

ALL SOLUTIONS
ARE WITH
THE PROPHET'S PROGENY

BY
DR. MUHAMMAD AT-TUJIB AL-GAMHARI



Translated by
Abdullah al-Nasiri

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Author : Dr. Muhammad at-Tijani as-Sammawi

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Introduction

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds, and the best of blessings and purest of greetings be on the one sent as mercy to all creatures; our master and guardian Abul Qasim Muhammad ibn Abdullah the last of prophets and messengers and on his immaculate progeny the leaders of guidance and lanterns in darkness; the imams of the nation and saviors of mankind. Allah has, by the grace of Muhammad and his progeny (peace be on them), favored me with the guidance to know the Truth that there is nothing after which except deviation, and made me taste the sweetness of the fruit that had ripen in the six books; 1 Then I was Guided, To be with the Truthful, Then ask the People of Remembrance (those who know), the Shia are the People of the Surma, Fear Allah, Know the Truth, in order to inform of that concealed truth, and consequently many truthful people who always search for the pure truth, turned to follow the way of the immaculate Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and became Shia.



Such people cannot be counted. In fact, only Allah the Almighty knows their real number : And none knows the hosts of your Lord but He Himself. 2 However, the many letters that come to me in Paris and in Tunisia from everywhere in the world make me happy and hopeful that the deliverance of Allah is imminent and that His promise is true. Thus, I quote this verse that reads : Or do you think that you would enter the garden while yet the state of those who have passed away before you has not

1 Written by the author before.

2 Qur'an, 74:31.

come upon you; distress and affliction befell them and they were shaken violently, so that the Messenger and those who believed with him said: When will the help of Allah come? Now surely the help of Allah is nigh. 3 Through reading those letters, I feel that goodness does not and shall never stop at all and that the truth prevails and is not overcome. Allah the Almighty says, Nay! We cast the truth against the falsehood, so that it breaks its head, and lo! it vanishes. 4

Since it is Allah Who casts the truth against the falsehood, so I do not and will never hesitate at all in announcing what I believe that it is the truth until Allah judges between me and those fanatics who approve nothing except that which they have accustomed to, even if it is false, and deny nothing except that which they have ignored even if it is truth. Nevertheless, I pray Allah to endow them with guidance and success, for it is He Who guides whomever He likes to the Right Path. And since I communicate with a great number of readers and researchers through letters or direct reviews during the lectures that I give on different occasions, I found that some people saw that which I had written (in my books) as the truth, but they often said: we are in no need to provoke these problems that may be against the unity of Muslims in a time that the west and the east have gathered together to do away with the Muslims. I saw in their saying an acceptable logic and reasonable opinion, because they try their best to narrow the cycle of disagreement and to unite the rows (of Muslims); therefore, I followed their request obediently and accepted their advices with gratefulness calling to mind the saying of Ameerul Mo'minin (a.s.) :

"Let the most beloved of affairs to you be the most

3 Qur'an, 2:214.

4 Qur'an, 21:81.

moderate of which in the truth, the most comprehensive in justice, and most thorough in the satisfaction of the subjects, because the dissatisfaction of the public annuls the satisfaction of the upper class, and the dissatisfaction of the upper class is forgiven by the satisfaction of the public ..." 5 For all that, I put before dear readers this book All Solutions are with the Prophet's progeny' in which I try all my best to avoid the sensitive issues that may provoke some people and then take them away from the truth, and thus the purpose of guiding them becomes vain.

In fact, I think that the provocative manner that provokes high souls, which I have depended on in my previous books, has given fruitful and wonderful results; nevertheless, it is no problem to me to follow a peaceful, lenient manner that may convince many people, and here the fruits become more delicious and more appetizing. Thus, I follow the two manners together as the Holy Qur'an that has followed the manner of interesting and the manner of warning to take the greedy to the Paradise and save the fearful from the Hell. Since we do not look forward to the position of Imam Ali (a.s.) who did not worship Allah out of the greed for His Paradise nor out of the fear of His Fire and who even if the screen had been uncovered to him he would not have been more certain than he had been, so we ask Allah the Almighty to favor us with His mercy and join us to the righteous.

5 From Imam Ali's missive to Malik al-Ashtar when he (Imam Ali) appointed him as the wali over Egypt. (10)

PREFACE

We have tried our best in our previous books to convince Muslims of the necessity of adhering to the Holy Qur'an and the immaculate progeny of the Prophet (a.s.) and to keep to them together to assure guidance and the deliverance from deviation. This is according to what the Prophet (a.s.) had confirmed and reliable narrators had narrated in their true books of Hadith of the two sects, the Shia and the Sunni altogether. As we think, we have fully carried out the research on this subject and have not spared any effort in explaining this fact in different ways that the research required and took us to it whether willingly or unwillingly, until some people thought that we tried to defame the Prophet's companions, hurt their dignities, or deface their honesty. We swear by Allah the Almighty that we did not want except to exalt the Prophet (a.s.), who represents the whole Islam, and deem him far above every defect and also to exalt and deem his progeny, who are equivalent to the Qur'an, far above every defect; that whoever knows them knows the Qur'an and whoever ignores them ignores the Qur'an, as the Prophet (a.s.) often declared.

By the assistance of Allah the Almighty, we shall uncover in this book that a contemporary Muslim, who lives the civilization of the twentieth century and faces different challenges, cannot abide by the Islamic Sharia ¹ correctly except when he keeps to the Immaculate Progeny of the Prophet (a.s.).

_____ ¹ The Islamic code of religious law, based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the traditional sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.).

The fact that cannot be overlooked is that the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna have been liable to misinterpretation and distortion. The Qur'anic verses were interpreted into different meanings away from the actual concepts of the Sharia, and the Prophetic Sunna was distorted by adding fabricated traditions to it that the Prophet (a.s.) was free from. All the tafsirs ¹ that we have in our hands nowadays are not free from some Israelite fables and false interpretations or some personal opinions of interpreters who says that some verses have been abrogated. The same is said about the books of Hadith that underwent fabrication, insertion, and distortion. It can be said that no book has remained untouched. Therefore, Muslims have to revert to the infallible imams of the Prophet's progeny, because they are the only ones who can correctly interpret and explain the revelation of Allah and purify the Prophetic traditions from all blemishes and distortion.

If the final goal of Muslims today is the call to go back to the righteous first companions to take the two sources of legislation from them only as they were the best of people, as most of Muslims believe, then we have to ask these people what their argument is. We can ask them for a convincing evidence and inevitable proof that let no Muslim turn here or there, and make any Muslim submit satisfactorily while his heart is certain. Just the trusting in someone or even his righteousness and good conduct do not make it surely that he has sound perception or infallibility. Imam Ali, the gate of the Prophet's town of knowledge, referred to this point when he said : In the hands of people there is truth and falsehood, truthfulness and untruthfulness, abrogating and abrogated (rulings), general and special (rulings), clear and ambiguous, memorizing and supposition. It was fabricated

1 Books of interpretation and commentary of the Qur'an.

against the messenger of Allah (a.s.) at his time, until he made a speech saying, let him, he who intendedly fabricates against me, take his seat in the Fire ...'

In fact, those, who convey to you speech, are four men (kinds) who have no fifth one; a hypocrite man who shows faith, pretends Islam, does not refrain from sins or feel shy, and fabricates intendedly against the messenger of Allah, may Allah have blessing and peace on him and his progeny. If people knew that he is a hypocrite and liar, they would not accept from him or believe his saving, but they said, 'he is a companion of the messenger of Allah, may Allah have blessing and peace on him and his progeny, that he (the hypocrite) saw him (the Prophet), heard from him, and took from him', and so they accept from him, though Allah has informed you about the hypocrites with what He has informed, and described them to you with what He has described. Then, they remained after him, peace be on him, and approached to the leaders of deviation and the inviters to the Fire with falsehood and fabrication, and they entrusted them with posts and made them rulers over the necks of people, and ate by them this worldly life. Surely, (most of) people are with the rulers and the worldly life except those whom Allah has preserved. So, this is one of the four men.

And a man who heard something from the messenger of Allah but did not memorize it as it was and he was uncertain of it and did not intend to tell lies. Thus, this (saying of the Prophet) is in his hands and he narrates and acts according to it and says, 'I heard it from the messenger of Allah, may Allah have blessing and peace on him and his progeny'. If Muslims knew that he was uncertain in it, they would not accept from him, and if he himself knew that it was so, he would deny it.

And a third man who heard from the messenger of Allah something that he (the Prophet) ordered people to do, and then he ordered them not to do it, but he (the man) did not know, or he heard him (the Prophet) forbidding something and then he permitted it, but he (the

man) did not know, so he memorized the abrogated thing and did not memorize the abrogating thing. If he knew it was abrogated, he would deny it, and if Muslims, when hearing from him, knew that it was abrogated, they would deny it. And a fourth man who fabricated neither against Allah nor against His messenger. He hates lying for fear of Allah and as glorification of the messenger of Allah, may Allah have blessing and peace on him and his progeny, and he was not uncertain, but he memorized what he heard as it was. He narrated exactly what he heard with neither increase nor decrease. He memorized the abrogating ruling and did according to it, and memorized the abrogated thing and avoided it. He knew the general and special (rulings), and the clear and the ambiguous, so he put everything in its right place. The speech of the messenger of Allah, may Allah have blessing and peace on him and his progeny, might have two sides; special speech (meaning) and general speech, and that one may hear it and he does not know what Allah the Almighty has meant by it nor what the messenger of Allah meant by it, and so the hearer interprets it without knowing its actual meaning, purpose, and reason.

And not all the companions of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) asked and inquired from him (the Prophet) that they might wish a nomad or a foreigner to come and ask him (the Prophet) so that they would hear (the answer). But, nothing from that passed by me except that I asked him (the Prophet) about and memorize it. These are the sides on which people are in their disagreements and defects of their narrations. 1

1 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 208.

From the speech of Ameerul Mo'minin (a.s.) it becomes clear to us the great difficulty that surrounds us in order to arrive at the real concepts and meanings of the Sharia. Since this was Imam Ali's analysis at his very time when there was no more than twenty-five years passing after the Prophet's death, and the availability of him (Imam Ali) and most of the Prophet's companions (alive), who could revise and purify the Prophetic traditions, then what can we say about the state of Muslims after the passing of fourteen centuries while the nation has disagreed and divided into different sects and cults? For all that, a researcher has to be fully cautious before he may judge for a certain sect and consider it true, or against another and deny it. As we have mentioned in our previous books through scientific historical studies that the Twelver Shia are the Saved Group that represents the right Islamic line, so this judgment was not the result of the conditions and circumstances that I lived and reacted according to them, but it is a fact proved by the Qur'an and the Sunna as it has also been proved by the true history that is free from distortion and fabrication. In fact, reason that has been endowed by Allah with the ability of arguing and distinction through evidence can easily get to this clear fact. Allah the Almighty says :

... therefore, give good news to My servants, who listen to the word, then follow the best of it; those are they whom Allah has guided, and those it is who are the men of understanding. 1

Allah also says about those who set their reasons aside and therefore deserve torment : And they shall say: Had we been wont to listen or have sense, we had not been among the dwellers in the Burning Fire. 2

1 Qur'an, 39:17-18.

2 Qur'an, 67:10.

In spite of all that and in spite of all the clear arguments and irrefutable proofs that have been mentioned in my previous books, some people, may Allah forgive them, do not read with their minds and hearts but with their emotions. They only read what pleases their feelings and inclination. They have learnt to be against all what may oppose their beliefs and to despise all what may disagree with their wishes. Since we are from the faithful who love goodness to be for all Muslims and try the best to guide them to the right path, which we thought it is the Ship of Deliverance, so we do not become desperate and we remain until the last of our life inviting them to goodness and happiness that nothing after which except the Garden of Bliss. Ameerul Mo'minin Imam Ali (a.s.) says :

May Allah have mercy on a man who sees a truth and he assists it, or sees injustice and he denies it, and be assistant by truth against the injustice-doer. He also says : I hate for you to be revilers, but you may describe their deeds and mention their conditions, and it would be more correct in saying and more effective in excusing. You may say instead of abusing them: O Allah, spare our bloods and their bloods, and reconcile between us and them, and guide them from their deviation, until those, who have ignored the truth, know it, and those, who have attached themselves to aggression and enmity, refrain from it. 1 In my six previous books, I have followed this style which Imam Ali (a.s.) had advised his followers to follow; therefore, I was not a reviler, but I described their 2 deeds and mentioned their

1 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 204.

2 The companions and men of authority of the first stages of Islam who had committed some errors and injustices and who have been taken as ideal models by great numbers of Muslims.

conducts, so that those, who ignored the truth, would know it. Yet, what shall I do to those, who do not accept even to describe and mention the deeds and conducts of those companions? And what shall I do when the truth cannot be shown except by this way? Here in my seventh book, I try my best not to mention the conducts of those companions or describe their deeds, but I try to prove the right of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and their followers in a new manner that may please most of people, though I think that the satisfaction of all people is an unreachable goal. I pray Allah the Almighty to make me successful in doing what He may please, make all Muslims successful in doing everything good and guide them and us to the

truth, make us not die except on the Right Path, and make our end the best.

Longing for his Lord's mercy Muhammad at-Tijani as- Sammawi

THIS IS THE TRUE ISLAM

This was the title that I chose for the lecture I gave in the mosque of my Sunni brothers in the city of San Francisco, California, the United States of America two years ago. That day, there was a great crowd of men and women from different nations and countries; from Africa, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Egypt who attended the lecture and most of them left satisfied after the free purposeful argumentation. An academic Egyptian, who recently had his doctorate, objected to me during the argumentation, saying, "How could Shiism be the true Islam, whereas the well-known thing is that the Sunni are the saved group (on the Day of Resurrection) who have kept to the Qur'an and the Sunna altogether, while the other sects are in deviation?"

Very calmly, I answered him and directed my speech to all of attendants, saying, "O brothers, I loyally swear that if I found one group from the Sunni or other than them practicing their religion according to a creed ascribed to Abu Bakr , I would say: Well blessed! Abu Bakr was a great companion and he was one of the first Muslims. He accompanied the Messenger of Allah (a.s.), was the second of the two in the cave, and was the first of the (four) orthodox caliphs. I would be satisfied with that and be one of that sect. And if found a group of the Sunni practicing their religion according to a creed ascribed to Umar ibn al-Khattab, I would say: Well blessed! Our master Umar was a great companion. He was the Farouq, who differentiated between the truth and falsehood, by whom Allah had strengthened Islam. He was from the first Muslims, and he was the second orthodox caliph. Then, I would be satisfied and would follow this group.

And if I found a group of the Sunni or other than them practicing their religion according to a creed ascribed to Uthman ibn Affan, I would says: Well blessed! Our master Uthman was from the first companions, and he was of the two lights of whom angels felt shy. He was the third of the orthodox caliphs, and it was he who had gathered the Qur'an (in one written book). Then, I would be satisfied and follow this creed. However, I did not find any group of the Sunni, nor from other than them claiming that they followed a creed belonging to one of these three caliphs or any one of the first companions. On the other side, I found one group practicing their religion according to a creed ascribed to Ali ibn Abi Talib, and this group is the Twelver Shia. The other sects of Muslims follow (imitate) Abu Haneefah, Malik, ash-Shafi'ee, or Ahmed ibn Hanbal. These scholars, in spite of their high positions, great knowledge, and piety, had never accompanied the Messenger of Allah (a.s.) for even one day, nor had they seen him at all. They all lived after the great sedition that spread over them from its darkness

and they all were affected by its bad effects. 1

1 Ibn Khaldun in his Muqaddimah, p. 411, shows the cause of the difference between the first companions and the imams (of the Sunni) coming later after them saying, "The new events are not covered by the (religious) texts, and what is not clear in texts, it is to turn to the other (texts) when there is similarity between them (events). And all these things are causes of disagreement that is necessary to take place."

It is clear that the scattering of the companions and the second generation that came after them (companions) in different countries and towns and that some of them were appointed as judges or in charge of giving fatwas, led to the differences in their theories and ijthad (personal reasoning in giving a certain fatwa on a certain event) according to the condition of the And if we divested Imam Ali (a.s.) of every thing and did not acknowledge any preference or virtue to him, he would always remain the great companion and the first Muslim (in believing in

country they lived in and the personality of the jurispudent himself in facing different questions. As a result to that, two schools came to light for them; First, the school of opinion that was famous among the Iraqis: the most prominent one of this school was Abu Haneefah an-Nu'man ibn al-Munthir in Kula and his disciples and adherents. This school had some characteristics; A, they used branchings and then violated them even the imaginary and abstract things. Therefore, they often said, "what do you think if it was so", that they asked, contradicted, and then derived a ruling for it. Then, they turned over and upside down with its possible sides, until they were called by the scholars of Hadith as (Ara'aytiyyun). (in Arabic, '...do you think...' is 'a ra'ayta'). B, they narrated and trusted in little traditions and according to certain conditions that only little traditions were accepted by them. Some of them were so excessive that they thought not to depend on the Prophetic traditions at all, and their argument in this was that they suspected the narrators of Hadith and the much doubting of traditionists about narrators. Second, the school of Hadith whose characteristics were; A, they very much hated the asking about obligations because the source for them was Hadith which was limited, and they hated to give their personal opinion (on this matters). They hated to ask about an event except when it actually happened. 'They criticized the Iraqis for their often discussing of obligations. B, they depended on traditions even the weak ones. They were not strict as to the conditions of (accepting) traditions, and they preferred this to the giving of one's opinion. (Refer to Fajr (dawn of) al-Islam by Ahmed Amin, p.243.

The disagreement and dispute between the two schools was so strong that they abused, reviled, and accused each other of impiety and disbelief. In fact, some of them fabricated false

traditions. It was narrated from Abu Bakr and Umar that they approved and reproved the acting according to Hadith. The same was narrated from ibn Mas'ud. Some scholars overexerted themselves in reconciling between these contradicted savings because of those disputing schools. Therefore, the truth and honesty were not observed and Allah the Almighty was not feared. For more details, refer to the book Know the Truth, p. 96-98, and Fear p. 67-72, by the author of this hook.

Islam) who spent all his life beside the messenger of Allah (a.s.). I adjure you all by Allah, that if you give up fanaticism and emotion and make your reason to judge in order to please your Lord before anything else and then to please your consciences, whom shall you choose to follow and obey?" Most of them cried out, "Imam Ali is the worthiest to be followed ..." I said, "If I add to you the traditions of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) that have been mentioned by the Sunni in their books of Hadith (Sahihs and Musnads), like the following ones :

I am the town of knowledge and Ali is its gate. Whoever I am his guardian, here is Ali to be his guardian. Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali. It turns with him wherever he turns. Ali to me is as was Aaron to Moses ...

Ali explains to my nation what they shall disagree on after me (after my death). Ali is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with Ali; they shall not separate until they shall come to me at the Pond (in the Paradise). If Muslims know these facts after having acknowledged by their reasons to follow Imam Ali (a.s.) just for his companionship with the Prophet (a.s.), then no doubt shall remain that the true Islam is the Islam adopted by the Twelver Shia who are called Refusers (rawafidh) because they refuse to follow anyone else than Imam Ali (a.s.)."

After having given answers to the questions offered and been discussed calmly through the scientific, historical research, much many attendants came to me congratulating and kissing me, and praising Allah the Almighty for the guidance. They asked me to give them all my books and to lead them to some books of the This is the True Islam 21Y Shia. From among these people was the imam who managed the mosque. He was crying when I was talking to him about the tragedy of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). He was an Egyptian physician who loved the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) too much. He said to me, "Be delighted my brother! I did not think that you would convince us so easily. I was worried about you from some fanatic persons who did not like you, but by the grace of Allah and by your influencing and truthful speech, you could affect their hearts...yes by Allah!"

The Ahlul Bayt Are The Natural Continuity Of The Mission Of Their Grandfather

When we say 'the Ahlul Bayt', we mean the twelve imams of the immaculate progeny of the Prophet (a.s.) whom we have studied in full in the previous books. The Shia and the Sunni have agreed that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) said :

The imams after me are twelve; all of them are from (the tribe of) Quraysh. The tradition mentioned in the Sahih of al-Bukhari reads :

ds : This matter (caliphate) shall remain in Quraysh even if (only) two people remain alive. 1 If we know necessarily that Allah the Almighty has chosen Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of Imran and preferred them, a progeny one from the other, to all mankind, the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) has taught and declared to us that Allah the Almighty has chosen from all those people the Hashimites who were the choice of choices. In the Sahih of Muslim, the book of 'Virtues', chapter of 'the preferring of our prophet to all creation' it is mentioned that the Prophet (a.s.) has said :

Allah has chosen Kinanah from the children of Ishmael, chosen the Quraysh from Kinanah, chosen the Hashimites from Quraysh, and chosen me (the Prophet) from the Hashimites.

1 Sahih of al-Bukhari, book of rulings (ahkam), chapter of 'the emirs from Quraysh', Sahih of Muslim, book of 'emirate', chapter of 'people are followers of Quraysh and the caliphate is in Quraysh'.

The meaning of this tradition, as it is understood by every reasonable one, is that the Hashimites were the family that had been chosen and preferred to all mankind, and from the Hashimites Allah had chosen Muhammad (a.s.) to be the best of all mankind at all. This shows that the Hashimites come secondly after the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) in preference with no separation. The Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) chose from all of the Hashimites 1 Ali and his progeny to be his successors by the command of the Revelation, and made it obligatory on all Muslims to pray Allah to send His blessings on them. We have found that the most tafsirs (commentaries) mention their names and confirm that it is they who are meant by the Qur'anic verses of 'Purification 33:33', 'Love; mawaddah 42:23', 'guardianship; wilayah 5:55', 'choosing and bequeathing of the Book 35:32', 'the people of remembrance 16:43', 'who are firmly rooted in knowledge 3:7' and the Sura of al-Insan (or 'hal ata') 76. 2

As for the Prophetic traditions that were agreed on as true traditions by all Muslims and in which

the Prophet (a.s.) referred to their (the Ahlul Bayt) preference and virtues and that they

1 The Prophet (a.s.) means a certain group from the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), and Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions on different occasions confirm this fact; otherwise, did the Prophet (a.s.) mean some people whom the nation did not know or could not be led to? Could the nation get to unknown people whether in names, description, or place? This is because the Hashimites were too many and they had spread everywhere in the land that no country or town was empty of them. So, those whom the Prophet (a.s.) meant, besides the nine imams after Ali, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn (peace be on them) were the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) only, due to traditional and mental proofs. He declared them as the second weighty (important) thing beside the Qur'an, so that the nation would not miss a match to him from them in any age, and that the nation would not miss a guide to whom whoever kept would not go astray ...

2 We have mentioned in brief some Qur'anic verses which the Sunni scholars acknowledge that they were revealed concerning the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), whereas ibn Abbas said that one third of the Qur'an had been revealed to talk about their virtues.

were the imams of guidance, are too much, but here, we just mention two of them.

The first tradition was mentioned by Muslim in his Sahih, the book of Virtues, chapter of the virtues of Ali ibn Abi Talib that the Prophet (a.s.) said :

O people, I am but a human being. The messenger of my Lord (death) is about to come and I shall respond. I am leaving among you two weighty things; the first of them is the Book of Allah in which there is guidance and light; so follow the Book of Allah and keep to it, and the second is my household. I remind you to obey Allah through (being dutiful to) my progeny, I remind you to obey Allah through my progeny, I remind you to obey Allah through my progeny.

The second tradition was mentioned by Muslim in the same book narrated by Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas from his father that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) had said to Ali :

You are to me as was Aaron to Moses, except that there shall be no prophet after me. 1

For brevity, these two traditions are enough to prove that Imam Ali (a.s.) was the chief of the Prophet's progeny and was the natural continuity to the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.). Did the messenger of Allah not say :

I am the town of knowledge and Ali is its gate?

Surely, this only saying is enough to show that the whole nation cannot enter the town of Muhammad's knowledge except through the gate of Ali, because Allah the Almighty has ordered His people to enter houses only through their doors.

¹ It has also been mentioned in al-Bukhari's Sahih, the book of Maghazi (battles), the Battle of Tabuk.

Here, we must point out that Imam Ali (a.s.) had acquired his knowledge from the Prophet (a.s.) who brought him out since childhood and he accompanied the Prophet (a.s.) all his life. The Prophet (a.s.) taught Imam Ali (a.s.) the knowledge of the past and the future where he said :

Gabriel did not pour anything into my chest, except that I poured it into the chest of Ali.

Imam Ali (a.s.) said about that :

If the rug was folded to me (to sit on), ¹ I would judge among the people of the Torah according to their Torah, among the people of the Gospel according to their Gospel, and the people of the Qur'an according to their Qur'an.

He often said :

Ask me before you shall miss me.

All the companions and all Muslims throughout history witness that Imam Ali (a.s.) was the most knowledgeable of all people in the affairs of religion and the world, and that he was the most pious, most abstinent, most patient with calamities, the bravest in wars, and the most forgiving. For more advantage, we have to read what Imam Ali (a.s.) said about the relation between the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny. He said :

They are the place of his secret, the recourse of his affairs, the bag of his knowledge, the resort of his wisdom, the caves of his books, and the mountains of his religion. By them he has erected the bending of his back, and driven away his fear. ²

¹ If I was allowed to judge among people.

² Nahjol Balagha, sermon 2.

He said :

By Allah, I have been taught the information of missions, carrying out of promises, and all words, and with us the Ahlul Bayt there are the doors of wisdom and the light of the affair ... 1

He said :

... where are those who claim that they are deep-rooted in knowledge other than us falsely and oppressively against us, that Allah has exalted us and lowered them, given us and deprived them, included us and excluded them. By us guidance is looked forward to and blindness is recovered...the imams from Quraysh have been sowed in this sept of Hashim that it (imamate) does not fit other than them, and chiefs from other than them shall not be fit. 2

He said :

... surely the example of the progeny of Muhammad, may Allah have blessing and peace on them, are like the stars of the sky; when a star sets, another star shines. As if the virtues from Allah have been perfected in you (the Ahlul Bayt) and He has given you what you hoped. 3

He said :

... no one from this nation can be compared to the progeny of Muhammad, may Allah have mercy on him and his progeny, and no one on whom their favor has been bestowed can be equaled to them at all. They are the base of religion and the pillar of certainty. To them resorts the oppressed, and to them followers joins. For them are the specialties of the right of guardianship, and among them is custodianship and inheritance ... 4

1 Ibid., sermon 11.

2 Ibid., sermon 142.

3 Ibid., sermon 99.

4 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 2.

He said :

... and surely I am on the clear way that I pick it up picking (from between the ways of deviation and confusion). Observe the progeny of your prophet, cling to their way, and follow their trace for they will not take you out of guidance, nor will they take you back to perishment. If they keep silent, you have to keep silent, and if they rise, you have to rise. Do not precede them lest you go astray, and do not lag behind them lest you perish ... 1

He said :

They are the life of knowledge and death of ignorance. Their discernment informs you of their knowledge and their silence (informs you) of the wisdom of their logic. They do not contradict the truth, nor do they disagree on it. They are the pillars of Islam, and the associates of resorting. By them, the truth has come back to its right place, and falsehood been kept away from its position and its tongue been cut from its root. They have understood the religion in reason and care, not the understanding of hearing and narration, because the narrators of knowledge are too many, but its carers are few. 2

These passages quoted from Nahjol Balagha and said by Imam Ali (a.s.) give us a real picture about the firm relation between the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny and make them the only continuity of his mission, and that they are the only ones who can inform of what he has announced for all mankind throughout ages and for all nations and cultures.

Imam Ali (a.s.) was not satisfied with showing the high rank of the immaculate progeny and their position to Muslims, but he showed that he himself was the axis of quern and the chief of the

1 Ibid., sermon 96.

2 Ibid., sermon 236.

immaculate progeny, and he showed his role, which he had been entrusted with by Allah and His messenger to manage people and not let them astray. He said :

... whereto do you go and how are you perverted while the banners are being raised, signs are clear, and the light stands are set up? So whereto do you go astray, or how do you be blind whereas among you there are the progeny of your prophet who are the reins of the truth, the leaders of the religion, and the tongues of truthfulness? So observe them in the best positions of the Qur'an, and hasten to them as the hastening of extremely thirsty ones (to drinking fountain).

O people, take it from the messenger of Allah, may Allah have blessing and peace on him and his progeny, that: 'One of us dies, but he is not dead, and one of us is decayed, but he is not decayed.' So, do not speak of what you do not know, because most of the truth is in what you deny and excuse the one against whom you have no argument, and he is me.

Did I not act among you according to the Major weighty thing (the Qur'an) and I left among you (after me) the Minor weighty thing (the Ahlul Bayt; at that time Imam alHasan and al-Husayn)? I fixed among you the banner of faith, showed you clearly the limits of the lawful and the unlawful, dressed you with soundness by my justice, spread to you the favor of my saying and doing, and showed to you the noblest of morals from myself. Therefore, do not use (your own) opinion in

that whose inners cannot be perceived by the sight, nor can thinking penetrate into." 1

If You, dear reader, ponder on the saying of Imam Ali (a.s.), you shall find it as the interpretation of the tradition of Thaqalayn (the two weighty things) that has been narrated by the Sunni

1 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 86.

from the messenger of Allah (a.s.) who said :

I have left among you the two weighty things; the Book of Allah and my progeny. If you keep to them, you shall never go astray after me at all. Imam Ali (a.s.) also said :

Did I not act among you according to the Major weighty thing (the Qur'an) and I left among you the Minor weighty. thing (the Ahlul Bayt)?

This saying of Imam Ali (a.s.) is a clear proof that Imam Ali (a.s.) managed people according to the rulings of the Holy Qur'an, which no one could understand their reality except he, and that he left among them after him the Minor Weighty thing that were the infallible imams from his progeny so that each one of them would carry out the same role that the Prophet (a.s.) carried out in his nation. If we ponder on the saying of the Prophet (a.s.) "I am leaving among you the two weighty things" and the saying of Imam Ali (a.s.) "did I not act among you according to the Major weighty thing", we understand that the role of the immaculate progeny is the explaining and declaring of the Book of Allah to the nation lest they disagree after the death of the Prophet (a.s.).

What confirms this fact is this saying of the Prophet (a.s.) :

In every generation of my nation there are just men from my progeny who protect this religion from the distortion of deviants, the fabrication of liars, and the misinterpretation of, ignorants. Surely, your imams are your delegation to Allah, so be careful to whom you delegate. 1 He also said :

Stars are security for the people of the earth from drowning, and, the people of my house are security for my nation from disagreement. If a tribe from the Arabs

1 As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah by ibn Hajar ash-Shafi'iy, p. 90, 148.

disagree with them (the Ahlul Bayt), they shall disagree among themselves and become the party of Iblis. 1

He also said :

Surely, the example of my progeny among you is like the Ark of Noah; whoever rode on it would be rescued, and whoever lagged behind it would drown. 2

Through this brief study, the guidance becomes clearly distinct to us from error, and we can say that the Twelver Shia is the true sect, because it is the only sect that has kept to the two weighty things, ridden on the Ship of Rescue, and clung to the Rope of Allah. The Shia neither precede the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) nor do they turn away from them, but they follow and imitate them; therefore, they are guided by their guidance and they follow their path.

Here is the Qur'an that you can ask to speak out, and it shall not speak out, but I tell you about. It has the knowledge of what shall come, the speech about the past, the treatment of your disease, and the managing of you. 3

Keep to the Book of Allah, for it is the firm rope, the clear light, the advantageous cure, saturating drink, the resort for resorters, and the rescue for clingers. It never crooks to be set right, nor does it err to be blames. The much reciting and listening to it do not make it old. Whoever speaks with it is truthful, and whoever acts according to it wins. 4

He left to you what the prophets had left for their nations that they did not leave them astray without a clear way or a raised banner. The Book of your Lord is among you showing His lawful and unlawful things, obligations and

1 Mustadrak al-Hakim, vol. 3 p. 149.

2 Ibid., vol. 3 p. 151, as-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah by ibn Hajar, p. 184.

3 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 156.

4 Ibid., sermon 154.

favours, abrogating and abrogated things, permissions and necessities, special and general rulings, lessons and examples, absolutes and finites, clear and ambiguous things, interpreting its statements and explaining its obscurities. (In it) there are some verses whose knowledge is obligatory and others whose ignorance by people is forgivable, and what its obligation is fixed in the book, but its abrogation is known in (the Prophet's) Sunna, or that which appears obligatory in the Sunna, but in the Book it is permitted to be given up, and that which is obligatory in its time but not so in its future (passing of its time), and that of His different prohibitions between major (sin) for which He has threatened of His Fires, or minor for which He has promised of forgiveness, and that which is accepted in its small portion (in reciting the Qur'an) and permitted in leaving its big portion. 1

1 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 1.

KEEPING TO RELIGION IN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

It is well known that Islam, with which the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) had been sent by Allah, is the last of religions as to the matter of the Divine Legislation. Allah the Almighty says :

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of the prophets ... 1 Since Muhammad (a.s.) is the last of the prophets and messengers and his Book is the last of the Books revealed by Allah, so there shall be no Divine Book after the Holy Qur'an, and that Islam is the basic religion in which all the divine religions have been fused. Allah says :

He it is Who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions; and Allah is enough for a witness. 2 After the advent of Muhammad (a.s.) as prophet, it has become obligatory on all human beings to turn from the previous religions whether Judaism, Christianity, or and religion else and embrace Islam and to worship Allah the Almighty according to the Sharia of Muhammad (a.s.), because Allah will not accept any religion other than Islam since then. Allah says :

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter, he shall be one of the losers. 3

1 Qur'an, 33:40.

2 Qur'an, 48:28.

3 Qur'an, 3:85.

We understand from this that the Jews and the Christians whatever they claim that their laws and legislations are true and that they follow the Prophet Moses (a.s.) or the Prophet Jesus Christ, the reality requires that they must follow the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) since the moment Allah sent him as a messenger. A Christian has no right to say that he wants to remain on his religion, nor does a Jew. The fact is that Muhammad (a.s.) was sent a prophet to all mankind and as mercy to all peoples with their different races and beliefs. This does not mean that we condemn the previous divine religions, but Allah the Almighty knew that his people distorted his laws and made lawful what was unlawful and unlawful what was lawful due to their own desires; therefore, they went astray and made those who came after them go astray. So the advent of Muhammad (a.s.) the last of the prophets was mercy to all mankind in order to restore themselves again and turn back to the truth, and so they would win the Paradise. However, most of people hate the truth.

Desires, fancies, and fanaticisms play with them, and devils occupy them that they become excessive in their deviation.

Allah says in this concern :

Those who disbelieved from among the followers of the Book and the polytheists could not have separated (from the faithful) until there had come to them the clear evidence; a messenger from Allah, reciting pure pages, wherein are all the right ordinances. And those who were given the Book did not become divided except after clear evidence had come to them. 1

It is not sufficient too that a Jew or a Christian says, 'I believe in Muhammad, but I will remain on my religion', as I myself have heard from some Arab Christians. We say to such people that Allah does not accept from them except when they actually follow him. Allah says in this concern :

1 Qur'an, 98:1-4.

Those who follow the Messenger-Prophet, who can neither read nor write, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel (who) enjoins them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things, and removes from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them; so (as for) those who believe in him and honor him and help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these it is that are the successful. 1

This invitation from Allah the Almighty was not limited to the Jews and the Christians, who all represented "the People of the Book", but it included all the human beings with no exception.

Allah the Almighty says :

Say: O people! surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, there is no god but He; He brings to life and causes to die; therefore believe in Allah and His messenger, the Prophet, who can neither read nor write, who believes in Allah and His words, and you follow him so that you may walk in the right way. 2 The Holy Qur'an is too clear in the obligation of following the Prophet (a.s.) and not only the believing in his prophethood, and this is the wisdom of Allah in sending the messengers. We have never heard in all the history of humankind that Allah has sent a messenger to say to people: 'remain on your religion that you have inherited from the messenger that had come before me. 3

1 Qur'an, 7:157.

2 Qur'an, 7:158.

3 Therefore, the Jews turned to be racists not accepting except those whose blood was Jewish. Thus, they gathered together their scatterings claiming that they were "the chosen people of Allah" and any other than them were not human, depending on the Torah that was lost and ruined after the Babylonian Captivity at the hands of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. All of the prophets called for the belief in all the messengers of Allah, so that no one might harm their prophethood or be excessive as to their actual position and give them the position of deity.

Allah the Almighty says :

(The messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers; they all believe in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers; We make no difference between any of His messengers; and they say: We hear and obey, our Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course. 1

who occupied Jerusalem in the year 586 BC. The Jews, who were not killed, remained captives in Babylon until the year 457 BC., when they could go back to Palestine by the assistance of Cyrus the great king of Persia. After their going back to Palestine, a man called Ezra collected and reformed the books of the Old Testaments, which are the Torah of today.

From this, we know that between the loss of the Torah and its regathering, there was more than 125 years. During this period, most of the memorizers of the Torah were killed or they died in prison where they were forbidden to practice any religious activity. Therefore, the Torah came to have interventions of human beings that it is now full of fables, contradictions, untruths, distorted events and realities ... etc.

The same thing happened to Christianity; the four Bibles were not written down at the time of Jesus Christ (a.s.). The oldest one, which is "the Gospel of Mark", was written down forty years later on in Rome. Therefore, it was like the Torah as to distortion, besides that all that was at the time of Augustine who mixed between idolatry and the statements of the Bible; the idolatry on which the idolaters of India, China, and old Egypt agreed on, such as the belief of Trinity and the ascribing of vices to the prophets (a.s.) and even to Jesus Christ (a.s.). Moreover, they annulled the main purpose of religions, which is the guiding of human beings, when they claimed that Jesus Christ (a.s.) had redeemed the criminals and sinners, so there was no necessity of guidance after him or to send other prophets. For more details, refer to "the School journey" and "the Guidance to the Religion of alMustafa" by Sheikh Muhammad Jawad al-Balaghi.

1 Qur'an, 2:285.

If we know that Islam is the last religion that Allah the Almighty has endowed His faithful people with, so its laws and rulings are valid for every time and every place, because there is no prophet

coming after the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) and no divine book coming after the Holy Qur'an according to this saying of Allah :

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. 1

However, some Muslims, if not most of them, do not abide by the laws and rulings of Islam claiming that they are difficult to carry out and that most of (ordinary) people are unable to carry them out. Some, who are the learned people, say that it is necessary to develop the rulings according to the requirements of the modern life. They see that ijihad 2 is necessary in every thing and claim that ijihad is one of the virtues of Islam and one of its prides. These learned people may affect the minds of many young students, especially that they pretend they love Islam too much and are too careful to apply its rulings. They justify the underdevelopment and deterioration of Muslims as because they have not developed their religion, which had been established fifteen centuries ago in a time where there was no means of transportation except mules and donkeys. But as for today where we live in the age of rockets, whose speed exceeds the speed of sound, telephone, fax, and computer, through which man can contact with any spot in the world within a few seconds, we cannot remain looking at the Qur'an with that superficial look and we judge against a thief by cutting his hand, or a criminal by cutting his head by the sword...they often say so and have odd philosophies in this concern.

1 Qur'an, 5:3.

2 Using of one's (usually a mujtahid) effort to form a judgment on questions concerning the Sharia and religious affairs.

Once, I was talking with a university professor of this line. In my talk with him, I said that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) had said : There is no magnanimous young man except (like) Ali, and no sword except Thul Faqar."

He laughed at me and said, "O doctor, do not say like this again. It was valid at the time of the Prophet (a.s.) when the sword had a role in winning the battles and it was the only weapon of which heroes prided in their poems, but now we are in the age of the machine gun that shoots seventy bullets in a second, and the jet fighter that can destroy a whole city in some minutes. In fact, we are in the age of the atom and nuclear bombs that can destroy a continent in some moments. Are you ignorant of all this and are still talking about the sword and the courage of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib?"

I said, "This does not refute that or contradict it, and every occasion has its own context. Do you not see that when Allah talked about weapons, He included in one word all means of destruction

when He said in brief :

And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier. 1

Thus, the Qur'an connected what military means the people at the time of the Prophet (a.s.) had to win battles with what the people of this time have. So, this Qur'anic statement :

And prepare against them what force you can, can be understood by every one according to the language of his time. The source and meaning of "force" is the same to the all, and this is like the saying of Allah :

... and We have made the iron, wherein is great violence and advantages to men ... 2

1 Qur'an, 8:60.

2 Qur'an, 57:25.

Therefore, all weapons, whether the simple ones like the sword or spears or the developed like tanks, machine guns, and bombs, are defined as of "violence", and all means of ease and comfort such as cars, airplanes, ships, televisions, and others are defined as "advantages to people". Glory be to Allah Who has created iron and made it usable for people and taught them what they did not know. Thus, the Holy Qur'an is in the hands of all kinds of people that every generation can understand it by the language of its age. But as for your saying "we cannot look at the Qur'an with a superficial look that we judge against a thief by cutting his hand or a criminal by cutting his head by the sword", if by this you try to replace the laws of Allah with human made laws whose makers claim that they are more beneficent and merciful to people than their Creator is to them, then this can never be accepted and it is undoubtedly clear disbelief.

But if you mean by "development" the development of the means of execution against a criminal or the means of cutting a thief's hand, this can be discussed, because these are minor things that the Islamic Legislation did not concentrate on, but it concentrated on the abiding by the carrying out of sentences determined by Allah the Almighty concerning "retribution". Allah says :

O you who believe! retaliation is prescribed for you...And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves against evil. 1

As for cutting the hand of a thief by a sword, a cleaver, or a modern tool, the legal ruler (judge) or the religious authority can give his opinion in the matter (by deriving it due to the legal proofs).

What is important, dear sir, is that we should not replace the laws of Allah by positive laws that

agreed on by the European systems that have abrogated the death sentence against criminals whatever extreme their crimes are.

1 Qur'an, 2:178-179.

Allah says :

And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding.

The meaning of the saying of Allah is that if we abrogate the laws of Allah and abolish the law of retaliation, our life shall be with no safety and security, and criminals shall corrupt everything. Then, life shall become as hell with no goodness or peace.

This university professor debated saying, "Evil is not to be treated with evil. Statistics has proved that some of those, who were sentenced to death for the accusation of crime, were innocent."

I said, "With my respect to you professor, but by your saying "evil is not to be treated with evil" you have made yourself more aware than Allah the Creator of everything and this is not your right. And as for your saying that some of those, who were sentenced to death, were innocent, this is another matter. To your knowledge, I say that Islam does not punish just for suspicion or accusation, but after evidence, witnesses, and confession."

The debate came to no use, because each one of us clung to what he had. 1

1 The likes of this professor who have westernized and who live with the complex of the yielding before the masses of iron and bricks arranged there even if by stealing and assassinating other peoples, or even all humankind. The Nazis, for example, and since they felt that they had some arms, adopted the slogan of "the Aryan race". Under this banner of racism, they destroyed civilizations and killed ten millions of people in two destructive wars within no more than a quarter of a century. And the allies were not better than them; they invaded the different nations as colonists and tore those nations into pieces in order to be able to rule them and control their treasures and resources. In this way, they built their false civilization on the bloods, sweat, and efforts of the subdued peoples. In the same way of the Nazi model, the American tyranny succeeded in blackmailing different countries and adopting the illegitimate child "Israel" and secretly and openly brought up and assisted it by all means until it became a pit of the It would be better to end this section with what Imam Ali (a.s.) has said about the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) and about Islam. He said :

He (Allah) has sent him with the shining light, the clear proof, the right method, and the guiding Book. His family is the best of families and his tree is the best of trees; its branches are straight and its fruits are hanging loosely. His birth was in Mecca and his immigration was in the Good City where his mention went high and his call reached too far. He has sent him with a sufficient argument, curative breach, and preventing invitation (that prevented every corruption of the pre-Islamic age). He (Allah) has declared by him (the Prophet) the unknown laws, suppressed by him the irrelevant heresies, and explained by him the decisive judgments. So whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, his misery becomes certain, his firm hold is broken, his fall becomes great, and his end comes to eternal sadness and severe torment ... 1

This is exactly as what has been declared by the Holy Qur'an :

worst criminals and blood-suckers in the world.

