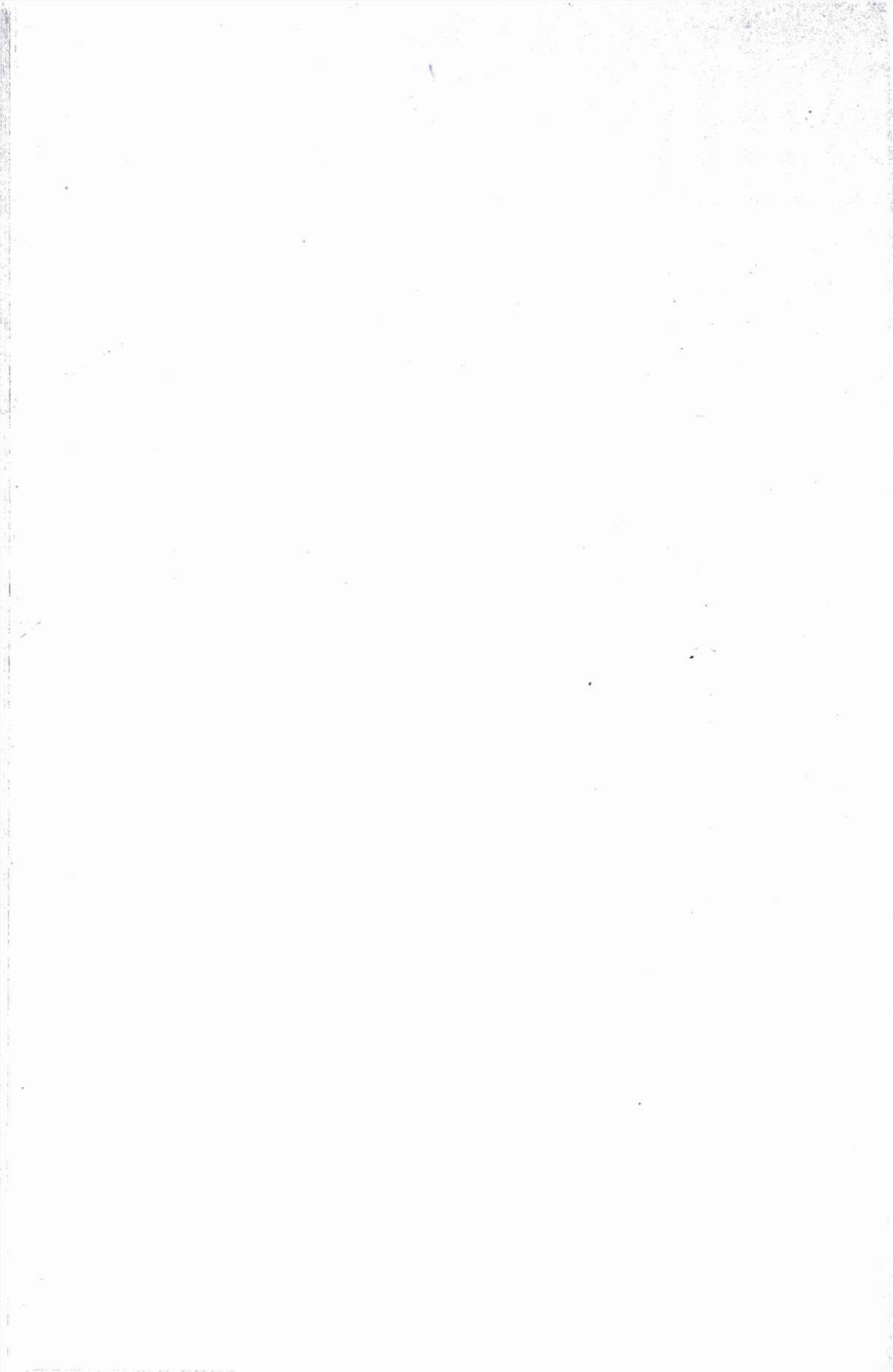
















# The Muslim World BOOK REVIEW

Vol. 4 No. 1 AUTUMN 1993

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