Whereas, Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) came to enliven humanity inside man following the true Mohammedan Islam and saying, "A strong man is weak before me until I take the right from him, and the weak is strong to me until I take back the right for him." He liberated man when he fought against the enemies of humanity. He said to Malik al-Ashtar when appointing him as the governor over Egypt, "...and do not be as predacious beast over them...for people are of two kinds; either your brother in religion or your equal in creation." He also said, "Do not be a slave to another while Allah has created you free."

So man whatever he is; the black, the poor, and the weak walk under the banner of Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) that carries the high values of liberation and human rights, whereas some people become mean and weak before technology that is possessed by the traders of wars and the suckers of peoples' bloods.

1 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 159.

And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers. 1 I think that after this explanation, no argument or excuse shall remain for those who flatter their Jewish and Christian friends and say to them: We and you arc on the truth as long as we all believe in one God Who has sent Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, and if we are different as to the prophets, we have agreed on the One Who has sent them to us.

Allah says :

Say: Do you dispute with us about Allah, and He is our Lord and your Lord, and we shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds, and we are sincere to Him. Nay! do you say that Abraham and Ishmael and Jacob and the Tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Are you better knowing or Allah? And who is more unjust than he who conceals a testimony that he has from Allah? And Allah is not at all heedless of what you do. 2

1 Qur'an, 3:85.

2 Qur'an, 2:139-140.

Is Islam Difficult That People Cannot Comply With It?

This is a false claim that has no any basis of trueness at all. Every one says this is ignorant knowing nothing about Islam, or he is biased intending to make people alienate their religion and give up its laws and rulings, or he is excessive puritan that does not regard except the opinions of the puritan clergymen who forbid people to worship Allah but according to their own way and make themselves as the guardians of Allah's religion; therefore, they regard things lawful or unlawful due to their own reasons or after the only traditions that have reached them.

The first thing that comes to mind in this concern is this saying of the messenger of Allah (a.s.): Make it (the affairs of religion) easy and do not make it difficult! Bring good tidings and do not (make people alienate), and do not constrict against yourselves, lest Allah constrict against you as He has done to the Children of Israel.

The Prophet (a.s.) often said before his companions:

Allah has not sent me as constrainer or obstinate, but He has sent me as a facilitating teacher.

It is well known that the Prophet (a.s.) was not made to choose between two things, except that he chose the easier one.

The Prophet (a.s.) was not a legislator as some people misthink when they read this Qur'anic verse:

... and whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, abstain (from it). 1

1 Qur'an, 59:7.

The commanding and forbidding of the Prophet (a.s.) do not come from him himself, but he

conveyed what was revealed to him from his Lord. He did not do except what Allah ordered him to do with no bit more and no bit less. Therefore, all the commands and prohibitions are from Allah the Almighty, though they are not recorded in the Holy Qur'an. Allah says about the Prophet (a.s.):

Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed. 1 Since it is so, let us come to the Qur'an to see if Islam is difficult that people cannot comply with or not, in order to see whether this claim is true or false and so that we be on a clear proof as to our affairs.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

He has chosen you and has not laid upon you a hardship in religion. 2

Allah does not want to put on you any difficulty, but He wishes to purify you and that He may complete His favor on you, so that you may be grateful. 3

Allah wants ease for you and He does not want for you difficulty ... 4

This concerns the Muslim nation that have embraced Islam and are abided by its laws and rules in worships and behaviors. Of course, the mercy of Allah has included all His people with their different religions. Allah has been merciful to all of them imposing no any hardship on anyone.

1 Qur'an, 53:3-4.

2 Qur'an, 22:78.

3 Qur'an, 5:6.

4 Qur'an, 2:185.

Allah says:

Of a small seed; He created him, then He made him according to a measure. Then (as for) the way, He has made it easy (for him). 1

So, the way of Allah that man follows to return to his Lord is an easy way with no difficulties or hardships. Allah the Almighty has repeated this meaning five times in the Qur'an. He says:

Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability. 2

We do not impose on any soul a duty except to the extent of its ability. 3

And (as for) those who believe and do good, We do not impose on any soul a duty except to the extent of its ability. 4

And We do not lay on any soul a burden except to the extent of its ability, and with Us is a book which speaks the truth, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly. 5

From all this, we understand that Allah the Almighty has not imposed anything on any man except within his capacity since the time of our father Adam (a.s.). If there was any difficulty or hardship in any one of the divine religions, it would be a result of those who interpreted the purposes of religions according to their personal opinions, or that there might be some people torturing themselves hardly, because of their many sins, looking forward to the forgiveness of Allah or in order to be nearer to Him. Therefore, they invented some things that were not from the religion and bound themselves to them, but they failed in bearing them. 6

1 Qur'an, 80:19-20.

2 Qur'an, 2:286.

3 Qur'an, 6:152.

4 Qur'an, 7:42.

5 Qur'an, 32:62.

6 Monasticism comes true in two ways; A, a serious monasticism which runs away by itself in order not to be touched by any harm and be saved by itself. (Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr, the Historic-al Traditions in the Holy Qur'an, p.

Allah the Almighty says:

... and monasticism they innovated; We did not prescribe it to them- only to seek Allah's pleasure, but they did not observe it with its due observance ... 1

On this basis, we interpret this tradition of the messenger of Allah (a.s.):

Do not be strict (in religious affairs) to yourselves, lest Allah be strict to you as He has done to the children of Israel.

And in the same way, we interpret this Qur'anic Verse concerning the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.):

... he enjoins them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things, and removes from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them. 2

103.) And this is from the view that "Stopping on the hill is more safe", and consequently, the way is cleared before different claims and excuses that a ruler gives or fabricated traditions that assist his creed and rule.

B, false monasticism where one pretends he is from the ulama to warn people against the injustice of a tyrant. And soon the falseness of these untrue claims and pretenses is uncovered; like the justification of "it is not permissible to disobey the ruler or turn away from congregation", as they did to Imam Husayn (a.s.) when he offered himself and family to save the true religion, and on the same way the Alawid and Talibid revolutions followed him.

Similar to that in our present time is the falseness of the monks of churches who serve the rulers and noblemen, and they become a cause for ordinary people to disbelieve and turn away from religion where it is tried hardly to separate it from politics. And we still see many rulers and their mercenary (clergymen) preachers encourage the state of ignorance and underdevelopment among Muslims by their fatwas that keep Muslims away from modernity and make them not meet and unite with other Muslims.

1 Qur'an, 57:27. 2 Qur'an, 7:157.

The burden and shackles, which were on them, were made and stressed by them, and they themselves had bound themselves to. We conclude from this analysis that Islam is a religion that has no difficulty, hardship, overburden, or shackles, but it is a religion of easiness, mercy, and leniency where the weaknesses of man in all his psychological and bodily sides are fully cared for. Allah says:

Allah wants that He should make light your burdens, and man is created weak. 1 ... this is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy. 2 We shall see, inshallah, in the coming chapters that Islam, as known by the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), is the religion that is without the opinions of opinionators, the excessiveness of the excessive, or the falseness of fabricators. Then, we shall know that the Muslims of the present age can abide by the Sharia without any difficulty or hardship.

1 Qur'an, 4:28

2 Qur'an, 2:178.

DOES ISLAM ACCEPT DEVELOPMENT?

Yes and with no any doubt that Islam is the very development, progress, and renewal. It is the highest code that humanity has ever reached since the beginning. In the Holy Qur'an, there are many verses encouraging knowledge and learning and inviting man to follow reason and to try the

best in all fields of life in order to reach the highest levels even in the space. Allah says:

O community of the jinn and the men! If you are able to pass through the regions of the heavens and the earth, then pass through ... 1

This encourages man to develop and progress and when he is not satisfied with the small earth, he looks forward to the sky, the planets, and stars in order to make use of them as long as Allah has given him all powers and informed him that he is preferred to all other creatures, which are exploited for his benefit. Allah says:

Allah is He Who made subservient to you the sea that the ships may run therein by His command, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks. And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect. 2

Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you, and made complete to you His favors outwardly and inwardly? And among men is he who disputes in respect of Allah though having no knowledge nor guidance, nor a book giving light. 3

1 Qur'an, 55:33.

2 Qur'an, 45:12-13.

3 Qur'an, 13:20.

How can the Muslim, who reads in the Book of his Lord that all what there is in the heavens like orbits, planets, suns, moons, stars, galaxies, air, clouds, rains, and snow, and all what there is in the earth, such as rivers, seas, oceans, mountains, forests, jungles, beasts, animals, treasures, minerals, plants, and everything arc made subservient to him, remain sitting on his hands until knowledge, progress, and invention may come to him from the west? If he acts so, he disavows his duty and obligation, degrades himself, and loses so greatly, because his Qur'an that has been revealed by Allah has all things and lacks nothing. Allah says:

We have not neglected anything in the Book. 1

The Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) often said:

Seek knowledge from the cradle until the grave.

The Prophet (a.s.) encouraged Muslims to get highnesses when he said: If the determination of the son of Adam turns toward what is beyond the Throne, he will get it. Thus, Islam does not see

anything impossible in the field of knowledge, sciences, and development. We avoid expatiation and that we may go far away from the theme of the book; otherwise, we would write on this subject an independent book. However, we ask scholars to refer to the scientific source books in this concern.

This is concerning the answer about the title of the chapter when development is meant to concern the scientific and technological development in the fields of industries and inventions that have invaded the minds and houses of people from Europe, the United States of America, and Japan especially. Anyhow, Muslims are indifferent to all that, and some of them have been affected by the

1 Qur'an, 6:38.

civilization and the scientific inventions that have come from other than Muslims; therefore, they think that Islam is the cause of the underdevelopment, especially those who are influenced by communism that says: "Religion is the opium of the people". These some people are ignorant, and if they are somehow fair, they will say that Islam is the incentive to peoples for renewal and development. Indeed, Islam created a nation from nothing in the Arabia that conveyed to the entire world a civilization and many sciences and inventions, until some scholars wrote: "The sun of the Arabs shines over Europe", acknowledging that the Arabs, after embracing and applying Islam, were precedent in every goodness and every discovery and invention. 1

1 Reinhart Dozy, an orientalist from Holland, writes, "In all Andalusia, there was no one man illiterate, whereas no one was able to read and write in Europe except the highest class of priests." Muslims were prominent in Europe in different sciences:

In geography and around-the world-journeys like ar-Razi, Abu Ubaydah al-Bakri, al-Ghurari, al-Idrisi, ibn Jubayr, ibn Batuta, and others. Al-Idrisi had made a great silver ball representing the terrestrial globe and it is still kept in Berlin. The Arab scientists drew maps by which the people of the west guided their ways to India and other places in the world.

Astronomy; Muslims had observatories in Toledo, Cordoba, Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Samarqand, and Persia. Draper says, "The Arabs knew the size of the earth by measuring the degree of its surface, and they defined the eclipse of the moon and the sun. They made correct tables for the sun and the moon, estimated the year, and knew the two equinoxes ..."

Geometry; Gustave Lebon says, "Europe took from the Arabs details in embellishment, and it was found on some churches in France figures of Arabic letters sculptured on stone."

Mathematics; the orientalist Sidio* says, "...and the Arabs paid much and special care for all sciences of mathematics. Indeed, they were our teachers in this field." Leonard Albizi (Blussy)*

wrote about 1200 theses in Algebra that he had learned from the Arabs. Hitti said in his book 'the History of the Arabs', "...and the zero that has solved many problems in the mathematical operations had come to Europe from Andalusia. And the `zero' is still but an Arabic word."

But, if it is meant by 'development' what the western world in

From among the geniuses in mathematics were al-Hasan ibn al-Haytham, ibn Sina (Avicenna), al-Khawarizmi, ibn al-Banna', and others. The book of alKhawarizmi on mathematics has been translated into many European languages.

Physics; A, light: ibn al-Haytham was very expert in the science of light (optics), and he had written a book called `al-Manadhir' in seven volumes, and tables of Arabic names of the parts of the eye translated into foreign languages and are still used with their Arabic names. B, the compass: Sidio* and Sarton confirm that it was the Arabs who invented the compass. C, the pendulum: the Muslims called it 'al-Mawwar' which was invented by ibn Yunus al-Misry (the Egyptian) died in 399 AH-1009 AD. It was used to count the periods during the observations of stars. Scientist Smith pointed out in his book 'the History of Mathematics' that ibn Yunus had preceded Galileo in knowing and inventing the pendulum.

I apologize to readers that some foreign names may be written unlike their origins. I tried my best, but I could not arrive at a result. Chemistry; the Arabs were expert in dying, tanning, mineral industries, and blending of perfumes. Gustave Le Bon says, "It was the Muslims alone who had invented the gunpowder as an explosive propellant substance able to shot bullets, and from them England took this invention and then the rest of Europe ..."

Industry; Philip Hitti says, "Paper is one of the great utilities that Islam had offered to Europe and all the world." In Andalusia, pottery became very flourishing, besides colored mosaic and textiles. Among the other crafts that passed to Europe were metalwork, glass making, and different industries of pottery.

Agriculture; Muslims were expert in the characteristics of soils and the suitable fertilizers for each to far extent more than any others were. Medicine; Philip Hitti says, "...in the middle of the eighth century AH-the fourteenth century AD- when plague spread in Europe, the people there remained sitting on their hands before it considering it as a fate from Allah. At this very time, the physician ibn al-Khateeb al-Ghernati wrote his hook `Haqeeqatus Sa'il wa al-Maradhul Ha'il: the fact of the asker about the frightful disease' to confirm the matter of infection and prove it ..." It is not unknown that the books of Abu Bala- ar-Razi (850-932 AD) and Avicenna remained until recently as main references in medicine, such as the books of `al-Qanoon' and `ash-Shifa".

This is just a brief about some sciences of Muslims and their influences on the European renaissance until the present age.

Europe and America is in, such as the indecorous fashions of clothes, the absolute freedom even to the clubs of the naked, sodomy, the practicing of sexual intercourse in public places, legislating of inheritance for dogs and other animals, and all what is shown in the TV of immoral

programs...all these can never be recognized by Islam, nor does it comply with it. Surely Islam fights against all these immoralities and tries to do away with them.

There are some practices practiced by some Muslims who claim they are keeping to the Prophetic Sunna from among whom are the Salafists especially. They have long beards flowing to their chests, putting on a long shirt, having in their hands a walking stick, standing at the gate of the mosque while brushing their teeth with a teeth cleanser (siwak) and rubbing them left and right, spitting sometime and puffing out another. If you sit with them at a meal, they refuse to sit at a table. They refuse to use a spoon and a fork in having food. They do not eat except with their fingers claiming that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) did so.

Extremism made some of them prohibit the tape recorder and loudspeaker in calling the azan, claiming that it was a heresy where it was not available at the time of the Prophet (a.s.).

Extremism reached its top with some of them when they imagined themselves as the guides who would force and take people back to apply this Sunna, which they thought as the true religion. Therefore, you see them scold whoever laughs loudly saying that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) just smiled and did not laugh loudly, or kick whomever they find sleeping on his abdomen saying that it is the sleeping of Satan. Once, I was present when someone of them beat his daughter because she offered some drinks to the guests not beginning from the guest on the right. He scolded and insulted her before the guests so that they would know that he kept to the Sunna.

What Surma is this that makes others detest it especially when it is practiced in western societies and before people who bear grudge against Islam and Muslims? Instead of showing the others a beautiful picture about Islam and the prophet of Islam, and to endear this religion to them, such people make them detest Islam because of the wrong and bad practices they do.

The strange thing is that when you try to talk with them and make them understand that when the Prophet (a.s.) used to brush his teeth with the tooth cleanser (stick of siwak), there was no brush and tooth paste of today. However, they are not satisfied and they dispute that the siwak stick of that certain tree is better than all the modern invented things, because it has salts and so and so. And if you talk to them about all the modern inventions and tools that can clean the teeth and sterilize the mouth, they will remain preferring that piece of wood which they insert in their pockets and take out from time to time after having been red because of the bloods of the mouth. They move this piece of wood right and left inside their mouths while repeating this saying of the Prophet (a.s.):

Except for that I might make it difficult for my nation, I would order them to use the siwak before every prayer.

But unfortunately, these people do not understand anything from the Prophetic Sunna except the surface and apparent things, and they do not penetrate deeply to the spiritual and scientific dimensions of the Prophet's deeds and sayings.

It is too odd that they are sticking to these doings in a blind imitation with no proof or perception, but they only repeat what they hear from their sheikhs and imams. Most of them are illiterate, and they may often insist on the illiteracy of the Prophet (a.s.) that he could not read and write, and thus they are the pride of the age that they imitate the Prophet (a.s.) in everything!!! 1

1 As for the Salafiyah phenomenon: you have seen before the contradictions and disagreements between the school of opinion and the school of ijtiḥad, and since Islam is a universal mission for all mankind, so it has what pleases the European man who has involved in his laboratory and technology, and, as well, the nomad man, and that man who lives in the unexplored areas of One day, I debated with some of them in the Umar ibn alKhattab Mosque in Paris. I said to them, "If you actually keep to the Prophetic Sunna and deny everything new that you say: 'the worst of things is the new of them, and every new thing is a heresy, and every (man of) heresy shall be in fire', then why do you offer your prayers on the moquette which is artificial that comes to us from the western countries and we do not know from what material it is made, and certainly the Prophet (a.s.) did not know such things nor did he offer prayer on them?"

1 Africa, because Islam is the religion of nature and is perfect in all its laws from the simple sides of life like the brushing of teeth to the greatest decisions of the managing of humanity.

Our ancestors conquered the land of the Romans in the year 17 AH, Persia in 56 AH, and Spain in 93 AH. They did not take with them tents and sticks of siwak, but as Victor Robinson said in his comparison between the Islamic civilization and the conditions of Europe, "Europe was in a terrible darkness after the sunset, while Cordoba was lit by lanterns in the public places. Europe was dirty, whereas one thousand public bathhouses were built in Cordoba. Europe was covered by vermin, while the people of Cordoba were the example of cleanness ..."

On the one hand, we, the Muslims, enrich and refine other civilizations, and on the other hand, there are some people, who, according to the fatwas of some schools, have reached the top of extremism besides the negligence of Sufis and keepers of hospices, and between this and that, there are moderate people.

Some may be fanatic with some things that do not reach the degree of disbelief and unlawfulness, like the imitation of the great leaders and companions, and make that as the whole Islam. For example, some Salafi persons say: 'what do you have to do with books? You can take knowledge

orally!' or they make some challenges with dentists on the basis of the important of the siwak, or something like that. Until this, there is no problem. But-as expected and that some of which has actually happened-some agents of intelligence may sneak into these groups and incite them to give a fatwa on burning the books, the clinics of dentists, or pharmacies because they are from heresies and deviation as they think. However, they forget that they make use of the latest technologies. They travel to the west by airplanes, whereas the Prophet (a.s.) traveled on camels!!! They neglect the great issues of the nation, but busy themselves with trivial things.

Some of them replied, "We are in the land of emigration and our ruling is like the ruling of an obliged one. Do you not know that `necessities permit prohibited things'?" 1 I said, "Which necessity? You can remove this moquette and offer the prayer on the ground as the messenger of Allah (a.s.) did, or you can bring with you some stones to prostrate on."

Their imam looked at me and said mockingly, "I knew that you are Shia since the moment you came into the mosque and put a piece of paper in the place of prostration."

I said, "Do you deny this? Can you convince me by the True Sunna which you claim to follow?" He replied, "We have been forbidden from debating and especially with the Shia, besides that we are not ready to listen to you. Your religion is for you and our religion is for us." 2

1 From the results of the Sunni jurisprudential school is the unseriousness toward the matter of Ijtihad that the Sunni may interpret an important question according to their personal thoughts. Therefore, we often see that some of them practice things unlike the reality, and here lies the great calamity! They may put into effect a rule in other than its actual place, and consequently, they fall into unlawful things and major sins because of "necessities permit prohibitions". They may, when are obliged especially in the western countries and without considering or piety, eat without knowing how the meat has been served or if the fried foods have been cooked in the pig's fat, or the refreshments have alcoholic liquor or not. All that is not a problem, but the problem is when one does not use the siwak, not let his beard reach his chest, or when he prostrates on what has been permitted to prostrate on imitating the Prophet (a.s.) who prostrated on the stones and earth of the Qabaa Mosque!!! Yes, this is considered by these people as heresy and polytheism!!!

2 Let us review here some matters: one day, Abu Haneefa saw one of his companions in ragged clothes. He put in his hand one thousand dirhams and whispered to him, "Repair yourself!" The man said, "I am in no need of this. I am rich enough, hut I seek asceticism in this life." Abu Haneefa said, "Allah pleases to see the effect of His blessing on His servant." Refer to The condition of Ijtihad by Dr. Abdul Aziz al-Khayyat, p. 16. These are some notes that we must mention, so that it would be clear to the learned Muslims that the Prophetic Sunna does not contradict the scientific and civilizational development, and does not forbid man or woman from

wearing any dress fitting him or her. The important thing is that this dress must cover man and woman's body in the way as Islam requires. The Prophet (a.s.) says :

Allah does not look at your clothes or figures, but He looks at your hearts and deeds.

The Prophetic Sunna does not forbid man from sitting at a table and having his meal with a knife and a fork. What is important is that one should be polite and well behaved and not make others feel that he is in a fight like a beast with its prey, especially when he lets his moustache and beard participate with him in having his meal.

The Prophetic Sunna does not forbid man from cleaning his mouth and teeth with a brush and toothpaste or any modern product made for this purpose. The Prophetic Sunna does not forbid man from cleaning his apparent and hidden body, shaving

Metonymically, we say, "You have observed one thing, but missed many things!" It is like that sheikh who interpreted this tradition of the Prophet (a.s.), "Simpleness of clothes is from faith" as 'raggedness of clothes' and followed it out of his ignorance and stupidity. In fact, the Prophet (a.s.) often said, "Clean your clothes and better your mounts until you become as a mole (prominent) among people." Mentioned by al-Hakim in his book al-Jami' al-Kabeer, p. 152 from Sahl ibn al-Handhaliyyah.

The worst of that is the unseriousness and the daring in ijtihaad that may lead to contradict the Book of Allah. Allah says, (O children of Adam! attend to your embellishments at every time and place of prayer). Qur'an, 7:31 Moreover, Islam calls for smoothing the moustache, trimming the beard, plucking out the hair of the armpits, adorning oneself on Fridays ... etc. Thus, we must be a good example of our clean, pure religion, but not vice versa.

the hair of his armpits and the pubic hair, using perfumes, putting in his pocket a handkerchief for his saliva or other uses. But as for those who claim they stick to the Prophetic Sunna while their smells are unpleasant whatever they uses musk because their bodies are unclean, especially in summer, with the long hair of their armpits, and with their bad behaviors that you find them blowing their noses with their fingers throwing their nasal mucus wherever they like paying no any attention to the passersby, and then wiping their hands with their sleeves..., such people are too far from the Prophetic Sunna.

The Prophetic Sunna does not forbid Muslims from making use of the modern tools like tape recorders or loudspeakers to make the azan reach further and further, and does not forbid the use of TV and videos sets and even in the mosques to show religious lessons and Islamic films at other than the times of prayers.

The Prophetic Sunna does not forbid a Muslim from making water in water closets in railway stations, airports...etc., that have been designed in a special way especially in the western countries, while standing up, but what is important is that he should hide his private parts and not to impure his body or clothes. 1 Allah says:

... surely Allah loves those who turn much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves. 2

The Prophetic Sunna does not forbid a Muslim woman from using the modern disposable tissues during her menstruation, or forbid her from driving a car, or going to markets, but the important thing is that she should veil herself and observe the Islamic laws and rulings. In brief, the Prophetic Sunna does not forbid any development or

1 To make water while standing up is not unlawful, but it is too hated or disapproved due to our mujtahids.

2 Qur'an, 2:222.

progress as long as it is for the welfare of man, which leads to his ease, happiness, and protection from any harm. Allah says:

Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah, which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions? 1 Surely, the Prophetic Sunna just prohibits impurities, fifths, and every thing which sound souls, by nature, detest such as had smells, filthy fingernails, unkempt hairs, and impure heels. It is said:

Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty.

We see that adorning oneself is a natural instinct in man and animals. No man, whether faithful or unfaithful, goes out of home, except that he looks at himself in the mirror to adorn and repair himself, and today, you cannot see even one house that has no mirror inside it. Since men do so, then why do we forbid women from doing it? It is preferred for woman to adorn herself, but on condition that she should not unveil herself or use cosmetics before non-mahram men. 2

People are enemies to what they ignore! In my youth, I liked to kohl my eyes every Wednesday, and in spite of that all the Sunni books mention that the Prophet (a.s.) used kohl and encouraged people to use it, each time I used kohl, I felt that men and women disapproved that as if I committed a sin; therefore, I gave it up unwillingly.

Some Arab men of the deserts pierced their earlobes and hung earrings in them. This is famous

among some Arab tribes. However, if we see today a man from the west with an earring in

1 Qur'an, 7:32.

2 A non-mahram man is a man that it is not lawful for a woman to get married to.

his earlobe, we find it strange and say that he is effeminate. It is the same when we see a man with long hair, though history proves that men lowered their hairs like women. Some companions narrated that the Prophet (a.s.) had plaits of hair. The important thing is that we should recall the sayings of the Prophet (a.s.) :

Surely, Allah does not look at your dresses or figures, but He looks at your hearts and deeds. Allah curses men who imitate women and women who imitate men.

Sticking to what the Prophet (a.s.) did fourteen centuries ago and prohibiting everything new and modern is something unacceptable and very odd. What for is all this extremism in the religion of Allah? What for are all these ties that have shackled and made us feel that our religion is full of difficulties and hardships? Surely, Allah is free from all that when He says:

... and He has not laid upon you any hardship in religion. 1

His messenger (a.s.) is also free from all that when he says:

Make it easy (in religion) and do not make it difficult, bring good news (to people) and do not make them alienate (the religion). In the end, we say to all these people whether Salafi, Sunni, or Shia they are: be lenient and moderate to yourselves and to others, and do not make it difficult for Muslims, lest they detest the religion and turn away from Islam, instead of endearing Islam to them. Do not forget the saying of the Prophet (a.s.): If Allah guides one man by you, it would be better to you than all the world and what there is in it.

1 Qur'an, 22:78.

But, if you want to be negatively puritan, then you have to ride on donkeys and mules and go back on them to your countries, because the messenger of Allah (a.s.) used to ride on them and he had never seen any motor vehicle or airplane in all his life. If you do not do, and certainly you shall not do, then you fear Allah as to your brothers and speak to them kindly. If you refuse to progress, at least do not be underdeveloped! 1

1 Our problem today is that the means have changed to be the purposes, and we have neglected the major and common matters that not only Muslims but all peoples meet at. Non-Muslim nations may have many habits and traditions that Islam invites us to accept and adopt, but unfortunately, and indeed unfortunately, many Muslims sanctify men and their sayings, and make them as the whole Islam and consider everything other than that as falsehood, polytheism, and atheism.

For example, Abu Haneefah sees that the reciting of the Qur'anic suras after the imam in the congregational prayers is forbidden, while ash-Shafi'iy sees it is obligatory. To them, these opinions represent the opinions of their owners and the means of getting them is their ijtihaad. Al-Maliki, for example, sees that lowering the hands in the prayer is the right act as the Shia think, but, and how terribly, that some Muslims, who think themselves the only true Muslims and that their creed is the only true creed, beat and abuse a Praying Muslim when they see him doing so in his prayer and they say to him: Do not offer the prayer like the dogs!!!

If someone passes in front of them while they are offering the prayer, or if they see a new convert Muslim putting on some gold ornaments, or see someone reciting the Qur'an while lying down, carrying the Qur'an in some way that they feel incorrect, not using the sticks of Siwak...etc., they raise the Devil and raise the Devil!! Thus, they brush aside the teachings and morals of Islam, and get out of their humanity by shouting, roaring, reviling, and making troubles. By this way, they try to repair a hated thing by an unlawful one, and a corrupted thing by a more corrupted one.

The Political Problems Created By Civilization

When the messenger of Allah (a.s.) ordered his companions to emigrate, he said to them, "Go to Abyssinia, for there is in it a king that no one is treated unjustly near him at all." He did not give them passports, nor did he request for them visas from the government of Abyssinia, nor were they forced to change the currency that was available there. All that was not known or followed at that time, but the land of Allah was vast when man's country became narrow to him. He rode on his mount and intended the mercy of his Lord. Wherever he went, he found what he sought with no inspectors to watch his goes and comes, and no custom-houses that would ask him to pay customs and taxes, or send him back if he had no documents of vaccination, or ask him to show the document of possession of his mount that it might have been stolen or have not paid the dues of the road.

Yes, civilization, or we may say that the great masses of human beings, required these things; the earth was divided into nations, and then into many countries. Every country or every people that

spoke the same language made a government, and every government took a special flag, boundaries in the land and the sea, and put guards at the boundaries so that no one unwanted would enter their country. When the numbers of people increased more and more, and one became greedy for each other, exploited each other, and colonized each other, and revolutions and crimes increased, the developed societies were obliged to define every citizen. Therefore, newborn children and dead people were counted, and every person had his/her own birth document, identity card, and passport. The boundaries were controlled that no one from a country would enter another except after getting the agreement of that country and to abide by the conditions imposed by that country.

I, like many other young Muslims, when my country became narrow to me, tried to emigrate to another country, but I found that all the doors were closed before me, especially of the Arab and Muslim countries. I was very confused when I recited this saying of Allah:

Surely (as for) those whom the angels cause to die while they are unjust to their souls, they shall say: In what state were you? They shall say: We were weak in the earth. They shall say: Was not Allah's earth spacious, so that you should have migrated therein? So these it is whose abode is hell, and it is an evil resort. ¹

I said to myself that the earth is Allah's with no doubt, but the servants of Allah had possessed and divided it among themselves and not permitted it for others.

When I tried to find an excuse for the non-Muslim countries like France, England, Germany, or the United States of America, I might find one, but what would the excuse of the Arab and Muslim countries be? And if I tried to find an excuse for the Arab and Muslim countries that they submitted to the international system as to reciprocity, then what would be the excuse of the rulers of Mecca and Medina who imposed on Muslims visas for going to perform the hajj and umrah besides the taxes that must be paid to enter this land?

¹ Qur'an, 4:97.

I also was confused when I recited this saying of Allah:

Surely (as for) those who disbelieve, and hinder (men) from Allah's way and from the Sacred Mosque which We have made equally for all men, (for) the dweller therein and (for) the visitor ...

¹

If the Inviolable Mosque (the Kaaba) that Allah has made as safety and security for all people, the residents and non residents, becomes now as a property of a certain country that permits some

and prevents others from visiting it, then we must review our Islam, Qur'an, and all concepts! I remained for a long time confused between different thoughts and obsessions that at some times I talked with my Lord saying: "O my Lord, You have said and Your saying is the truth:

Was not Allah's earth vast, so that you should have migrated therein? 2

You also said: And proclaim among people the Pilgrimage: they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every remote path. 3 But now, this Your vast land has been prevented before people, and this Your House has been possessed and its gate has been closed, so what do we do then?

One day, while I was reading some sermons of Imam Ali (a.s.) in Nahjol Balagha when he talked about the Qur'an, one statement attracted my attention and I reread it many times. I found in it what I sought for a long time. It was the only answer that solved the riddle and removed my obsessions. Imam Ali (a.s.) said in the first sermon when talking about the Book of Allah, "... and

1 Qur'an, 22:25.

2 Qur'an, 4:97.

3 Qur'an, 22:27.

between a thing that is obligatory at its time and that shall be null in its future ..." I understood from this speech that such Qur'anic verses, which were possible at the time of the Prophet (a.s.), would be not possible in the future because of the prevailing of the unjust and the tyranny of disbelievers.

Thus, if someone shall say to his Lord on the Day of Resurrection: 'was disabled in the earth', Allah the Almighty, Who is aware of all things, will know that this man is from late people, and so Allah will not say to him: 'your abode is Hell and it is an evil resort! And if someone shall say to his Lord on the Day of Punishment: 'I was prevented from going to perform the pilgrimage to Your Inviolable House', it shall be said to him : 'I have said to you that if you can afford the journey to it. So your excuse is accepted, and the one, who prevented you from that, is responsible for it.'

Peace be on you O my master on the day when you were born, on the day when you died, and on the day when you shall be restored to life. 1

1 If the Zionists have occupied Palestine and Jerusalem, most of the Muslim countries are occupied by the agents and officials of the international Freemasonry. One of these countries is Hijaz; I mean Saudi Arabia. I went from Iraq and Jordan to Saudi Arabia to perform the hajj. I saw

with my eyes how an applicant of the hajj was treated in the medical centers and the passport control departments, and until he would reach the airport of Jeddah where I remained for seven hours until some people slept there and many others became noisy. This was besides the had and rough treatment of the officials of the airport and the impolite policemen towards all hajjis. As if they wanted to say: we are rich and in no need of you. Hasten to the hot tents and deserts! It is supposed that these places would be planted with trees and flowers and would have comfortable buildings and services for the hajjis. There must be laws and systems to manage the affairs and case of the hajjis and from their (the hajjis) own monies! However, these monies, in addition to good shares of petrol, go to increase the welfare of the American people and the Zionists and to support the French franc!

ENJOINING OF GOOD AND FORBIDDING OF THE WRONG

From the serious problems that civilization has created in societies is selfishness and man's being busy with himself without caring for others, as long as he is at ease and not needy. This is more dangerous than any disease is. When people are selfish, the society is afflicted with paralysis and the welfares of the nation are suspended, and its fates arc played with, where there is no one that can offer anything. Then, the values of magnanimity, heroism, the sacrifice for others, altruism, and the fight against injustice and corruption die, and in that case, religion and conscience shall wither and be weak.

The Prophet (a.s.) said :

Either you enjoin the good and forbid the wrong, or Allah will set against you the worst of you, and then the best of you shall pray Allah and it shall not be responded to them.

"The enjoining of good and the forbidding of the wrong" is a necessary matter in the life of the nation that some of the imams have considered it as one the pillars of Islam. Therefore, you see that the first motto that the modern Islamic movements adopt is "the enjoining of the good and forbidding of the wrong".

However, civilized societies today object seriously to this matter through the foundations created recently such as the democratic societies, the assembly of the human rights, the assembly of woman's rights, and even the rights of animals. If a government is not responsible for the "enjoining of the good and forbidding of the wrong", it shall be impossible for a group or individuals to undertake it. Today, you see wrongs and corruptions everywhere and you cannot change anything. It is very easy for any girl to bring a suit against you, and in the best condition it shall be said to you: do not interfere in what does not concern you! If you say that you just enjoin the good and forbid the wrong, the answer shall be: `and who are you? And by which right you permit yourself to do so? And who has given you this authority?'

\ I myself have tried these experiments, as have many other Muslims. We got out of those experiments with the bitterness of weakness and failure. I remained confused between beliefs that forced me to carry out that duty and threatened me if not, and the reality we lived that prevented me from this right and threatened me if I try to do it again. I remember that once the governor said to me, "Arc you the messenger of Allah that Allah has sent with a new religion to reform people?" I said, "Certainly not." He said, "Then, be satisfied with yourself and family and keep us away from your evil. It is we who are responsible for the safety and peace of people. If we leave the matter for every nosy one to enjoin and forbid, there shall be anarchy." 1

I knew my worth and stopped at borders! I was afraid, and my soul incited me to venture one time and to retire another. I remained so for some years until a tradition of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) attracted my attention. In this tradition, the Prophet (a.s.) said:

1 Because we are Arabs, or in fact underdeveloped nomads that we let our learned men and thinkers solve the social, economic, and political problems of the country. Recently, we became free from regency and mandatory; therefore, we have but to keep silent and be obedient to keep pace with the movements and clubs of nudism and perversion, and announce, like in the west, our need for some girls to act in a licentious film for wages, of course, and then they go on their way. Why should we remain nosy? Otherwise, the tongue of every nosy person who wants to obstacle the way of development and prosperity must be cut! Long live the civilization!

Whoever of you sees an evil let him change (repair) it with his hand, and if he cannot do, let him do with his tongue, and if he cannot do, let him do with his heart, and this is the weakest of faith. 1

The Prophet (a.s.) said:

No prophet that Allah had sent for his nation before me, except that he had from his community disciples and companions who followed his Sunna and obeyed his commands, then after them successors come who say what they do not do, and do what they are not ordered to do; whoever resists them with his hand is faithful, whoever resists them with his tongue is faithful, and whoever resists them with his heart is faithful, and anything else than that is not from faith inasmuch as a grain of mustard. 2

I praised Allah the Almighty that He has not imposed on us that which we have no capacity to bear. Thus, the Prophet's traditions explained the Book of Allah, and because Allah knows all things in the past, present, and future, so He knew that a time would come to people where a Muslim would be unable to reject the evil; therefore, He made it easy for Muslims and imposed

on them only what they could bear. Therefore, the saying of the Prophet (a.s.), "Whoever of you sees an evil let him change (repair) it with his hand, and if he cannot do, let him do with his tongue..." is a proof on the changing of the Muslim society from the state of powerfulness into the state of weakness, besides that it is a proof that the legal obligation changes from a state into another.

So the duty of one, who is powerful, is to repair the evil by power which is represented by the "hand" in the tradition, and the one, who is powerless, has to repair the evil through speech and breaches which is represented by the "tongue", and the one,

1 Sahih of Muslim, chapter of "the forbidding of evil is from faith..." Sahih of Muslim. chapter of "the forbidding of evil is from faith ..."

who is certain that his speech shall cause him harms and troubles, has to deny the evil in his heart without announcing his opinion openly, and this shall be his legal duty.

Glory be to Allah Who does not impose on a soul except what it can bear, and blessings and peace be on the Prophet of mercy who was more merciful to the believers than they themselves were, and on his generous, immaculate progeny. 1

1 Unfortunately, we find among foreigners and in the western countries attentive listeners, but we do not find them in our Arab and Muslim countries. In fact, attentive listening is forbidden here!

Modern Man and The Lenient Religion

There is no doubt that the goals of the divine religions are firstly to make man-know his creator and keep him away from idolatry and all kinds of polytheism and deviation, and secondly to manage his life socially, economically, and politically. These goals can be summarized into two things; faith and working. We mean true faith and good deeds, because not every faith or every deed can be accepted by Allah the Almighty. Man may believe in doctrines that contradict Islam and what Allah has revealed to His Prophet (a.s.), or in a belief inherited from ancestors and even if it is right, but it may be changed and replaced.

Allah the Almighty says: And when it is said to them: Believe in what Allah has revealed, they say: We believe in that which was revealed to us, and they deny what is besides that, while it is the truth verifying that which they have. 1

Man may do many, things that he thinks they are for the welfare of humanity, whereas they cause harms and damages. Allah the Almighty says: And when it is said to them: Do not make mischief in the land, they say: We are but peacemakers. Surely, they themselves are the mischief makers, but they do not perceive. 2

1 Qur'an, 2:91.

2 Qur'an, 2:11-12.

Man may do great deeds that are very useful to mankind, but he does not intend the contentment of Allah. He just seeks fame and prominence, and so his deeds are:

... like the mirage in a desert, which a thirsty man thinks to be water; until when he comes to it, he finds it to be naught. Allah says:

And We will proceed to what they have done of deeds, so We shall render them as scattered motes. 1

Religion is the landmark, by which man is guided and exalted, and wherever man is available, religion is found there too since the beginning of humanity. Excavations and scientific studies have proved that primitive man did not know many things except after several ages, but he did know temples since the beginning. Thus, we can certainly say that civilization is the extract of the divine religions. Since it is so, then Islam that has been revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) is the most advanced civilization, and humanity cannot overleap or precede it. This century has recorded a very strange change in the modern man who suffers different woes because of atheism, disbelief, the absence of spiritual values, and the mental emptiness that have come out of irreligiousness. Today, man is searching for his identity and lost personality and trying to come back little by little to the laps of the lenient religion. Allah says:

Then set your face upright for religion in the right state; the nature made by Allah in which He has made men; there is no altering of Allah's creation; that is the right religion, but most people do not know. 2

Today, we see a great Islamic wakefulness in all milieus whether learned or not, and we see that the change has included all peoples of different races and nationalities.

1 Qur'an, 25:23.

2 Qur'an, 30:30.

In the atheist milieus that used to adopt the theory of human rights and absolute freedom, we see that they have begun retreating and changing their theories. They prevent man from drinking alcohols while driving his car, in spite of the Christians' claim that their religion permits them to drink alcohols and that Jesus Christ (a.s.) himself made wine for them. They have passed such a law after the increase of accidents in the streets because of drinking. Statistics shows that twenty thousand people are killed every year in France only because of such accidents.

If we review the laws that have been enacted by the most advanced civilizations in the most developed countries and compare them to the laws of Islam, we shall see the great difference as the distance between the earth and the sky. In one look at the epistle of Imam Ali (a.s.) to Malik al-Ashtar when he appointed him as the wali over Egypt, we shall clearly see the precedence of Muslims in all fields. Imam Ali (a.s.) said in his epistle to Malik :

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This what the servant of Allah, Ali Ameerul Mo'minin, orders Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in his covenant to him as he appoints him the wali over Egypt (ordering him) to collect its revenue, fight its enemies, manage its people's affairs, and to improve the country. He is ordered to fear Allah, obey Him, and to follow what Allah has ordered in His book of obligations and norms, which no one will be prosperous unless by following and no one will be wretched unless by denying and missing, and to support Allah (by supporting the rightness) with his heart, hand and tongue, because Allah has promised to support whoever support Him and glorify whoever glorifies Him. He is ordered to control his soul's fancies and to subdue his soul if it wants to err, because the soul often incites towards evil except for those, whom Allah has mercy upon.

O Malik, know that I have sent you to a country that had experienced just and unjust rules before you. The people will think of your deeds as you thought of the deeds of the walis, who preceded you, and they will talk about you as you talked about the walis ruled before you. The virtuous men will be known by what is said about them by the people (by the favor of Allah). Let the loveliest provision to your self be the benevolent doing. Control your fancy and prevent yourself from what is not legal to you because controlling one's self is the very fairness to it in what it likes or dislikes.

Fill your heart with mercy, love and kindness towards your people and do not be with them like a beast, waiting for an opportunity to eat them, because people are of two kinds; either a brother to you in religion or an equal to you in humanity. They fall into mistakes and may be incited by the slips. They may commit sins on purpose or unknowingly. So you are to forgive them as you like

Allah to forgive you. You rule over them and the responsible guardian rules over you and Allah is upon the one, who installed you. Allah tries you by managing your people's affairs, so do not be in a war against Allah (by trespassing His Sharia and by wronging His people) because you are unable to put up with His wrath and you cannot do without his forgiveness and mercy. Do not regret when you forgive someone and do not boast when you punish someone. Do not be angry about something that you may find an excuse for it. Do not say: 'I am the superior. I order and I must be obeyed' for it corrupts the heart, destroys the religion, and approaches to the others (the opponents).

If your high position gives a sense of splendor or pride, you are to think of the supreme power of Allah over you and His ability to act upon you what you can never put up with. This will lessen your vanity, prevent your sharpness and restore what is missed of your reason to you.

Beware not to compare yourself with Allah in His greatness or to imitate Him in His supreme power, because Allah degrades every arrogant and demeans every haughty one.

Be fair before Allah and do not prefer yourself, your relatives, or your close companions to people. If you do not follow this, you will wrong; and whoever wrongs the people, Allah will be his opponent and when Allah becomes the opponent of someone, He refutes his excuses and that he will be in a state of war against Allah until he dies or he repents.

Nothing leads to change the blessings of Allah and to hasten His wrath more than to persist in oppression, because Allah hears the prayer of the oppressed and He always waylays the oppressors.

Let the loveliest thing to yourself be that which is moderate in rightness, more general in justice and widely accepted by people. Know that the discontent of the public removes the content of the upper class and that the discontent of the upper class will be excused by the content of the public.

No one is more dependent upon the wali during the ease, less helpful during the distress, more reluctant of justice, more insistent on gifts, less grateful when gifted, less indulgent when prevented and less patient during misfortunes than the upper class. Whereas the pillar of the religion and the entire of the Muslims, who are always ready to stand against the enemy, are the public of the ummah, so let your tendency be with them and let your attention be to them. Let him, who looks for the defects of people, be the farthest one from you and the most odious to you, because people have defects that the wali is the first one, who has to cover them. Do not try to disclose what is hidden of those

defects, but you have to purify what is appeared of them to you and Allah decides upon what is

unknown for you. Cover the defects (of people) as possible as you can and Allah will cover of your defects as what you like to cover of your people's defects.

Remove every grudge from the people's hearts by behaving fairly with them and keep away from all that which may cause enmity. Overlook whatever is not clear to you and do not hasten to believe any slanderer, because a slanderer is deceitful even if he imitates the sincere people. Let neither a miser participate in your consultation because he makes you be away from virtue and frightens you of poverty if you want to spend, nor a coward because he disheartens you, nor a greedy one because he graces greed for you with wrongfulness. Miserliness, cowardliness and greed are different instincts, but they participate in one common thing, which is distrusting in Allah.

The worst of your viziers are they, who were viziers of the wicked rulers before you and who participated in their sins; so do not let them be of your retinue, because they were supporters of sinners and brothers of the unjust. You will find better than them, who have the same experience but without sins and guilts and who haven't helped the unjust in their injustice, nor the sinners in their sins. They will be less burdensome on you, more helpful for you, more kindhearted to you and less intimate with other than you (the opponents). So you depend on such people as your retinue, and then let the most preferable one to you that, who is the most truthful in saying the bitter truth to you and the least helpful when you do what Allah hates for His guardians to do whether it agrees with your fancy or not. Stick to the pious and truthful people and inure them not to praise you or make you feel proud about something that you have not done, because much praise leads to vanity and arrogance.

Do not consider the benevolent and evildoers as equal, for you will discourage the benevolent to do benevolence and courage the evildoers to commit more offenses. You have to reward every one according to his doing. Know that nothing makes the ruler think much of his people better than to be kind to them and to lessen their burden and not to force them to do what they are not able to do. Let you, by doing that, cause a mutual trust between you and your people, because confidence will keep you away from many troubles. As long as you do good to them, they will confide in you and as long as you do evil to them, they will distrust in you.

Do not break a good tradition followed by the leaders of this ummah, upon which the ummah agreed unanimously and was a cause of the people's virtuousness. Do not create a tradition, which will oppose some of those previous traditions, so that the merit will be for those, who enacted those traditions, and the sin will be upon you because you oppose them.

Always discuss with the ulema and wise men to firm what improves the affairs of your state and to revive what have rectified the people before you. Remember that people are composed of different classes. The progress of one is dependent on the progress of the other; and none can

afford to be independent of the other. From among them, there are the soldiers of Allah (the army), clerks and civil officers, judiciary, revenue collectors and public relations officers, the people of land taxes and jizya 1 of Muslims and Thimmis, 2 merchants and craftsmen, and the lower class of the needy and the indigent. Allah has

1 Jizya is an attribute taken from non-Muslims who live under the Islamic rule.

2 The free non-Muslims, who live under the Islamic rule by paying jizya (tribute).

prescribed for each his share (rights), and determined His penalties (on violations) in His Book or the Sunna of His Prophet, may Allah have blessing on him and his progeny; a covenant from Him that is observed near us.

The soldiers, by the will of Allah, are like a fortress to the people, dignity to rulers, glory of religion, and means of peace and safety. Without them, the state cannot stand, and they cannot stand without the support of the revenue that Allah gives by His grace, and by which they become strong to fight their enemy and rely on to satisfy their needs. Then, these two kinds, the military and the civil population, cannot stand without the third category of judiciary, workers, and clerks, who run the transactions and dealings among people, and who are entrusted with the private and general affairs, and the all cannot do without the tradesmen, the merchants and the craftsmen, who run the market and offer their services to the others who may not be able to do by themselves. Then, there is the lower class of the poor and the needy, whose deserve to be helped and assisted. Allah has given an appropriate opportunity of living to the all; and then the rights of all of these classes are to be under the charge of the wali and nothing will acquit the wali of his charge except by carrying out his charge fairly with full carefulness after praying Allah to support him, and he (the wali) has to accustom himself to keeping to the truth and be patient with it whether it is light or heavy to him.

So appoint (in important posts) from your soldiers those, who, in your opinion, are most faithful to Allah and His Apostle, most loyal to your imam, most honest, and the most patient of them, who restrain themselves at anger and calmly accept (others') excuses, are kind to the weak and strict to the strong, who will not be incited by the violent provocation and who will not falter at any task.

Keep to those of good reputation, integrity and glorious past, and those of courage, bravery, magnanimity and generosity, because they are bases of liberality and branches of benevolence. Care for them as parents care for their children and do not exaggerate what you have done to them. Do not leave any little kindness to them you think it may be worthless, because any kindness towards them will lead them to confide in you and to offer you the sincere advice. Do not give up caring for their little affairs, relying on their big ones, because the little of your favor

has a place that they benefit from, and the big (of your favor) has a position that they cannot do without.

Let your commander in chief be the one, who helps his men and gives them from his wealth what suffices them and suffices their families left behind so that their concern will be one concern in their jihad against the enemy. Your being kind to them will turn their hearts towards you. The best delight of the wali's eye is by spreading justice in the country and by the expression of the people's cordiality. They do not express their goodwill except when their hearts are contented, and they will not be sincere unless they are willing to safeguard their walis and are contented with their rule and are hopeful of their aims; therefore, try to achieve their hopes and keep on praising them and mentioning their good deeds, because praising the good deeds provokes the brave and encourages the laggard inshallah.

Keep every one's right and do not ascribe someone's excellence to another. Do not belittle one's great deed. Do not let someone's nobility lead you to glorify his slight deed, and do not let the meanness of someone's lead you to belittle his great deed. Turn to Allah and to His Prophet for guidance whenever you face a hardship and feel uncertain about what you have to do. Allah had said to some people, whom He wished to guide:

O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger. 1

Referring to Allah is to obey His Book, and referring to the Prophet is to follow his Sunna, which calls for unity and warns of division.

Choose, for judging among people, the best of them to you, who is not obsessed by distresses, does not become importunate before the opponents, does not keep on mistakes, does not miss reason, does not hesitate to follow the truth when he finds it, does not think of greed, does not satisfy with the least perception without looking for the farthest, the most pondering on the confused matters, the most dependent upon evidences, the least bored in inspecting the opponents, the most determined when the truth appears, who is not affected by praise, who is not incited by any temptation, and these are very few.

Observe his (the judge) judgments always and be openhanded to him to satisfy his needs so that he shall not be in need of people. Give him a position in your court so high that none can even dream of coveting it and so high that neither backbiting nor intrigue can touch him. Think of this so much, for this religion was captive under the control of the evildoers, doing with it according to their fancies and using it as a means to obtain the vain pleasures of this worldly life.

Then, think about your officials, and employ them after trying. Do not appoint them favoringly or

autocratically, because they are a compound of injustice and treason. Seek after the experienced and coy men of the benevolent families and the precedence in Islam because they are more honest, less greedy, nobler, and more prudent. Then supply

1 Qur'an, 4:59.

them with sufficient living, for it helps them to purify themselves and prevents them from seizing what is there under their control, and it will be an evidence against them if they break your order or betray the trust. Then, check their jobs and send truthful and sincere inspectors to watch them. Watching them secretly leads them to be honest and loyal in doing their jobs and to be kind to people. And beware of assistants; if one of them betrays the trust, you will be informed of that by your spies and this will be enough witness to let you punish, disgrace, defame, and girt him with the shame of the guilt according to what he commits.

Take much care of the revenue, so as to prosper the producers because their prosperity leads to the prosperity of the others. There is no prosperity without them, because all people are dependent upon them. Let you think of reclaiming the lands more than to think of getting the revenue. Whoever seeks after revenue without reforming, shall ruin the country and destroy people and his rule shall not last long. If they (farmers) complain of deficiency or lack of water (of rivers or rains) or that their farms are damaged by floods, you have to aid them with what may lessen their sufferings. Do not be vexed about what you give them to relieve their distress, because they will, in return, recompense in prospering your country and strengthening your rule besides getting their goodwill and being delighted by spreading justice among them. They will join their power to yours and will confide in you after doing them favors and being fair to them.

One day if something happens, you may charge them with a heavy burden and you find that they undertake it willingly. Prosperity bears whatever you burden it with, but the destruction of the land comes out of the indigence of its people, and the indigence of people comes out of the eagerness of the walis for heaping up monies for themselves, and of their distrust in remaining in their positions, and that they do not learn from the previous examples.

Then think about your clerks. Trust your affairs to the best of them. Trust your special books, in which you put your plans and secrets, to the one, who is honest, who does not pride upon his position so that he may dare to stand against you in front of people when there is a disagreement between you and him, who does not ignore to inform you of the correspondences of your officials in the different countries or to reply to the received books correctly instead of you, who does not weaken a contract he concludes for you and does not be unable to cancel an ineffective contract, who is not ignorant of his ability in dealing with the affairs because he, who ignores his own ability, is more ignorant of the others' abilities. Let your choosing them not be according to

physiognomy and confidence, because people feign before the walis so that they may think well of them, but in fact there is nothing of truthfulness and fidelity behind that. You have to try them with what they did to the just walis, who ruled before, you and then choose the best in serving the public and the most loyal among them. This will show your sincerity to Allah and to him, who has entrusted you with the position you hold. Appoint for each of your affairs one, who is not defeated before great difficulties, nor is he lost among the many problems when facing him. If you ignore any defect available in your clerks, you will be responsible for it.

Take much care of merchants and the craftsmen; the residents and the ones roving through the countries, and take much care of laborers, because they are the source of the welfare and the means that brings devices and utensils from here and there, on the land and in the sea, from plains and mountains where people cannot reach. They (merchants and craftsmen) are peaceful people, who do not cause troubles or calamities. Care for their affairs in your country and about it. And know-nevertheless- that many of them are cruel in dealing, with bad stinginess, monopolizing the utilities and controlling the deals. This is a disadvantage for the public and a defect for the walis. Prevent monopoly, because the messenger of Allah, peace be on him and his progeny, had prohibited it. Let dealing be lenient and fair, and with fair prices for the two parties; the seller and the buyer. If someone monopolizes something after being forbidden, then you have to punish him severely, but without exceeding the limit of justice.

For the sake of Allah, take much care of the lower class; the poor, the needy, the destitute and the handicapped, who have no way to get their living. Among this class, there are the beggars and those, who are in serious need, but they do not beg. Obey Allah with what He has entrusted you of their rights. Assign for them something from the treasury and something from the yields of the Muslims' booty lands in each country. The far and the near of them have equal right and you are responsible for the right of every one of them. Do not be careless about them because you shall not be forgiven when wasting the slight thing for the sake of achieving the great thing. Do not be ignorant about their affairs and do not be proud before them. Seek for those, whose news do not reach you because that people scorn and hate to look at them. Order some of benevolent and humble people to seek for those destitute ones and to inform you of their affairs, and then you are to do to them what Allah may forgive you for when you meet Him, because this class of people is in need of fairness more than the others are. Anyhow, you have to give every one his right.

Attend to the orphans and the old people, who are helpless and do not demean themselves by begging people. This is too heavy for the walis, and the whole rightness is heavy, but Allah may make it easy for those, who hope for the good end by being patient and believing in what Allah has promised them of.

Assign some of your time to the plaintiffs. You sit humbly with them in a public meeting and keep

your guards and soldiers away from them, in order that they may talk frankly without any fear. I had heard the messenger of Allah (a.s.) saying more than a time: "A nation will not be sanctified if the right of the weak is not taken back from the powerful without threatening or frightening." Tolerate their severity and ineloquence. Do not show them intolerance and disdain, so that Allah spreads upon you his mercy and rewards you for your obedience to Him. If you give, give willingly and if you deny, deny kindly and apologizingly.

There are certain things that you have to do yourself; you have to answer your governors when your clerks are unable to, you have to answer the people's wants as soon as they reach you, since your assistants may delay them. Achieve every day's duty in time, because each day has its own duties. Choose for yourself the best time to be with Allah. Know that the greatest of your doings, although that they all are to be for the sake of Allah, are those that you do with good will and those you do for the sake of your people.

Let the best thing, with which you worship Allah sincerely, be the offering of his obligations, which are for Allah alone. Tire your body for your Lord during your day and night. Approach to Allah sincerely with all what you do for the sake of Him without any shortage or hypocrisy whatever you become tired. When you lead the people in offering the prayer, try neither to lengthen it nor to lose anything of it, because among people there are some, who are ill, and some, who have things to do. Once, I asked the messenger of Allah (a.s.), when he had ordered me to go to Yemen, about how to lead people in offering the prayer and he said, "Offer it like the prayer of the weakest of them and be kind to the believers."

Do not hide too long from your people, because the hiding of walis from people is a kind of distress and ignorance of their affairs. Hiding from people prevents them from knowing why they are kept away and so the great thing will be insignificant for them and the insignificant thing will be great, the good things will be bad and the bad will be good, and the truth will be confused with falsehood. A wali is but a human being. He does not know what is hidden of the people's affairs, and the rightness has no signs that by which one can distinguish between the truthfulness and the falsehood. You (the wali) are but one of two; either you are a man with a liberal character, following rightness, and then why do you hide from a right duty that you are to do or a deed of munificence you are to offer? Or a man of stinginess and then you will find that how soon people will despair of asking you for anything, in spite of that the most of people's wants are of complaining of injustice or asking for fairness of a conduct, which do not cost you anything.

A wali has a retinue and close companions, among whom there are some selfish, impudent and unfair persons when dealing with people. Cut off this thing by cutting off the reason that encourages them to be so. Do not donate to anyone of your retinue or relatives a donation. Let them not expect from you to possess any property, which will harm other peoples of their watering or a shared act. They (the wali's retinue or relatives) enjoy it at the expense of the

others, and hence, the benefit will be for them, whereas the blame will be upon you in this life and in the afterlife.

Make every one submit to the truth whoever he is whether be your retinue and relatives or not. Be patient and tolerant in applying that, whatever effect it has upon your relatives and close companions. Care for its result whatever heavy it is to you, because the result of that will be good.

If people suspect you of doing injustice, come out to them with your evidence to refute their suspicion, because by this, you will accustom yourself to justice. Be kind to your people when showing your evidences to achieve your aim in rectifying them according to the rightness. Do not refuse the peace your enemy invites you for if it pleases Allah, because peace will bring your soldiers comfort, make you safe from your troubles and bring security for your country. But be extremely careful of your enemy after the peace, because the enemy may approach to you under the pretense of peace, in order to attack you unexpectedly. So be resolute and doubt your enemy's good will. When you conclude an agreement with your enemy or you promise of something, you have to keep your agreement with fidelity and to keep your promise with loyalty. Make yourself as the safeguard of what you have promised, because nothing of Allah's obligations that people agree upon, in spite of their different thoughts and fancies, is better than to glorify fulfilling the promises. Polytheists, rather than Muslims, kept to their promises among them when they saw the had results of perfidy. So do not betray your agreement, do not break your promise and do not cheat your enemy, for no one dares to disobey Allah but the miserable ignorant. Allah made His promise as safety that He spread between His people with His mercy and made it as sanctum, to whose power people resorted and to whose protection they hurried. So never let thwarting, cheating or forging be with your promises. Do not conclude an agreement that you may use confused statements in order to find a way that you may cheat with it and do not depend upon a solecism as an excuse after certifying your promise. Let no distress lead you to annul your promise unfairly, because tolerating a distress that you expect its relief and good result is better than cheating that you fear its bad_ consequence besides that Allah will ask you about His right of fidelity you break, and then He will bless neither your life nor your afterlife.

Avoid and avoid shedding of bloods unjustly and without any right cause leading you to. Nothing leads hurriedly to wrath, to evil consequence, to transience of blessings and cessation of life worse than shedding of bloods unrightfully. Allah the Almighty will judge among His people, first of all, about shedding of bloods on the Day of Resurrection. Do not try to firm your rule by shedding haram (unlawful) blood, because this will weaken and enfeeble your rule, or in fact, it will remove your rule and transfer it to others. Neither Allah nor I will forgive you for an intended killing, because it must have a penalty. If you face a wrongdoing, let your whip, sword or hand not exceed in punishment, because a blow may cause a killing. Let your rule not make you proud that you do not give the guardians of the killed one their right.

Avoid self-conceit; do not confide in what you like of your self and do not wish to be praised, because this is the best opportunity for Satan to crush the benevolence from inside the benevolent.

Do not mention the favors you do to your people. Do not exaggerate your deeds and do not promise your people, and then you break your promise, because mentioning the favors done by you voids benevolence, exaggeration puts out the light of rightness, and breaking the promise brings detestation of Allah and people. Allah said, (It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do). 1

Do not give your judgment about matters before their time and do not be indifferent when they occur. Do not insist upon dispute when matters are not clear, and do not be indifferent when they become clear. Put every thing in its place and every order in its concernment.

1 Qur'an, 61:3.

Do not distinguish yourself with what people are equal in, and do not ignore your duties when they become clear for people, because what you take unrightfully, will be taken from you to others, and how soon your affairs will be uncovered, and then the rights of the wronged ones will be extracted from you.

Control your passion, intensity, power and sharpness of your tongue. Be away from all that by preventing your tongue from setting about and by delaying your power until your rage calms down, and then you have the option to decide. You will not control yourself until you worry yourself with recalling that you will meet your God in the afterworld.

You have to remember what preceded you of a just government, a virtuous norm, a tradition of our Prophet (s) or an obligation in the Book of Allah and then, you have to imitate what we have done according to that and to try your best to follow what I have entrusted you with in this charter. I have quitted myself from anything you may protest with later on and lest you find any excuse when you hasten after your fancy. I pray Allah, with His infinite mercy and great power of granting every wish, to grant me and you success to do what pleases Him and His people with the rightful conduct, and to make us worthy of people's good will and to offer beneficial achievements to the country. I pray Allah to grant us blessing and dignity and to conclude my life and yours with happiness and martyrdom. To Allah we will return. Peace be upon the messenger of Allah and Allah may bless him and his pure progeny with great peace and blessing. With salaam. 1

If one studies deeply this epistle that Imam Ali (a.s.) had written to his wali, he shall find in it the highest meanings of the

1 Nahjol Balagha, letter (53) to Malik al-Ashtar.

human civilization which the civilization of the twentieth century has not yet arrived at. It includes all fields of life, such as social, economical, political, and cultural sides besides worship, ethics, psychological education, and human natures.

If I feel sorry, my sorry is but for most of Muslims who neglect the Nahjol Balagha of Imam Ali (a.s.) and the Gnostic treasures and scientific facts it has, and they run after the western writings and theories, thinking that they may reach the convoy of the false civilization that has brought woes and calamities to weak societies and peoples.

If I say to one of them that in Islam and in the Islamic personalities there are great and good examples for all humanity, he would answer that if this was true, then Muslims would not be underdeveloped while others have developed and progressed.

Such people and their likes ignore a regrettable fact that Islam remained but a theory without being applied, and the great Islamic personalities, who tried to apply it, were fought, exiled, and killed, or they were abused and reviled from on minbars, and their works and books remained unknown under the intellectual siege and different accusations and rumors. 1 Western scientists in America, Germany, and England made great use of the facts of Islam, while the Muslims are still indifferent. Allah the Almighty says:

But there came after them a generation, who neglected prayers and followed lusts, so they will meet perdition. 2 One day, someone said to me, "If you mean by 'the Islamic personalities' the twelve imams of the Ahlul Bayt, so the Shia, as

1 Refer to the books 'What has the world lost by the decline of Muslims?' by an-Nawawi, 'the Arabian man and civilization' by Anwar ar-Rifa'iy, 'The excellences of our civilization' by Dr. Mustafa as-Siba'iy, and 'Islam and the Arab civilization' by Muhammad Kurd Ali, and many other books.

2 Qur'an, 19:59.

mentioned in your books, have believed in their imamate, obeyed, and followed them in the affairs of life and religion, then why have the Shia remained underdeveloped like the rest of Muslims, and have not advanced in a science or invention?"

I said to him, "The Shia, who had believed in the twelve imams, were minority like a white spot in a black dress. They feared for their lives; their bloods were shed, their honors (women) were

violated, and they were tortured severely throughout the ages. In such conditions, could the Shia, who were all the time busy with their griefs and distresses and were afraid of being killed at any moment, advance or develop?"

It is well known that when man becomes needy and hungry, his mind becomes busy, before everything, with assuring his living, which is the cause of his survival and continuity. Then, how it is if the means of his living and the living of his family and all who resort or support him is prevented? However, if the means of good living and ease are available for man, and he enjoys the pleasure of life, then he becomes very ambitious and his reason and intellect go high and higher. Therefore, you see that governments regard the people of knowledge and sciences very highly, prepare for them all means of living and ease, spend on them great monies, prepare for them libraries and laboratories equipped with all modern tools. In these conditions, how would they not advance and invent?

Nevertheless, the Twelver Shia, and in spite of all poverty, expelling, torturing, and killing they suffered, were the first in all fields of knowledge and sciences, because they had drunk from the springs of the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) from which the best of scientists and scholars in different fields of knowledge had graduated. Imam Ja'far bin Muhammad as-Sadiq (a.s.) taught besides jurisprudence and tafsir (interpretation of the Qur'an) the applied and theoretical sciences such as mathematics, medicine, physics, chemistry, astronomy, and other sciences whose importance did not appear except after the industrial revolution and in the recent centuries.

Here, I mention just some of that which western scholars had acknowledged and some of the facts that orientalist have mentioned about Imam as-Sadiq (a.s.) in their scientific meeting held in the year 1968 AD in Strasburg University in France when discussing the scientific and civilizational history of the Twelver Shia. More than twenty scientists from the United State of America, England, Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy attended this meeting. 1

These scientists spoke in details about Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) and his disciple Jabir ibn Hayyan who had left behind one thousand and five hundred theses from the lectures of his teacher on chemistry, medicine, and philosophy as mentioned by ibn anNadeem in his book al-Fairest and by ibn Khillikan in his book the News of Imam as-Sadiq. The participants in that scientific meeting all agreed upon that Jabir ibn Hayyan could apply many scientific theories and prepare chemical matters and compounds that have a great role in making bombs and explosives. They also said that he could discover the secrets of chemistry that was called "San'ah; craft" which is the transmutation of poor metals into expensive ones like gold, silver, and others. In this concern, Jabir ibn Hayyan said, "My teacher Ja'far ibn Muhammad had taught a branch of knowledge that if I wanted, I would change all the earth into gold by it."

Dr. Muhammad Yahya al-Hashimi (a today-scholar) has written a book called 'Imam as-Sadiq, the

inspirer of chemistry'. He says in this book, "That which increases our admiration is the claim of Jabir ibn Hayyan that this secret (the transmutation of metals and the changing of matters) has a role in all operations. And if we think deeply, in the present time, we shall see that the discovering of radiant elements that cause to convert the element of a matter and destroy the atom has not led to the atomic bomb only, but

1 Imam as-Sadiq as Known by the Western Scientists, translated into Arabic by Dr. Nooruddeen Aal Ali.

also to find new resources of power that did never come to man's mind." 1

In addition to all of that, the Twelver Shia were the first in all sciences, whereas the rest of Muslims were limited to jurisprudence, tafsir, and ethics in which the Shia had reached the top, because of the vast knowledge they had inherited from the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). We, as history confirms, see that the Shia were the first of creators and first of inventors.

For more details, researchers can read the book 'The Shia and the Arts of Islam', or the introduction of 'the Origin of Shiism and its Principles' to be certain that the Shia had preceded all other sects in all fields of knowledge and sciences under the guidance of their infallible imams (a.s.) who had penetrated all knowledge. Really, they are the true propagandists of knowledge. Imam Ali (a.s.) said: ... but I have contained a hidden treasure of knowledge that if I reveal, you shall be confused like the confusion of ropes in a deep well. 2

1 Imam as-Sadiq; the Inspirer of Chemistry, by Dr. Muhammad Yahya alHashimi, p. 156.

2 Nahjol Balagha, sermon 5.

The Shia In Brief

The talks about the Shia in the last years, especially after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, have been so widespread. The western information and its media spread everywhere in the world has focused on the Iranian Shia, describing them as 'the fool of Allah' one time and 'terrorists' another time. This included the Lebanese Shia too after they had threatened the American and western interests in Beirut. They were described as 'excessive and extreme'. After

no long, these descriptions were ascribed to all the Shia in the world. In fact, they included the Islamic movements everywhere in the world even if they are Sunni having nothing to do with the Shia.

It does not matter to us what the western information and enemies of Islam say or the false justifications and fabrications they follow, for 'you may hope for the friendliness of every enemy, except the enemy of your religion'. What does really concern us is that which some Muslims say about the Shia. You hear from them wonders and wonders! It is too odd that they do not have any evidence, clear proof, or irrefutable argument in their false accusations, but they only repeat what their ancestors used to say without any analysis or verification.

In addition to the actual definition of Shiism we have mentioned in our fourth book "The Shia are the People of the Surma", we see that we must show the Muslims, who seek the mere truth and do not fear a blame in the way of Allah, the savings of Allah and His messenger (a.s.) about the Shia, and then, we shall discuss the sayings of some approving and disapproving scholars and thinkers.

The Shia in the Qur'an

Allah the Almighty says : As for those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men. 1 Jalaluddeen as-Sayuti says in his commentary (tafsir) of the Qur'an called ad-Durr al-Manthur fit Tafsir al-Ma'thur, "Abu Hurayra narrated (that the Prophet (a.s.) said):

Do you wonder at the position of the angels to Allah? I swear by Him, in Whose hand my soul is, that the position of a faithful servant to Allah on the Day of Resurrection is greater than the position of an angel. If you want, you can read (this verse): As for those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men.

Aa'ishah narrated, "Once, I said, 'O messenger of Allah, who is the best of people to Allah?' He said: O Aa'ishah, do you not read:

(As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men)? Jabir ibn Ahdullah narrated, "One day, we were with the Prophet (a.s.) when Ali came and then the Prophet said: (I swear) by Him, in Whose hand my soul is, that this (Ali) and his Shia (followers) shall be the winners on the Day of Resurrection. Then, this Verse was revealed:

(As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men.

1 Qur'an, 98:7.

Abu Sa'eed narrated (that the Prophet (a.s.) said): Ali is the best of men. Ibn Abbas narrated, "When this verse was revealed ((As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men), the messenger of Allah (a.s.) said to Ali:

Surely, you and your Shia (followers) shall be on the Day of Resurrection pleased and pleased with (by Allah).

Imam Ali (a.s.) said, "The messenger of Allah (a.s.) said to me: Have you not heard this saying of Allah: (As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men? It is you and your Shia, and your appointment and my appointment shall be at the Pond (in the Paradise). When nations shall come for reckoning, you shall be called `ghurran muhajjaleen; honorables and shiny marked.

The Sunni scholars, who have mentioned this interpretation when interpreting this verse, are too many. Besides Jalaluddeen asSayuti, we can mention at-Tabari in his Tafsir, al-Hakim alHasakani in his Shawahid at-Tanzeel, ash-Shawkani in Fat--h alQadeer, al-Aaloosi in Roohul Ma'ani, and al-Manawi in Kunooz al-Haqa'iq.

We can also mention al-Khawarizmi in his al-Manaqib, ibn asSabbagh al-Maliki in al-Fusool al-Muhimmah, ibn Asakir in Tareekh Damashq, ash-Shabalanji in Noor al-Absar, ibnul Jawzi in Tathkiratul Khawass, al-Qandoozi al-Hanafi in Yanabee' alMawaddah, al-Haythami in Majma' az-Zawa'id, al-Mutaqqi al-Hindi in Kanzol Ummal, and ibn Hajar in al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah.

On this firm basis, researchers cannot be satisfied with the opinions, which suppose that Shiism did not appear except after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s.).

The Shia in the Prophetic Sunna

The messenger of Allah (a.s.) many times talked about the Shia, and each time he confirmed that the followers of Ali (a.s.) would be the winners, because they supported the truth and kept away from and let down the untruth. He also confirmed that the followers of Ali (a.s.) were the followers of the Prophet (a.s.) himself. Here, we mention the following tradition that has been mentioned by Ibn Hajar in as-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah and other Sunni scholars; The messenger of Allah (a.s.) said to Ali:

Are you not pleased that you shall be with me in the Paradise, and al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and our progeny behind our backs, our wives behind our progeny, and our Shia (followers) to our left and

right sides? 1 Many times, the Prophet (a.s.) said about Ali and his followers:

By Him, in Whose hand my soul is, this (Ali) and his Shia are certainly the winners on the Day of Resurrection. 2 It is very natural that the Prophet (a.s.) praised the followers of the truth and distinguished them with a sign by which they would be known throughout the ages so that Muslims would know the suppressed truth and be guided to it through the nearest way. Because of the Prophet's praising and continuous instructions, a group from the best of his companions became adherents to Imam Ali (a.s.) and were famous of their love and support to him

1 As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa by ibn Hajar, p. 96, 159.

2 Al-Manaqib by al-Khawarizmi the Hanafite, p. 62.

after the death of the Prophet (a.s.). Among these great companions there were Salman al-Farisi, Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, Ammar ibn Yasir, Huthavfah ibn al-Yaman, and al-Miqdad ibn al-Aswad. Thus, the word "shin" became a surname for these men. Dr. Mustafa Kamil ash-Shaybi mentions this fact in his book 'the Relation between Sufism and Shiism; and the same is mentioned by Abu Hatim in his book az-Zeenah when saying, "The least name of a creed that appeared in Islam was the "Shia", and this was a surname of four companions who are Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, Ammar ibn Yasir, Salman al-Farisi, and al-Miqdad ibn al-Aswad."

This shows clearly that the orientalist and some of Muslim researchers, who had quoted from those orientalist, were untruthful when they said that Shiism was a political phenomenon that came out as a result of the circumstances after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s.). It also clearly shows the falseness of those who tried to attach Shiism to the Persians. In fact, these people just revealed their own ignorance and fanaticism.

How would these biased people justify the existence of Shiite states in the Arab land in north Africa like Morocco and Tunisia, and the east like Egypt and Halab (in Syria) centuries before the appearance of Shiism in Persia? The state of the Idrisids (Adarisah) in Morocco was in the second century of hegira and the state of the Fatimids was in Tunisia at the end of the third century of hegira. The Fatimids also ruled in Egypt in the middle of the third century of hegira, and the Shiite state of the Hamadanids ruled in Halab (Syria) and Iraq in the fourth century, whereas Iran turned to be Shia in the tenth century of hegira at the hand of the Shah Ismael. Those, who try in a way or another to attach Shiism to the Persians, will never be able to prove that whatever they try to do. As I have mentioned before in my book 'Then I was guided' most of the Sunni scholars and imams were Persians and were not Shia! In fact, they were very puritan and fanatic against the Shia and Shiism. Some historians mention that the people of Persia used to abuse Imam Ali (a.s.) on their minbars even after Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, the Umayyad caliph, had prohibited it (the abusing of Imam Ali). 1

If we know that the first and most famous interpreter azZamakhshari was Persian, the great traditionists al-Bukhari and Muslim were Persian, Abu Haneefah the Greatest Imam, as called by the Sunni, was Persian, the master and most famous of grammarians Seebwadh was Persian, the master of theologians Wasil ibn Ata' was Persian, the master of linguists al-Fayrooz Abadi the author of al-Qamus al-Muhit (comprehensive dictionary) was Persian, Imam al-Ghazali, ar-Razi, Avicenna, and Ibn Rushd all were Persian... and all of the mentioned above men were from the scholars and heads of the Sunni, then would those fabricators and agitators turn to reason and let alone true scholars and researchers conclude and arrive at the truth derived from the true history through their reasons and not emotions and fanaticism?

1 The Present Islamic World, vol. 1 p. 191, quoted from al-Khwarizmi.

Today, I Have Perfected For You, Your Religion

Would that Muslims have turned Shia on that day!

Eid al-Ghadeer

Eid al-Ghadeer is the greatest and most important eid to Allah. All Muslims in the east and the west of the earth celebrate two eids; the first is the Eid al-Fitr after the end of Ramadan, and the second is Eid al-Adhha immediately after performing the hajj.

Muslims, since the beginning until now, keep on celebrating these two eids everywhere in the world. They call the first eid as 'the minor eid' and the other one as 'the major eid'. However and unfortunately, Muslims have disagreed on the third eid, which is the greatest of all eids and called Eid al-Ghadeer. It is the day when Allah the Almighty had perfected the religion and completed His favor on Muslims. One, who studies history, can undoubtedly discover that this disagreement has come out of the political situation of the men of the Saqifah at the first moments of the Prophet's death. They permitted themselves to behave unlike the clear Qur'anic texts and Prophetic traditions 1 and impose that on Muslims by force.

1 Besides that, they contradicted many occasions on which the Prophet (a.s.) often declared and

announced his successor clearly and openly. Allama Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'iy, in his book 'The Shia in Islam', p. 24, says, "It is impossible for the leader of a revolution, and in its first days, not to assign one of his companions as vizier or successor to him over the Because of this, Imam Ali (a.s.), who had been appointed as the caliph after the Prophet (a.s.) according to many clear texts, was kept away from caliphate and replaced by another one chosen by Quraysh 1 after their desires and ambitions. Thus, this was the first relapse that afflicted the Muslims immediately after the death of their prophet that paved the way for the quarrel of the untruth against the truth, and of jahiliyyah (ignorance of the pre-Islamic era) against Islam.

There is no doubt that the following Qur'anic verse has a direct relation with the Eid al-Ghadeer: And Muhammad is no more than a messenger; the messengers have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? 2

The messenger of Allah (a.s.) celebrated the Eid al-Ghadeer when Allah the Almighty ordered him to appoint Ali (a.s.) as the caliph after him and introduce him to the nation. The messenger of Allah (a.s.) cried out, "Allahu Akbar" when the present Muslims finished paying their homage to Imam Ali (a.s.), and Gabriel came down to the Prophet (a.s.) revealing to him this verse:

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. 3 The Prophet (a.s.) said: Allah is Great. Praise be to Allah for perfecting the religion and completing the blessing and the contentment of the Lord with the guardianship of my brother and cousin.

others, and not introduce him to the most loyal of his close companions and supporters...or keep him away from the responsibilities of vizierate and successorship!!

1 Quraysh was the biggest tribe in Mecca of great power and authority.

2 Qur'an, 3:144.

3 Qur'an, 5:3.

On the same day, the Prophet (a.s.) held a meeting of congratulation that no one of the Muslims men and women present at that day, except that he\she came to Imam Ali (a.s.) congratulating him on that guardianship.

However, it lasted no long! Only two months after the celebration of that great eid, the nation disavowed and denied the eid and the hero of the eid, and chose someone else against the will of Allah claiming one time that Ali was too young then, and another time that the Hshimites had had the honor of the Prophethood and so they should not get the position of caliphate as well, and a third time that the people of Quraysh would not agree on the one who had killed their heroes,

defeated their brave knights, and crushed their pride. Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) had no guilt in all that at all, except that he had sold his life for the contentment of Allah and sacrificed every thing he had for supporting the religion that his brother and cousin had received from the heavens, never minding any blame in the way of Allah and nothing of this worldly life's vanities could turn his determination away. I cannot account Imam Ali's virtues or show his qualities. I know certainly that:

If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be consumed before the words of my Lord are exhausted. It sufficed him as pride and honor that Allah the Almighty had perfected the religion with his imamate, completed His favor with his caliphate, and been pleased with the Muslims who believed in his guardianship. And it sufficed him as glory and virtue that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) had made him as the imam (chief) of the pious, the master of Muslims, the leader of the honorables shiny marked, and the head of people in religion. I am in no need of showing a proof on the fact of the Eid alGhadeer or proving the narrations and historical events on it, for

the ummah has agreed unanimously on the reality of this event , whether the Shia, who celebrate it every year, or the Surma who try to misinterpret it. We have read the sayings of celebrators as we have read the sayings of misinterpreters. We have read the sayings of the adherents, who have understood from those texts, traditions, and celebrations that imamate is a fundamental principle of the religion.

We have read the sayings of the dissenters who have misinterpreted the texts as to be no more than a personal opinion that Muhammad adopted about his cousin and husband of his daughter to endear him to the hearts of haters and enviers.

After that, we knew the situations of the adherent supporters, who were few, poor, and disabled, and we knew the situations of the disappointing opponents who were in great numbers, wealthy, and arrogant. Therefore, they violated the sanctity of the Prophet's household, beginning with the Principal of all the women of the world, Fatima (a.s.), and then Imam Ali (a.s.) the master of all guardians against whom they broke out many wars; al-Jamal, Siffin, and then an-Nahrawan, until lastly they assassinated him in the mihrab during his prayer, and after that, they prostrated to thank Allah for all that! However, they were not satisfied with all that, until they killed the two masters of the youth of the Paradise; Imam al-Hasan with poison and then Imam al-Husayn by the sword in Kербala with his family and loyal companions.

From all that, we knew that the Eid al-Ghadeer was the trial for this nation that disagreed and were divided and separated like the Jews and the Christians as the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) had predicted. 1 We also knew that the holy imamate, which is one of the fundamental principles of religion, was suppressed and subdued,

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 144, vol. 8 p. 151.

and its people had nothing to do, except to be patient and submissive. This divine imamate was replaced with false emirate that was "a slip from whose evil Allah has kept Islam and Muslims safe", until after that, the tulaqa' (set free prisoners) and the profane wished for, whereas no one rode on the ship of rescue that Muhammad (a.s.) had made except a very few loyal companions. The current of this worldly life and the love of power swept away the rest of Muslims, who turned their backs to the infallible imams of guidance and followed creeds they themselves invented that had a proof neither in the Book of Allah nor in the Sunna of His messenger.

This is, in brief, the event of Eid al-Ghadeer, the hero of alGhadeer, and the plot that was born after the Day of al-Ghadeer. For more details, I suggest for readers to read my book 'To be with the Truthful.

Today, we have to know that we both the Sunni and the Shia are victims of the false history, or in fact, the victims of the plots and transgressions that had been done by other than us. Surely, these are the results of the crimes that our ancestors had committed, and Allah knows that we are free from them. We are just followers and nor heretics. We have been created on nature and our parents were the cause of our being Shia or Sunni, guided or deviant.

We still have to know that the deviation, which has been continuous for fourteen centuries, cannot be repaired in some years, and whoever believes in this just deceives himself and wishes for an impossible. It goes without saying that the infallible imams (a.s.), from Imam Ali (a.s.) to Imam al-Hasan al-Askari (a.s.), spared no any effort to unite the nation and guide it to the right path. They sacrificed their lives and the lives of their children to keep the Religion of Muhammad (a.s.) untouched, but most of people were unfaithful and resistant to the Truth which they terribly hated.

We also have to know that efforts of faithful and truthful reformers failed and the hope of unity were broken against the rock of the blind fanaticism and offensive ignorance. Hills and mountains of nationalities and races besides governments stood in the face of these hopes, and at the backs of all these, there were and are enemies to us, whose friendliness cannot be wished for. They were active since the beginning of the Mission until today and they spared no effort to put out the Light of Allah. Besides those, there are many opportunists who do not think except of their own benefits, which the unity of Muslims seriously threatens.

In addition to all those, there is the cursed Iblis, about whom Allah the Almighty has said:

He said: As Thou hast caused me to remain disappointed, I will certainly lie in wait for them in Thy straight path. ¹ We have to know, too, that time has elapsed; fourteen centuries have passed while we are sleeping, bewildered, drunken, and confused. The ornaments and embellishments of this life intoxicate our minds, and many incurable diseases gnaw our bodies. At the same time, our enemies worked and are still working day and night for scientific and technological development, and because of that, they permitted themselves to colonize our countries, subdue us, and suck our bloods and treasures, claiming that we were underdeveloped nations that should be developed, or predacious beasts that must be tamed. They controlled every way and closed every door before us. They began counting our breaths that if anyone of us sneezed, even if one sneeze at the end of every century, they counted everything against him and asked him to prove the source of that flu, fearing for themselves from infection that might cause displeasing results.

They took much from Islam and did according to it, whereas we turned away from much of what Allah had ordered us to do.

¹ Qur'an, 7:16.

Here, there is no need of more explanations and details, because "a word to a wise man is enough".

Today, we woke up from our lethargy and began clapping and dancing with the melodies of unity. Each one of us claimed that he was the hero of this unity. We imagined that it was a simple matter and that we would unite the nation within an overnight by calling out some slogans and holding some conferences.

Since I opened my eyes towards this life, I heard of "unity". In my first school, I learned songs of unity whose meaning flowed with my blood in my veins. I grew up, and every day, I dreamt of fifty years old, but I have not seen any sign or even ghost of this unity.

After being desperate of the unity of Muslims, and even of the unity of the Arabs, I was satisfied with a minor unity between two neighboring countries. In the morning, I was very delighted for that unity, and in the evening of the same day when it was born, I wept for it.

The two peoples were twins that nothing separated them, except that which was called "the government verdicts". By that time, I knew that the destinies of peoples were in the hands of a few persons who controlled them as they liked; if they liked, they would unite them, and if they liked something else, they would set them against each other and throw them into wars, and then you would see the same people, who used to embrace each other, fight each other.

Since the enemies had power and dominance by which they could separate peoples having united

for hundreds of years, shred them, and make them melt away in spite of their power and influence, so certainly they would not let Muslim peoples, who were shredded since hundreds of years, meet and unite to form a powerful entity that would be dangerous to their benefits and interests, though these peoples were poor, underdeveloped, and in great debts.

Suppose that we have united; what would we get from this poverty and underdevelopment? If we think of driving the colonists away and cutting the hand of the thieves, we must prepare enough power and forces to repel the unjust, and control the rioters. And how can we do that while we still buy the arms and weapons, which are not used except for killing Muslims and drudging citizens, from them themselves?

If we advance one day, they will advance sixty years, and if we prepare one force against them, they will prepare seventy! If we want to face them in war, they will not trouble themselves much! They will incite our brothers in nationality or religion against us, and then one will kill another, while they will remain but delighted audiences clapping their hands.

The Gulf war is not far! Only some soldiers were killed from them, but hundreds of thousands of Muslims were buried alive, and that one, who used to threaten to burn Israel yesterday and many stupid Arabs believed him, came to burn his people in the north and the south with the Napalm. Even the mosques and holy shrines were not safe from his evil mercenaries whom we saw coward and inactive towards disbelievers, but against the Muslims, they were ravenous beasts. ¹

¹ From the book 'The Secret File of the Gulf War', p.138-139. In a letter to the Iranian President Mr. Rafsanjani, the criminal Saddam praised peace and showed that he had given up his conditions...in few lines, this tyrant effaced the remembrance of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis killed in the eight-year-war which was the bloodiest since the Second World War!!! He adopted the slogan of "the way to Jerusalem passes through Tehran", and then he turned to occupy Kuwait and let his armies kill, rob, and violate the honors of women, and finally set fire to the Kuwaiti oilfields. He issued a law to execute every one of his armies who refused to rob from Kuwait. After all that, yet he was called 'the Sword of the Arabs'!!! It is worth mentioning that the Iraqi, the American, and the third partner the UN's information refrained from announcing the true losses and damages caused by the allies in their bombing on Iraq. In fact, that, which was bombed in Iraq was the public utilities, bridges, and hospitals. And

The young Islamic Republic of Iran made every effort to unite the Muslims and offered every sacrifice in this way. It paid a very high price from the bloods of its most loyal people. It resisted the west and the east and faced an international blockade (sanction). Its leader died while bemoaning the indifference of Muslims, as his grandfather the leader of the pious (Imam Ali)

bemoaned before.

From the eternal sayings of Imam Khomeini (may Allah have mercy on him) is this one, "If every Muslim spits once, the Muslims shall make Israel sink."

If Muslims are stingy even with one spit, so how is it expected that they sacrifice their properties and lives? Therefore, most of them have had friendly relations with Israel. So, do not look forward to unity, O you inattentive! Is it unknown to you that fifty thousand Palestinians wait everyday for the mercy of Israel, and they hurry up every morning to work with meanness and disgrace to gain the daily bread for themselves and their families? If Israel closes its doors, these people shall die of hunger. So where are their Muslim brothers whom Allah has enriched with His favors to the extent that one emir of them receives income that is too much more than the needs of those people who are obliged not to resist or fight Israel, as long as they feel that Israel is the benefactor and the cause of their livelihood. 1

now, the Iraqi people are suffering terrible famine that more than four millions people are liable to death, and 75% of the newborn children are under the danger of death because of malnutrition and absence of the medical care. Moreover, the sanction shall not be annulled except after destroying the weapons of the regime which have been accumulated from the wealth and sweat of the Iraqi and Arab people, and after offering the Iraqi people as a sacrifice for Israel and its security and stability!!! (This book was published first in Arabic in 1995). The media and journals mentioned that after the decree of transferring the capital from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a high official from the Gulf countries
Peace be on Ali (a.s.) who said:

Poverty is about to be atheism. If poverty were a man, I certainly would kill him. It is true that there is powerfulness in unity, but it is supposed that there is power in every one of its elements. If all the elements of unity are weak and sick, then in their unity there shall be but more weakness and sickness. How is it possible for one, who is always busy thinking of the hunger of his stomach and the sickness of his body, to believe in unity? About what shall I talk to you? Shall I talk to you about the children who cannot find any weapon except the stones to resist; though all the stones have been swept away? Perhaps, some of them look for a stone to put it on his abdomen because of hunger!

What makes one laugh and cry at the same time is that you see some drawlers try, with all their abilities, to convince us that the Stone Revolution has troubled and shaken Israel. In fact, this is a mere informational propaganda to justify the savage doings of Israel, that if one Israelite soldier is wounded by those stones, tens of innocent children shall be killed by machineguns and bombs.

So, where are the Arab countries that have united under the shade of the Arab Assembly since tens of years and promised of liberating Palestine? Where are the Muslim countries that lead the Muslim World and claim to liberate Jerusalem?

Have you seen even one of these countries offer help, assistance, or arms to those children of stones (in Palestine) or the mujahidin who face the bombs and missiles of the enemy without having any arms to reply except the stones? We have seen them in the

visited the United States of America offering six milliard dollars for the luxury of the American people!

Gulf War ... we have seen our Arab Muslim brothers take out their hidden arms and spend milliards from their wealth to overthrow the Iraqi government that in return threatened to do away with the Israelite government, agents, and reactionaries! However, the truth was that they all were plotting to do away with the Shiite Revolution. And actually, the Iraqi regime remained as it was, and so did Israel, the agents, and the reactionaries, whereas the Shia were buried alive and the rest of them were displaced in the deserts and wild lands, and thousands of refugees are still living in camps under lowness they face from the Saudis and insults from the Wahabis. I talk to you about the fate of Muslims in Afghanistan whom Allah has bestowed on victory and they came fighting each other between their children and families, destroying their own houses by their own hands, being stimulated by foreign, unfaithful hands! 1

1 I saw in a video cassette very horrible scenes of maiming and cutting of heads and burying the wounded in collective graves. I asked the owner of this cassette, "What for all this brutal grudge and enmity is?" He said, "These are innocent, peaceful old people, women, children...just because they are Shia." These horrible crimes were committed by evil men under the leadership of Shah Mas'ud and Abd Rabb ar-Rasool the wahabite, who would be glad to see Satan but not to see even one Shia. He might give a fatwa that the bloods and honors of the Shia were violable. This attack was against a town called Afshar where about eleven thousands of peaceful civilians were killed. Their women were raped and their properties were robbed. After killing the leader of the Afghani Unity Party, martyr Abdul Ali al-Mazari, there was another attack against innocent civilians where about thirteen thousands were killed, their women were raped, and their properties robbed.

The Shia form one fifth (if not one third) of the population and have historical deep-rooted existence there. There is a holy shrine of one of the sons of the great martyr Zayd bin Ali (may Allah have mercy on him) in Jowzjan, now called Mazar Sharif. The situations of the Shia (of Afghanistan) against the Umavvads, against the British colonists, and lately their participation with

their brothers in forcing the Red Army to leave

I talk to you about the destiny of the Muslims in Yugoslavia where the powers of atheism have gathered together to remove them all from Eastern Europe. I talk to you about the Muslims in India, and about what I 'myself have seen. Their dignities were violated often and always to the extent that Alawid Muslim women were sold in the markets like animals.

I talk to you about the Muslims in Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and all Africa who die of hunger in thousands every day, whereas dogs and cats in Europe enjoy all kinds of delicious food. The dignity and holies of Muslim are violated, whereas many societies for defending and protecting animals have been and are founded.

Stop lying and deceit! Stop hypocrisy and misleading! If the people of one country are not in accordance with each other, then how can we ask the Muslims of different countries to unite? 1

Afghanistan, were and are great that cannot be neglected. Thus, instead of being grateful to them and acknowledging their creed, the others try to remove and do away with them and their beliefs!

1 Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) said addressing the followers of the Umayyads, "If you have no religion and you do not fear the Hereafter, then be free in your worldly life and regard to your lineages if you are Arabs as you claim!"

We have refused and took off the black dress of the reactionary religion that has taken us to underdevelopment and darkness! Let us keep pace with the ages of development and progress. The Iraqi regime said, "There is no place in this country except for development and socialism." Whenever religion was mentioned, it was described as reactionary and was detested. The Iraqi regime adopted the slogan of "One (united) Arab nation...", but it divided Iraq into pieces, and its army was divided, and then the members of the government, until it reached the members of the president's family themselves, and now the president is surrounded not by the Republican Guards, but by those who are more loyal; Fedayeen of Saddam. This is an example of the Arab developed socialist leader who would suppress the reactionary religion and unite the Arab nation! He plotted and is still plotting against his own people and neighbors. (We have said before that this hook was published first in Arabic in 1995 AD). The aim of the Iraqi army in the war of 1967AD was to overthrow the Jordanian regime. And in the year 1970, the Black September, the Palestinians thought that

The sayings are too many, but the doings are too little! One look at the history that we lived since the war of 1948 until the Persian Gulf War would be enough. Victory was always with disbelievers. Every time, the share of Muslims was defeat, loss, lowness, and disgrace. So take a lesson from

the wrath of Allah, O people of understanding! Recently, we said that we would not negotiate with Israel, and what was taken by force, would not be taken back except by force. And today, we run after Israel and beg it to give back to us our lands that it had extorted from us. We entreat its close lovers to intercede for us! Our hearts have become tired and bored, and our minds confused and submissive, and now, we believe neither in unity nor in the victory that shall come one day!

Can it be believed that the emirs of the Gulf, the kings, and rulers shall unite with the poor, the hungry, and the destitute some day? Yes, they unite by speaking only! The testimony of "there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah" is just a saying! Faith is just a saying, and even the prayer, zakat, fasting, and the hajj have all become sayings in sayings! It is not difficult for an orator to say for example: "our god is the same, our prophet is the same, our Book is the same, and our qiblah is the same; therefore, O Muslims, be united! Be united!"

Saddam and his army tried to defend them against the massacre committed by King Husayn ibn Talal of Jordan, but they were massacred before the sights and hearings of the all!

Yes, they gathered together to fight against their Muslim neighbor Iran, after they had been disciplined by the cudgel of the Shah! And after that came the scenario of the invasion of Kuwait to pave the way to coexist with the Zionists. As they took back Husni Mubarak to the Arab line, they shall take Saddam back to it as well, and whoever refuses shall be fought by them and with their new partner Israel, because in that there is the glory of the Arabs and their progress toward the eternal Arabic goals!!!

How it is easy to adopt a slogan saying "no Shiism, no Sunnism, but Islamic unity"! However, it has disappeared from the minds of all these people to live the painful reality and face the naked truth with no clothing of misleading! They have come to us in the last years with a new opinion, as if it was unknown to their ancestors and to the infallible imams! They said it should be prohibited to discuss the matters of history lest some of Muslims would be provoked. They went too far in that, until they said that there was no difference between the Shia and the Sunni except in the branches of religion, exactly as the differences between the Sunni sects themselves and they gave up the matter of imamate which is to them a fundamental from the fundamentals of religion.

As a result to this new situation, minds have become frozen and have stopped to search for the truth after they (minds) had been liberated claiming that they (those claiming Muslims) should be united in order to face the common enemy! These people have forgotten that our actual enemy is hidden inside our selves, living inside our houses, and being brought up by our eyes.

It is a wonder that when you talk to one of them about Marx and Lenin, he becomes proud and

bloomed, and he considers you as a learned man, but when you mention Imam Ali (a.s.) and the infallible imams of his progeny, he frowns and is depressed, and then accuses you of defaming the Orthodox Caliphs. Worse than that is that when you argue with him with clear evidences and proofs, then he pretends to adopt the slogan of the Islamic Unity, and accuses you of trying to divide the Muslims.

After that, would we abuse those who call for the unity of beliefs according to the Book of Allah and the pure Sunna of His messenger and accuse them of trying to divide the Muslims?

In fact, some ulama hide the truth willingly and when they are asked, they do not answer fearing that they may be accused of striving against the Islamic unity.

I think that the scientific researching to get to the sought truth is not a danger threatening the unity of Muslims, because it is not more than provoking some people's emotion that shall disappear in the end when arriving at the truth. The danger and the worst of dangers is to close the mouths, tie the tongues and prevent people from researching, freeze the minds and keep them away from the truth by the pretense of unity! This is the very thing that the Baathist regime in Iraq did to separate between the Shia and the Sunni. The talk about Shiism was prohibited lest the Sunni would know the truth of the Shia. 1

1 Collective conversions to Shiism took place at the hands of some ulama. For example, Allama al-Qazwini could convert about thirty thousand people from the tribes of al-Jubour in Hillah (in Iraq). The same took place at the hands of other ulama. Some tribes of nomadic trends near Tikrit and Ramadi have a proverb saying, "May Allah afflict you with like the affliction of the tribe of Aal Alwan who gave up the religion of their fathers and became Shia!"

There were many meetings between the Shia and Sunni ulama during the struggle against the British colonialism, the communistic expansion, and the Iraqi Baath's prevailing. Among those Ulama was the Martyr Abdul Aziz al-Badri whom the tyrannical regime cut into pieces. Thus, the Baathist regime in Iraq followed a hypocritical policy that his Masonic masters had trained him to. They exploited Saddam's ignorance, complexes, and nomadic nature that he had inherited from the village of alOujah (in Tikrit) which was terribly underdeveloped and nomadic, besides his vagrancy because of his uncle's bad and severe relation to his mother, besides his Jewish background and gypsy life that was with no moral bonds, lawful marriage, or pledges...so this nomad was worthier of not knowing the limits of Allah. He knew neither Sunnism nor Shiism. He was just to carry out what he had been ordered to do; therefore, he did not refrain from any crime or sin. He accused the Shia of treason for foreign countries, disbelief, and of Persian origins ... He accused me of his own guilt and ran away ... and a suspicious one may expose himself!!

It is the same thing like that which the first caliphs did when they prohibited people from writing down or mentioning the traditions of the Prophet (a.s.). Therefore, the truth was hidden from most of Muslims who did not know the Eid al-Ghadeer and what happened on that Day, which made the Jews and Christians say to them, "If this (Qur'anic) verse was revealed about us, we would highly regard that day and take it as eid even if only two people remained from us:

This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you. ¹ The companions could not find an answer to that. Some others have come to us relying on Imam Ali's saying: I will submit as long as the affairs of Muslims are safe and when there is no oppression except against me only.

These people have forgotten that it was Imam Ali (a.s.) who revived the event of al-Ghadeer after it had been buried and made to be forgotten, when he made thirty companions from those, who had attended the Day of al-Ghadeer, bear witness and he invoked Allah against those who denied it. Then, after him, his two sons (Imam al-Hasan and al-Husayn) revived it during the season of the hajj before great masses of Muslims. In this concern, Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

Unfortunately, many Sunni people responded to him (Saddam), especially those who broke into houses, tortured, raped, and maimed innocent people with total rage to write with Saddam that "there would be no Shia after today". And due to their jurisprudence, it is not permissible to disobey the ruler and turn away from the group (congregation), and therefore they helped Saddam to do whatever he liked. Certainly, this is the continuity of the fatwa of the first (illegal) rulers of Muslims saying that it is not permissible to disobey a ruler even if he is unjust. Certainly, this is a clear rejection to the Prophet's tradition saying that "Whoever of you sees a wrongdoing let him repel it ..."

¹ Qur'an, 5:3.

Do not be revilers or cursers, but you say that their doings were so and so, in order to be more effective in argument. We must take Imam Ali (a.s.) as our example and not take only one of his sayings (I will submit...) and leave the others; that we believe in some of the Book and disbelieve in some!

It is right that Imam Ali (a.s.) was patient unwillingly for the sake of the welfare of Islam and Muslims, because he did what he exactly said. He fought the breakers of covenants (nakitheen) (in the battle of al-Jamal), the unjust (qasiteen; who falsely sought arbitration in the battle of Siffeen), and the renegades (mariqeen) (in the battle of an-Nahrawan), until he straightened the pillars of religion, provided safety to all Muslims, and pardoned his enemies whenever the matter

concerned the oppression against him only. Those, who argue against us by Nahjol Balagha, must believe in everything in it, and not argue by what complies with their desires only. If there is a praise to someone unknown mentioned in Nahjol Balagha, they say: this is Imam Ali's speech about our master Umar al-Farouq. He praises and commends him!

But if you say to them (that Imam Ali (a.s.) has said), "By Allah, ibn Abi Quhafah (Abu Bab) has dressed himself in it (assumed the caliphate) and he knew well that my position to it was like the position of the axis to the quern that flood flows down from me and birds cannot ascend to me", they say that this is the speech of ash-Shareef ar-Radhy 1 and not Ali's. Yes, they love Ali (a.s.) and pray Allah to be pleased with him when he is sincere to the caliphs and does not disobey them. But, these people forgets that the self of Ali (a.s.) is like the self of Muhammad (a.s.) and the heart of Ali (a.s.) is like the heart of Muhammad (a.s.) that Allah has kept away uncleanness from and purified thorough purification. Ali (a.s.) was a true copy of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) whom Allah had described as "on exalted standards of

1 He is the compiler of Nahjol Balagha.

character" and that the hearts of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) had no any place for grudge or hatred. 1 For that, this was the Prophet (a.s.) and that was the guardian (a.s.); Muhammad (a.s.) was the warner and Ali (a.s.) was the guide. The first one fought for the revelation, and the second one fought for the interpretation. For that, Allah chose him (Imam Ali) for imamate by which He perfected the religion and completed the favor, and as honor to him, Allah crowned him with the imamate on the day of the Major Eid (of al-Ghadeer).

1 And the same is said about us his Shia! If we say that Imam Ali (a.s.) is the gate of the (Prophet's) city of knowledge, their (the others than the Shia) arguers cries out loudly that this fact does not deny that this city has many gates. If we mention his great courage and that it was he who put the cornerstone of Islam, they say to us: do you want to invalidate all the history? How did the Muslims achieve all those conquests and victories and ... and ...etc?

This is if the argument is quiet, but if there is injustice and oppression against the Shia, they shall approve the setting of fire to Fatima's house, the murdering of Imam al-Husavn (a.s.), the persecution of the Alawids, making the al-Azhar University and Halab Sunnite, persecuting the seyyids from the progeny of the Prophet (a.s.), the killing of the Iranian hajjis, fighting and trying to do away with the Shia and their ulama in Iraq like the descendants of the great religious authority Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakeem and the great thinker Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Sadr (may Allah have mercy on him).

This is if they have not participated in the activities of the media or as soldiers in the different armies of the tyrant (Saddam), because, for them, it is not permissible to disobey the guardian of Muslims when he has not disobeyed Allah yet!!! How wonder it is! I do not know how the color of disobedience would be for Yazid, al-Hajjaj, and Saddam!!!

Yes, we invite them to dialogues and discussions so that we do know the truth and its people, but they invite us today to keep silent. The invitation that they have accustomed us to is murdering and supporting the wrongdoers to defend the rulers whether good or bad they are!

Ali (a.s.), with his patience and loyalty, did not overlook his right even one day. You (Sunnis) have mentioned in your Sahihis that he did not pay homage (to the caliph) for four months during which he argued against them (the men of authority) with every proof and evidence, and he said to Umar one day: Milk a milking that you shall have a half of it, and support him (Abu Bakr) today, to recompense you tomorrow ... Muhammad is my brother and father-in-law ... You also have narrated that he (Imam Ali) took out his wife Fatima (a.s.) with him and they both frequented the meetings of the Ansar who apologized, saying to her: O the beloved of the messenger of Allah, if your husband and cousin preceded to us, we would not prefer to him anyone at all. Imam Ali (a.s.) said in reply:

Would I leave the messenger of Allah (a.s.) without washing (ritually before the burial) and go out disputing with the people for his succession (caliphate)? Fatima (a.s.) said:

Abu Hasan did not do except what he was required to do, and they did not do except what Allah shall judge them for. Did Ali (a.s.) not complain when burying his wife in the night by addressing the messenger of Allah (a.s.) saying: Peace be on you O messenger of Allah and on your daughter who is coming to your neighboring. She shall tell you about the rising of your Umma against me and the extorting of her right. So keep on asking her and know from her what happened? Did Ali (a.s.) not refuse the caliphate when he was asked to follow the way of the two previous caliphs in rule? Does this show that he accepted and was pleased with what they did?

Did Ali (a.s.) not refuse the caliphate when people forced him to assume it, and he did not accept it except when he made thirty men witness for him about (the reality of) the event of alGhadeer and that the messenger of Allah had appointed him on that day as the caliph over all Muslims, until he said:

Whoever does not consider Ali as his guardian is not Muslim? Thus, Imam Ali (a.s.) revived the Eid al-Ghadeer after it was about to be buried forever. Nevertheless, most of Muslims do not know that and they cannot believe those events, claiming that the courage of Imam Ali (a.s.) would not

let him keep silent before his right. I say to these people that the courage of Imam Ali (a.s.) was not greater than the courage of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) about whom Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

When war became violent, we protected ourselves by the back of the messenger of Allah. Nonetheless, the messenger of Allah (a.s.) kept silent and gave up his right when he accepted all the conditions of the polytheists for the welfare of Islam and Muslims, until one of his companions accused him of being indifferent to the religion by saying to him: Are you really the messenger of Allah? It was the same situation when some ignorants accused Imam alHasan (a.s.) of degrading the believers when he concluded a truce with Mo'awiyva to spare the bloods of Muslims.

Thus, the Lid al-Ghadeer is the borderline between the truth and falsehood; between the perfecting of the religion and its comprehensiveness with the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His prophet on the one hand and its imperfection and being in need of the ijtihaad of mujtahids on the other; between the completion of the favor and its belonging to the grateful on the one hand and the wrath of Allah on the renouncers; between the infallible imamate that Allah has made among His loyal, pure servants, and the usurped caliphate that the tulaqa' (freed captives) and sinners had assumed. When I remember the great martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir asSadr (may Allah have mercy on him), I do not and shall never hesitate even for one moment to announce the right of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). One day, he (Martyr as-Sadr) said to his companions, "When the letter of at-Teejani came to me from Tunisia, telling that some of our Shia brothers had celebrated the Eid al-Ghadeer for the first time there, I cried and praised Allah that He planted the seed of Shiism there."

The attendants understood then that the crying of Sayyid as-Sadr was because of his delight that some believers had been guided at his hand. However, by the passing of years, I understood that his crying was for the great injustice against Imam Ali (a.s.) and the pure progeny of the Prophet (a.s.), because the injustice against them was as injustice against Islam and all Muslims. Sayyid asSadr cried for most of the Muslims who had not heard about the Eid al-Ghadeer and not known about its great value and importance near Allah the Almighty. After this brief discussion about the Eid al-Ghadeer and its importance, I have to show my opinion as to the sought solution for the unity of Muslims. Anyhow, my opinion is not a personal one, but it is a following of the texts of the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna, because after these two holy sources, my opinion and the opinions of all people shall be just deviation and supposition, and surely, supposition is nothing before the truth.

I think that the unity of Muslims shall not come true except when it is built on a firm basis; the basis of the same beliefs and the clinging to the firm rope of Allah, because the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) said: If they disagree in the religion, they shall become the party of Iblis.

(117) The signs of the unity were declared by the messenger of Allah (a.s.) when he said: I have

left among you the Two Weighty things which if you keep to, you shall never go astray after me at all; the Book of Allah and my household, my family. The all-comprehensive, the all acquainted (Gabriel) has told me that they will never separate until they will come to me at the Pond (in the Paradise).

So whoever, whether knowingly or unknowingly, keeps to them is from the propagandists for the unity that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) had ordered of, and whoever turns his back to them is from the propagandists for separation and disagreement, which the messenger of Allah (a.s.) had forbidden. If such a man claims that he is the leader of unity and uniting, his claim is certainly false, as long as he follows other than these Two Weighty things. What one of scholars has said to me might reveal clearly the intentions of the Sunni propagandists of unity whom no Muslim doubts their love to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). He said to me, "We (the Sunni) cannot unite with you except by the appearance of your sign." I asked him, "What is our sign that you wait for?"

He said, "Al-Mandi whom you claim to be alive and hidden. When he comes to us, only then we can unite with you and know that you are truthful." It is a painful conclusion, but it is inevitable, for this nation cannot unite except by his (Imam al-Mandi) appearance. Even if we suppose that most of the Sunni shall return to the truth, there shall be some obdurate people there until the Last Day. 1

1 You may stand with the enemies of the grandfathers of al-Mahdi (a.s.), of his followers, and supporters, supporting (the oppressors) and keeping silent before the injustice against them, or participating with their killers, or being a voice and echo for them, or a mere onlooker to be safe, imitating It is necessary in the end of this brief discussion to remind of the will of the leader of the Umma and founder of the Islamic Republic (Imam Khomeini may Allah have mercy on him) to close the way before pretenders. He prohibited disputing between the Shia and the Sunni for the sake of unity. He began his will by the tradition of ath-Thaqalayn (two weighty things), and after explaining the tradition, he directly said, "We must say that what had afflicted the two trusts of the Prophet (a.s.) by the tyrants, afflicted the Muslim nation, and in fact all humanity where the pen is unable to express. We have to mention this point that the tradition of ath-Thaqalayn has been mentioned by so many narrators (mutawatir tradition) and it is well known among all Muslims. It has been mentioned in the

what you have inherited from the ancestors!" (Abdullah) ibn Umar (ibn alKhattab) blamed Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) for marching to Kufa and for his rising against Yazid ibn Mo'awiya and separating from the group (congregation of Muslims)." Refer to al-Bidavah wen-Nihayah fit-Tareekh, vol. 8 p. 163. "And ibn Umar secluded himself from the people of Medina when they renounced their

pledge to Yazid ibn Mo'awiya and ordered his children and family to keep on their allegiance to him (Yazid) and not to follow the people of Medina in renouncing him". Ibid., vol. 8 p. 218...though Yazid killed Imam al-Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.), his children and companions, took his women as captives, and roamed with the heads of the martyrs on spears ... destroyed the Kaaba, and violated Medina for three days by committing every kind of vices in it!

As the Mufti of the Saudi royal palace (ibn Baz) gives a fatwa that it is not permissible to eat from the meat of the sacrifices of the Shia, for they (the Shia) are polytheists and unfaithful and that it is not permissible to marry from them or marry women to them, we see him welcome the foreign armies in Hijaz and the scenes of the American female soldiers in their sunbaths freely (nakedly) considering them secured by Islam, since they are in the land of Muslims, and he sees that peace with Israel is recommendable ... with the full obedience to the rulers of Aal Saud (Saudians)!

Then, why do we not wait for Imam al-Mandi (a.s.) under a good shade instead of this shade, so that Allah may hasten his reappearance to spread justice and remove injustice?

main Sunni books of Hadith, such as the six Sahihs and other books in different wordings and in many places. This Prophetic tradition is an irrefutable argument over human beings especially the Muslims with their different creeds. All the Muslims, on whom the argument has been cast, have to undertake this responsibility. If the ignorant have an excuse, the scholars of the different sects have no any excuse."

After Imam Khomeini had disclosed the stages of the plot against the Book of Allah and the Immaculate Progeny (a.s.) and showed that tyrants made the Qur'an as a means to establish governments hostile to the Qur'an, though the call of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) "I have left among you the Two Weighty Things" was still sounding in their ears, and that they tried their best through different plots and tricks to keep away the true interpreters of the Qur'an and the real scholars of the Prophet's Hadith, he said, "We are proud that we are followers of the creed that strives to release the facts of the Holy Qur'an which all invite to the unity among all Muslims, and, in fact, all human beings.

We are proud that we are followers of the creed of the foundation of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) by the command of Allah, and the foundation of Ameerul Mo'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), this loyal servant who was free from all ties and who was ordered to liberate humanity from enslavement and all kinds of fetters.

We are proud that the book Nahjol which is, after the Qur'an, is the greatest course of material and moral life and the greatest book of liberality for human beings, and whose moral and administrative teachings are the best way for deliverance, is from our infallible imam. We are proud that the infallible imams from Imam Ali (a.s.) to the Saviour of humanity, Imam al-Mandi

(thousands of blessings and peace on him) who by the power of Allah the All-Powerful is still alive and watchful of all affairs, are our imams."

Then he said in the end of his will, "I ask from the Muslim nations with all seriousness and all humbleness to take the infallible imams as their examples and not to listen to any misleader who opposes the truth and the creed, and to know that any deviant step may form the beginning of the decline of the creed and the government of the Divine Justice. ... from that, they have not to be indifferent at all to the Friday Prayer, congregational prayers, and the rituals of consolation of the immaculate imams (a.s.), especially the master of the wronged and martyrs Imam al-Husavn (a.s.). ... and to know that the teachings of the imams (a.s.) to liven up this great historical Islamic mission, and that the cursing against those, who were unjust toward the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), is all but a heroic, public cry in the face of the unjust rulers throughout history and forever. And you know that cursing the Umayyads (may Allah curse them) and the talking about their injustice-though they have become extinct and gone to the Hell-is but a cry in the face of all oppressors of the world.

It is necessary to mention openly in the consolation, eulogies, and elegies of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) the disasters of the oppressors' oppression in every land and every time, and this very time, which is the age of the oppression of (the United States of) America, Russia (the Soviet Union), and the rest of their followers from among whom are the Aal Sa'ud (the rulers of the Saudian dynasty) the betrayers of the Divine Sanctum, may the curse of Allah, of His angels, and of His messengers be on them. We must mention their injustice openly accompanied with invoking curse against them.

Let us all know that what lead to the unity of Muslims are these rituals that keep the identity of Muslims, especially the Twelvers Shia.

What I have to remind of is that my will does not concern the great Iranian people only, but my will is for all Muslim peoples and all wronged nations in the world with their different races and beliefs." This is the will of the leader of the umma. It is clear in showing the necessity of openly mentioning the injustice of the unjust and cursing them. The claim of those, who claimed that Imam Khomeini had prohibited that (unity), is a false claim with no any proof at all. In the end, I would like to say that all Muslims have to ride the Ship of Safety (of the infallible imams) if they seek the real unity. We see that the Prophet Noah (a.s.) made, by the command of his Lord, a small ship that could not hold except a few believers, but the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) prepared, by the command of his Lord, a big ship that can hold all the nation, and that all believers can ride on it. Certainly, the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) are not for the Shia only, but they are for all mankind.

May Allah make us all successful in doing all that which has welfare for all human beings, and may He make us keep to the guardianship of Ameerul Mo'minin Imam Ali (a.s.) and his infallible progeny. May Allah make you and us celebrate the Eid al-Ghadeer again and again with glory and

victory! The last of our prayer is that praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds, and blessing and peace be on the noblest of messengers our master Muhammad and on his pure progeny.

Striving To Remain Firm On Guidance

Allah the Almighty says: And most surely I am most Forgiving to him who repents and believes and does good, then continues to follow the true guidance. 1 This holy verse shows that repentance, faith, and good deeds are not enough for the forgiveness of Allah and do not require the His contentment, except with the true guidance. It has been mentioned that Imam as-Sadiq (a.s.) said:

Surely Allah does not forgive, except one who repents, believes, does good, and is guided to our guardianship, we the Ahlul Bayt. By this, it is understood that guidance and being guided are two synonymous lines that each completes the other, but guidance is a divine favor that Allah endows His creatures with. Surely, His guidance has included all His servants with no exception. Allah says: And the soul and Him Who made it perfect. Then, He inspired it to understand what is right and what is wrong. 2 Surely, We have shown him the way: he may be thankful or unthankful. 3

1 Qur'an, 20:82.

2 Qur'an, 91:7-8.

3 Qur'an, 76:3.

As for being guided, it is a personal effort that man exerts according to the general guidance to arrive, after searching and trying relying on his mental faculties, at distinguishing the truth from the untruth, and then to choose willingly the path of the truth after having been away from it. What explains this meaning is this saying of Allah: ... therefore, give good news to My servants, who listen to the word, and then follow the best of it; those are they whom Allah has guided, and those it is who are the men of understanding. 1 The meaning of the verse is that a reasonable servant opens his ears for argumentation and listens to all sayings and theories. He distinguishes the good from the bad, and then chooses to follow the truth and avoid the untruth. Such a servant returns to the original divine guidance willingly, and so he deserves the praising of Allah to him that he is from the men of understanding.

The clearest example on the explanation of "guidance" and "being guided" is what has happened

and is happening to the nation of Muhammad (a.s.) whom Allah guided by the Prophet (a.s.) and took them out of darkness into light, and guided them to walk in His right path. He left them in the shiny destination after He had perfected to them their religion, completed His favor to them, and chosen for them Islam as a religion. 2

1 Qur'an, 39:17-18.

2 The love to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) has been considered as the recompense for the fulfilling of the Mission by the messenger of Allah (a.s.). Allah says, (Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives). Qur'an, 42:23. This love is the gate and the way to the contentment of Allah the Almighty, and without this love the house may only be entered from the back (wrong side). Allah says, (...and it is not righteousness that you enter the houses at their backs). Qur'an, 2:189.

Imam Ali (a.s.) is the gate of the Prophet's city of knowledge. The Prophet (a.s.) often said, "I am the town of knowledge and Ali is its gate". "Ali is with the truth and the Qur'an. He has divorced this worldly life thrice ..."

However, the nation separated, disagreed, and divided, after the departure of the Prophet (a.s.), into different groups, sects, and creeds after it had been the best nation raised up for mankind. The first reason behind this separation and disagreement belonged to the first companions who carried the banner of the Mission to deliver it to the next generations coming after them. They disagreed and separated after the departure of their prophet (a.s.). They fought and killed each other. They considered each other as unbelievers and were free from each other.

The next generations followed them in that and made the problem more complicated. They widened the circle of disagreement with new thoughts and strange theories they attached to the religion of Allah. Therefore, sects and creeds came

Imam Ali (a.s.) did never compete for authority, nor did he strive for power, wealth, pleasures, desires, or lusts, but his great soul struggled to build the religion and firm its pillars. He said, "By Allah, if the Arabs and foreigners gathered together against me, I would not run away." His strike against Amr ibn Abd Wudd that equaled the worship of men and the jinn, his plucking out of the gate of Khavbar...etc. were just a drop in the sea of his achievements. Allah the Almighty had supported His messenger (a.s.) by Ali (a.s.). (Refer to Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 11 p. 173). The same is mentioned in Thakha'ir al-Uqba and Kanzol Ummal). We see him weep for a Jewish woman who had resorted to Islam when been wronged by some man. He said, "I was informed that a man from you broke into (the house of) a Muslim woman and another covenanted one whom he

plundered her necklaces, jewels, and adornments and she could not defend herself except by sighing and seeking Allah's mercy." (Refer to Nahjol Balagha, by Subhi as-Salih, p. 69.) He often said, "It is my soul that I tame with piety." He said, "Ah, for the lack of provision (good deeds and means for the afterlife), farness of the journey, and the loneliness of the way!" (Nahjol Balagha, by Subhi as-Salih, p. 480).

The great man of letters George Jerdaq loved him too much and wrote on him the best of his works. One of the popes composed poetry on him. Ibn Abil Hadeed loved and wrote on him. So did Muhammad Abdu, Subhi asSalih, and the author of this book. Peace be on Ameerul Mo'minin, the highest example for mujahidin!

out and different groups disputed and fought each other. Muslims became confused in darkness that they did not know where to go and where the truth was, for every group claimed they kept to the Qur'an and the Sunna, every creed claimed the following of the Prophet's line, and every party was pleased with what it had. If we leave aside our emotions, give up blind imitation, turn our backs to fanaticism, look at things with the eye of insight, and ask: where is the position of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) among all these sects and creeds? This is especially when we face the Prophet's traditions that order the nation to refer to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) in all religious and worldly affairs to assure guidance and protection from deviation. These traditions are true and reliable to all sects of Muslims. One of these traditions is the tradition of Thaqalayn where the Prophet (a.s.) said:

I have left among you the Two Weighty Things; the Book of Allah and my progeny, my family. If you keep to them, you shall never go astray after me at all. I recommend you to obey Allah through obeying my family. He repeated this three times.

One, who studies the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and their position to the nation today, does not find but respect and reverence to them among all Muslims, but the will of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) was not limited to respect and reverence to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). He ordered the nation to obey, follow, and imitate them in everything. He said: Do not precede them lest you perish, do not lag behind them lest you perish, and do not teach them, because they are more knowledgeable than you. If it is so, we do not find, today, except one group that does according to the will of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) and keeps to the line of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) since the time of Imam Ali (a.s.) until today. This group was called "Shi'atu (followers of) Ali" at the time of Imam Ali (a.s.), and later on, every one who followed Imam Ali (a.s.) and the infallible imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), was called Shia (or Shiite). If we look at the history and leaf what historians have recorded, we find that the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) were wronged, kept away from the stage of the public life, and were fought by the rulers and governments that ruled over Muslims during the first three centuries of Islam. In fact, those rulers were successful in separating the nation from its real leadership, and keeping it away from the true path. However, they could not succeed in taking out the love and reverence from the hearts of Muslims towards the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). In spite of the

abusing and cursing announced from above the minbars and the forcing of Muslims by all kinds of force, those rulers failed to extract the love of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) from the hearts of the faithful.

Due to that, we justify the contradiction we find today in most of Muslims that they love the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and acknowledge their superiority in virtues and knowledge, but nevertheless, they imitate other than them and refer in their rulings and legislations to imams who neither saw nor lived at the time of the messenger of Allah (a.s.), but they were born after the Great Sedition that distorted the religion, did away with the righteous, and left the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and their followers discarded and isolated. The infallible Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) remained unknown by most of Muslims whom if you ask about "the Ahlul Bayt", they shall say that they are the wives of the Prophet (a.s.).

It is naturally that when the Prophet (a.s.) ordered his nation to refer to his progeny, he did not mean his wives, but the twelve imams about whom he said:

The caliphs after me are twelve ones; all of them are from Quraysh.

And it is well known for all scholars and researchers that the Infallible Imams (a.s.) tried their best and on every possible occasion to introduce themselves to people so that people might come back to them, but: People are slaves to this worldly life, and religion is just a pretense on their tongues. They claim it as long as they are at ease, and when they are tried with affliction, the faithful become very few.

Therefore, Imam as-Sadiq (a.s.) said, when reciting this verse:

And most surely I am most Forgiving to him who repents and believes and does good, and then continues to follow the right path: 1 And then follows the right path of our guardianship, we the Ahlul Bayt. It may be understood from this holy verse too that it is not enough for the Muslims, who truly believe in Allah and His messenger, repent of their sins, do good deeds, and give up bad deeds, to deserve the forgiveness of Allah the Almighty, except when they are guided to the infallible imams who are the successors of the messenger of Allah (a.s.), for they (the imams) alone are the ones who teach Muslims the real meanings of the Qur'an and the Sunna. Thus, Muslims' faith, deeds, and repentance would be according to what Allah had imposed on them with no misinterpretation or distortion.

Since misinterpretation took place in the Holy Qur'an and distortion in the Prophetic Sunna, and since every sect relied on a proof misinterpreted from the Qur'an and argued on untrue traditions considered true by them, so disagreement, confusion, and many doubts came out.

1 Qur'an, 20:82.

Therefore, if a Muslim wants to know the truth, be protected from going astray, delivered on the Day of Resurrection, and to win the Paradise and the contentment of Allah, he has not but to ride on the Ship of Deliverance and turn to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), because they are the security for this ummah where Allah will not accept (the deeds of) a servant except through their way, and no one shall enter (the Paradise) except from their gate. This is actually what the Prophet (a.s.) ordered the ummah to do due to the command of Allah the Almighty. If we review the disagreement of the companions after the Prophet (a.s.), we shall find that they disagreed for the sake of caliphate and authority over the ummah, and every disagreement that came out after that was because of the caliphate. If unqualified people assume the rule and high posts, they certainly shall lead the nation to deviation because of their ignorance, selfishness, and personal desires.

Today, as the Islamic caliphate has gone to the unknown and there is nothing that may make it come back, then would Muslims return to their reasons to observe the commands of their prophet, follow the Book of their Lord, and follow the progeny of their prophet in order to restore fraternity, concord, and peace in order to make the ummah reunite and recover from its disagreement and separation? This is a cry from a pitiful, compassionate brother!

We have known from the previous discussion that guidance is a great blessing, which Allah has bestowed on His servants, and known too that being guided to the guardianship of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and following them is a greater blessing that deserves the forgiveness of Allah the Almighty for His sinful servants.' Then, how would jihad (strive) be for remaining fixed in this path? Jihad in Islam is in two kinds; the jihad against enemy, which is called "the minor jihad", and the jihad against one's self (desires, fancies, and lusts) which is called "the major jihad".

What concerns us in this subject is "the major jihad" which concerns the soul to treat it against perverse doctrinal diseases. One time, man is in jihad against himself and another time in jihad against others. The jihad against oneself is accomplished by doing good deeds, being righteous, accompanying good people, offering worships, and being truthful in dealing with people according to what the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) have determined by narrating from their grandfather (a.s.) who has received it from Allah the Almighty.

As for the jihad against others, it is accomplished by the enjoining of good, forbidding from the wrong, and inviting for the way of Allah through wisdom and good exhortation. Such kind of jihad can be accomplished through speaking one time and through the pen another time. This kind of jihad is better and greater near Allah than the jihad by the sword. The messenger of Allah (a.s.) said: The ink of scholars is better near Allah than the blood of martyrs.

What scholars write to show and support the truth and explain different affairs for people to be

guided to the right path of Allah through irrefutable arguments and convincing proofs is better near Allah than the blood of martyrs, although the blood of martyrs is holy and highly sanctified in Islam. On the other side, we find that some people struggle to impose the religion by force and coercion, where Allah says:

There is no compulsion in religion; truly, the right way has become clearly distinct from error. 1 Therefore, scholars and thinkers must try their best to spread the true Islam, 2 to introduce the imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and

1 Qur'an, 2:256.

2 From the situations that the ulama and jurists face is the trial they are tried with, and here, the advantages of Major Jihad, the struggling against one's self, and suppressing it shall appear clearly!

their sciences, and spend from their monies and times. How many circles of disbelief, atheism, and corruption there are that are financed with billions of dollars, whereas wealthy Muslims do not spend in the way of Allah except very scanty amounts! We see that unbelievers come to Somalia under the pretense of saving its people from famine, whereas their brothers in religion are inadvertent to them.

We have seen the activities of the Christian Missionaries in the west and east of Africa, Egypt, Sudan, Indonesia, and other

Sheikh Murtadha al-Ansari was a religious authority and one of the ulama who had been educated in the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). One night, one of his students saw in his sleep Iblis holding in his hands threads, ropes, and iron chains. When he asked him about that, Iblis replied, "These are traps by which I attract people to me. Last night, I tried all these tools against Sheikh al-Ansari, but I failed, and in the end, the thick iron chain was broken." When this student woke up, he hastened to the house of his teacher Sheikh al-Ansari and told him what he saw. After much insistence, the Sheikh said, "Last night, my wife was in parturition. My self enticed me to take from the monies of khums and zakat with me to hire a midwife, but I often and often resisted myself, and so on, until my wife gave birth to her child by herself. Then, I praised Allah too much." On the other side, we see those who gave a fatwa on the killing of Imam al-Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.) by saying, "Al-Husayn was killed by the sword of his grandfather (the Prophet Muhammad), because he rebelled against the imam of his time". This was the statement of Abu Bakr ibn al-Arabi al-Andalusi in his book al-Awasim, p. 232, verified by Muhyiddeen al-Khateeb!

When Harun ar-Rasheed became the caliph, he was very fond of one of his father's bondmaids. He tried to sleep with her, but she said to him, "I am not fit for you, because your father has slept with me." However, he was very fond of her. He sent for his famous judge Abu Yousuf who was called as "the jurisprudent of the earth and its judge". The judge replied to the caliph, saying, "Violate the inviolability of your father and satisfy your lust, and make it (the responsibility of sin) in my neck." Refer to Tarikh al-Khulafa by as-Sayooti, p. 291.

Like ar-Rasheed, Abu Yousuf, and these stories there were many many rulers, royal court preachers, drinking companions, officials...etc.

Muslim countries. They offer to people there little foods and drugs that affect their hearts and they convert Christians after having been Muslims. Nonetheless, wealthy Muslims, whom Allah has endowed from His bounty and made as His deputies in the earth to serve His people, are indifferent to everything. These wealthy people may go to the hajj twenty times and spend much monies every year, whereas in their neighboring there are many hungry, destitute sufferers who find no one to offer them a bite of food to satisfy their empty stomachs, or a piece of cloth to cover their naked bodies. Did the messenger of Allah (a.s.) not say, "The nearest of you to Allah is the most useful of you to His servants"? Would Allah accept this doing (every-year-hajj), which He has imposed on people one time (as obligation) throughout their lives? The messenger of Allah (a.s.) performed the hajj one time in all his life that he might want to makes us feel that the wealthy people of this ummah may exaggerate in worships and ignore dealing (social communication and association) which is the basis of the Sharia. Therefore, the Prophet (a.s.) often said: Certainly, the religion is (human) dealing.

So, how about one, who performs the hajj many times while he is in debt to people, or that some of his relatives are poor whom he does not help or feel pity for?

If we add to that the wasting and prodigality of smoking among Muslims, then the punishment shall be severe near Allah on the Day of Punishment. If we look with a general view at what is spent on smoking by Muslims, we shall be surprised by the statistics. For example, the number of Muslims in the world today is more than one milliard that if only one fifth of them smoke, then there shall be two hundred million smokers who spend two hundred million dollars a day, six milliard dollars a month, and seventy-two milliard dollars a year. Yes, Muslims spend seventy-two milliard dollars a year at least to buy fatal diseases!

O Muslims, fear Allah as to your selves and properties! If these monies of only ten years are collected, they shall be 720 milliard dollars, which shall suffice all poor Muslims in every spot of the earth: And you deemed it trifle, while with Allah it is great. In the. end, I would like to attract the attention of my Shia brothers, who follow the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), towards the

following points:

1. They have to argue with their Sunni brothers in the best manner and to avoid abusing and revilement, which cause alienation. Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

Do not be abusers or cursers, but you say: 'they did so and so', and this is more effective in argument.

2. They have to avoid in their worships and dealings all the heresies that were not available at the time of the Prophet (a.s.) or the time of the infallible imams (a.s.), such as beating oneself with injurious tools until bleeding in Asura, that make others keep away from embracing the creed of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). Imam as-Sadiq (a.s.) said:

Be propagandists for us by your deeds not your sayings! Be a source of praise to us and not a source of dispraise against us!

3. They have to pay much attention in their lectures and discussions to scientific matters that have proofs and evidences in the reliable books of the Sunni themselves. They have to avoid weak traditions that provoke disputes and disagree with reason. 4. They have to try their best to be good, pious, and righteous as their infallible imams (a.s.) were. They have not to rely on the belief that Imam Ali (a.s.) would intercede for his followers and adherents. Imam Ali (a.s.) himself said:

Faith is not obtained by wishing or adorning, but faith is that which is fixed in the heart and proved by sayings and doings.

5. They have to take lessons from the lives of the infallible imams (a.s.) who have left incomparable treasures of knowledge and morals. For example, Nahjol Balagha alone is a curative drug for all diseases. It is the time for shaking off ignorance and underdevelopment, and taking the nation to the high meanings of civilization and development. So, if the imam of the Shia was the gate of the city of knowledge, then his followers must be the first in all sciences.

6. The Shia have to unite and avoid all kinds of political partisanship and regional blocs, and strive to unite the religious authorities and obey them, and after that strive to unite all Muslims. If the Shia follow these instructions, which I have taken from the Holy Qur'an, the Prophetic Sunna, and the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), security and peace shall prevail everywhere. If we change the bad beliefs, ignorance, and deviations inside our inners, Allah will change our poverty and meanness into richness and glory, and make Imam al-Mahdi (a.s.) reappear to us to fill the earth with justice and fairness after it has been filled with injustice and oppression.

The ShiA ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE SUNNA, BUT ...

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We have known from the previous discussions that the Twelver Shia are the true followers of the Prophetic Sunna. This is a clear fact free from any doubt for whoever studies the teachings of Islam in all its beliefs, rulings, and historical stages. However, their enemies from "the Sunni", whose origin and goals we have known in the previous studies, defame the Shia, criticize their beliefs and deeds, evoke suspicions against them, doubt their religion, and sometimes fabricate false stories to defame and cause them troubles, and make others detest and despise them.

One of these fabrications is the claim that (the Shia believe that) Gabriel has betrayed the Trust and delivered the Mission to Muhammad instead of Ali. The second one is the unreal story of Abdullah ibn Saba' the Jewish as the founder of Shiism. A third one is that the Shia have a special Qur'an called "Musshaf Fatima" other than the Qur'an available among all Muslims, or that the Shia prepare a horse every night at the door of the vault in Samarra' (in Iraq) waiting for al-Mandi to ride that horse. They also claim that the Shia worship the graves and consider the imams as gods, and they prostrate for stones. The worse of it is their claim that the Shia permit adultery and that they (more than one) sleep with the same woman in the same night. They fabricate many other lies against the Shia with no any bit of reality or evidence.

Anyhow, there are some objections that the Sunni put forth in our present time and make them as obstacles in the way of scientific researching, and then block the way to arrive at the sought truth. Such people, when showing such spurious arguments, which we shall discuss later on, have never read them in books or heard them from traditionists, but they swear that they have seen them with their own eyes and attended them themselves. Therefore, this matter is too dangerous and serious and it may have a negative effect on the scholars and researchers who seek the pure truth. As we have accustomed readers to the seeking of the truth and being neutral with no any fanaticism to any creed or sect, following the Prophetic tradition that says, "Say the truth even if it is against yourself", and because that Allah the Almighty does not feel shy of the truth, so we must have a clear situation in this concern to say to the good doers of the Shia that they have done well and to the wrong doers of them that they have done wrong and sinned. We do not fear, in that, the blaming of any blamers, for we just seek the contentment of Allah the Almighty. We must distinguish the fundamentals of Islam and that which is really in the Sharia from traditionals, habits, and personal conclusions. And as we have been frank and daring in criticizing some companions of the Prophet (a.s.) for the violations they had committed, we also have to criticize some Shia and not to keep silent before their violations. However, there is an important difference here. What the companions changed and invented became parts of the religion, which changed the rulings of Allah and His messenger, but what some of the Shia changed or invented did not change any divine rulings, nor did any one of them say it was obligatory; nevertheless, we must criticize it.

I shall discuss the most important points raised about these new invented things (heresies)

through which some others criticize and try to falsify Shiism and ascribe to it different kinds of defects. Dear reader, you yourself may suffer them and not find a satisfying answer by which You face an opponent or convince yourself.

These new things, in fact, are heresies fabricated against Shiism and Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) who always refused and refuted every heresy whatever it was and whatever adorned and called "a good heresy". They, peace be on them, often and always declared that they_ did not say or do except according to the sayings and doings of their grandfather the messenger of Allah (a.s.). Thus, every thing that came out after the infallible imams (a.s.) are heresies that harm and not benefit, alienate and not attract, complicate and not make it easy, where the learned youth find in them a defect in Shiism and may find it very difficult to justify or refute them. We mention here, for example, some of those heresies, which the Sunni criticize the Shia for: the exaggeration in the rituals of consolation in Asura where some people beat themselves with chains, daggers, and knives until they bleed, the disorder in offering the prayer and the indifference to other praying people, smoking in mosques and places of prayer, neglecting the Friday Prayer, and some other things that we shall mention later on which prevent many people from getting to the truth.

Every Day Is Ashuraand Every Land Is Karbala

Would that people understand this meaning and observe, in every land they stay and every day they live, the right of Islam for which Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) were martyred! If they did that, the face of Muslims in the world would change and they would be the masters instead of being slaves. However, the majority understood from the revolution of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) just weeping, wailing, beating themselves with iron chains and knives, dramatic performance in few hours of the year on the anniversary, and imitating some things like a parrot, and then after that every thing would be forgotten. Most of the Sunni criticize the Shia for these doings that are practiced on the day of Asura which cause their bloods to bleed.

Western and Arabic media in this age have spared no effort to show the Shia in Iran, during the season of Asura, as predatory beasts knowing nothing but violence, and admiring nothing better than to see bloods flowing from human beings. Though the Shia in India and Pakistan practice that and worse than that, the media, especially TVs, do not focus except on the Shia of Iran for a special purpose which is clear to everyone watching the events in the world and especially the affairs of Islam and Muslims.

The media do not show the Friday Prayer in Tehran where more than two millions gather to offer

the prayer congregationally behind the president (as the imam of the prayer). The media do not show the wonderful reverence covering millions of Muslims while reciting the du'a of Kumayl at the nights of Friday when streets become fully crowded, avenues are closed, and traffics stop. Here, you see men, women, old, young, and children supplicating their Lord humbly in the calmness of night and asking for forgiveness in the dawn.

These media are only concerned in showing the rituals of Asura focusing on the beating of heads with knives and chains and the scenes of bloods on some few persons! It is true that what some of the Shia do during these rituals is not from religion at all, even if mujtahids give fatwas to say that there are great rewards in such doings. These doings are but habits, traditions, and emotions that overcome some people and make them behave unusually, and little by little these habits become as part of the folklore inherited by a generation from another in blind imitation and senselessly. In fact, some ordinary people feel that the shedding of blood by beating oneself is a deed that brings man closer to Allah, and that whoever does not do that does not love Imam al-Husayn (a.s.).

When I ponder with myself and in spite of my being Shia, after knowing satisfactorily that Shiism is the true creed, I am not satisfied with those ugly scenes that alienate souls and sound minds, especially when someone unclothes himself and beats himself with an iron tool in crazy movements shouting out too loudly: Husayn, Husayn! The odd thing in this matter that makes you doubt it is that you see those persons, who behave very unusually and whom you think that the sorrow for Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) has affected terribly, a little after the end of the rituals, jest, laugh, and eat sweets as if everything ends with the end of the rituals. And the oddest of all that is that most of these persons are not religious or pious. Therefore, I permitted myself to criticize them directly many times and said to them that what they did was just folklore and blind imitation. ¹

¹ These doings are doings of ignorant and underdeveloped people, but they are a way of expressing their love and allegiance to Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) May Allah have mercy on the martyr Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr who helped me much in this calamity when I asked him before my converting a Shia. He said to me, "The beating of bodies and shedding of bloods that you see is from the practices of ordinary and ignorant people. No one of the ulama ever practices it. In fact, they always prevent and prohibit it."

I hate heresies and fight them wherever and with whomever they are. We must make the Shia be aware to give up heresies and make the Sunni understand that these practices cannot be obstacles preventing them from knowing the truth and following the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). They have not to observe the practices of ordinary and ignorant Shia that are unfounded in true Shiism.

Anyhow, we have to imitate our great example the messenger of Allah (a.s.). His uncle and

protector Abu Talib died and he felt _____ as they think. Once, one of them said to a religious authority that he served food for al-Abbas (a.s.) and all the time he did not take off his shoes. The alim (scholar) asked him how he performed wudu and prayers then, but he paid no attention, thinking that he would get his reward from al-Abbas (a.s.).

On the other side, we find the circles of dhikr (remembrance) near the Sunni with their different methods like Qadiriyyah, Naqshabandiyyah, and others, as shows for nothing but to be close to the chief of the creed (method). These shows are done by inserting nails in the head and eyes, and daggers and swords in the body with tambourines and smokes and shaking the heads and bodies in harmony with the melodies. Some of them rotate for continuous hours. We knew some of them well that so-and-so drank intoxicants, so-and-so did not offer prayers, so-and-so was impious... did not refrain from abusing Allah and His messenger...committed adultery or sodomy...etc. However, those persons were invited by the chief (Sheikh) to attend the circles. They did not leave except when blood came out of their bodies, and then the Sheikh cried out: "Get out! Either you have not washed after janaba (sexual intercourse), or you have come here while having drunk wine ...!" I say that these things are recent heresies, which the colonists have emphasized on and fed for certain purposes. They are about to vanish among the Shia; so would they be so among our Sunni brothers?

great sorrow for him. His most beloved wife Khadijah died. And then he terribly suffered the lose of his uncle Hamza who was martyred and maimed and his body was found torn into pieces with no liver which was taken out and chewed by Hind the wife of Abu Sofyan. He felt great sorrow, but in all cases, he just wept out of mercifulness for them.

He wept for his son Ibrahim, for his grandson al-Husayn (a.s.) when Gabriel told him that he would be murdered, and wept for his brother and cousin Ali (a.s.) when he foreknew that the most wretched of people would dye his (Imam Ali's) beard with the blood of his head. The Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) often wept, and he ordered Muslims to feign crying if they could not cry. He sought the protection of Allah from the eye that did not shed tears. Nevertheless, he prohibited Muslims from being excessive in showing their sorrow, beating their faces, or tearing their clothes. Then, what about beating one's head or body with iron tools until bleeding?

Our first imam, after the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.), Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) did not do anything like that when his brother and cousin the messenger of Allah (a.s.) died. After a short time of six months, his wife Fatima (a.s.) left to join her father in the better world. Imam Ali (a.s.) felt great pain and sorrow, but he did never do anything unusual as what ordinary people do nowadays. Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn (peace be on them) did nothing of that when they lost their merciful grandfather Muhammad (a.s.), and their kind, loving mother Fatima (a.s.), nor when their father Imam Ali (a.s.), who was the best of all human beings after the Prophet Muhammad, was killed by the cursed ibn Muljam in the mihrab.

Imam as-Sajjad (a.s.), as well, did nothing unusual when he did see scenes that did never happen anywhere at all. He saw with his eyes the massacre of Karbala when his father, uncles, brothers, cousins, and companions were murdered, and after the terrible event, he faced great difficulties and sufferings that even mountains would not bear. History did not record that any of the infallible imams (a.s.) did something of that or ordered their followers to do it. The only thing they did was that they liked to hear from some poets elegies about the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) where they wept and felt sorrow and ordered people to weep and be sad for the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). In fact, this is a recommendable thing if it is not obligatory. I myself attended many occasions of Asura in many countries and did not find anyone of the ulama doing that at all. Scholars and learned people of the Shia hate that and try, to refute and forbid it.

We, after having become Shia, do not imitate ordinary people of the Shia in all what they do without researching and being certain of its truth. We celebrate the anniversary of Asura by reciting the maqal (the story of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom) and the tragedies that the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) faced. We weep and feel sad for that. The point is that the heart should react and weep with the eyes, and then all man's entity should submit to the remembrance of Allah the Almighty and to the truth that He has revealed. The hearts should promise their Lord to follow the path of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) which is the same path of the messenger of Allah and all the Ahlul Bayt (peace be on them all).

Asura, with its consolation, sorrows, weeping, celebrating of its memory, and taking lessons from its situations and heroes, remains pure for the loyal Shia who abide by the true Sunna of the Prophet (a.s.) and the instructions of the infallible imams (a.s.), whereas the doings and practices of ordinary Shia people remain liable to criticism and fabrication by those who fish in troubled waters to distort the beliefs of the Shia and separate them from the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), and then consider them as disbelievers. Praise be to Allah Who has made us from the discerning Shia who has been guided to the truth through studying and researching, and not from the imitating Shia.

Thus, readers have to be exemplar in abiding by the true Prophetic Sunna transmitted by the infallible imams (a.s.). 1

1 It is well known that many ulama like Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin and nowadays Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamanaei, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadhlullah, and many others have given a fatwa that these practices (beating oneself with iron tools) are not permissible. Those, who say they are permissible, mean some things else, that one of scholars has said, "The swords that the Shia unsheathed in the face of oppressors are used today to strike their heads with." It is so that the British gave some swords to the processions of the Shia on Asura! These traditions came from the nations of Asia and India where there were groups practicing such rituals in their celebrations. When they gathered in Karbala, every group (procession) showed its way in expressing emotions.

It is worth mentioning that different colonies lived in Karbala and kept on imitating their ancestors that made others admired what they practiced. Therefore, these things became as a part of the rituals of Asura ... In addition to that, some people, who love Imam al-Husayn (a.s.), think that the issue of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) shall die out if there is no shedding of blood ... etc.

The pressures against the Shia in the past, during the Ottoman reign, and then during the oppressive rule of the Iraqi tyrannical regime that prevented military men, placemen, and state officials from going to Karbala on Asura, and punished (if did not hang) them if they went there, made people warmly practice these traditions.

Nowadays, these practices have become limited because of wide comprehension and the fatwas of the religious authorities. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, these practices have abated 98%. So have they in Iraq, Lebanon, and in different percentages in India, Pakistan, and other places according to the milieus surrounding them. In fact, these practices are practiced by the ignorant among ordinary people who think that the cause of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) to them is greater than the fatwas of so-and-so of ulama!!!

THE SHIA AND THE PRAYER

Some young Sunnis criticize the Shia of what they call as "the confusion in prayer and lack of submission". In congregational prayers, some of the Shia do not care for the rows and do not impact them well that there are always gaps left between the praying men. It is often noticed that the first row is not yet complete whereas there are great masses of people offering the prayer behind the imam in the other rows without caring for the order of the first row. It is also noticed among the Shia that some people come in and go out of the mosque during the prayer, passing between the praying ones. They often pass between a praying person and the place of his prostration in the direction of the qibla, which annul the prayer according to the beliefs of the Sunni.

It is true that the prayer of the Sunni is more orderly than the Shia's. When you offer the prayer with the Sunni brothers, you see the imam, before beginning the prayer, turn towards the people coming to offer the prayer behind him and order them to straighten and impact the rows saving to them, "Be orderly (in your lines), may Allah have mercy on you! Impact your rows and do not leave gaps for Satan, because the impacting of rows is from (the conditions of) the prayer."

Therefore, you see the praying ones press together until their shoulders and bodies stick together and see that they compete to fill the gaps. 1

1 These things are true and real, but we see that the Sunni mosques are built very big and adorned with ornamentations and decorations and great. When the prayer is being offered, they do not permit anyone to pass in front of a praying one, even if the prayer is recommendable and

not obligatory. They believe, according to some traditions they narrate in their sihah (books of Hadith), that the prayer is annulled when someone passes in front of a praying one. In some of their traditions, it is said that the one, who passes in front of a praying one, is a devil who must be repelled and pushed away.

As for the Shia, they do not care for such things during their prayers. I offered prayers behind many Shia imams 1 most of whom were from the known religious authorities and in many countries, but I did not see anyone of them turn to the people,

monies from inside and outside their countries are spent on them, besides that their ulama too much breach and emphasize on these matters. However, we find that the Sunni do not care much for the matter of purity and impurity. We find this in their creeds and especially the Hanbalite School. I thought before that wearing gold by Sunni men was permissible, because many of their men did that, but it appeared that all their creeds prohibit it. They invite to pray behind every good and bad man (as the imam in the prayer). You may find in the row of prayers a disbelieving, secular ruler and his mercenaries, and this is a very doing of Satan!

As for the Shia, they see that mosques are Allah's...and they are shelters for all Muslims, and that the building of a mosque is something spontaneous, simple, and with no constrictions. The Shia pay very much attention to mosques not to be impurified. Mosques for the Shia have many strict rulings that must be observed, and they are often breached by the Shia ulama. Anyhow, this problem can be solved through a lecture or by hanging a poster on the wall.

Are we not invited to (make it easy and not difficult and not to make others alienate the religion)?

How often I find Sunni youth, who do not go to mosques, for either they have been shocked and driven away, or because of those difficult rituals! We the Shia think that the important thing is the coming of people to mosques first, and then to be educated in it, and not to shout at them just because they pass in front of us. Let us deal with others through the Islamic morals and manners and not through disgusting nomadic fanaticism. 1 "Imam" here refers to the one leading others in offering a prayer.

who had come to offer the prayer behind him, before the beginning of the prayer to ask them to regulate their lines or fill the gaps between them. I also saw no one, whether an imam or a led praying one, prevent others from passing in front of a praying one.

I am convinced that the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) does not say that the prayer become null when someone passes in front of a praying one. This is in accordance with neither reason nor traditions, because the things that annul the prayer are limited and known to the Shia and the

Sunni, and certainly, the passing in front of a praying one is not one of them.

Al-Bukhari himself mentions in his Sahih that once it was mentioned before Aa'isha that a dog, a donkey, and woman (when passing before a praying one) would annul the prayer. She denied that and said, "You have compared us (women) to dogs and donkeys! By Allah, I saw the messenger of Allah (a.s.) offer the prayer while I was on the bed between him and the qibla ..." 1 This is a strong proof and a convincing argument showing that the prayer is not annulled by the passing of man or animal between the praying person and the (direction of) qibla even to the Sunni. 2

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 130.

2 This matter is like the matter of building a mosque or offering the prayer where there is a grave. The matter is based on the rule of "the preventing of excuses" for fear that the matter may develop to be as worshipping the one in the grave. Certainly, we have not found since 1416 years ago (the hook in Arabic was published in 1416 AH) until now even one Muslim who worshipped a grave!

According to this precautionary basis, some of the Sunni destroyed the graves of their saints or separated them with high fences. They, and especially the Wahabis, criticized impudently the Shia for making graves inside the mosques. Once, one of my friends was in Hijaz. Some Sunni people from different Muslim countries gathered around him asking, "Why do you make the graves of your imams as mosques?!"

However, not everything permissible is recommendable or praiseworthy. If a Muslim is careful not to pass over the necks of praying people, lest he treads on them while prostrating for Allah, it is a recommendable and praiseworthy morality that Islam prefers and public tradition acknowledges, for it shows reverence and respect to the prayer and the praying one who is before his Lord solemnly supplicating in a very high spiritual state. So is it acceptable from anyone to interrupt a praying one's submissiveness and state of spirituality? Do you not see that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) has prohibited to sit in the public ways where there is embarrassment for passers and especially women who feel shy and embarrassed to walk in a way where there are men sitting in it?

Since we talk about and seek the truth in all our studies, and since we know that Allah does not feel shy of the truth, we say that the Shia should benefit from their Sunni brothers in this morality that gives praying ones sanctity and holiness as long as they are standing, bowing, or prostrating before the Lord of the worlds.

Once, I said this to some imams of the Shia and they confessed their shortcoming in this concern,

but one of them objected to

Since the passing in front of a praying one does not annul the prayer for the two sects (the Shia and the Sunni) and since they depend on Hadith, so this is refuted and they (the Wahabis) have no right to impose it on any Muslim. In fact, they harm and accuse other Muslims of different accusations because of silly rulings.

This reminds me of an event where someone was committing an impermissible thing inside a mosque. He saw someone else spit on the ground of the mosque. He got up and beat him why he spat on the ground. The other one resisted and beat him saying to him, "Is your committing of sin is worse or my spitting on the ground?"

Would that they care for purity, the prostrating on permissible things, refraining from wearing gold (by men), wearing foreign leather clothes (coming from non Muslim countries), standing before Allah (during prayers) while their stomachs are filled with impermissible meat (of unlawfully slaughtered animals) ... etc.

me saying that these matters were superficial and the advantage lied in the essence. I replied, "These matters are not superficial, but they are systematic that brings gravity and reverence and make others respect us. Surely, our religion is a religion of systematicity that loves orderliness and hates confusion. Allah says:

Attend constantly to prayers and to the middle prayer and stand up truly obedient to Allah. 1 Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks as if they were a firm and compact wall. 2 The Sura, in which this verse is, has been called 'the sura of asSaff; rank', since rank is too important near Allah.

Perhaps, the problem of the Shia concerning the congregational prayer throughout history has found in them some unseriousness and indifference because of the severe conditions they faced throughout history. It was very difficult for them to offer congregational prayers behind Sunni imams who changed the rulings of prayer and were used to abuse Imam Ali (a.s.) and the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) in their prayers. On the other hand, they avoided offering the prayer in a special congregation, because this meant that they would be accused of being "rawafidh; rejecters" and this would lead to doing away with them.

Therefore, they often offered congregational prayers with the Sunni out of Taqiyya 3 and they immediately leave the place after the end of the prayer, and most of them might offer the prayer again when they would be in their houses.

We may conclude from this too that the dissenters of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) have called themselves

"the people of the Sunna and congregation" because the majority of Muslims followed them

1 Qur'an, 2:238.

2 Qur'an, 61:4.

3 Precautionary concealing of one's real belief.

and offered the prayer in their congregation, whereas the Shia offered their prayers behind their own imam, and thus they were minority, like a white spot in a black dress, after their appearing as a special sect. After their having appeared as a special Islamic school adhering to the jurisprudence of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), the Shia bound themselves strictly by the praying behind a just, knowledgeable, abstinent imam according to the religious texts in this concern on the one hand, and on the other hand, as a reaction to the Sunni who permit the praying behind every good or corruptive man. This is, too, affected the congregational prayer of the Shia that you see when someone of them comes into a mosque and does not know the imam of the congregational prayer, he offers the prayer individually in one of the mosque's corners. It is because he does not know the imam, so he does not trust in him (as to be just or not).

On the other side, the Sunni are wasteful in this concern that they permit the prayer behind anyone whether good or bad, pious or impious, abstinent or corruptive. We have talked before about Abdullah ibn Umar who offered prayers behind Yazid ibn Mo'awiya, al-Hajjaj ibn Yousuf ath-Thaqafi, and Najdah alKhariji, and all of these three were openly corruptive and dissolute.

The same thing can be said about the Shia that some of them do not consider it permissible to offer prayer behind anyone except when he is known, by the praying person himself, to be just and pious. Some of the Shia are not satisfied to see tens of Muslims offer prayer behind so-and-so imam except that when they themselves become certain of his justice and piety, and then they may offer the prayer behind him. All this is because of precaution in the religion and carefulness to offer the prayer in the best way that Allah may accept. It is as if the Shia think that their prayer shall not be accepted if it is offered behind an unknown imam, and as if Allah has ordered

them to inquire very accurately about the affairs of religion, 1 and as if they always think of this verse:

... and you deemed it an easy matter while with Allah it is grievous.

I believe that Islam is the religion of nature, and nature is the most moderate of affairs. Allah the Almighty says: And thus We have made you a medium (just) nation. 2

The messenger of Allah (a.s.) says:

The best of affairs is the medium one. There should be neither excessiveness nor wastefulness. So the Sunni's belief, which is too much indifferent to a degree that it permits the offering of the prayer behind every good or bad person, is excessive, and the Shia's belief, which is too excessive to a degree that they do not permit the prayer except behind the just imam who is unique of his kind, is wastefulness.

The true Islam stops in the middle between the two in this concern; it does not agree with those who say it is permissible to

1 Since the Shia were exiled from the stage of the Muslims' life, their fatwas are very strict and precautionary. For example, you see that they are very careful and strict to the precedents of the prayer such as purity, ghusl, and wudu to a degree that you cannot see one of their mosques empty of some scrupulous men to purity, recitation, or the number of rak'as of the prayer. Some stipulate conditions for the imam of congregational prayer as if they are conditions of a high religious authority. However, most of the recent ulama, including Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadhlullah who criticizes in his lectures this excessive strictness, consider the matter easy with no complications. This fact results from carefulness, precaution, and perfection of deeds. But as for those who say "even though"...in any how the wudu is performed, to offer the prayer led by a pious or impious person, to be indifferent to impurities that stain one's body and clothes...to say 'everything is alright' and 'everything is permissible'...it is a very serious matter that requires much pondering!

2 Qur'an, 2:143.

imitate a corruptive, and on the other side, it stipulates in the justice (honesty) of an imam not to commit corruption openly, and this is enough for others to offer the prayer behind him. The Prophet (a.s.) often recommended his companions and all Muslims by saying:

Make it easy and do not make it difficult. Give good news and do not make (others) alienate (the religion).

Do not complicate it for yourself, lest Allah makes it more complicated for you, as He did to the children of Israel.

Since we are talking about excessiveness, it may be useful to mention what some excessive Muslims do. You may see some ones, during performing the wudu, move from this side to that side under the lamp while turning their hands and arms up and down to see if there is a needle-eye-spot untouched by water to repeat the wudu again just because of doubt (though, to the Shia, doubt does not annul certainty). You see when they come to the prayer and begin reciting

the sura of al-Fatiha, their tongues begin stuttering and they become unable to pronounce the words, and then they repeat "welladh dhalleen" four or five times, and this happens to them in every rak'a.

Once, I attended (the congregational prayer) with one of them, and then I regretted my praying behind him, because that prayer became boring in the way he offered. Later on, I spoke to him frankly and mentioned to him, before a group of other friends, the saying of an American man who had become Muslim and written a book, saying in it, "Praise be to Allah Who has made me know Islam before I knew Muslims." I added, "If I had known such a kind of Shia, I would have alienated them and not bothered myself with all these researches."

Certainly, Islam is the religion of easiness, simplicity, and leniency. I do not mean by this to be indifferent to the rulings of the Sharia; God forbid! I myself disapprove the schools that interpret the religion of Allah according to their own opinions.

However, when you see that all excessiveness and exaggeration is from the human beings themselves, your soul may alienate the religion. 1 You recite these sayings of Allah:

... and has not laid upon you any hardship in religion. 2 Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty. 3 While you see the sayings and doings of such people, who make the religion of Allah as nightmare and all hardship that ordinary man cannot bear. This makes you doubt and suspect everything, and then pave the way for Satan to enter your heart. The most dangerous disease is when a Muslim becomes too scruple that he does not know how many rak'as he offers, or he has or not, or when he has offered the prayer. Satan plays with him in every worship and ritual, and this may exceed worships to come to the dealings and relations with people, and then one's life becomes unbearable hell, from which may Allah protect you and us.

1 The Shia say that the imam (the leader of prayers) is to offer (as) the prayer of the weakest of the praying ones that means to pay attention to the old, weak, or sick persons. Nevertheless, some people, and because of often precaution, seek perfection in worships, wudu, and purity, especially when they read that their infallible imams (a.s.) did not perform wudu except with pure water, did not wear except permissible (well gotten) clothes, and even did not carry a sword belt if it was from leather that was unknown whether or not the animal was legally slaughtered, and that when they stood before Allah, they would shake and change color ...

Therefore, our jurisprudents see that such people are sick of scruple, and they often blame them for this. A scholar, who wants to do so (being excessive or scrupulant) is not to lead congregation or give a fatwa in these matters. Our thought is the same about Sufis, Salafites (puritans) and others who have violated the right path. Whoever wants to practice such things has to practice

them inside his house and away from people, because such things are from Satan, whereas our religion is a religion of easiness and a civilizational way of life for all humankind.

2 Qur'an, 22:78.

3 Qur'an, 2:185.

The Shia and The Friday Prayer

From the important matters, which the Sunni raise and criticize the Shia for on all occasions, is the matter of neglecting and not offering the Friday Prayer. Some of them are so excessive to a degree that they consider the Shia as disbelievers for not offering the Friday Prayer, relying on a Prophetic tradition that they narrate saying, "Whoever gives up the Friday (prayer) three times does turn his back to Islam." They also narrate another tradition that the Prophet (a.s.) once was asked about one, who gave up the Friday Prayer, and he said, "He shall be in the Fire." Regarding the truth, we say that the Shia disagree among themselves on the legality of the Friday Prayer during the age of the Occultation of Imam al-Mandi (a.s.). The Shia jurisprudents are of two opinions; some say it is obligatory in every time, and others say it is not obligatory except when all its conditions are available, and one of its conditions is that it must be offered by (or under the rule of) the just ruler.

Before I turned a Shia, I truly say that I too much approved Sheikh al-Khalisi who offered the Friday Prayer in the Mosque of Imam al-Kadhim (a.s.) in Baghdad. Sometimes I traveled from Najaf or Karbala to participate in the Friday Prayer there. At that time, I wondered at the courage of Sheikh Mandi al-Khalisi ¹ who

_____ ¹ It is worth mentioning that once Sheikh Muhammad al-Khalisi, the father of Sheikh Mandi al-Khalisi, went to the religious authority Sayyid al-Khoei in Najaf, talking with him about the matter of the Friday Prayer, relying on this Qur'anic verse, (O you who believe! when the call is made for prayer on Friday, then hasten to the remembrance of Allah...) (62:9). Sayyid al-Khoei pondered for a little, and then said to him, "Who is the caller?"

did not care for the criticism of some ulama who did not think that the Friday Prayer was obligatory. He believed it was obligatory and he offered it in the best way. I noticed at that time (in 1968 AD) the masses of people crowding in his mosque, showing him great reverence and respect. I also wondered at those, who criticized him for offering the Friday Prayer. I said to myself, "How do these people defame an alim (scholar) who, due to his ijtihad, offers the prayer

that Allah the Almighty has ordered it to be offered when He has said:

O you who believe! when the call is made for prayer on Friday, then hasten to the remembrance of Allah ...? I repeated this saying before some of those people, defending Sheikh al-Khalisi and seeking for him different excuses and proofs, but some of them revealed what was inside their hearts. Some of them said to me that Sheikh al-Khalisi did not recite in the azan "the third witness". I asked what "the third witness" was, and they said that it was, "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah".

I spent that night asking myself if that required to criticize and defame that man. I researched much in the books, and I read the books of his (Sheikh Mandi al-Khalisi) father's books, but I did not find except true knowledge, piety, and concernedness for the unity of Muslims, which some people considered (the concern about the unity of Muslims) as flattery to the Sunni.

Sheikh Muhammad al-Khalisi could not answer and he went back to Baghdad, keeping on offering the Friday Prayer there. It has been mentioned that Abu Hanifa too thought that it should not be offered except by the availability of a just ruler. Be it known that it is now offered in the Islamic Republic of Iran that calls for offering it in the other countries and in Syria. Sayyid Fadhlullah calls for it in Lebanon (in fact, it is offered in Lebanon now).

What kind of Friday Prayer is that which is offered under the authority of an oppressive ruler, or when the Friday Sermon is dictated under his supervision, or when the imams of mosques are appointed according to his desire and mood from among those who praise and glorify the regime and its policies?!!

However and despite that some persons tried to make me dislike and keep away from him, whenever I visited al-Kadhimiyyah (in Baghdad where Imam al-Khadim (a.s.) was buried), I offered the Friday Prayer behind Sheikh al-Khalisi and listened to his sermons which I benefited much from. Whenever I sat with him and listened to his talks, I liked him more, but I remained reserved, justifying that the Shia knew him more than I did. On the other hand, I remained confused between the two ijthads (deductions) that one said the Friday Prayer was obligatory and the other said it was not. I said that I could not understand that, except when I would reach the degree of ijthad. However, after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the establishment of the Islamic Republic there, the Friday Prayer was offered since the first Friday after the victory. And since then, the Islamic Republic spared no effort for the sake of the unity of Muslims. Then, I knew the value of Sheikh al-Khalisi and became certain of his loyalty and truthfulness in his mission. I remained until today wishing for seeing him that Allah may make me meet him on a near, happy occasion, and Allah is powerful over everything.

Anyhow, the Shia are still until now on two thoughts; some offer the Friday Prayer, and the others do not, waiting for the Reappearance of Imam al-Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance). I wish from the deep of my heart that the Friday Prayer is offered in every village and town of the Muslim countries, for it evokes great reward and has many benefits that only Allah the Glorified knows.

In Many lectures, I invited the Muslim colonies in the different countries, which I visited, to offer the Friday Prayer, taking the Islamic Republic in Iran and its leader as their example and trying to near the hearts to each other and make Muslims, Sunni and Shia, love each other in one united nation.

We pray Allah the Powerful to help us thank and worship Him well as His due, and to reconcile our hearts with each other to be true brothers by His Grace, He is Hearing, Responding to the prayer.

SMOKING IN THE PLACES OF PRAYER

How often that the Sunni criticize the Shia for their smoking in the mosques and say that it is an abominable doing from the doings of Satan. We can say that smoking is a common phenomenon among the Shia that when you come into their mosques for the first time, you are shocked by that. 1 I remember that when I traveled to Holy Najaf for the first time and was shocked by this phenomenon. I found it odd, and so I asked some of their (the Shia) ulama about it, but they gave answers which did not convince me until now. Some of them say that smoking is neither impermissible nor disapproved, because there is no (legal) text concerning it neither from the Prophet (a.s.) nor from the infallible imams (a.s.), and that analogy is not permissible to them. Some others say that they do not smoke in the mosques, but only in Husayniyyas, 2 which are not from mosques.

As for the first answer, a Muslim cannot accept that every thing, about which no religious text have been mentioned, is permissible, because the texts are either general including all prohibited vices like this saying of Allah:

1 For the truth, we should say that this phenomenon cannot be seen in the mosques in Iran.

2 Holy places like mosques but do not have the same rulings and conditions of mosques.

Say: My Lord has only prohibited indecencies, those of them that are apparent as well as those that are concealed. 1 or special, in which something is mentioned by name, like these sayings of Allah:

And go not nigh to adultery. 2

And do not kill any one whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause. 3 O you who believe! do not devour usury. 4 or the sayings of the Prophet (a.s.):

He, who cheats us, is not from us.

Whoever fabricates lies against me (as if I have said) let him take his seat in the Fire. Cigarettes were not available at the time of the Prophet (a.s.) and the times of the infallible imams; therefore, it is not possible to have a religious text about them from Allah, His messenger, or the infallible imams. It is the same as to many impermissible things available nowadays that are included by the general texts, such as lottery, horseracing, and modern games that cause many profits with no effort.

Smoking can be included by this saying of Allah the Almighty: ... and do not squander wastefully. Surely, the squanderers are the fellows of the devils and the devil is ever ungrateful to his Lord. 5

1 Qur'an, 7:33.

2 Qur'an, 17:32.

3 Qur'an, 17:33.

4 Qur'an, 3:130.

5 Qur'an, 17:26-27.

The messenger of Allah (a.s.) said:

Squandering is to spend even one dirham on what does not benefit you. Is there squandering worse than to spend one's money on some things harmful to his health and dangerous to his life? Smoking is also included by this saying of the messenger of Allah (a.s.):

There should be no harm (against oneself) and no harming (against others). Is there any harm worse than cancer, which has been proved by medicine and sciences of today to attack smokers and do away with their lives? Smoking is proved to cause dyspnea and that the nicotine in cigarettes causes addiction, which a smoker can hardly get rid of. Sociologists in the developed countries knew the dangers of smoking; therefore, smoking was forbidden there in the public halls, state centers, airplanes, trains, and other means of transportations. Lastly, the British government prohibited smoking in the metro, and the same was done by the French government.

Modern medicine has proved that a smoker, in addition to harming himself, harms others who sit with him in a place or a vehicle during a journey. Therefore, smokers are forbidden to smoke inside the public halls and are forced to go out to smoke in the open air if they want to smoke, as

a kind of regarding others' feelings and safety.

This is actually what the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) meant when he said:

There should be no harm (to oneself) and no harming (against others). In fact, in this saying there is a prohibition for smokers not to smoke even if they are alone, because a Muslim is prohibited from harming himself, as he is prohibited from harming others.

Do you not see that Islam has prohibited suicide? Islam considers suicide as one of the major sins. A Muslim is not free to harm even his own body, because his body is a possession of Allah, and a Muslim has no right to do to his body except what pleases Allah the Glorified. When, nowadays, we hear that the developed countries prohibit drivers from having alcohols during driving their cars, because they may cause fatal accidents, as they prohibit smokers from smoking in public places because they harm others, we see that they apply the rule of "no harming to others" and they neglect the rule of "no harm against oneself" according to the law of FREEDOMS they have that consider man as free to do to himself whatever he likes, on condition that he should not harm others. Islam does not acknowledge this absolute freedom and does not permit man to do to himself except what Allah has permitted within the limits that the Sharia has determined for him; therefore, Allah has said, "... and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands,"¹ and the Prophet (a.s.) said, "There should be no harm (against oneself) and no harming (to others)."

If we supposedly agree with these Muslim smokers, who say there is no any text on the prohibition of smoking, we do not agree with them on permitting smoking inside the mosques and other places of prayer, worship, and meeting of Muslims. Therefore, smokers must observe non-smokers. Here comes the problem of their second answer when saying that smoking is not practiced in mosques but in Husayniyyas. To define a Husayniyyas for those who do not know it, we say that a Husayniyya is a building built by the Shia and entailed for Imam

¹ Qur'an, 2: 195.

Husayn (a.s.) where ceremonies of anniversaries of births and deaths of the infallible imams are held besides the anniversary of Asura and the Eid al-Ghadir. Other ceremonies of different occasions are also held in the Husayniyya. These Husayniyyas are often furnished with precious carpets and most of them have a mihrab of prayer. If one of the Shia says that it is permissible to smoke inside a Husayniyya because it is not a mosque, we say that this is a confession that smoking is not permissible in mosques first, and secondly, every place in which prayer is offered is called "a mosque". When we attend on any occasion in a Husayniyya, we shall find the meeting full of remembrance of Allah and praying Him to send blessings on the Prophet Muhammad and

his progeny (peace be on them all), surrounded by the angels who pray Allah to forgive the believers. So, is it nice to pollute such meetings with bad smells that harm people besides the angels?

I myself find it odd from the Religious Authorities of the Shia who prohibit the playing with chess, but do not prohibit smoking, though there is a great difference between the harms of each of them. And I find odd too that one of the grand authorities prohibits his followers, by ijtiḥad, from smoking tobacco as a way of resisting the British companies that promote it, but does not prohibit it again, by ijtiḥad too, to keep his followers safe from the fatal diseases and the squandering that Allah hates too much!! I often criticized this state and discussed these matters with some of ulama, but I did not find any one who had enough courage to prohibit smoking, 1 neither among the Shia nor among the Sunni.

1 From the ulama, who has given a fatwa on prohibiting smoking, is Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadhlullah, relying on this Qur'anic verse that prohibits wine, (They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: in both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men, and their sin is greater than their profit) 2:219. It is understood that everything, whose sin (and harm) is more than its benefit, is impermissible,

Shahid Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr (may Allah have mercy on him) did never smoke at all. When once I asked him about smoking, he said, "I do not smoke and I advise every Muslim not to smoke." However, I did not hear from him the prohibition of smoking openly.

It is said that some ulama have prohibited smoking for the ones, who have never smoked and they want now to smoke, and considered it unapproved for smokers themselves, and that some ulama consider it impermissible, but they do not dare to announce that openly for fear that they may be accused of following analogy.

I want to say that the religious authorities have to give an open, clear opinion about smoking without fearing the blame of any

and according to this rule, smoking is impermissible too. Justifying it in this way, Ayatollah Sayyid Fadhlullah has given a fatwa of "obligatory precaution", because there are many believers and ulama have been addicted to smoking, and it may be difficult for them, or they may face harms if they give up smoking.

As for mosques and those who frequent them, it may be considered by a new Muslim, who has recently embraced Islam, in the west as a kind of binding to his freedom; this is beside the bad treatment that a smoker may face there. Perhaps out of ignorance, a smoker may be invited

negatively not to smoke there. It has been mentioned that once Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn (peace be on them) saw an old man perform the wudu incorrectly. They did not scold him, but kindly said to him, "O old man, would you please watch us both and say which of us performs the wudu correctly?" When they finished their wudu, the old man said, "By Allah, the wudu of both of you is better and more correct than mine." By this way, the old man corrected his wudu. Would that we learn from the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) the morals and etiquette of inviting others to do something!

In a very polite manner, we can invite the youth, who have been attracted by the places of gambling, impermissible amusement, and ill-educating cinemas, and who think that they enjoy their freedoms, to follow the right path. In the same way and through wisdom and goodly exhortation, we can invite our Sunni brothers who wear gold, or who do not care for impurities to correct their behaviors.

blamer. They have to prohibit it, even by their own ijihad, as long as it causes harms to smokers themselves and to others, besides the squandering and wastefulness it has. Have we not agreed from the beginning that when a mujtahid is right in his fatwa, he shall get two rewards, and if he is mistaken, he shall get one reward on condition that there is no religious text from Allah or His messenger on that matter concerned? Let us suppose that there is no clear text on smoking and that it is not included by this saying of Allah, "and do not squander wastefully" ¹ nor the saying of the Prophet (a.s.), "There should be no harm (against oneself) and no harming (against others)", then the way is open before the ulama and religious authorities to follow their ijihad and prohibit smoking because of the harms and fatal diseases it causes. But, when the ulama and religious authorities keep silent just because people accept that, it is really a big problem.

They may fear the reaction of smokers, and so they do not give a fatwa on its being disapproved. Someone of them tried his best to convince me that smoking has many benefits, and this is really a dangerous thing having dangerous effect. It encouraged the Muslim youth, who knew this man, to keep on smoking.

At the same time where we find charitable societies and social organizations in the atheist countries spare no effort against smoking and smokers, and prevent even advertising it, and ask from the factories of cigarettes to write on the packets of cigarettes the word "SUICIDE" to encourage people to keep away from it, we find in the Islamic religious societies wide embarking on it and encouraging others towards it. We even find women there carrying with them packets of cigarettes in the places of worship and religious meetings.

¹ Qur'an. 17:26.

When a child opens his eyes and see his mother and father smoke, he shall imitate them before

he shall imitate the religious authority. When such a child becomes young with the love of smoking and is intoxicated with cigarettes, it shall be very difficult to convince him to give up when he becomes adult, especially when he is used to see his father smoke in the places of worship. If Muslims know how much monies they lose because of smoking and what it has been plotted against them through it, they shall be thunderstruck! For example and in a simple mathematical operation, we can see the danger of the situation. In the world today, there is one milliard Muslims. If we suppose that only one fifth of them smoke, we shall find two hundred millions smokers. And if we suppose that every smoker spends one dollar a day, which is the least price of an ordinary packet of cigarettes-and we do not talk about those who smoke two or three packets a day nor those who spend two or three dollars on their expensive kind of cigarettes-we shall find that two hundred million (200,000,000) dollars are spent by Muslims on smoking every day, and seventy-three milliard (73,000,000,000) dollars every year. Thus, Muslims squander seventy-three milliard dollars on smoking every year to buy with it fatal diseases.

If we add to that the amounts that Muslims spend on the treatment from the diseases caused by smoking itself, like cancer, dyspnoea, infection of lungs, angina pectoris, dental caries, pyorrhea, and others, the amounts shall be unimaginable that mind cannot believe easily. If Muslims spare these amounts of ten years, they shall have a paradise on the earth, and there shall be no any poor among them. They shall not need to beg the atheists, and they shall definitely do away with poverty, diseases, and underdevelopment. They can, by such monies, buy modern technology and develop in all fields.

After this brief discussion, we want to say that Muslims have to prohibit themselves from everything that harm and not benefit them. Even if there is no clear text on that, surely their religion encourages and orders them to keep away from everything harmful and not useful to them. Allah says in the Qur'an: ... and (Allah) makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things. 1 The messenger of Allah (a.s.) forbade his companions from eating garlic on Fridays, lest the people in the mosque would be hurt by its bad smell, though garlic is permissible and it has many medical benefits. Certainly, the smell of garlic cannot be compared to the smoke of cigarettes that spreads everywhere, pollutes the space, and bothers others too much. Nevertheless, the Prophet (a.s.) forbade the eating of garlic on Fridays (for those who would mix with people) according to the rule of "no harming to others". Those, who eat garlic, get advantages from it, but it is hated for them to eat it when they want to mix with others especially in the Friday Prayer, lest others he hurt by its had smell.

Moreover, only the bad smell of garlic may hurt others. It causes neither diseases nor infections, but it is not so for smoking. Nevertheless, the Prophet (a.s.) forbade it. After this, is there any lesson in that for men of understanding?! Mujtahids prohibit the playing with playing cards and chess even if they are used for amusement and not gambling, and they prohibit amusing singing and music and other things that there is no any clear text about neither in the Book of Allah nor in

the Sunna of the Prophet. Could they not prohibit what causes harms and diseases for Muslims?

But, if some Shia insist on permitting smoking and not prohibiting it, then, let them observe the feelings of non-smokers and observe the sanctity of the places of worships, as their Sunni brothers do inside their mosques. Would you try that individually?

1 Qur'an, 7:17.

If you come into a mosque of the Sunni while having a lit cigarette in your hand, you shall be prevented and denied, and may be hurt by some of them. I can swear that Allah and His messenger hate smoking, because reason, sound nature, and logic hate it. This bad habit made many of the Sunni, who visited the countries of the Shia, alienate and go back to their countries, criticizing the Shia, though they did not know about Shiism anything, except those bad habits. Therefore, I always remind of Imam as-Sadiq's saying to his followers: Be propagandists for us by your deeds and not your sayings. Be a cause of praise to us and not a cause of dispraise against us. How many doings that one may see and alienate, and then he becomes displeased, and after that he does not accept any invitation, even if it is true! What is said about some of the Shia in this concern can be said about some of the Sunni.

In the end, I say that reform is necessarily required, and returning to the truth is a virtue. Let one not be deceived by saying: Can what have been corrupted throughout too many centuries be repaired?

Yes, it can be. If there is loyalty, and causes are available, the nation shall be recovered from this chronic disease, even if it takes a long time, by the power of Allah the Almighty.

I Bear Witness That Ali Is The Friend Of Allah 1

There remain some other criticisms that do not deserve defaming and frightening. These things, which are criticized unfairly by the Sunni, are mentioned among the Shia, in the past and present, as

1 The azan in Islam is a means of announcing to people about the time of prayer. It has no certain,

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inviolable text as the texts of the Holy Qur'an, which cannot accept a decrease or increase even for one letter.

As for azan, the books of the Sunni sometimes mention that the azan was not available and that Abdullah ibn Zayd al-Ansari heard it in sleep and told it to the Prophet (a.s.) who acknowledged and confirmed it. Perhaps, this is what made the Caliph Umar, when he was sleeping and the muezzin awaked him saying, "Prayer is better than sleep", approved the statement and ordered to add it to the azan. Bilal al-Habashi, the Prophet's muezzin, pronounced [sh] as [s] and he said "ass~hadu" instead of "ass~hadu". When some Muslims criticized this, the Prophet (a.s.) said, "The [s] of Bilal is [sh] near Allah." Once, when I was in Sham (Syria), I passed by the Umayyad Mosque at the time of the Isha' Prayer and I heard a collective azan recited in tones like oratorios. So, why all these reactions when Ameerul Mo'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib is mentioned?! Let us say it is a good heresy or bad heresy (as the Sunni believe), then what for are all these reactions? However, they (the Sunni) are excessive in this concern. They have fixed "prayer is better than sleep" and considered it a part from the azan, but we (the Shia) do not say it is a part from the azan, but only recommendable.

Azan is a means that announces the prescribed time of prayer. As long as it is within the required limits that have no excessiveness and do not harm Islam and Muslims, there shall be no serious problem.

recommendable and a cause of blessedness, such as the adding of a part to the azan and eqama 1 by saying, "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah". All the Shia have agreed that this part is not a basic part of the azan or the eqama and that it was available in the azan at the time of the Prophet (a.s.). They have agreed that considering it a basic part of the azan or the eqama invalidates both the azan and the eqama. This is the belief of the ulama and religious authorities of the Shia. As long as the truth is our goal, the sayings of Allah and His messenger are our sayings and their contentment is our aim and intention. And as long as we face criticism from some of our (Sunni) brothers, so we have to approve from others what we approve from ourselves, and find ugly from ourselves what we find ugly from others.

We criticized Umar ibn al-Khattab in our previous studies for his adding "prayer is better than sleep" to the azan and omitting "come on to the best of deeds" from it, and said that it was impermissible because it was a heresy that was not available at the time of the Prophet (a.s.). We were not convinced by their saying that "prayer is better than sleep" was mentioned only in the azan of the Fajr (dawn) Prayer and their justifying that in the dawn, man would be in the best moments of his sleep and rest; therefore, "prayer is better than sleep" would be used to encourage him to give up his rest and get ready for prayer. It was nice speech, justifying and defending the matter, but we denied it, because the clear texts would not submit to personal opinions and desires. We said, "Whatever the messenger of Allah (a.s.) did not do is heretical."

1 Eqama is a recommendable (not obligatory) part before the prayer. It has the same wordings of the azan, but with a very little difference. On this basis, we say to the Shia the same speech and argue against them with the same argument. There should be no difference between these and those. Therefore, we confess that "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah" is extra in the azan, because the messenger of Allah (a.s.) did not say or order it, nor did the infallible imams (a.s.) do it. If they really did it, we would find some proofs for it. If they did it, then it would not be permissible for the ulama of the Shia and their religious authorities to consider the azan and eqama as null when this statement is mentioned as an actual part of them (the azan and the eqama) as we have said before.

Fairness and justice require us to say the word of the truth, and not to deny the Sunni for something while we ourselves do the like. Allah says: What! do you enjoin men to be good and neglect your own souls while you read the Book; have you then no sense? 1 Once, one of the Shia said to me, "O my brother, do not mix between "prayer is better than sleep" and "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah"!

I said, "Why? Prayer is really better than sleep, and Ali is really the saint of Allah, but they are parts added later on, and the messenger of Allah (a.s.) did not do that." He said, "But the guardianship of Imam Ali (a.s.) has been revealed in the Qur'an, and you yourself have acknowledged that in your book "Then I was Guided"." I said, "So, the messenger of Allah (a.s.) was to be blamed, for he did not make that in the azan!!! Not everything that has been revealed in the Qur'an is to be added to the azan or eqama, and not my acknowledgment that it has been revealed in the Qur'an makes

1 Qur'an, 2:44.

it necessary to be added to the azan or eqama. Is it right for one to recite, for example, in the azan, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, bear witness that Adam is the choice of Allah, bear witness that Noah is the prophet of Allah, bear witness that Abraham is the friend of Allah, bear witness that Moses is the spoken to by Allah, bear witness that Jesus is the Holy Spirit of Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the beloved one of Allah"? All these facts are true and they have come in the Qur'an.

However, we cannot recite that in the azan, because the messenger of Allah (a.s.) has taught us to recite in the azan only the two witnesses "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah". We must abide by the saying of Allah: ... and

whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back. 1 It is true that some of the Shia ulama do not mention "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah" in the azan or the eqama. I offered the prayer with some of them and did not hear them say that- they might mention that in their hearts and this is something else. However, there are some of the Shia, who suspect the loyalty and faith of whoever does not mention that in the azan or the eqama." My opponent, praise be to Allah, was convinced; though, he said to me that he could not give it up, because his tongue had been used to it since his childhood.

I say this and I am certain that some of the Shia shall not approve it, because man, by his nature, an enemy to what he ignores, and that the satisfaction of all people is an unreachable goal. 2

1 Qur'an, 59:7.

2 Heresy, as we have said before, is a thing, which is not from religion, fixed and added to religion. "Prayer is better than sleep" was added and considered as a part of the very azan, but as for recommendable things mentioned before As I have said before in this book, I do not flatter anyone nor do I seek his satisfaction (with me) whatever high position he has. I only seek the satisfaction of my conscience through the satisfaction of Allah, His messenger, and the infallible imams (a.s.) who are my imams and masters, at the head of whom is Imam Ali (a.s.). In the deep of my soul, I am certain that Imam Ali (a.s.) would be pleased with those, who try to guide people to the right path more than he would be with some of his Shia and lovers, who bear witness in every azan and eqama that he is the saint of Allah, but they do not do anything to guide people towards this guardianship (of Imam Ali) or to prove the truth to them (people). In fact, they may make people alienate, and unknowingly keep them away from getting to the truth.

Would Imam Ali (a.s.) be pleased when we bear witness of his guardianship and sainthood while we stop as a big obstacle before those who search for the truth? Certainly not! I often argued with obstinate people in the best manner, but I found in them a psychological obstacle preventing them from keeping on argument in order to get to the truth. I tried to destroy that obstacle daringly with a certain heart for keeping on researching and getting to the sought goal. Then, I found that the obstinate ones advanced little by little with me and broke the psychological obstacles. In most of times and about eighty percent, they acknowledged the truth and were guided to the guardianship of Ameerul Mo'minin Imam Ali (a.s.) and the guardianship of the infallible imams (a.s.) after him. Once, I was in Poona and Jabalpur in India. 1 met there with a big

or even through the azan, such as "Say: praise be to Allah Who has not taken a wife nor a child" or "blessing and peace be on you O messenger of Allah" besides "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of

Allah, or is the commander of the believers" are mentioned as recommendable according to general evidences that the little speech of ordinary people (neither Allah nor the Prophet) do not annul the azan, on condition that these things are not considered as parts of the azan or the iqama.

group of Sudanese students, and in one evening gathering, I felt in them loyalty and true intention to know the truth. Most of them objected to the beliefs of the Shia concerning the matter of infallibility¹ that they (the Shia) proved for their imams, and they also objected to the witness that "Imam Ali is the saint of Allah" recited in the azan. They said that the Shia were too excessive and extravagant in their love to the imams. I said to them, "O my brothers in Islam, I do not try to impose on you the conception of "infallibility" and do not consider it the goal leading to the truth, though I myself believe in it, but I shall avoid it all to

¹ Why do they (the Sunni) deny the infallibility of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), whereas they themselves believe in the infallibility of all the nation as to the matter of consensus, or the infallibility of all the Prophet's companions, and of the men of authority? Al-Fakhr ar-Razi says in his Tafsir, "...and it has been proved that all those, whom Allah has ordered to obey, must be infallible, and thus. it has been definitely proved that "the men of authority" mentioned in this verse must be infallible. Then we say: that the infallible ones are either all the nation or some of the nation... those infallible ones meant by Allah's saying (men in authority) must be the men in power from the imams (rulers), and this makes it necessary that the consensus of the nation is evidence." The interpretation of the Sura of an-Nisa', verse 59, p. 144 (in ar-Razi's Tafsir). It is not unknown that those men in power were themselves who gave Mo'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan the authority (and considered him a legal wali) and his son Yazid the drunkard and the killer of Imam Husayn son of Imam Ali (a.s.) and (killer of) seventeen men from the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.)...and the results were all Mo'awiya and his son's crimes and vices, the rule of al-Waleed and other criminals from the Umayyad dynasty, and then the allegiance to the Abbasids among whom were Abul Abbas as-Saffah (slaughterer), Abu Ja'far al-Mansur (the tyrant), and others.

As for those in power who were pious, they were either exiled, or forced to be neuter, though keeping silent at that time would be a heavy burden. Then, why do they find it odd and unacceptable the infallibility of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), whereas their infallibility has been confirmed by many Qur'anic verses, Prophetic traditions? On many occasions and situations, the Prophet (a.s.) proved this virtue for them and they were preferred to the whole nation after the Prophet (a.s.).

prove to you that the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna impose on every Muslim to be a Shia following the messenger of Allah and his immaculate progeny (peace be on them). You are not required to prove and believe in this infallibility in order to get to the sought goal, which is the

adherence to the saints of Allah and His messenger and to be free from the enemies of Allah and His messenger. You are, as well, not required to bear witness of Imam Ali's guardianship and sainthood in the azan, and not required to believe in all what the Shia narrate on Ali and his progeny that you consider as excessiveness and extravagancy. Imam Ali (a.s.) is much greater than to prove for him a virtue that is considered as one of miracles and say that Allah the Almighty has returned the sun to him because he missed the Afternoon Prayer, or the earth was shrunk for him to travel from Medina to Mada'in in order to ritually wash Salman al-Farisi (after his death) and come back on the same day, which was a distance of some month's travel at that time.

These narrations concern miracles of the Unknown, and a Muslim is free to or not believe in them, for they shall neither increase nor decrease his faith. However, we are required to believe that Imam Ali (a.s.) was the successor of the Prophet (a.s.) and the best of all people after him and that the Prophet (a.s.) had appointed him as his successor over the nation after his death. We have to prove that Ameerul Mo'minin Ali (a.s.) was the gate of the city of the Prophet's knowledge and there was no one more knowledgeable than him in the nation at all. We have to prove that he was most courageous of all the companions and the most loyal of all of them at wars and difficulties, and that by his sword and courage Islam became strong and firm. We have to prove that he was the first of all to believe in Islam, he was the most loyal in all the battles, and that he sacrificed everything to preserve Islam after the Prophet (a.s.); therefore, following him is obligatory on every Muslim.

We have to prove that he was the only one who spared no effort to enliven the Book of Allah and the Sunna of the Prophet after they were about to be buried. We have to prove that he was the most ascetic to the worldly life among all human beings, and the nearest to Allah in all his behaviors and doings. We have to prove that he was the most just and fair of all people at all, and most pious to Allah, and that he fought the nakithin (breakers of covenant) (in the battle of al-Jamal-the camel), the qasitin (the unjust) (in the battle of Siffin), and the mariqin (renegades) (in the battle of anNahrawan) to preserve Islam and Muslims. We have to prove that Muhammad (a.s.) was the first and Ali (a.s.) was the second, and they were the best of Allah's creation at all. Yes! We have to prove all that from the Qur'an, the true Prophetic Sunna, and the true history, and show clear evidences and convincing arguments that are irrefutable.

But, if we repeat that Allah had created Muhammad and Ali one hundred thousand years before He created Adam, and that all the prophets and messengers prayed Allah the Almighty by the right of Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn, or that it has been written on the leg of the Throne that "Ali is the saint of Allah", it is something else, and it neither benefits nor take us to the sought goal. We cannot convince others with these things, for we do not have any scientific proof on them. If we insist on proving the miracles, the infallibility, or the guardianship of Ali (a.s.), each side will insist on his situation and be fanatic, because the Sunni narrate on Abu Bakr and Umar more than what the Shia narrate on Imam Ali (a.s.) and his progeny. In this case, time shall

be wasted in unfruitful disputes, and the Sunni shall accuse the Shia of being extravagant to their imams, and then the Shia shall accuse the Sunni of being extravagant to the three caliphs especially and to the companions in general, and thus the dispute shall remain unfruitful. O brothers, today, we are required to show clear arguments and scientific proofs. I do not argue with you except by reasonable and traditional proofs that have been proved by history, reality, and what all Muslims, Sunni and Shia, have agreed on. I pray Allah to guide us all to the truth."

After we had spent that night until the dawn in scientific argumentation and logical discussion, most of them turned to the truth and longingly read the hook "Then I was Guided". Two days later, they came to farewell me before my travel while thanking Allah for guiding them to His Right Path, and wishing to know the beliefs of the Twelver Shia and to read their books. One of them became alone with me, and I think he was the emir of the group as they called him, and said after thanking me and offering compliments, "I met with the Shia in Egypt, Sudan, and in India here, but no one of them could convince me like what you did. I said, "The hook Then I was Guided convinced many researchers and this is from the favor of Allah to me, so I often praise and thank Him." He said, "I did not yet read your book, because I am busy with examinations, and I do not read any book except when I am tranquil."

I said, "Then, how were you convinced whereas you did not read the book?" He said, "On that night when you began your talking by putting aside the "infallibility", "Ali is the saint of Allah", and many other concepts that the Shia adopt, I admired your talks, because you talked to people with what they understood. If you kept to those concepts, the argumentation would be unfruitful and that night would be vain. However, you knew the truth and could guide us to it. If you give a lecture in Sudan before the university students, you will make them all turn Shia by this way and method."

I thanked him for his kind feelings and asked him to read the hook (Then I was Guided) and send me his notes on it. We embraced each other, while our hearts were beating with the love and loyalty to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

EPILOGUE TO THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

These were the most important objections and criticisms that the Sunni often raise against the Twelver Shia. They deserve to be studied impartially by every researcher and scholar who seeks the truth in every thing and does not fear, in the way of Allah, the blame of any blamer, and who should say the truth even if against himself and whatever bitter it is. The today learned youth of our Muslim nation no longer believe in superstitions, false fables, and rumors that the media broadcast here and there against the Shia to show them as groups of stiffness and terrorism, or "the mad of Allah" as they call them. I have discussed some mistakes practiced by ordinary Shia; though they (mistakes) are not from the religion or from the necessities that may make

impermissible things permissible. They do not cause but harms and disagreements among Muslims.

I have confirmed in my previous works and studies that I have published among Muslims and through clear evidences, that the Twelver Shia are the most right of all the Muslim sects as to the beliefs and laws of the religion, and that the Shiite sect is the saved one from among all the Muslim sects by the will of Allah. This is for nothing, but because they are truly adherent to the Two Weighty Things (the Book of Allah and the Immaculate Prophet's Progeny).

Nevertheless, this cannot prevent me from criticizing the Shia when I find errors or slips in the conducts of some of them, for I believe that "there is nothing other than the truth, except that it is untruth".

Sometimes, a good doing may turn to be a bad doing if it exceeds the usual. For example, once when I was invited for an Islamic conference in the United States of America, some Muslims there invited me to their houses to be their guest as a kind of honoring and respecting. I accepted their invitations unwillingly. Many others were invited with me on my honor. Foods and refreshments were unimagined, and sometimes they cost thousands of dollars. On the following day, or even the same day, I was invited by others and the same things happened, as if they competed with each other. The same invitees attended with me. I would not be excessive if I say that the kinds of western and eastern foods were more than ten in every meal. Whatever eaters ate, a half of that food would remain to be thrown into the rubbish bin with no doubt. ¹ This habit has become a necessity for them. Whatever is said about

¹ Yes! This has changed to be a habit and tradition. People pride and compete with each other and the victim is the guest who compliments to satisfy the host; otherwise, even the scholar or thinker (guest) who attracts their attentions to the offenses of this habit, may be not invited by them any more. So how about ordinary people?! In this way, hateful classism appears that despises the poor and prevents them from attending such invitations. (The rich are invited and the poor are kept away). Its bad results divide people into different classes.

Such invitations affect the mentality of the guest (when he is a scholar or thinker) that he acknowledges their conducts, or they pervert his thinking of caring for the right affairs of Muslims to their own world and life.

Unfortunately, an example is one of the wealthy people in Iraq who was in a state of recklessness that he did not know how to spend his wealth, which whatever he did to it, it would not run out because of abundance. Saddam exiled him out of Iraq and confiscated all his wealth and properties. In the place of immigration, I heard a wealthy man saying, "I cannot be convinced the

Iraqi people suffer famine, except when they become like Indians who die in the streets and then, the municipality personnel carry their corpses altogether." Surely, a Muslim cannot be a true Muslim except when he follows the true Islam, imitates its high examples, and apply it in the true way. A true Muslim must be a true faithful away from vanities, wastefulness, dissipation, and worldly desires; otherwise, life shall be beastly.

the Arabic generosity and the honoring of guest, and whatever some people argue by means of this verse "Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions? 1 I shall not be satisfied and I will criticize that and try my best to convince people of other than it. Those, who take their evidence from the Qur'an on the permitting of good provisions, forget, or overlook this saying of Allah, "... and eat and drink and be not extravagant," 2 surely He does not love the extravagant," 2 or this saying of the Prophet (a.s.): We are a people who do not eat, except when we feel hungry, and when we eat, we do not become satiate (do not eat much). Where are we from the education of Imam Ali (a.s.) who has accustomed himself to eating dry barley and who sealed his bag lest al-Hasan or al-Husayn (peace be on them) wet his dry piece of bread with oil?

Do Muslims not feel shy today before their Lord that they sleep in silk beds with stomachs full of all kinds of foods, whereas their Iraqi Shia brothers die of hunger in the Saudi camps, not finding the simple means of living? I thank those who invited and honored me, but my duty requires me to remind them of what is better, for reminding benefits the faithful. It is my duty to encourage them to do good for the sake of Allah and in the way of Allah, and not for fame and hypocrisy. Many wealthy Muslims, who live the life of kings, become very stingy when they are asked to help the poor and the needy, whereas they spend on their lusts and desires millions of dollars recklessly. The fact that makes you wonder too much is that most of those wealthy people had escaped with their faith from the oppression of

1 Qur'an, 7:32.

2 Qur'an, 7:31.

unjust rulers and emigrated to the United States of America or England while they had no money in their pockets, and then Allah made them rich and they possessed buildings, shops, and millions of dollars, but then, they behaved like Th'alaba who came to the Prophet (a.s.) complaining of his poverty and asking the Prophet (a.s.) to pray Allah for him to be rich because he wanted to help the poor and the needy. The Prophet (a.s.) prayed Allah for him, and he became too wealthy. When the Prophet (a.s.) asked him to pay the zakat, he refused to pay anything. Then, Allah revealed this verse about him: And there are those of them who made a covenant with Allah: if He gives us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms and we will certainly be of the good. But when He gave them out of His grace, they became niggardly of it and they turned away, averse. 1

Certainly, there are wealthy people who spend their monies charitably in the night and the day, openly and secretly, looking forward to the mercy and contentment of their Lord, but these people are few in comparison to the majority who run after fame and refuse any charitable doing. You may see wealthy Muslims, whom Allah has given too much to be trustees on it and to give from their wealth a share to the beggars and the destitute, perform the major hajj every year and the minor hajj two or three times a year- and I am not excessive if I say that some of them has performed the hajj twenty times and the minor hajj more than forty times- and they show their pride of that openly before people. Such people from among the Shia are too many. They do not know the actual amount of their wealth. They spend their times in the best hotels, eat the most expensive meals, and travel in the first class airplanes. After that, they go to visit the holy shrines of the infallible imams (a.s.). When you see how they eat and what they throw in their rubbish bins, you say with no

1 Qur'an, 9:75-76.

hesitation that they are too far away from the Islamic ethics and human morals. It is true that the hajj is recommendable after performing the first obligatory one, but do these people not understand that Allah, first of all, orders them to help His poor people, the needy, orphans, and the oppressed? Has Allah the Almighty not said to them in His Book: It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and Me prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and Me needy and Me wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives ... ? 1

0 Muslims, righteousness is not to go every year to perform the hajj or to visit the holy shrines of saints ... yes, the hajj is obligatory and recommendable and so is the ziyara, but to be a habit every year while your brothers are dying of hunger is something that does not please Allah at all. 2 Did the messenger of Allah not say:

The nearest of you to Allah is most helpful of you to His people? Did he not say: Who sleeps his night satiate while his neighbor is hungry is out of the covenant of Islam? Did your first Imam, Ali ibn Abi Talib, whom you pride on and

1 Qur'an, 2: 177.

2 The responsibility- of changing the conducts of these people is on the ulama And preachers that they may repent and return to the true path of Islam and the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

imitate, not say: Surely, every led one has a leader (imam) whom he imitates, and from the light of whose knowledge he seeks light. Surely, your imam (Ali) has been satisfied from all his life with his two coarse garments, and from his food with his two loaves...by Allah, I have never hoarded from your world gold, nor have I saved from its booties anything...and if I wanted, I could follow the way to the pure honey, the kernels of this wheat, and the textiles of this silk, but how far for my fancy to overcome me, or my greed to lead me to choose between foods, that there may be in Hijaz or Yamama one, who can not even wish for a loaf of bread, and who has never been satisfied with food, or I sleep my night satiate, while around me there are hungry stomachs and very thirsty livers!

... I was not created to be busy with good foods and pleasures like a tied animal, whose concern is only its fodder, or a released one whose business is seeking in rubbish ...

O worldly life, be away from me! Your halter is on your wither (free to do whatever it likes). I have sneaked away from your claws and escaped from your traps, and avoided going into your slips. Where are the generations, whom you incited with your plays? Where are the nations, whom you fascinated with your adornments? Here they are captives in the graves and hidden in the tombs...Be away from me! By Allah, I do not submit to you so that you degrade me, and do not be mild for you, so that you drive me (as you like) ... Blessed is a soul that offered its obligation for its Lord and was patient with its distresses, gave up in the night its sleeping until slumber overcame it, took the ground as its bed and its hand as a pillow, from among people whose fear of the Hereafter made their eyes sleepless, and whose bodies kept away from their beds, and whose lips always murmured with the remembrance of their Lord, and whose sins were dispelled by their long asking for forgiveness:

... those are Allah's party; surely the party of Allah, are the successful ones 1. 2 This speech is addressed to every Shia who takes Ali (a.s.) as his imam after the Prophet (a.s.).

As we have confirmed in our previous studies that the Shia are the true Muslims who have kept to the Book and the Prophet's progeny after the Prophet (a.s.); therefore, we must obey the commands of the Book and the immaculate progeny (a.s.). They order us to glorify and sanctify the rites of Allah, because it is from true piety. From observing the rites of Allah is the observing of congregational prayers inside and outside the mosques, the trying to keep prayer in the best way, and keep the mosque sanctified, clean, and unpolluted with the smokes of cigarettes. Rather, mosques must be refreshed with good scents and perfumes. Certainly, all these are from the rites of Allah. 3

1 Qur'an, 58:22.

2 From the letter of Imam Ali (a.s.) to his governor on Basra, Uthman ibn Hunayf al-Ansari, when he (Imam Ali) was informed that Uthman was invited to a banquet and he accepted and went to it. Nahjol Balagha, with commentary by Muhammad Abdo, p. 558.

3 It is noted in general that a praying one stands to offer the prayer with the clothes he usually wears, not caring whether they are tidy and clean or not. The important thing is that they must be ritually pure. People think that there is no problem with Allah! But, if one of them wants to meet someone, he puts on the best of his clothes, especially if that someone is an important personality. Thus, the person whom one meets shall be more important than Allah, though one does not perceive or think of this! Let each one of us think of this matter: when one of us is inside his house wearing nightclothes, he does not let others (visitors) see him in that clothes, because this is as a kind of insult to them. Would he offer the prayer with these clothes so easily?

We have to observe before Whom we stand to offer the prayer. We have to put in mind that Allah the Almighty is always with us wherever we are, and behave on this basis. (and He is with you wherever you are), Qur'an, 57:4. We know it is better for us to be ascetic towards many pleasures of this life, not to squander our monies in what does not benefit us, and not to be excessive in food and amusement while our faithful brothers are dying of hunger! How it is better for us to think of serving the servants of Allah and save them from deviation instead of performing the hajj forty times and the minor hajj eighty times! If these monies are spent on publishing and sending books as gifts to the Muslim countries that do not know anything about the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), nor do they hear about the Shia except fabrications, they shall be effective means to make millions of deviated people, who seek the truth, turn to the right path, and the reward of this near Allah shall be greater than the reward of a recommendable hajj that one goes to offer, wishing that Allah may forgive his sins of the last year. The Prophet (a.s.) said:

The ink of scholars is better near Allah than the blood of martyrs. Fear Allah by maintaining kinship, because it is better near Allah than all prayers and fasting. How it is better for us to think of the future of Muslims in the world who face a plot of annihilation in every place on the earth!

stand before Him all the time and especially in the prayer. Therefore, we have to put on the best of our clothes, using perfume, in order to be, apparently, in an acceptable state to Him. After preparing our appearances, we have to purify our inwards to be real travelers toward Allah the Glorified.

It is not bad to pay attention to the recommendable things as to the prayer's clothes and etiquettes especially for women who may put on white clothes and...be in the best shape that makes us actually feel that Allah is with us.

After all this and through my personal experiment of twenty-five years the most of which was arguments and disputes with learned and unlearned Sunni, I knew that overlooking some beliefs that are not from the essence of Islam is the only way to get to the sought goal. How many obstinate opponents, who never preferred anyone at all to Abu Bakr and Umar, began, after turning Shia, wishing that if Imam Ali (a.s.) had fought and relieved Muslims from them. And how many protestant deniers, who denied the concept of "infallibility" and considered it from the excessiveness of the Shia, believed in it, after having turned Shia, more than the Shia themselves did! All that would lead to enmity and grudge if I insisted on the concept of "infallibility" or "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah" in the azan, or "Ali is the best of all human beings and whoever denies that is a disbeliever". I am sure that Muslims shall be near to each other and shall be united if both the Shia and the Sunni try to overlook some of their beliefs that are not from the fundamentals of the religion. If the Sunni give up their belief that all of the Prophet's companions are totally fair, just, and honest, (and certainly this belief has nothing to do with the religion), they would relieve their Shia brothers from their continuous efforts to prove the opposite.

And if the Shia overlook "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah" which was not a part from the azan or the eqama at the time of the messenger of Allah (a.s.), they would relieve their Sunni brothers, who criticize and accuse them of being extravagant and excessive, from toiling for that. Do Muslims, Shia and Sunni, not take a lesson from what the messenger of Allah (a.s.) did on the day of al-Hudaybiyyah Truce when he gave up many things and did not oppose the polytheists in anything? He did so because he knew that resisting them and not giving up some of his conditions would be an obstacle in the way of guidance and the getting to the truth.

They said to him, "We do not acknowledge that you are the messenger of Allah. You are Muhammad son of Ahdullah." He said, "Yes, I am Muhammad son of Ahdullah. O Ali, do not write down 'Muhammad the messenger of Allah'." If one of the Shia says, "How do we give up 'Ali is the saint of Allah' which is right and truth, and the Prophet (a.s.) said, 'whoever keeps silent before the truth is a dumb devil'?", we say that, "As Muhammad son of Abdullah (a.s.) gave up his attribute as the messenger of Allah before the polytheists in order not to cause an obstacle between him and them and to attract them toward guidance, and he was actually the messenger of Allah whether the polytheists accepted or denied that "and Allah is sufficient as a witness" 1 so "Ali is the saint of Allah" is also right and truth, whether people bear witness of that or not. Their witness does not add anything to his value, nor does their denial decrease anything from his virtues." 2

1 Qur'an, 4: 166.

2 We have confirmed before that no one of the Shiite ulama say that "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah" is a basic part of the azan or the eqama, and whoever calls it as a "good heresy" is

totally mistaken. It is but a witness that Imam Ali (a.s.) is the saint of Allah and the commander of the believers, and a witness of the injustice he suffered and the suppression of history against him, though he was the establisher of the cornerstone of Islam after the Prophet (a.s.) with his knowledge and jihad as were the qualities of Taint in the Holy Qur'an when the Israelites asked from their prophet to send for them a king so that they would fight under his leadership. (And their prophet said to them: Surely Allah has raised Taint to be a king over you. They said: How can he hold kingship over us while we have a greater right to kingship than he does, and he has not been granted an abundance of wealth? He said: Surely Allah has chosen him in preference to you, and He has increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique, and Allah grants His kingdom to whom He pleases, and Allah is Ample giving, Knowing), Qur'an, 2:247. This is besides many other instances that this and that has witnessed of (and the virtue is that which opponents witness of). So why do we not actually take a strict situation against heresies like the omitting of "Come on to the best of deeds" from the azan by Umar ibn al-Khattab? It is related to Akrimah that he said, "Once, I said to

ibn Abbas, 'Would you tell me why "come on to the best of deeds" was omitted from the azan?' He said, 'Umar wanted people not to rely on prayer and give up jihad; therefore, he omitted that from the azan.' Refer to Sunan al-Bayhaqi, vol. 1 p. 524-525, as-Seera al-Halabiyyah, vol. 2 p. 105, Sa'd asSa'oud, p. 100, Mizan al-I'tidal by ath-Thahabi, vol. 1 p. 139, Lisan al-Mizan, vol. 1 p. 261, Nayl al-Awtar by ash-Shawkani, vol. 2 p. 32, Kanzol Ummal, printed in the margins of Musnad Ahmed, vol. 3 p. 276, Kanzol Ummal, vol. 4 p. 266, ar-Rawdh an-Nadheer, vol. 2 p. 42.

On the other side, Umar added to the azan of the Fajr (dawn) Prayer "the prayer is better than sleep". This shows that Muslims do not wonder at this omission and the addition, because the Sunni do not believe that the azan and the iqama have been legislated by Allah through His revelation to the Prophet (a.s.), nor that the Prophet (a.s.) has done it like the other rites and rulings that he received from Allah the Almighty!!! They narrate that the azan was a dream which one of the companion saw in his sleep after the Prophet (a.s.) had been confused (as they say) either to call people for the prayer by the bell or by beating two pieces of wood against each other...Refer to Sunan Abu Dawud, vol. 1 p. 335, as-Seera al-Halabiyyah, vol. 2 p. 93, Sahih at-Tirmithi, vol. 1 p. 359, al-Muwatta', vol. 1 and its explanation by az-Zarqani, vol. 1 p. 120-125, Sunan al-Bayhaqi, vol. 1 p. 390, Seera of Ibn Hisham, vol. 2 p. 154, al-Bidaya wcn-Nihaya, vol. 3 p. 232, al-Mawahib al-Laduniyyah, vol. 1 p. 17, Muntakhab Kanzol Ummal, printed in the margins of Musnad Ahmed, vol. 3 p. 273, Tabyeen al-Haqa'iq by az-Zuray'ce, vol. 1 p. 9, ar-Rawdh al-Anaf, vol. 2 p. 285, Hayat as-Sahaba (the lives of the companions), vol. 3 p. 131, Kanzol Ummal, vol. 4 p. 263, Sunan ad-Darqutni, vol. 1 p. 241, and others.

Thus, the azan, for you (the Sunni), has not been legislated by Allah, and you omit from and add to it, and even if you add to the azan of the Noon Prayer the statement of "the prayer is better than

lunch" it shall be given legality by you and you shall approve it as you have approved some things else, whereas you deny those who have consensually agreed that the azan and the iqama in their actual chapters had been revealed to the Prophet (a.s.) by Gabriel (a.s.).

Yes, we all have to deny everything that contradicts the real azan. Once, Muslims heard the muezzin saying in the azan: "They say that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah". They were astonished and they denied that. They went to the imam of the mosque objecting to him. He said to them, "I found no one to announce the azan in the mosque; therefore, I hired a Jewish man to announce it, and he does not believe in the prophethood of Muhammad (a.s.)."

As for the mention of Imam Ali and the Ahlul Bayt (peace be on them all), we The result of Muhammad's concession in the al-Hudaybiyya Truce was so great that no one of the companions had ever imagined. It was the great victory after one year where groups after groups embraced Islam willingly and unwillingly without effort or fighting. If you both (the Sunni and the Shia) take the messenger of Allah (a.s.) as your example and you claim that you do according to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His messenger, then follow his (the Prophet) deeds O you men of understanding! Allah the Almighty says :

If you obey Allah and His Messenger, he will not diminish aught of your deeds; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. 1

do not say that it is a part of the azan, nor do we add it instead of another basic part. We do not omit from or add fixed part to the azan, which was revealed to the Prophet (a.s.) by Gabriel in his sleep. We believe that the revelation to the Prophet (a.s.) in his sleep is like the revelation to him in his wakefulness.

However, they (the Sunni) chanted the azan in tones and recited it in groups like anthems. They omitted and added, since they believe that it (the azan) has not been divinely legislated, but a vision of one of the companions.

The Shia unanimously say that the azan was a revelation from Allah, and therefore, they believe that any omission or addition to it is not permissible; otherwise, it is considered a man's legislation against Allah's legislation, and this is impermissible among the Shia. The case is not like "I bear witness that Ali is the saint of Allah", because this is mentioned as generally recommendable and to show our adherence to the saint of Allah.

1 Qur'an, 49:14.

The Shia and The Sunni Refute The Wahabis

As for the criticism, revilement, exaggeration, and the accusation of unbelief that the Wahabis raise against the Shia because of their taking the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny (the infallible imams) (a.s.) as means between them and Allah, and their visiting the shrines of these imams and considering them as a cause of blessedness, it (the accusation...) is something new that neither the Shia nor the Sunni knew before. Muslims, since the time of the Prophet (a.s.) until now, kept and are keeping on that (visiting and seeking blessedness) and celebrating it in all the lands of Muslims. No one denied that, except the Wahabis who came with their new doctrine in the fourteenth century of hijra. It was very naturally for the Wahabis to contradict all Muslims in order to appear as renewers and as people of monotheism on the one hand, and on the other hand, to justify the aversion and objection of Muslims to their heresies. 1

1 The tombs of the imams and saints are still visited in all the lands of Muslims. In fact, new tombs were found during excavations that made even secular and atheist governments to keep them safe with no damage. An example is what happened to the regime in Iraq, when the government with its different machinery and equipment failed to remove those tombs after the happening of many charismata that forced the government to give up the project or change its place. The same thing took place in Lebanon and other places in the Muslim countries in the world. In fact, when people see the charismata, they ascribe the tomb to a prophet, a saint, or a descendant of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), until a group of scientists come and prove who the person in the tomb is.

We did never hear in any place that people worship the tombs. They honor. Indeed, Muslims have not ever been tried as they have been tried by the Wahabis in this century. 1 It is so because of the following reasons: First, their mission is false, but they have dressed it in the garment of the truth. They prohibit the beseeching of Allah by the means of the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny, and punish for it claiming that it is a kind of polytheism where Allah says: Call not upon any one with Allah. 2

those who have been buried in those tombs, because they are our examples and means to Allah, and honoring them is from the rites of Allah. 1 Wahabism is ascribed to Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab...ibn Wahab at Tamimi. He was born in 1111 and died in 1207 AH. At his early life, he studied at the hands of many ulama of Mecca and Medina who were expert in deviation and misleading. His father often dispraised and warned people against him, and so did his brother Sulayman ibn Abdul Wahab, who denied him and wrote a book on refuting him.

He was fond of reading about the false claimants of prophethood like Musaylama the Liar, Sajah, al-Aswad al-Ansi, Tulayha al-Asadi, and others ...! Refer to "The Emirs of the Inviolable Country" by Sheikh Ahmad ibn Zayni Dahlan, and "Kashful Irtyab fee Ittiba' Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab" by Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin al-Aamili.

Thus, he grew up deviant, doubtful, and spiteful. He was just like Kemal Ataturk and many rulers of the Muslim countries who claim their being Muslims, whereas they are directed by Freemasonry and nursed by the world intelligence agencies. Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab was fed by the British agent in Iraq Mr. Hanfer, as mentioned in his autobiography. He prepared and assisted him to achieve his ambition in prevailing over Hijaz. He and his likes are worse than their ancestors such as the Kharijites were. Because the Kharijites rose out of ambiguity, but these people are mercenaries working for the welfare of the enemies of Islam. It is natural that his misleading mission did not incite except the ignorant nomads, as it was with Musaylama the Liar and his group opposite to the true mission of the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny and followers. Therefore, his mission of deviance did not spread through conviction, but by treason, deceit, invasion, oppression, suspicious treaties, and breaking of covenants in order to get to his satanic desires.

2 Qur'an, 72:18.

And this is like the mission of the Kharijites who accused Imam Ali (a.s.) of unbelief and said to him, "The judgment is not yours, Ali, but to Allah." He said : It is a word of truth by which the untruth is sought. It means that the saying of the Kharijites "the judgment is but to Allah" was a word of truth, but the Kharijites intended falsehood by which when they said, "the judgment is not yours, O Mi." It is certain that the judgment is to Allah alone and not to any human being, but Allah the Almighty made His judgment appear at the hand of His messenger who did not speak out of desire, and then at the hands of the Prophet's successors whom the Prophet (a.s.) defined and appointed to judge among people with the truth that he had legislated to them.

Surely, the legislative authority is Allah's only and not to anyone else, and the executive authority is to people alternating one another. This is something very natural that all reasonable people understand. Then, how was it unknown by the Prophet's companions to say, "The judgment is not yours, O Ali"?

Imam Ali (a.s.) reveals to us that they knew the truth, but they wanted the untruth by raising this doubt. Allah the Almighty says in His Book :

If you judge, judge between them with equity. 1 Surely, Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice ... 2 Surely, We have revealed the Book to you with the truth that you may judge between people by means of

that which Allah has taught you ... 3

1 Qur'an, 5:42.

2 Qur'an, 4:58.

3 Qur'an, 4:105.

0 Dawud! Surely, We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice. 1 And that you should judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires. 2 But no! by your Lord! they do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any straitness in their hearts as to what you have decided and they submit with entire submission. 3 Surely We revealed the Torah in which was guidance and light; with it the prophets ... judged. 4

After this and through these Qur'anic verses, it becomes clear to us that the mission of the Kharijites was of truth, but they did not want by it except untruth and to raise sedition among naive people, who did not know the actual objective of the Sharia. The same can be said about the mission of the Wahabis. It is a mission of truth, but they do not want by it except untruth by which they deceive simple people, who do not know the actual objectives of the Sharia. They claim that they alone are the true monotheists and the others are polytheists because they call upon human beings with Allah.

It is true when they say, "Allah has said : The mosques are Allah's; therefore, call not upon any one with Allah. 5 Say: I only call upon my Lord, and I do not associate any one with Him. 6

1 Qur'an, 38:26.

2 Qur'an, 5:49.

3 Qur'an, 4:65.

4 Qur'an, 5:44.

5 Qur'an, 72:18.

6 Qur'an, 72: 20.

But they intend the untruth when they prohibit the supplicating of Allah by the means of the Prophet and his immaculate progeny (peace be on them) and deceive people, claiming that this is a kind of polytheism. It is clear that there is a difference between those, who believe that there are partners to Allah who benefit and harm, where they make for every thing a god; the god of goodness, the god of evil, the god of peace, the god of war, the god of love...etc., and those who believe that Allah is One and only with no partner, and that no one can repel His decree, and that He has given them the right to call upon Him by the means of His prophets and saints. This is the

difference between the two beliefs; polytheism and the supplicating by means, and this is the similarity between the Kharijites and the Wahabis; the Kharijites said, "There is no judgment but Allah's" and the Wahabis said, "There is no supplication except by the means of Allah." The Kharijites said, "The judgment is not yours, O Ali", and the Wahabis said, "The means is not yours, O Muhammad!"

In the two savings there is untruth covered by the dress of truth. As the judgment is to Allah alone, but He has legislated it for His people to judge among themselves with truth and justice, the means, as well, is to Allah, but He has determined it for His people to take His prophets and saints as a means to Him. This is clear in the Islamic religion and all the previous religions too, since all the divine religions are from one source: The religion near Allah is Islam. 1

1 The origin of the suspicion of the Wahabis in their judgment that all Muslims are polytheists and that their bloods and properties are to be violated, as they actually did in Mecca, Medina, Iraq, and other places of the Muslim lands, is because they (Wahabis) claim that those Muslims worship graves when honoring, kissing, and circumambulating them, besides building domes and minarets on them and some things like that! In fact, there are many Prophetic traditions narrated by the Shia and the

Sunni about seeking the intercession of the Prophet (a.s.) and other than the Prophet (a.s.) in this worldly life, and for worldly or afterlife needs. Abdullah Ibn Abbas narrated that the Prophet (a.s.) said, "No man dies and forty men, who do not associate with Allah anything, carry out his funerals, except that Allah accepts their intercession for him." Refer to Sahih Muslim, Part of Intercession. Savvid Muhsin al-Amin (may Allah have mercy on him) comments (mockingly) on this tradition, saying, "The forty men must be from the nomads of Najd (Wahabis) so that their intercession would be accepted!" (Najd now is Saudi Arabia). In Sahih Muslim, it has been mentioned from Aa'isha that the Prophet (a.s.) said, "No one dies and a group of people, who reach one hundred, offer the prayer (of the dead) on him and who all intercede for him, except that Allah accepts their intercession for him."

According to the thought of the Wahabis, this must be a kind of polytheism, because, as they claim, it contradicts this saving of Allah, (So invoke not any one along with Allah). We seek the protection of Allah from this great lubrication against His Holy Prophet (a.s.)!

There are many Prophetic traditions about intercession, and ulama say that there is no difference between a dead and alive person. As-Samhudi ash-Shafi'iy, the alien of Medina, says in his book al-Wafa bi-Akhbar al-Mustafa, vol. 2 p. 419, quoting al-Hakim that Umar ibn al-Khattab narrated

that the Prophet (a.s.) said, "When Adam committed the sin, he said, 'O my Lord, I ask You by the right of Muhammad that You but forgive me.' Allah said, 'O Adam, how do you know Muhammad while I have not created him yet?' Adam said, 'O my Lord, when You created me and inspired in me from Your Spirit, I raised my head and saw on the posts of the Throne written 'there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah...' Allah the Almighty said, 'O Adam, you are right. Surely, he is the most beloved of all creation to Me. Since you asked Me by his right, I forgive you. Were it not for Muhammad, I would not create you.'" He mentioned that this tradition was mentioned by at-Tabarani, and by al-Bayhaqi through true chain of narrators in his book Dala'il an-Nubuwwah. In other traditions, it is mentioned that Adam and Noah supplicated Allah by the means of the Five of the Aha (Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn, peace be on them all).

About this matter, Imam Malik asked al-Mansur, "Why do you turn away from him (the Prophet) while he is your means and the means of your father Adam to Allah the Almighty?"

As-Samiri al-Hanbali, al-Kirmani al-Hanafi, and the Shafiite ulama believe All the Qur'anic verses that the Wahabis rely on in concluding their proofs have no any sense of prohibiting the supplication of Allah by the means of His loyal, righteous people. In fact, all these verses have been revealed to refute the polytheists, from men and the jinn, who fabricated lies against Allah and worshipped many gods, thinking that those would bring them closer to Allah. The saying of the Wahabis is not applied to the Nation of Muhammad (a.s.) that is called "the nation of monotheism" and "the nation of faith", for this nation is free from polytheism. All Muslims recite, day and night, the sum of monotheism and faith : Say: He is Allah, the One. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor was He begotten. And none is like Him. The Prophet (a.s.) referred to this fact by saying:

I, by Allah, do not fear for you that you become polytheists after me, but I fear for you that you may compete with each other for worldly pleasures. 1

This is an irrefutable evidence that the Muslim nation is free from polytheism, and it is a clear evidence that the nation would compete for the worldly pleasures and authority. The nation would apostatize and judge with other than that which had been revealed, and that would lead to oppression, lack of faith, and atheism, but would not lead to polytheism at all.

Allah the Almighty has fixed this fact in His Book when saying in the Sura of al-Ma'idah :

in the supplication by the means of the Prophet (a.s.) and believe in his intercession after his death. Imam ash-Shafi'iy supplicated Allah by the means of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) after their death. He supplicated Allah by the means of Imam Abu Haneefa , and he approved the supplication of

the people of Morocco by the means of Imam Malik after his death. Ahmed ibn Hanbal supplicated Allah by the means of ash-Shafi'iy, and so on. These are the ulama and jurisprudents of Islam, then, who are the rude nomads?!

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 7 p. 207.

Whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers. ...and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unjust. ... and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the transgressors. 1 This is actually what happened in the Muslim nation after the death of the Prophet (a.s.) until today, that they inserted in the Sharia what was not from it; many positive rulings out of personal opinionation were added, and thus they changed the rules of Allah. However, Allah does not say that they are polytheists, but He says that they are unbelievers, unjust, and transgressors.

All of us know well that the presidents and kings of the Arab and Muslim countries may rule with what is unlike the Book of Allah, nevertheless, we do not call them polytheists, because they believe in Allah alone with no partner to Him and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger. In fact, we do not consider even the Jews and the Christians, who believe in the Torah and the Gospel, as polytheists when they believe in the oneness of Allah and do not ascribe to Him a child.

Allah the Almighty says : How do they make you a judge and they have the Torah wherein is Allah's judgment? Yet they turn back after that, and these are not the believers), 2 and (And the followers of the Gospel should have judged by what Allah revealed in it; and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the transgressors. 3 Thus, the matter has become clear with no need of more details.

1 Qur'an, 5:44, 45, 47.

2 Qur'an, 5:43.

3 Qur'an, 5:47.

Second, the Wahabis have occupied the most sacred places for all Muslims of all colors, races, and countries. The Holy Mecca has the Inviolable House of Allah to which Muslims from everywhere come to perform one of the pillars of Islam (the hajj) every year, and they are very eager and full of incomparable longing to circumambulate the Kaaba, to stop at the Inviolable Mish'ar, 1 run between the Safa and the Marwa, and stop at Arafat. All these places live inside the conscience of every Muslim who wishes to visit them even one time throughout his life... and Medina where there is the Holy Mosque of the Prophet (a.s.) and his holy tomb inside it, beside the other monuments that all Muslims sanctify; the mihrab of the Prophet (a.s.), his minbar, the pure yard (rawdha), the tombs of Abu Bakr and Umar, the Baqee' Graveyard that includes the tombs of the

Prophet's companions and wives, the holy tombs of the Ahlul Bait (a.s.), and the worth visiting places that are highly regarded by Muslims, like Uhud Mountain, the Martyrs Graveyard, the Two Qiblas Mosque, and Qabaa' Mosque.

The Wahabis traded on these rituals to the top, materially and morally, and propagated their new doctrine with all means through gifting or terrorizing, especially during the season of the hajj where millions of Muslims gather together. They hold conferences and meetings, and their agents spare no effort in propagating Wahabism by direct contacting with different sects, groups, and individuals. Add to that all kinds of the media, which are very effective on the hajjis who give up argumentation and disputation during the rituals of the hajj and retire to worship Allah alone.

Third, the vast wealth coming from petroleum, the mines of gold, and the continuous economic activities refreshed by the masses of pilgrims during the seasons of the hajj, the minor hajj, and the rest of the year, have helped Wahabism to spread everywhere in the world. The Wahabis spend great monies on the imams of

1 A place where one of the rituals of the hajj is performed

mosques, who are incited by monies, in all places in the world. They have built in every Arab and Muslim capital a mosque or several mosques working day and night to spread this new doctrine. They have established schools, colleges, and universities graduating missionaries to propagate Wahabism throughout the world, sparing no effort in turning people to this new creed. They have established many presses and foundations of publication and distribution and financed more than one hundred daily, weekly, and monthly magazines and newspapers. They spend millions of dollars on mercenary writers to write for them what they like in assisting their beliefs and considering the others as unbelievers. They publish millions of copies of the Holy Qur'an and some books that assist their creed and distribute them freely as gifts everywhere. After the Gulf War and because people hated them, they began distributing milk and dates among the visitors in Ramadan, and then gifting them in the airport with big bottles of Zamzam water written on them "a gift from the servant of Haramayn-two sanctums", whereas before, they prevented pilgrims from taking Zamzam water with them into airplanes.

Fourth, the international relations the Wahabis have through their firm relation with the United States of America which has direct and indirect influence on the Arab and Muslim countries, and in fact on all the world after the decline of the Soviet Union.

It is known to everyone that the welfare of the United States of America is assured and guarded in the east and the Gulf States by the Wahabis, especially after the fall of the Shah and the coming of the Islamic Republic in Iran that threatened to attack all the American benefits in the region. It is

known too to everyone of understanding that the Wahabis are the right eye of the United State of America, as Israel is its left eye, but it (the United States) takes from the Wahabis everything and gives to Israel everything.

It takes from the Wahabis, because it spends great efforts in defending them and guarding their Royal throne (of the Saudi family) and has made its Intelligence Agency ready to reserve the Wahabi regime and do away with all its opponents. It gives to Israel to assure the votes that are controlled by the Jewish Lobby inside the United States and Europe. This is another subject that requires an individual book, but what concerns us in this study is that the Wahabis, and through their relation with the United States of America, have become feared in the Arab and Muslim countries and all the world. As mosques are closed after the prayers in some Arab and Muslim countries for fear that some groups may use them as centers to propagate their beliefs and thoughts, we find that the mosques of the Wahabis are open all the time for their propagandists to give whatever they like of lectures for spreading their thoughts.

Wahabism has acquired this legality because of the great gifts, helps, and loans given to those countries. Therefore, those poor countries submit to the conditions of the Wahabis in permitting them to spread their creed, and preventing the books and magazines that reveal their plots.

This has happened even in France, the strong modern country that claims it defends freedoms, human rights, and freedom of speech. It is France itself that defended Salman Rushdi and adopted his book, but at the same time, it prevented the book "the History-of Aal Sa'ud" which reveals the reality of Wahabism. The French government collected the copies of this book from libraries, because the Saudi Kingdom saved France from the economic collapse in 1984. Then, Saudi Arabia gave to France seven hundred million dollars, and it was said much more than that. After that, hundreds of mosques were built in Paris only, propagating Wahabism there, whereas the Ahlul Bayt Center (a Shiite foundation) was closed by the pretense that it adopted excessiveness and terrorism. The French police began pursuing everyone following the line of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), while Wahabism and its followers flourished there.

Add to that the league of the Islamic world that has been established by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It includes the Arab and Muslim presidents and kings who have been under the Saudi influence. This is just a little thing, but what is plotted behind the scenes is known by Allah alone. Therefore, I often say that Muslims have never seen a calamity worse than Wahabism.

Kharijites' Doubt In The Past and Wahabi'In The Presents are The Same

The Kharijites, in the past, rose the doubt of "the judgment is Allah's alone" and the Wahabis, in the present, rose the doubt of "servitude is to Allah alone". There is no place for criticizing their mere calls when there is no context. But if the mission is coupled with a political doubt or a certain benefit in contradicting the beliefs of others, then it is a false mission dressed in the garment of truth. As for the mission of the Kharijites, it was buried on the first day, because Imam Ali (a.s.) disclosed it and revealed its false reality when he said, "It is a word of truth by which untruth is intended." Rather, Imam Ali (a.s.) fought the Kharijites with no leniency according to the will of his brother and cousin the messenger of Allah (a.s.), and he did away with them and with their mission forever.

As for Wahabism, it became strong and widespread by the assistance of the British firstly, and the support of the United State of America and the West secondly. This was for a certain purpose that analyzers and learned people of the Muslim nation know well. The United States of America especially and the West in general fight Islam and consider it the only danger that threatens their beliefs and welfares. 1

1 They call Islam as "the great danger coming from the east". Since the time of colonialism until now, the plundering of Muslim countries is continuous by England, France, Italy, the United States of America, and others... After that, came out new serpents calling themselves with new names; mandate,

We saw how they allied with each other in fighting the Islamie Republic in Iran and tried, and are still trying, to do away with it as possible as they can and with all means. Some of their presidents announced openly that they supplied their agent Saddam with all fatal weapons and all experiences to do away with the Islamie Republic, but when they failed, and the Iraqi opposition became strong inside and outside Iraq, they feared that the experiment of Imam Khomeini might be repeated in Iraq, where the Shia are more than two thirds, and feared that the revolution in Iraq might unite with the revolution of Iran. Then, they played their filthy trick by occupying Kuwait and making the war not against Saddam, as they claimed, but against the Iraqi people, where the Shia are more than seventy percent of population. And this is actually what happened; Kuwait was rebuilt better than before and the Regime of Saddam became stronger than before, but the oppressed Iraqi people, who were terribly destroyed, began selling their furniture and clothes to get a bite of bread.

By that, the Wahabis obtained victory over all the Shia in the world. In fact, the plot was to degrade the Shia and drive them to the camps in Saudi Arabia to meet there all kinds of insults, torture, and killing.

defending, or guardianship. All that was not enough and it appeared that it was the stage of incubation. After that, came the international organizations to assure the welfares of the great countries:

1. League of Nations, established in 1919 after the First World War
2. The United Nations, established in 1945 after the Second World War
3. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), established in 1949...and many others...even the Treaty of Baghdad...and finally the time is for the American policy to be defined after it showed you the Statue of Liberty, but the liberty that must be in compliance with the American style that has become a play in the hands of the international Zionism!

We see today the competition between many Arab governments to win the Israelite contentment, as if they have mistakenly interpreted this verse (...and for that let the aspirers aspire). Qur'an, 83:26.

Allah says:

The Jews will not be pleased with you, nor the Christians until you follow their religion. 1 Today, we see the Jews and the Christians (the United States of America and western countries) show cordiality to the Wahabis, or they are pleased with them, because they themselves flatter and show them cordiality. At the same time, they are full of grudge against the Shia in Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran, and even in France. They use all kinds of the Media to defame and accuse the Shia of terrorism, fanaticism, and puritanism. 2 The media, financed by the Wahabis, was successful in dividing the Shia, making some of them disagree with others, doubting their beliefs, and concentrating on some negative practices that some of ignorant Shia follow in Ashura. They openly criticized the great religious a

uthorities, suspected their justice and honesty, and accused them of leaving the wealth of Muslims to their children to spend it recklessly. The media was successful in buying the consciences of some prominent Shia personalities to raise the banner of deviation and misleading. In fact, there was no time dangerous to the Shia more than this time is. The true Shia must think of the affairs deeply, because they are threatened by many enemies. Anyhow, their patience and faith bring good news of optimism. Allah the Almighty says : Obey Allah and His Messenger and do not quarrel for then you will be weak in hearts and your power will depart, and

1 Qur'an, 2:120.

2 Of course, they do not mean by puritanism the keeping to the fundamentals of religion, for this

is a virtue, but they mean by it the middle ages of oppression and darkness, which means underdevelopment, ignorance, and opinionation.

be patient; surely Allah is with the patient. 1

As we have said that the doubt of the Kharijites was based on the saying that "the judgment is Allah's alone", the doubt of the Wahabis was based on the saying that "servitude is to Allah alone". Despite that the two sayings are alike, the saying of the Wahabis is more effective than the saying of the Kharijites who focused on the rule (judgment). Before Imam Ali (a.s.), the rule was assumed by Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman who all ruled as they liked and gave judgments that contradicted the clear texts of the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet (a.s.), but no one objected to them. At least, history did not mention to us any objection that is worth mentioning.

People were used to the rules of the caliphs and they accepted them as continuity to the rules of Allah, misinterpreting the actual rulings as they liked. Therefore, this saying (of the Kharijites) did not find any influence in the selves of the majority of Muslims who adopted the doctrine of the Saqifah which showed that people were free to choose their ruler and they did not believe in the choice of Allah. They relied on the Qur'anic verses that confirmed the doctrine of the Saqifa and which were called "the verses of consultation" besides this verse : "O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you," 2 in deriving their evidences that the obedience to the ruler, who is a human being, was obligatory. The prophetic traditions that they relied on in concluding that the obedience to the ruler was obligatory were too many as well.

Therefore, the doctrine of the Kharijites was sentenced to death by the majority of Muslims even if Imam Ali (a.s.) did not refute, because it was strange to them and to the concept of the rule to them, and thus it would not receive any acceptance especially

1 Qur'an, 8:46.

2 Qur'an, 4:59.

from those who were greed to the rule and authority from the Umayyads and the Abbasids, and how many they were! But as for the doubt of the Wahabis, it depends on the saying that "servitude is to Allah only", and surely there is no Muslim who does not believe in the obligation of this fact, where Muslims always recite this verse :

They were not enjoined anything except that they should serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience, upright, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and that is the right religion. 1 The Wahabis made use of the behaviors of some ignorant Muslims in the ages of declination where

there were many juggleries and jugglers and quacks, who were fed by colonialists. The Wahabis took such kind of people as a clear argument to accuse Muslims of disbelief and polytheism, and then to permit the killing of them in bloody wars and continual assaults against peaceful places which they overcame by force and oppression.

If we ponder on their argument they rely on, which is this saying of Allah, "And that the mosques are Allah's, therefore call not upon any one with Allah," 2 we shall find that it is like the saying of the Kharijites that "rulership (judgment) is Allah's alone" where Allah says :

There is none to be a guardian for them besides Him, and He does not make any one His associate in His Judgment. 3 Despite that the verse shows that Allah does not participate anyone in His judgment, the many other verses give the right of judgment to man. We have mentioned some of them and said that there was no contradiction or difference between them, but the meaning is that the legislative judgment is to Allah alone and

1 Qur'an, 98:5.

2 Qur'an, 72:18.

3 Qur'an, 18:26.

no any one else, even if this one is a prophet or messenger. Allah has declared this in His saying : If he had fabricated against Us some of the sayings, We would certainly have seized him by the right hand. Then We would certainly have cut off his aorta. And not one of you could have withheld Us from him. 1 As for the executive judgment, Allah has made it for His prophets, messengers, the caliphs from His saints, and the imams whom He chooses. By this interpretation, the meanings of the verses become right. It is the same about the verse that prohibits man from calling upon anyone with Allah, because there are many other verses giving man the right to supplicate Allah by means of His prophets, messengers, and saints. There is no contradiction between the verses; the first verse talks about deity and servitude, and that deity is Allah's alone, and the other verses declare that Allah has given the right of intercession and being a means to His prophets and saints.

To explain this matter, which is ambiguous to the Wahabis and to some Muslims who have been influenced by the Wahabis, it is useful to mention a debate between one of the Wahabi ulama and me. Because of its uses, I shall mention it as it was. In the year 1983, I was preparing a thesis on the rights of woman in Islam. During my reading in some magazines, I was surprised by the fact that the Muslim woman in Comoros is the custodian of man. She builds and furnished her house, and then, when getting married, she brings her husband to her own house, and if she divorces him, she drives him out of her house. She works in the market, and the role of her husband is fishing in the sea, working in the field, and fetching goods to her in the market. She herself sells

and buys. Thus, women in Comoros are custodians of men. How wonderful it is!

1 Qur'an, 69:44-47.

I traveled to there in a difficult journey and I knew that France had given independence to three of the islands of the country and kept one until now. Comoros, as a new country, has joined the League of Arab States, which offered their helps. From among those helps, educational delegations from Tunisia and other countries were sent to Comoros to teach the Arabic language to the students of religious studies, most of whom were Arab from Yemeni origins called Hadharimah (related to Hadhramaut). From among them, there were sayyids from the pure progeny of the Prophet (a.s.) who spoke Arabic besides French and the local language.

In the airport, I met with one of the Tunisian teachers whom I knew twenty years ago in a meeting of the youth. He recognized me and I recognized him. He invited me to his house where his wife and children had traveled to Tunisia and he was alone at home. I accepted his invitation and remained with him in his house.

During my residence there, I became acquainted with the mufti of the Republic and the judge of judges. I talked with them on many subjects. They trusted in and loved me when they knew that I was from the followers of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). They complained to me about the bad treatment and despise they faced from the Wahabi ulama who began coming successively in great numbers with monies and books. They were successful in attracting many youths to their line through money, because those youths were living under poverty level. After that, those youths began blaming and disrespecting their fathers whom they highly regarded and kissed their hands and heads and stood up for when they passed, before that. They had inherited these morals generation by generation. The Prophet (a.s.) said:

He is not from us (not a Muslim) who is not kind to our little children, does not regard our old people, and does not observe the right of our scholars.

He 1 said to me, "However, when the Wahabi ulama, the ulama of evil, came to us, their intention was not but to do away with these good morals and habits that we have been brought up on. A man from us, even though he is married and has some children, kisses the head and hands of his father and seeks his satisfaction and supplication for him. But now, our children resist, criticize, and accuse us of polytheism, claiming that kissing of hands and the bowing before someone is as prostration for other than Allah and it is mere polytheism. There is a gap and hatred between fathers and children since the first day when these persons have come to our country. There is no power save in Allah!" One day, the mufti of the Republic invited me to accompany him to inaugurate a new mosque built in Moroni Island. I went with him in addition to the Judge of

Judges whose name was Abdul Qadir al-Gilani. When we arrived in the mosque, which was full of guests and ordinary people, the mufti introduced me to the attendants and asked me to make a speech on that occasion. I responded and thanked him for that honoring.

I made a speech, in which I emphasized on the love to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and their great position to Allah and to the messenger of Allah, who had ordered Muslims to love and observed them, and declared that loving them would be from faith and hating them would be from hypocrisy. I talked in details about their virtues and the great favors they offered to Islam and Muslims. In the end of my speech, I talked about their vast knowledge and sciences that filled the world and benefited the Muslim scholars everywhere in the earth and I said that if the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) were not available, people would not know the features of their religion. The mufti asked one of the ulama there and made him stand beside me to translate what I said. After the end of my speech, people came kissing and greeting me and praying Allah to have mercy on my parents.

1 The author means either the mufti or the judge.

The scene made angry one of the Wahabi ulama, whom I recognized by his long beard and Saudi uniform. He came, shook hands with me, and said, "Fear Allah O Sheikh! All of us love the Ahlul Bayt, but you were too excessive in loving and honoring them."

I said, "I pray Allah to make me die on that."

He said, "You are my guest inshallah." I said evadingly, "I am guest of the Mufti of the Republic." He said, "Tomorrow then!"

I said, "Tomorrow, I am guest of the Tunisian teachers." He said, "All of them are my friends, and we shall meet there."

ARGUMENT WITH ONE OF THE WAHABI ULAMA

My friend, the Tunisian teacher, told me that his Saudi friend would come the next day to argue with me in scientific argumentation, and he told me that he had invited a group of teachers to participate in the argumentation so that the all might make use of it. He told me that he had served lunch for the invitees. He said to me, "Today is the weekend holiday and we have enough time. How much we are eager to such meetings! We want you to be victorious; so do not disappoint us, because this Saudi man often talks and talks alone without giving us a chance to talk." At the appointed time, the teachers came and with them was the Wahabi scholar. We were nine; seven invitees, the host, and me. After the meal, we began our argument whose subject was "Tawassul (the supplicating of Allah by means of a prophet or a saint) and the intercession

between a servant and his God"

I said that I believed in tawassul to Allah by means of His prophets, messengers, and righteous saints. I said that man's supplication might be repelled because of his many sins and business with the pleasures of this life, and then he might seek the intercession of the beloveds and saints of Allah. The Wahabi scholar said, "This is polytheism and Allah does not forgive the association of anyone to him."

I said, "What is your evidence that this is a kind of polytheism?"

He said, "Allah says, 'And that the mosques are Allah's, therefore call not upon any one with Allah.'¹ This is a clear verse that prohibits the supplication to anyone other than Allah. Whoever calls upon other than Allah makes a partner to Him that benefits and harms, whereas the benefiting and harming one is Allah alone." One of the attendants approved his speech and wanted to support him, but the host stopped him, saying, "Take it easy! I have invited you not for disputing and competition, but I have invited you to listen to these two scholars. As for this Tunisian man, I have known him since long ago, but I was surprised when I recently discovered that he is a Shia, following the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), and this is our Saudi friend that all of you know and know his beliefs. We have just to listen to them both and see their arguments and evidences, until they finish their argumentation. After that, it is our time to participate in the discussion, and every one can give his opinion if he wants."

We thanked him for his kindness and polite way, and we kept on our argumentation. I said, "I agree with you that Allah the Almighty is alone the Benefactor, the Harming, and no one of Muslims disagrees with you on this, but our disagreement is on tawassul. The one, who supplicate Allah by means of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) for example, knows well that Muhammad (a.s.) neither benefits nor harms, but his (Muhammad) supplication is accepted and responded to by Allah. If Muhammad (a.s.) asks Allah, saying, "O my Lord, have mercy on this servant, forgive that servant, or enrich this one", surely Allah will respond to him. The true Prophetic traditions in this concern are too many. For example, one day, one of the companions, who was blind, came to the Prophet (a.s.) and asked him to pray Allah for him to restore his sight. The Prophet (a.s.) ordered him to perform wudu and offer

¹ Qur'an, 72:18.

a two-rak'a prayer for Allah, and then to say, "O Allah, I beseech You by means of your beloved Muhammad that You restore my sight." After doing so, his sight was recovered. One day, Tha'laba, who was a destitute companion, came to the Prophet (a.s.) and asked him to pray Allah

for him to make him wealthy, because he liked to be benevolent to help the poor and give charities. The Prophet (a.s.) prayed Allah for him, and he became so wealthy that his livestock were uncountable, but then, he stopped coming to the mosque to offer prayer, and he did not give zakat...and this story is famous to most of people. One day, the Prophet described to his companions the bliss of Paradise, and what Allah had prepared to its inhabitants there. Ukasha asked the Prophet (a.s.), "O messenger of Allah, pray Allah for me to make me one of them (the inhabitants of Paradise) !"

The Prophet (a.s.) said, "O Allah, make him one of them!" Another one got up and said to the Prophet (a.s.), "And to me, O messenger of Allah!" The Prophet (a.s.) said, "Ukasha has preceded you to that." In these three traditions, there is a clear evidence that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) made himself the means between Allah and His servants." The Wahabi interrupted me, saying, "I argue by the Holy Qur'an, and he argues by weak traditions that neither fatten nor avail against hunger." I said, "Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, O you who believe! Be careful of (your duty to) Allah and seek means to Him. 1 " He said, "The 'means' refers to a good deed."

I said, "The verses, concerning good deeds, are many and clear. Allah says, 'And convey good news to those who believe and do

1 Qur'an, 5:35.

good deeds,' 1 but He says in this verse, Seek means to Him,' and in another verse, He says, Those whom they call upon, themselves seek the means to their Lord.' 2 These two verses denote that the seeking of a means in supplicating Allah is to be with piety and good deeds. Do you not see that Allah says, 'O you who believe, be careful of (your duty to) Allah' that He mentions faith and piety before the seeking of a means?" He said, "Most of scholars interpret "means" as good deed."

I said, "Keep us away from interpretation and the savings of scholars! What then if I prove "intercession" by the Qur'an itself?" He said, "This is impossible, except if it is another Qur'an that we do not know!" I said, "I know what you mean, may Allah forgive you! But I will prove that from the Qur'an that all of us know. Allah says, 'They said: O our father, ask forgiveness of our faults for us, surely we were sinners. He said: I will ask for you forgiveness from my Lord; surely, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.' 3 Why did our lord Jacob, the prophet of Allah, not say to his children: you yourselves ask Allah for forgiveness and do not make me intercessor between your Creator and you? He did accept that intercession and said: I shall ask my Lord to forgive you. Thus, he made himself a means to Allah for his children."

The Wahabi felt it difficult to repel these verses that could not be doubted or misinterpreted. He

said, "What do we do with Jacob who was from the children of Israel and whose religion was abrogated by the religion of Islam?" I said, "I will give you an evidence from Islam, from the religion of Muhammad the Prophet of Islam (a.s.)."

1 Qur'an, 2:25.

2 Qur'an, 17:57.

3 Qur'an, 12:97-98.

He said, "We are listening."

I said, "'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful...and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Messenger had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful.' 1 Why did Allah order them to come to the Prophet (a.s.) to ask for Allah's forgiveness near him, and then the Prophet (a.s.) would ask Allah to forgive them? This is a clear evidence that the Prophet (a.s.) was their means to Allah and that Allah would not forgive them except by him (the Prophet)." The attendants said, "This is a clear evidence that cannot be refuted."

The Wahabi, feeling defeated, said, "Yes, this was right when the Prophet was alive, but the man had died fourteen centuries ago." I said astonishedly, "How do you say about the messenger of Allah 'the man had died'? The messenger of Allah is alive and not dead." He laughed mockingly at my saying, and said, "The Holy Qur'an said to him, Surely you shall die and they (too) shall surely die.' 2" I said, "And the Qur'an itself says, Reckon not those who are killed in Allah's way as dead; nay, they are alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord,' 3 and 'Do not speak of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead; nay, (they are) alive, but you do not perceive.' 4" He said, "These verses talk about martyrs who are killed in the way of Allah, and they have nothing to do with Muhammad."

I said, "Glory be to Allah, and there is no power save in Allah!

1 Qur'an, 4:64.

2 Qur'an, 39:30.

3 Qur'an, 3:169.

4 Qur'an, 2:154.

You demote the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.), who is the most beloved to Allah, lower than the rank of a martyr! As if you want to say: Ahmed ibn Hanbal has died a martyr and he is alive near his God, but the messenger of Allah is dead like any other dead one." He said, "This is what the Holy

Qur'an says."

I said, "Praise be to Allah Who has uncovered to us your nature and made us know your reality by your own tongues. You have tried your best to wipe out the signs of the Prophet (a.s.) to a degree that you tried to remove his tomb, as you had removed the house in which he was born." At this moment, the host intervened, saying to me, "Let us not go out of the circle of the Qur'an and the Sunna. We have agreed on this." I apologized and then said, "What is important is that our friend has acknowledged 'intercession' during the Prophet's life and denied it after his death."

The attendants all said it was so, and they asked him again, "Did you agree that 'intercession' was permissible during the Prophet's life?" He replied, "It was permissible during his life, but it is not permissible now after his death." I said, "Praise be to Allah! For the first time, the Wahabis acknowledge 'tawassul', and this is a great victory. Please, allow me to add that tawassul was permissible even after the Prophet's death." The Wahabi said, "By Allah, it is not permissible. It is from polytheism." I said, "Take it easy! Do not be hasty and swear that you may regret it after that." He said, "Give an evidence from the Qur'an!" (213) I said, "This is not possible, because the Revelation stopped by the death of the Prophet (a.s.). We have to rely on the books of Hadith." He said, "We do not accept any tradition, except that it is true. What the Shia narrate has no any value to us."

I said, "Do you trust in the Sahih al-Bukhari which is the most reliable book to you after the Book of Allah?" He said astonishedly, "Does al-Bukhari say that tawassul is permissible?!" I said, "Yes, he says that, but unfortunately, you do not read what there is in your Sahihs, and despite that, you resist out of fanaticism to your opinions.

Al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih that Umar ibn al-Khattab asked Allah for rain by means of al-Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib when it was rainlessness. He often said, "O Allah, we beseeched You by means of our prophet, and You sent down to us rains, and now we beseech You by means of the uncle of our prophet. So send down rain to us!" Al-Bukhari says, "And they were rained." ¹ Then I said to him, "It is Umar ibn al-Khattab, who is to you the greatest of companions, and you have no doubt in his loyalty, strong faith, and good beliefs. You say that if there would be a prophet after Muhammad, he would be Umar ibn al-Khattab. Now, you are between two things with no third; either you acknowledge that tawassul is from the essence of Islam and that the saying of Umar "O Allah, we beseeched You by means of our prophet, and You sent down to us rains, and now we beseech You by means of the uncle of our prophet. So send down rain to us!" is an acknowledgment of tawassul during the Prophet's life and after his death, or you say that Umar ibn al-Khattab was a polytheist because he made al-Abbas as his means to Allah. It is

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 209 , Chap. The virtues of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib.

well known that al-Abbas was neither a prophet, nor an imam and not even from the Ahlul Bayt whom Allah had kept away uncleanness from and purified thorough purification. Besides, al-Bukhari, who is the master of traditionists to you, has mentioned this tradition acknowledging its reliability and adding, "and they were rained", which means that Allah responded to them.

Thus, al-Bukhari and the narrators from the Prophet's companions, who narrated this tradition, are all polytheists in your view!!!" He said, "If it is proved that this tradition is true, it shall be an argument against you." I said, "How is it an argument against me?"

He said, "Because our master Umar did not supplicate Allah by means of the Prophet because he was dead, and he supplicated by means of al-Abbas because he was alive."

I said, "The doings and sayings of Umar are not evidence and have no value to me. I just mentioned this narration to prove the subject of our discussion, which is the denial of tawassul by you and all your ulama and that you consider it as polytheism. I am astonished why Umar did not supplicate Allah, during the rainlessness, by means of Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), who was to Muhammad (a.s.) as was Aaron to Moses. No one of Muslims ever said that al-Abbas was better than Ali (a.s.). However, this is another subject that does not concern us in this argumentation. I just say that you now acknowledge tawassul by means of living people, and this is a great victory to me. I thank Allah Who has made our argument prevailing, and your argument vain. Since it is so, now I will use tawassul in your presence."

I got up from my seat, turned toward the qibla, and said, "O Allah, we call upon You and supplicate You by means of Your righteous servant Imam Khomeini." (215) Suddenly, the Wahabi leapt and denyingly shouted, "I seek Allah's protection! I seek Allah's protection!" He left hastily. 1The attendants looked at each other, saving, "How strange he is! How often he criticized and refuted us! We thought that he was full of knowledge, but it has become clear that he is emptier than the heart of Moses' mother!"

One of them said, "We are Allah's and to Him we shall return! O Allah, I turn to You in repentance." He turned to us and said, "How much I was influenced by his saying. Until today, I believed as he believed that tawassul is a kind of polytheism. If I was not with you today, I would remain misled. Thanks to Allah and to you."

And say : The truth has come and the falsehood has vanished; surely falsehood is a vanishing (thing). 2

1 The Lebanese al-Bilad Magazine mentioned in a report on Bosnia, "We have met with a teacher of Arabic Language and Holy Qur'an in one of the mosques of the city, and he expressed his worry

about the actions of some Muslim countries. The teacher Janiti said that a Tunisian volunteer, whose name was Ahmed, asked him to give a lecture on Wahabism, and when he refused to do that, he threatened to kill him and said that whoever did not embrace Wahabism would be in Fire." Refer to al-Bilad Magazine, vol. 191, p.35.

2 Qur'an, 17:81.

The Prophet Refutes The Wahabis and Their Misleading

There is no doubt that the Holy Qur'an has acknowledged intercession and tawassul between Allah and His people, and not prohibited that nor prevented His messenger from it. Rather, the Qur'an has made it permissible and recommended it. The Qur'an has made the Prophet's doings, savings, and approving of others' doings as example for us to follow in our lives, when saying: Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar. 1 On this basis, we will take the Prophet's doings and savings as our evidences. We shall not derive our evidences from the books of the Shia nor all the books of the Sunni, for that shall be uncountable. We shall be satisfied with what al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih alone, so that the answer to the Wahabis shall be by the knockout that they may not argue after it if they are fair. Otherwise, their obstinacy and blind fanaticism shall expose them before all Muslims.

After we have proved the permissibility of tawassul from the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna, we discuss what is, to the Wahabis, more defamed and more deniable than tawassul is; it is the asking blessing of and wiping one's body (against holy shrines and sacred places). The Wahabis have reached an extent that they beat the hajjis for doing so and accuse them of polytheism.

1 Qur'an, 33:21.

THE COMPANIONS SEEK THE BLESSING OF THE PROPHET'S HAIR

It is worth mentioning to say that the doings of the Prophet's companions is an argument against the Wahabis, because they believe that all the companions totally are just and honest, and they claim that they imitate them. They call themselves as Salafis meaning that they follow the "pious ancients" and that all the companions were pious and righteous in their view. Al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih that Malik ibn Ismaeel narrated from Israel ibn Aasim from Ibn Sirin who

said, "Once, I said to Ubaydah, 'We have some of the Prophet's hair. We have got it from Anas or the family of Anas.' He said, 'If I have one hair from him, it shall be more beloved to me than the world and all what there is in it.'"¹

Al-Bukhari also mentioned a tradition narrated by Muhammad ibn Abdurraheem from Sa'eed ibn Sulayman from Etad from ibn Sirin that Anas said, "When the messenger of Allah (a.s.) had his hair cut, Abu Talha was the first one to take from his (the Prophet's cut) hair."² Since Anas ibn Malik, the famous companion, kept the Prophet's hair and gave from it to his relatives and friends, and since a companion said, "If I have one hair from him, it shall be more beloved to me than the world and all what there is in it", (I swear) by my life, this is the clearest evidence that the

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 51.

² Ibid.

companions sought blessing in the belongings of the Prophet (a.s.) and everything related to him. And, by my life, this refutes the Wahabis who beat the hajjis who seek blessing in the Prophet's belongings. In my book 'Then I was Guided, I have mentioned the nice story of the Shia scholars who offered a copy of the Holy Qur'an wrapped in leather as gift to the Saudi king at that time. The king kissed the Qur'an and put it on his forehead as a kind of honoring. The Shia Scholar said to the king, "Why did you kiss the leather and honor it?"

The king said, "When I kissed the leather, I intended what there was inside the leather, which is the Holy Qur'an." The Shia scholar said, "And so do we! When we kiss the window of the Prophet's room (inside which he has been buried), we know that it is iron, which neither benefits nor harms, but we mean what is beyond the iron, and it is the messenger of Allah (a.s.). "

COMPANIONS AND CALIPHS SEEK BLESSINGS IN THE PROPHET'S BELONGINGS AFTER HIS DEATH

Through my researching on this subject, I found more than twenty traditions in the six Sahih (the Sunni books of Hadith) showing that the companions in general and the caliphs especially sought blessing in the Prophet's belongings. However, as I have promised, I shall only mention one or two traditions from al-Bukhari who seems to be strict in such traditions. Al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih in a chapter "on what was narrated about the Prophet's armor, stick, sword, drinking-vessel, ring, and what the caliphs used of that after him... and from his hair, shoes, and vessels by which his companions and others sought blessing after his death." ¹

Al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih that az-Zubayr said, "On the Day (the battle) of Badr, I met (in fighting) Ubaydah ibn Sa'eed ibn al-Aas, who was heavily armed that nothing was seen from him except his eyes, and who was surnamed as Abu Thatil Karsh. He said, 'I am Abu Thatil Karsh.' I

attacked him with my iron-tipped stick. I hit him in his eye and he died." Hisham said, "I was told that az-Zubayr said, 'I put my leg against him and stretched myself, and effortfully I could take it out (the stick) where its ends were bent.'" Urwa said, "The messenger of Allah (a.s.) asked him (az-Zubayr) to give it to him, and he gave it to him. When the messenger of Allah (a.s.) was taken (made to die),

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 46. Chapt. The Prophet's call for Islam and Prophethood.

he (az-Zubayr) took it back. Then, Abu Bakr asked for it, and he gave it to him. When Abu Bakr died, Umar asked for it, and he gave it to him. When Umar died, he took it back, and then Uthman asked for it, and he gave it to him. When Uthman was killed, it became in the possession of Ali's family, and then Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr asked for it, and it was with him until he was killed." 1

A necessary note

We notice from this tradition that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) himself sought blessing in that stick, which az-Zubayr had and with which he fought heroes in wars. With this stick, he fought Ubaydah ibn Sa'eed ibn al-Aas who was heavily armed and armored that only his eyes were seen. Despite that, az-Zubayr struck him with this stick in his eye and killed him, and then, he difficultly could take it out. It was really a wonderful stick, and it might be from the kind of Moses' stick, by which he split the sea to the Children of Israel. Allah says : Then We revealed to Moses: Strike the sea with your staff. So it had cloven asunder, and each part was like a huge mound. 2 And when Moses prayed for drink for his people, We said: Strike the rock with your staff So there gushed from it twelve springs. 3

It is no wonder then that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) asked azZubayr to give him that iron-tipped stick to seek blessing in it, or to teach people that seeking blessing is permissible in Islam. This possibility is too strong, especially when we know that all the caliphs after the Prophet (a.s.) asked for this stick which moved

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 5 p. 14. Chapt. The presence of angels in the battle of Badr from the book al-Maghazi (raids).

2 Qur'an, 26:63.

3 Qur'an, 2:60.

from one to another until finally it came to Abdullah ibn azZubayer, for it was his father's heritage. We find in the Holy Qur'an many references to seeking blessing in things that related to prophets and messengers. It has been said in the Qur'an : He said: What was then your case, O Samiri? He

said: I perceived what they perceive not, so I seized a handful from the footsteps of the messenger, and then threw it in. Thus, my soul commended to me. 1

Perhaps, the Samiri, who perceived what the rest of companions did not perceive when he seized a handful from the earth that the Prophet had stepped on, might achieved some miracles, and so he thought that Moses was a great magician, and that the miracles he showed before people were just magic that whoever had its causes could do. Therefore, he threw the handful of earth and his soul incited him to take the Children of Israel back to worship the calf. The story confirms what we have said that he showed some charismata and miracles to the Israelites until they were deceived and they followed him.

We find other references in the Holy Qur'an to the seeking of blessing and cure by the belongings of the prophets. Allah says in the Sura of Yousuf : Take this my shirt and cast it on my father's face, he will (again) be able to see, and come to me with all your families. And when the caravan had departed, their father said: Most surely I perceive the scent of Yousuf, unless you pronounce me to be weak in judgment. They said: By Allah, you are most surely in your old error. So when the bearer of good news came, he cast it on his face, so forthwith he regained his sight. He said: Did I not say to you that I know from Allah what you do not know. 2

1 Qur'an, 20:95-96.

2 Qur'an, 12:93-96.

What is understood from these verses is that the Prophet Jacob (a.s.) was blind and that his son Yousuf sent him his shirt and asked the bringer of good news to wipe his father's face with the shirt in order to recover his sight, and this actually happened. Despite our deep faith that Allah the Almighty is able to make the Prophet Jacob (a.s.) recover his sight without the shirt of Yousuf (a.s.), able to make water gush out of the rock, and the sea to split without the Stick of Moses, and able to restore to life the killed one without hitting him with some pieces of the cow,' Allah the Almighty has made a means for that to make people understand that means and intercession is from the law of Allah to His people, and not polytheism as the Wahabis and their followers claim.

Allah says :

This is Our book that speaks against you with justice; surely We wrote what you did. Then as to those who believed and did good, their Lord will make them enter into His mercy; that is the manifest triumph. And as to those who disbelieved: What! were not My communications recited to you? But you were proud and you were a guilty people. 2

1 In reference to these verses, "And when you killed a man, then you disagreed with respect to that, and Allah was to bring forth that which you were going to hide. So We said: Strike the (dead body) with part of the (Sacrificed cow), thus Allah brings the dead to life, and He shows you His signs so that you may understand. 2:73"

2 Qur'an, 45:29-31.

THE PROPHET ADMITS SEEKING BLESSING AND TEACHES IT TO HIS COMPANIONS

Let no one be deceived by the sayings of deniers who say that seeking blessing in things is a heresy invented by some companions or some of their successors. They say that out of ignorance or fanaticism to new Wahabism which is itself a heresy that accuse Muslims of polytheism just for a false doubt the Wahabis themselves have invented. The messenger of Allah (a.s.) acknowledged on many occasion what his companions did, seeking blessing in certain things and he recommended them to do that. After that, the companions competed among themselves to do it. Al-Bukhari in his Sahih has mentioned a tradition narrated by Adam from Shu'bah from al-Hakam that Abu Juhayfah said, "The messenger of Allah went out to us in the midday. He was brought some water and he performed wudu with it. People began taking from the remaining water of his wudu and wiping themselves with it. The Prophet (a.s.) offered the Noon Prayer in two rak'as and the Afternoon Prayer in two rak'as, and there was a stick in front of him. Abu Musa said, 'The messenger of Allah (a.s.) called for a vessel of water with which he washed his hands and face and ejected (from his mouth) in it and said to them (his companions), 'Drink from it and pour on your faces and necks.'" 1

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 55.

Al-Bukhari mentioned another tradition in his Sahih clearer than the previous one. He mentioned that Abu Musa (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "Once, I was with the Prophet (a.s.) while he was in al-ja'rana (a place) between Mecca and Medina, and Bilal was there with him. A nomad came to the Prophet (a.s.) and said to him, 'Would you not carry out to me what you have promised?' The Prophet said, 'Be delighted!'

The nomad said, 'How much you said to me: be delighted (with good news)!' The Prophet (a.s.) came to Abu Musa and Bilal while somehow angry, saying, 'He rejected the good news. You both come to me!' They came to him. He called for a vessel of water. He washed his hands and face in it, and then rinsed out his mouth in it and said, 'Drink from it and pour on your faces and necks and wait for good news!' They took the vessel and did so. From behind a curtain, Umm Salama (the Prophet's wife) called out, 'Leave some of it to your mother!' And they left some to her." 1

These true traditions on seeking blessing do not show that the Prophet (a.s.) approved the matter, but it was he who ordered his companions to do it after he had washed his hands and face and rinsed out his mouth in the water. Then, he asked them to drink and pour on their faces and necks from that water. He gave them good news that they would receive goodness by the blessing of that water with which the Prophet washed his hands, face, and mouth, until Umm Salama (the Prophet's wife) asked to leave for her some of that water to be blessed by it. So where are the Wahabis from these facts? Or there are locks on the hearts!

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 5 p. 103.

MUHAMMAD IS A HUMAN NOT LIKE OTHER HUMANS, BUT AS CORUNDUM AMONG GEMS

Another time, we say to all people that the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) is the best of all creatures and no one from the children of Adam can be compared to him. He is the master of them all. Despite whatever is said about his human aspect, Allah has purified him from every dirt and vice. Traditionists have mentioned that he had qualities that no one at all from the human beings ever has. The examples on that are too many; flies did never sit on him at all, a cloud was shadowing him, the earth swallowed all his excrements, the scent of musk emitted from his holy body that Abu Bakr said when he was laid out dead, "May my father and mother die for you! How good scented you are alive and dead!"

When I read like these traditions that I have already mentioned and believed in their reliability, I understand from them what others may not understand. I do not deny anyone to drink from the remainder of the Prophet's washing water, because the Prophet (a.s.) is not like any other human being; he is like corundum among other gems.

Which one of us may willingly drink from a water with which someone else has washed his hands, face, and mouth? In addition to that, we fear that microbes and diseases may come from dirt and filth. Our souls detest that, especially when we see with our eyes what is done to the water.

If we have not believed and are not certain that the Prophet (a.s.) has been purified from dirt, microbes, and bad smells and that his body is pure and immaculate, we shall not perceive these traditions. And if the loyal companions had not that deep faith in these facts, they would not compete to drink the remainder of the Prophet's washing water, to an extent that they struggled for it. In fact, the loyal companions knew of the facts of the Prophet (a.s.) what others did not know. The remainder of the washing water in which the Prophet (a.s.) washed his hands, face, and mouth did not suffice them. We shall mention more than that which human souls cannot bear. Al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih a long story from which we shall take the theme that concerns our study. He said, "...then Urwa began glancing at the Prophet's companions and he said, "By

Allah, the messenger of Allah did not expectorate, except that it (his extract) fell in the hand of one of them (willingly) and he (a companion) rubbed it to his face and skin. When he (the Prophet) ordered them, they hurried to carry out his order, and when he performed the wudu, they quarreled with each other to get (the remainder of the water of) his wudu ..." 1

Al-Bukhari mentioned too a tradition narrated by Urwa that alMusawwir and Marwan said that the Prophet (a.s.) came out to them at the time of Hdaybiyya... and he mentioned the tradition, "the messenger of Allah did not expectorate, except that it (his extract) fell in the hand of one of them (willingly) and he rubbed it to his face and skin ...". 2 This leads us to say that the great companions (may Allah be pleased with them) would not do that, unless the Prophet (a.s.) kept silent when they did it, or rather he approved it to them. There is no doubt that the companions saw charismata because of

1 Sahib al-Bukhari, vol. 3 p. 180.

2 Ibid., vol. 1 p. 66.

that, such as recovering health and soundness, goodness, prosperity, and cure of diseases; otherwise, they would not massage their faces and skins with the Prophet's pituitrin. To confirm what we say, we quote this tradition from Sahih alBukhari, to show people the falsehood of Wahabism. The tradition reads, "Once, the messenger of Allah went out in the midday to the desert. He performed wudu and offered the Noon Prayer in two rak'as and the Afternoon Prayer in two rak'as, and in front of him there was a stick...Awn added that his father Abu Juhayfa said, "Passers passed behind it (the stick). And then people got up and began taking his (the Prophet) hands and massaging with them their faces. I took his hand and put it on my face. It was colder than ice and better (in its scent) than the scent of musk." 1

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 165.

SEEKING HEALING BY THE PROPHET'S BLESSING

There is no doubt that the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) cured patients by his touching, water of wudu, saliva, and other things. Muslim has mentioned in his Sahih and al-Bukhari as well that Sahl ibn Sa'eed (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "On the Day (battle) of Khaybar, the messenger of Allah was heard saying, 'I will give the banner to a man at whose hands Allah will grant victory. He loves Allah and His messenger, and Allah and His messenger love him.' That night, people remained thinking to which of them the Prophet (a.s.) would give the banner. They all looked forward to it. He (the Prophet) asked where Ali was, and it was said to him that he had sore eyes. The Prophet (a.s.) spat in his (Imam Ali) eyes and he recovered as if he never suffered any pain.

Then he (the Prophet) gave him the banner and he (Ali) said, 'Will I fight them to be like us (Muslims)?' He (the Prophet) said, 'Go on until you arrive in their field, and then invite them for Islam and tell them of their obligations. By Allah, if Allah guides by you one man, it is better to you than to have red camels (abundant wealth).'¹

Al-Bukhari has said too, "I heard as-Sa'ib ibn Yazid saying, 'Once, my aunt took me to the Prophet (a.s.) and said to him, 'O messenger of Allah, this son of my sister has fallen.' He rubbed my head and prayed Allah to bless me. Then, he performed wudu and I drank from the water of his wudu ...'"²

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 20.

² Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 56,57.

He also said, "I heard Jabir saying, 'One day, the messenger of Allah came to visit me when I was ill of insanity. He performed wudu and poured on me from the water of his wudu, and I became sane. I asked him, 'O messenger of Allah, to whom the inheritance shall be, for I have neither parents nor children?' Then, the verse of obligations (inheritances) was revealed." ¹ Surely, the messenger of Allah (a.s.) was in such a position to Allah that he made a blind man recover his sight by his saliva and a mad one recover his sanity by the water of his wudu and that his companions massaged their faces and skins with his pituitrin seeking health and soundness. It has been mentioned in traditions that Huthayfa ibn al-Yaman had a pouch with which he cured patients and that whomever he put the pouch on was cured. People were very influenced by him until his news reached the Prophet (a.s.) who sent for him, asking, "Are you seditious O Huthayfa?" He replied, "Certainly not O messenger of Allah, but I have kept the stone that once had harmed your foot. I put it in a piece of cloth, and now I cure patients by it."

The Prophet (a.s.) said to people, "If you trust in a stone, it shall benefit you."² We do not mean by these traditions that we trust in jugglers and swindlers, or that we do not believe in scientific medicine. How would that be where we always depend on the Prophet's saying, "Bring a physician to him, because Allah has created the disease and created the cure to it." And this does not mean that Muslims only depend on supplication, amulets, the Qur'an, blessing, and other things that are familiar in all Muslim countries for treatment. We quote these evidences just to argue against the

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 56,57.

² I do not remember the source of this tradition, but I have heard it from our teachers in Tunisia.

Wahabis who deny all these things and consider whoever believes in them as a polytheist. Surely, the companions had their justification in their seeking blessing and tawassul in the Prophet (a.s.),

for they lived with him and saw his miracles and charismata that astonished them and filled their selves with reverence and hope. Biographers, who were interested in the Prophet's miracles, had mentioned all the miracles mentioned in the Qur'an of the prophets who had preceded him, such as healing the patients, the blind, and the leprous, giving life to the dead, the coming down of food from the heaven, talking with animals, and many other signs.

We shall mention only one or two traditions from al-Bukhari and let researchers themselves read what scholars have written on this matter. Qatada narrated that Anas said, "A vessel was brought to the Prophet (a.s.) while he was in az-Zawra. He put his hand inside the vessel and water began gushing out from between his fingers. All people performed wudu (from that water)." Qatada said, "I asked Anas how many men they were and he said that they were three hundred or about three hundred men." 1

Jabir ibn Abdullah narrated, "On the day of al-Hudaybiyya, people felt thirsty. There was a pot before the Prophet (a.s.). He performed wudu. People hurried towards him, and he asked, 'What happened to you?' They said, 'We do not have water to perform wudu or drink, except this water before you.' He put his hand in the pot, and water began gushing out between his fingers like springs. We drank and performed wudu."...I asked how many ones they were and he said, 'If we were one hundred thousand, the water would be enough. We were fifteen hundred men." 2

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 170-, chapt. the signs of prophethood in the book "the beginning of creation".

2 Ibid.

Alqama narrated that Abdullah said, "One day, we were with the messenger of Allah on a travel. We ran out of water. He (the Prophet) said, 'Bring me a little of water.' They brought him a vessel having a little water. He put his hand inside the vessel and said, 'Come on to the pure, blessed (water), and blessing is from Allah!' I did see water spring between the fingers of the messenger of Allah...and we did hear the glorifying (tasbeeh) of food while it was being eaten." 1

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4 p. 170-, chapt. the signs of prophethood in the book "the beginning of creation".

Wahabism Has Historical Roots

If we go back to our history and look up its painful events, some of those events shall attract our attention to reveal to us that Wahabism, which we have known in this century, had ancient roots since the beginning of Islam. They appeared one time and hid another. One time they appeared daringly, and another time hid because of fear and dissimulation, until when Islam regressed and was afflicted in its pillars and great personalities, and colonialism came to feed and strengthen this new thought. The aim behind that was to destroy the sanctity of the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.). Muslims, due to the colonialists' thought, sanctify two things; the Qur'an and the Sunna, which are the two basic sources of the Islamic Sharia that is targeted by them.

They know that the speech of Allah can never be changed and distorted, because Allah the Almighty has undertaken its preservation. But as for the Prophetic Sunna, it is liable to distortion and fabrication. In fact, since the first day when the Prophet (a.s.) left to the better world, disagreement took place among Muslims on the Prophet's Sunna. However, colonialists perceived that the scholars of the nation set right the Sunna and collected its true and reliable traditions and put laws and rules to keep it safe from increase or decrease. Therefore, they thought of a satanic trick that might help them do away with the spiritual matters that were the most active factor in the life of Muslims; that whenever Muslims gave up these spiritualities, they would approach, step by step, the unfaithful materialism, and then they would become like the scum of a flood.

They looked for a Muslim man who had infinite ambition, and they discovered Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab, to whom Wahabism is ascribed. They inspired in him from their spirit and convinced him that he was the savant of his age and that he had genius and intelligence that even the orthodox caliphs did not have. They showed him the violations of the caliphs against the clear texts of the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna, especially the objection of Umar ibn al-Khattab to the Prophet (a.s.) during his life. They convinced him that Muhammad was a human being who was fallible; that he committed many mistakes, and that some people corrected him, and this was a proof on his weakness. They aroused his greed to the rule and to prevail the Arabia first, and then all the Arab and Muslim world. Wahabism was established on these concepts, trying the best to degrade the Prophet (a.s.) and slighting his importance, until their scholars said openly, "The Mall has died." And their head said, "Muhammad is just a worn-out rope that dose neither benefit nor harm, and my stick is better than him, because it benefits and harms."

Sayings like that were said at the time of al-Hajjaj ibn Yousuf athThaqafi who himself said, "Woe to them! They circumambulate a worn-out rope. If they circumambulated the palace of Ameerul Mo'minin Abdul Melik ibn Marwan , it would be to them." In fact, nothing made al-Hajjaj and the vicious Umayyad rulers so daring, except the daring of Umar ibn al-Khattab who said in the presence of the Prophet (a.s.), "The man (the Prophet) is raving. The Book of Allah suffices you." In this very impudent saying, there are all the meanings that the Wahabis try their best to confirm

and fix in the minds of people. They say that Muhammad has died and is no longer but a part of history. Whoever supplicates by means of him is as if he worships him and makes a partner in deity. This is not a new concept; it has a root in history. Abu Bakr said openly before people, "O people, whoever worshipped Muhammad, so Muhammad has died, and whoever worshipped Allah, Allah is alive and does never die."

What was the reason for Abu Bakr to say so while he certainly knew that no one of Muslims worshipped Muhammad at all? Did Abu Bakr believe that some Muslims actually worshipped Muhammad? If it was so, then why did Muhammad keep silent before those people, or why he did not prevent or scold them or even kill them? I have been convinced that they (Abu Bakr, Umar...etc.) had the same thought that the Wahabis have today. It means that they could not bear to see people sanctify and honor the Prophet (a.s.). It made them angry to see people hurry and quarrel with each other to get the remainder of the Prophet's water of wudu to massage their faces and skins for blessing, and to be closer to Allah by loving him and his progeny. All that made a reaction to the people of Quraysh who began hating Muhammad (a.s.) with no guilt committed by him. The chief of Quraysh Mo'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan revealed what was hidden in their chests when al-Mughirah suggested to him, "O Ameerul Mo'minin, would that you be kind to your cousins of the Hashimites! By Allah, nothing has remained with them that you may fear. And this may cause you good mention."

Mo'awiya said, "How far! The man of Taym 1 ruled, wronged, and did what he did. By Allah, as soon as he died, his mention died with him. People may remember him and just say: Abu Bakr. Then the man of Adiy 2 ruled for ten years. As soon as he died, his mention died with him. People may remember him and say: Umar. Then our brother Uthman ruled. He did what he did and people did to him what they did. As soon as he died, his mention and what happened to him died with him. But the man of Hashem; 3 everyday his name is announced five times (I witness

1 It was the name of Abu Bakr's tribe.

2 The name of Umar's tribe.

3 The tribe of the Prophet (s); Hashem was the great grandfather of the Prophet.

that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah). So which mention will last after this? May be buried their mention!" 1 It was Wahabism in its prettiest clothes and clearest tongues. It plotted yesterday, and is trying now to execute the plot today and tomorrow. They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths but Allah will perfect His light, though the unbelievers may be averse.

1 Mentioned by ibn Abil Hadeed in his book an-Nasa'ih al-Kafiyah Ieman Yatawalla Mo'awiya,

quoted from at-Tabari and ibnul Atheer.

WAHABISM PROHIBITS VISITING OF GRAVES

One of the heresies widespread in the present time is the prohibition of visiting the graves by women. When a Muslim woman goes to perform the hajj, they (Wahabis) do not permit her to visit the Baqee' Graveyard or any other graveyard there. The Wahabis had prohibited this thing and still prohibit it with no any evidence except fanaticism. Muslim has mentioned in his Sahih, Chapter of Funerals, that Aa'isha once asked the Prophet (a.s.) what she would say if she visited graveyards, and the Prophet (a.s.) said, "You say: Peace be on you, O peaceful people! You are from the foremost and we, if Allah wills, are from the following, and may Allah forgive the first and the last."

Al-Bukhari has mentioned in his Sahih that Anas ibn Malik said, "One day, the Prophet (a.s.) passed by a woman crying at a grave. He said to her, 'Fear Allah and be patient!' She said, 'Be away from me! You have not been afflicted as I have.' She did not know him. It was said to her that he was the messenger of Allah. She came to his house and did not find doorkeepers. She apologized to him that she did not know him before. He said, 'Patience is (required) but at the first shock.'" ¹ The traditions about this subject are too many in the books of the Sunni and the Shia, but the Wahabis deny and pay no any attention to them.

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 2 p. 79, chapt. Visiting of Graves, Funerals.

When I argued with one of the Wahabis by these traditions, he said to me that they were abrogated. I said, "In fact, the prohibition is that which was abrogated, because the messenger of Allah said, 'I had prohibited you from visiting the graves, but now you visit them, because they remind you of death.'" He said, "This tradition means men and not women."

I said, "It has been proved in history and to the scholars from the Sunni that Fatima az-Zahra' (a.s.) visited her father's tomb every day, and she cried there and said, 'O father, calamities have been poured on me that if they were poured on days, they would turn nights.' It is well known in history that Imam Ali (a.s.) built her a special house called 'the house of sorrows' where she spent most of her time weeping." He said, "If we suppose that this narration it true, it concerns Fatima alone."

Unfortunately, it is the blind fanaticism! How can a Muslim imagine that Allah and His messenger prohibit woman from visiting the grave of her father, mother, brother, husband, or child where she may pray Allah to have mercy on and forgive them, and where she may pity them through tears of mercy and remember death and the afterlife as man does? It is injustice against woman that Allah does never please nor does His messenger or any man of sound reason.

THE AHLUL BAYT AND A MODERN MUSLIM

The jobs of the present age have occupied most of man's time and not left for him free time except very little. At the age of the Mission, the first age of Islam, jobs were limited that man was either a farmer, trader, or manufacturer. These three jobs gave man enough free time to practice his worships as he liked and at their specified times. When the time of prayer came even if a Muslim was in the place of his work, he stopped working to offer the prayer with a tranquil soul. As for today where governments have employed most of people for assured and defined salaries and for several hours, people are not allowed to stop working in order to offer the prayer. A student, teacher, manager, physician, nurse, worker, soldier, policeman, officials in companies, factories, and mines, the guards of boundaries, officer in a weather station or airport ... etc. do not find free time to offer the prayer in its five prescribed times.

I myself suffered this problem when I was a teacher. My soul was upset and my conscience was confused for time did not permit me to offer the prayer in its specified time. I often missed the Dhuhr (midday), Asr (afternoon), and Maghrib (time of sunset) Prayers especially in winter. I often offered the four prayers (in addition to Isha (evening) Prayer) altogether in the night. Sometimes, I went back home while very tired that I could not offer them, or I offered them in spite of me. I discovered that many Muslims gave up prayer for this reason that they were psychologically confused, hoping that chance might permit them to offer this obligation. Because of that, detestation came to some people who saw that the prayer was like a nightmare, which confused their ease. They began criticizing Islam of being a religion of tiredness, difficulty, and hardship, and saying that Christianity had relieved its followers from many ties where they pray only one time a week; on Sunday which is a holiday.

How often the missionaries did strike the right tone before the Muslim youth, claiming that their religion (Christianity) would keep pace with civilization and with all ages! They say that one prayer in a week and fasting (abstaining from eating meat only) for only three days in a year make their religion a religion of love and peace. How much these propagandas did attract the Muslim youth, who suffered, in their early childhood, the pressure of parents to perform wudu and prayer to a terrible degree in some families. You see that some parents, especially unlearned ones, want their children to be exactly like Rabi'ah al-Adawiyyah 1 if they are females and like Ahmed al-Badawi if they are males. They waken them up before the dawn and tire them with prayers. They watch them day and night, and blame and punish them severely for everything. They beat them sometimes just because they forget something. They send them to government schools and burden them with duties, until they become boring, and then hate the religion while they are not yet adolescent. I do not say except what I have already seen. I saw many children from my relatives, who offered the prayer under pressure, give up the prayer when the authority of parents was no longer over them, or when they were far from the family and its ties.

Many times, I tried to convince some parents from my relatives not to heat or force their children to offer the prayer and that they must treat them kindly and leniently, to endear to them the prayer and not to make it as a nightmare to them, but I often

1 An exemplar in faith and piety.

faced their saying that the Prophet (a.s.) had said, "Beat them (children) to offer the prayer while in seven years old (or ten years in some traditions)". In this way, the Muslim youth lose their prayer and give up their religion, even if they do not follow the missionaries. In addition to that, the TV, games, and many things else take the youth away from the remembrance of Allah.

THE SOLUTION IS IN THE AHLUL BAYT'S SCHOOL

Whoever observes the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), concerning the Islamic education, shall find the sufficient solutions that Allah the Almighty has legislated for His people to make the religion easy to them and within the reach of everyone, young or old. Allah the Almighty says :

He has not laid upon you any hardship in religion. 1 Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty. 2 Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability. 3 To relieve from hardship This is the general rule in Islam; every hardship is kept away, every difficulty is hated, and every strait is prohibited. If it is so, then what for is the strictness that we find in the books of jurisprudence among all Muslims?

If a Muslim reads some chapters on wudu or ghusl (ritual wash or bath), he feels that jurists have added difficulty to the easiness, and imposed on man more than his capacity.

1 Qur'an, 22:78.

2 Qur'an, 2:185.

3 Qur'an, 2:286.

It is known in the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) through traditions narrated by them from their grandfather the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) that "Wudu is two washes and two wipes; to wash the face and the hands, and to wipe (with the wet remaining in the hands) the head and the feet."

THIS IS THE WUDU

As we have said before and in order to make it easy for Muslims, Allah the Almighty has imposed wudu on Muslims before offering the prayer. Allah says : O you who believe, when you rise up to

prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles. 1 Then, wudu is to wash the face and the two hands and to wipe the head and the two feet. As we see, it is easy and accessible with no any difficulty or hardship. If a Muslim is at home or traveling, in an airport or a railway station, this wudu shall not embarrass him at all; he just turns on the tap and washes his face and hands, and then he turns off the tap and wipes his head and feet with the wet of his hands. He may not take off his shoes except in the place of prayer if it is near, and then he wipes his head and feet.

But, if the wudu is as described by (Sunni) jurisprudents who says :

1. To wash the hands to the wrists three times
2. To rinse out the mouth three times
3. To wash the nose three times (by inhaling and ejecting out)
4. To wash the face three times
5. To wash the right hand three times and the left hand three times
6. To wipe all the head
7. To wipe the two ears
8. To wash the right foot three times and then the left foot three times

It shall be of difficulty and hardship, especially to the youth when

1 Qur'an, 5:6.

they are in travel. It is difficult to wash the feet in winter, and then to wait until they dry in order to put on the socks. What is important in this matter is that the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), that do not rely on personal opinions nor on misinterpretation before clear texts, acts according to the Holy Book and the pure Prophetic Sunna. The wudu that the Shia follow is the wudu that Allah has imposed on Muslims in the Holy Qur'an and it is the wudu that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) and the infallible imams of his progeny did practice. May Allah have mercy on Abdullah ibn Abbas who often said, "I do not find in the Book of Allah except two washes and two wipes, hut you insist on following the rule of al-Hajjaj."

Muslims today, especially the learned youth, have to go back to the right way of Islam with its simplicity and easiness to make people love and wish for the religion. How often the Prophet (a.s.) announced before Muslims, "Make it easy and do not make it difficult! Do not make (people) alienate (the religion)!" And he often said, "Do not make it difficult for yourselves, lest Allah makes it more difficult for you as He did to the Children of Israel." How many ones, who escaped from the prayer because of wudu, or they offered the prayer but with tayammum 1 for fear of

water which caused them prurigo in the hands and fingertips of the feet, 2 but by the wudu of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), they recovered soundness and became tranquil!

1 Ritual purification with sand, soil, or dust instead of wudu when there is no water. In the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), one can practice tayammum even if water is available when he fears from a disease, or what may lead to or complicate a disease as narrated from Imam as-Sadiq, "... soil is one of the two purifying things".

THIS IS THE PRAYER

The prayers in the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), are offered in three times instead of five times : One time for the Fajr (dawn) Prayer One time for the Dhuhr (midday) and Asr (afternoon) Prayers One time for the Maghrib (time of sunset) and Isha' (evening) Prayers We have written a separate chapter in our book "To be with the Truthful" to prove the legality of these three times from the Holy Qur'an and the pure Prophetic Sunna; therefore, we do not want to expatiate or repeat what we have said. Let whoever wants to see the details refer to that book. Anyhow, we want here to explain the wisdom of Allah in gathering between the times of the prayers in this way. As we have said in a previous chapter (the Ahlul Bayt and a modern Muslim) that most of employees, who form three thirds of a society, do not offer the prayer, offer it lazily and unwillingly, or offer it with difficulty and hardship, because they know that it is not permissible for them (in the view of religion) to leave the work during the time of work, for which they receive wages, in order to offer the prayer.

We have nothing to do with those, who cry out in the mosques calling people to leave their jobs at the times of prayers even if that costs them to lose their jobs, because Allah-as they claim-is the One Who provides His servants with sustenance and not the employer or the owner of the factory.

What is odd is that these very imams, who bear this thought, contradict themselves in the same subject. Once, 1 heard one of them praising Umar ibn al-Khattab and saving, "One day, our master Umar came into the mosque and saw some man offer the prayer before the coming of people. The second time, he came and found him offering the prayer. In the third, he (Umar) asked him (the man), "Who spends on you?" The man said, "My brother spends on me."

Our master Umar said to him, "Get out of the mosque! Surely, your brother is better than you are. The sky does not rain gold or silver." I became alone with the imam (of the mosque) and said to him, "Did you not say a month ago, 'Allah is the One Who provides His servants with sustenance, so leave your work in order to offer the prayer'?" He looked at me with a smile and said, "For every occasion there is a certain saying! My first saving was from the Qur'an, and my second

saying was our master Umar al-Faruq's. My first and second sayings are both true ..." I said, "May Allah reward you with good! I have benefited from you."

We come back to the subject of the wisdom of Allah behind the gathering of prayers in one time. We say that Allah, the Wise, the All Knowing, the Creator of everything, Who knows the past, the present, and the future; nothing is hidden from His knowledge. He has known that in some certain time people would be confined to their jobs that would limit their freedoms and times, and since Muhammad (a.s.) was the last of prophets, whose law would be valid until the Day of Resurrection and within the reach of all human beings, and since the wisdom of Allah requires easiness and relief for people who are abide by religion; therefore, Allah recommended His messenger to offer the Dhuhr and Asr Prayers in one time either by advancing the Asr Prayer or delaying the Dhuhr Prayer, and offer the Maghrib and Isha' Prayers together either by advancing the Isha' Prayer or delaying the Maghrib Prayer, 1 and to teach his nation this way in order to relieve them from hardship. The messenger of Allah (a.s.) did what he was ordered to do. He led congregational prayers in Medina many times in this way, and when he was asked why, he said, "in order not to make it hard for my nation, or in order not to embarrass my nation". 2 Ibn Abbas said, "The messenger of Allah (a.s.) offered in Medina seven (rak'as) and eight (rak'as); the Dhuhr and the Asr prayers (together) and the Maghrib and Isha' Prayers (together)." 3

This is the wisdom of Allah the Almighty and this is the prayer of the messenger of Allah (a.s.) according to the order of his Lord, in order not to cause the nation any hardship. Then, why do we refrain from this way in offering the prayers, whereas it is easy and possible for all people; employees, workers, students, soldiers ... etc.? There is no job in the world that may disturb these times and there shall be no excuse for any Muslim after that. 4

It is well known that the labor law in the world limits the hours of work to eight hours a day into two periods; the first one from eight o'clock AM to the midday, and the second from two o'clock PM to six o'clock PM, where there is a break of two hours for rest at midday. In this case, a Muslim can offer the Dhuhr and Asr prayers during this time of rest before coming back to his work.

1 This advancing and delaying is from the beginning of the Dhuhr Prayer's time to the last of the Asr Prayer's time, and the same thing is to the Maghrib and Isha' Prayers. But as for one who has enough free time, it is recommendable for him to offer each prayer in its time.

2 Sahih Muslim, the book of Prayer, chapt. gathering between two prayers.

3 Sahib al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 133, book of Times of Prayers.

4 There is a saying by our ulama, "whenever the conditions of something are too many, the chance of its availability is too little"; therefore, make it easy that you may get it! Thus, he offers the Dhuhr and Asr prayers in their right times and come back to his work with tranquil mind and pleased conscience. If the work is continuous all the day as in mines and some other factories, in this case, the labor law determines the work in seven continuous hours including a break of half an hour for rest. A company may manage the work by dividing the workers into three groups alternating each other in this way :

1. A group works from 7 o'clock AM to 2 PM
2. A group from 2 PM to 9 PM
3. A group from 9 PM to 4 AM

By this Divine wisdom of the times of prayers, all the groups can offer their prayers in their right times without any difficulty or embarrassment, and no one after that may say that he cannot find time for the prayer or that he misses the right time of prayer. 1 By this, we follow the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna in offering the prayers in their times, for the prayer is a timed ordinance for the believers. At the same time, we keep away from ourselves and from others any hardship and embarrassment. Perhaps, most of the youth, who give up the prayer, may return to it when they know that Allah the Almighty has permitted it in this way, and the messenger of Allah and his progeny (peace be on them all) offered it in this way. 2

1 Of course, we do not talk about the very special cases that may force workers to work for ten continuous hours or more that is called "overtime". Such workers, as well, can offer the prayers if they want, for the wudu and the offering of the Midday (Dhuhr) and Afternoon (Asr) prayers take about six minutes. Do these workers not go to the WC? Does this not take time?

2 In many cases, the prayer can be offered according to the conditions of those cases; a traveler in the airplane can offer the prayer while sitting in his chair, a patient, who cannot move, can offer it while lying down, a handicapped person can offer it in the way possible to him, and so on.

This Is The Zakat

The school of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) (Shiism) is different from the other Islamic creeds who believe in the obligation of the zakat but not the khums. They see that khums is required only in the booties

of war. As for the Shia, they believe that zakat is obligatory and khums is obligatory too in all what a Muslim gains in a year. According to the Prophetic Sunna, zakat is obligatory in the following things:

1. Gold and silver coins
2. Livestock; camels, cows, sheep, and goats
3. Four yields; wheat, barley, date, and raisin

If we ponder on these mentioned articles of zakat, we see that they do not satisfy the need of building an integral Islamic society that looks forward to development, to the keeping pace with modern ages, getting rid of poverty and neediness, assuring of safety and good living, building of hospitals, universities, streets and highways, assuring of good abodes, enough salaries for unemployed people or the disabled by diseases, old age, or any disability.

It is known among all nations that the wealthy class forms not more than twenty percent of a nation, the middle class that hardly satisfy their needs may form fifty percent, and thirty percent of people are poor and needy, who are in terrible need of any help. If we rely only on the zakat in those afore mentioned items that the Prophet (a.s.) had mentioned and with the defined value of 2.5%, it shall be not enough to satisfy the needs of people and the requirements of the age. One, who has thousands of olive trees, shall say: 'zakat is not obligatory on me, because the messenger of Allah (a.s.) has not mentioned olive among the yields included in zakat.' The same can be said about many other yields, besides tons of fishes taken out of the sea by modern tools. One, who has thousands of poultry, does not have to pay zakat as well. One, who has many real estates, also does not have to pay zakat. If we suppose that all these people are convinced to pay the zakat, they shall not pay except 2.5% of their properties, which is a very little amount that neither fattens nor avails against hunger! As for the khums that Allah the Almighty has imposed on Muslims when saying :

And know that whatever thing you gain, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. 1 We have talked about this verse in details in our book "To be with the Truthful". Whoever wants more details let him refer to this book. We do not want to convince people that the Umayyads misinterpreted and annulled this verse and limited its rulings to the booties of war only, but we want to show what the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) did in this concern, and the Ahlul Bayt (the people of the house) are more aware of what there is in the house! They did according to the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna and said that Muslims must pay the fifth of whatever they gain within a year.

If we think deeply through a simple mathematical operation, we shall clearly see the great difference between the reality that Muslims live today and the theory that has not been applied except to a very small group of people, and disorderly. Let us take an example; a Muslim who has

ten thousand dinars. If this Muslim follows the rulings of the Sunni, he shall pay the zakat from his wealth in a percentage of 2.5, which is two

1 Qur'an, 8:41.

hundred and fifty dinars, but if he follows the rulings of the Shia, he shall pay the fifth of his ten thousand dinars, which is two thousand dinars. When this Muslim pays the zakat according to the Sunni, nine thousand and seven hundred and fifty dinars shall remain with him, but when he pays the fifth according to the Shia, eight thousand dinars shall remain with him. On this basis, a poor Muslim among the Sunni gets two hundred and fifty dinars for his living of a year, whereas a poor Muslim among the Shia gets two thousand dinars a year. The difference between the two poor Muslims is too big. If the zakat of the Sunni suffices for the living of one poor Muslim, the zakat of the Shia suffices for the livings of eight poor Muslims.

If we compare between a rich Muslim and a poor one among the Sunni, we shall find the following account; 9750 in opposite to 250, which is a very weak proportion, forming one of forty. It means that if the poor Muslim has one loaf of bread, the rich one has forty loaves. In the comparison between a rich Muslim and a poor one among the Shia, we shall find the following account; 8000 in opposite to 2000, which is a reasonable and acceptable proportion, forming one of four. It means that if the poor Muslim has one loaf of bread, the rich one has four loaves. In another word, a poor Sunni Muslim has one share, whereas a rich Sunni Muslim has thirty-nine shares. The difference between the two is too immoderate, and this is what Allah has warned us of when saying :

So that it may not be a thing taken by turns among the rich of you. 1

1 Qur'an, 59:7.

Indeed, in this case, the rich, who form only twenty percent of the nation, possess ninety-five percent from the general wealth, and the rest of people possess five percent from that wealth. As for a Shia poor Muslim, he has one share from every four shares, and this difference, though it is big, is not so immoderate. The rich here possess seventy-five percent of the wealth, whereas the poor possess twenty-five percent of that wealth. 1 In addition to that, Islam encourages voluntary charities. In fact, Islam imposes on Muslims some other obligatory charities like the zakat al-Fitr (after fasting in Ramadan), sacrifices in the hajj, penances, and some vows. Islam also gives a legal ruler the right to take from the rich and give to the poor in some necessary circumstances, or put it in the public treasury.

However, the reality is other than what Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an and what the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny did. You see that the wealth of the Muslim nation is in the hands of the rich who are very few, but they possess everything, whereas the poor, who are the great majority, have nothing.

1 What confirms this fact is that many Sunni economists say that the proportion of 2.5% of the zakat is no longer sufficient to meet the increasing expenditure where the different needs of man have become much more than his needs in the past ages. In this concern, they think that they must not follow the very literality of the Qur'anic texts concerning the political and economic affairs!!! Refer to An Introduction to the Islamic Economic, by Dr. Abdul Aziz Fahmi, p. 163.

Instead of accusing the texts of being insufficient- and this is from the daring things that the Sunni are blamed for, where they claim that the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna do not include all rulings, and so they (the Qur'an and the Sunna) need other tools and analogy!! "And if they had referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those among them who can search out the knowledge of it would have known it" who are the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). So, the right solution is to add the khums to the zakat and not limit it to the booties of war only. In this way, Muslims shall be prosperous.

The communist blocs knew this phenomenon in the Muslim world; therefore, they attacked it very easily and attracted its learned youth in the colleges and universities by the theory of the distribution of wealth among all individuals. Most of the Muslim youth believed in communism and denied their religion and beliefs. They began blaming and criticizing their fathers and grandfathers. In fact, Islam met a very dangerous affliction by communism that destroyed it from the inside and at the hands of its learned youth. The very Muslims fought against Islam when they got the reigns of authority, and then, they affected too much their peoples. If we are safe from communism, we have to blame the first Muslims who distorted the rulings of Allah and caused the affairs of the Muslim nation to get to what Muslims are in now of poverty, underdevelopment, ignorance, and blind fanaticism. There is no power save in Allah, the Most High, the Most Powerful!

TEMPORARY MARRIAGE AND ITS IMPORTANCE

One of the most dangerous problems that destroy human societies is the problem of sex. As it is well known, sex is the basic factor that makes life continue as willed by Allah the Almighty Who has made masculinity and femininity in everything; man, animals, plants ... etc. Allah says :

And of everything We have created pairs that you may be mindful. 1 And Allah has made wives for you of your kind, and has given you children and grandchildren from your wives. 2

In order that life continues, male and female must marry and produce offspring. This is the norm of Allah in His creation. For marriage and production, Allah has created this unruly instinct in man and woman equally that each gender wishes and longs for and yearns to have sexual intercourse with the other to satisfy his or her lust. In this way, an ovum is pollinated by a sperm and a fetus is formed that develops until it becomes adult to repeat the same role, and thus, life continues. And He it is Who has created man from the water, then He has made for him blood relationship and marriage relationship, and your Lord is powerful. 3

1 Qur'an, 51:49.

2 Qur'an, 16:72.

3 Qur'an, 25:54.

The Islamic Sharia has put conditions and limits for this instinct in a way that not all people may bear. Islam has prohibited sexual intercourses, except by lawful marriages in order to preserve honors, lineage, offspring, and dignity of man. The sexual lust may wake in a young boy and a young girl in their early years when they are not more than ten years old. In the west, these young boys and girls may practice sex so easily and with no limits, for western peoples think it is a natural thing, having no any problem, and therefore, they encourage it and pave the way for early mixing between boys and girls, or that parents may practice sexual intercourse before their children to make them be used to see their parents naked, besides many other behaviors that open widely the door of adultery before young boys and girls. Before fourteen years old, a girl would have lost her virginity. This is very natural there to a degree that when a man gets married to a woman and finds her virgin yet, he is astonished and considers that woman as unnatural or savage.

For Muslims, the matter is totally different. There is no room for uncovering private parts before children at all, and there is no place for mixing between males and females, except within certain limits conditioned by the required veil of woman. Add to that the moral and psychological education that children receive from parents, especially girls from mothers. Thus, girls grow up with shyness and fear of sex, bearing in mind that their virginity is the criterion of their chastity, abstinence, honor, and perfection of body. Most of times, a young woman may come to the marital house while she knows neither much nor little about sex, and perhaps the husband may be so too. This is if they live in a Muslim society that follows the actual laws of Islam, or we may say 'the ideal Muslim society' that seems to be imaginary, because it is very difficult, or somehow impossible, to be applied, for it is not possible to suppress this instinct in males or females anyhow. Whatever we try to ignore this instinct, we shall not be successful most of times. When the genitals and glands of a male and a

female grow and they feel the desire to sex, they shall practice sex in a way or another, whatever parents try to watch them. There is no doubt that males and females shall find an opportunity to meet, and in the least, boys may practice sex with boys and girls with girls. Certainly, this is a dangerous matter, having bad effects and psychological diseases that may be a main cause in destroying family, and then leads to the corruption of all the society. If western societies have exceeded all the limits in practicing sex, until people there have become like animals in satisfying this unruly lust, which is considered there as a conceded right of male and female and a part of their freedom even if they are married and living with their spouses. As they think, a husband has to regard the feelings of his wife if she wants to satisfy her lust with whomever she likes, and a wife has to regard the feelings of her husband if he wants to do the same with any woman else than his wife. However, in the Arab and Muslim societies, we are very immoderate in the matter of sex to the extent that we have burdened our societies with psychological complexes, sexual suppression, secret practices, and yearning to woman with fatal lust as of animals.

WOMAN IS WRONGED AMONG US

Woman, in the Arab and Muslim societies, has been wronged in general, since the day when she was buried alive until nowadays. Muslims have not understood until now that woman has body and soul just like man; she has intellect, heart, feelings, and instincts. Man cannot claim that he has honor and dignity, except that woman can claim this too. Allah says in the Qur'an : O you men, surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware. 1 So their Lord accepted their prayer: That I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other. 2

Of course, we do not deny that Allah the Almighty has given man a degree over woman for leadership and constancy, but it has nothing to do with preference at all. Allah the Glorified says : They (women) have rights similar to those against them in a just manner, and the men are a degree above them, and Allah is Mighty, Wise. 3

1 Qur'an, 49:13.

2 Qur'an, 3:195.

3 Qur'an. 2:228.

The wisdom of Allah has determined that man and woman are equal in rights and duties, but a degree has been given to man over woman in leadership, because Allah has given man more power and strength and made him responsible for guarding and protecting woman. When a woman feels fear and fright, she hurries to seek protection of her man or husband. Therefore,

Allah has imposed fight and jihad on man and exempted woman from that. In fact, Allah has imposed on man to fight and be martyred for the sake of woman. Allah the Almighty says : How should you not fight for the cause of Allah and of the feeble among men and of the women and the children. ¹ This is what I have understood from the Holy Qur'an. It does not mean that Allah has preferred man to woman; certainly not! There may be a man better than one thousand women, and there may be a woman better than one thousand men!

We must take the messenger of Allah (a.s.) as our exemplar. He treated woman in a way that the history of humankind has never known better than. Despite that some of his wives hurt him, he did never hurt any one of them at all. He always ordered Muslims to be good to women. Nevertheless, some bad spirits of the pre-Islamic era remained in Muslims until now. You may hear that some man has divorced his wife because she did not bear a male child. Until now, they raise from the Qur'an only this motto "and beat them", besides their sayings that "woman is the seed of Satan", "she is sedition", "she is shame", "she is scandal" ... etc. Woman among Muslims has remained underdeveloped and ignorant. She has no right to learn and study. Some people do not agree with her leaving her father's house, except to the house of her husband or to grave. ²

¹ Qur'an, 4:75.

² There is no doubt that a jurispudent or a preacher is the son of his milieu and society. He carries out his mission within the reality he lives in; therefore, he does not tire himself to show the ruling of Allah, face the new

Some men declaim and repeat false traditions before learned men and women that the messenger of Allah (a.s.) has said, "The best thing for woman is that she should neither see a man nor let a man see her."

What kind of mentality is that, which contradicts what has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, concerning the freedom of woman and her rights equal to man's? Otherwise, what is the meaning of this saying of Allah :

Say to the believing men that they should lower their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely Allah is Aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their looks and guard their private parts and do not display their adornment except what appears thereof. ¹ This is very clear evidence on the freedom of woman in going out of her house as man does, and that she is ordered to lower her gaze and observe her modesty exactly as man is ordered to do.

Yes! The mentality of the pre-Islamic age has remained prevailing to some extent in the Arab and Muslim societies. Muslim men have exploited the degree that Allah has given to them over woman to give themselves all the rights and deprive woman of all her rights, leaving for her nothing.

changes, and keep to justice. He may not observe whether people in that society are excessive or wasteful. For example, is woman wronged, or she is given her full rights?

Let us not rely on some weak traditions that do not fit our milieu and social backgrounds. A jurisprudent may not talk about the essence of hijab (Islamic veil), learning of woman, mixing (of males and females), the influence of the TV ... etc., but he does not wake up, except when he is shocked by changes, sudden events, and the cultural invasion of the west against us, and then he behaves as a surprised one; either he clings to his heritage and fanaticism, or gives a fatwa at a hurry and after time, hesitating between nomadism and modernity, open and closed society! 1 Qur'an, 24:31)-31.

I do not go far if I say that the main reason behind our underdevelopment is our injustice against woman and closing the doors before her; no learning, no culture, no communication, no association, no going out, and no right to choose her spouse. Until recently, woman is married without her choice. In fact, how can she choose while she does not know any man? 1 Thus, a woman may find herself, in the night of wedding, before a man in the age of her father and she can do nothing except to submit unwillingly, and then it is said to her, "this is what Allah has determined for you; therefore, you have to be patient!" Then, she becomes like a productive milk cow that has nothing to do, except to give birth, suckle, and bring up, because her husband likes to have many children! Detestation and hatred may rise and grow between the two spouses, because the husband is too old and may not understand the needs and feelings of the young wife, and most of the time, he leaves her alone, suffering the pains of the instinct and lust. And since the husband is jealous of her young wife, he tries his best not to let her see any man and not to let any man see her. However, the sexual lust defeats everything and this woman falls in the first opportunity, as a reaction against suppression and deprivation. Consequently, unlawful relations come out. Forbidden fruit is sweet! Many a woman has a lover, and many a man has a lover or lovers, and how many the children are, who

1 The hooks of history and biographies mention that women came to the meeting of the Prophet (a.s.) and asked him to find them good husbands. Once, some women came to the Prophet (a.s.) and said to him, "We cannot be alone (to talk) with you in your meeting of men ...". He assigned to them an appointment in the house of someone, and then he went to them at the appointed time and place.

The Prophet (a.s.) permitted women to do some works. He said to the wife of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, who was forced to work to spend on her husband and children, "...you shall have reward for your spending on them, so spend on them!" There are too many examples concerning the

affairs of woman, showing her freedom and rights.

are born on the expense of others! Then, doubts, troubles, problems, quarrels, and at last divorce comes. The society is corrupted and high values are replaced by disorders, treasons, adultery, vices, and all sins. Unfortunately, this is what actually happens in our societies nowadays. Therefore, we must face these painful facts and not overlook them or insert our heads in sands like an ostrich. Since the first day when I understood Islam and became certain that it is the best law at all, I called in meetings, conferences, and publications for the liberation of woman for making her learned and erudite. Surely, woman is the half (or more) of society, and when the half of society is paralyzed, the body of all the nation shall be unable to carry out its functions and shall die little by little. From the injustice of our society against woman is that we have thought of the lust of man only and found effective solutions for it, in order to "close the door of excuses"; therefore, we have built public places for men to satisfy their desires whenever they like, and with no denier or objector! Rather, it seems that the matter is too natural to the extent that sometimes a brother may meet his brother, or some man may meet his nephew or another relative there in that place, and he may feel proud and victorious, because that place is a proof of manhood where no one can enter it except one who is manly!

If such a man, who feels proud before his fellows that he has gone to such place and been acquainted with different women, comes back home and sees his sister look at passersby in the street from the window, shall turn the house upside down and beat that poor sister until she bleeds! 1

1 Some Sunni jurisprudents gave a fatwa that one, who looks at a foreign (non-mahram) woman, is to be whipped (one hundred whips), relying on the saying of the Prophet (a.s.), "The two eyes may commit adultery", mentioned by Ahmed ibn Hanbal in his Sunan and by at-Tabari in his al-Kabeer from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud.

Why did jurisprudents think of the satisfaction of man's lust and they did not think of the satisfaction of woman's lust if they were just? I do not call for the liberation of woman, as the case in the corruptive West where people do not believe in values and good morals and they believe in freedoms only, but I call for the liberation of woman within the limits that Allah and His messenger have determined such as hijab, abstinence, modesty, and chastity, and beyond that she is free to do, as her brother does in her father's house and as her husband does when she is married. If we actually do that, we shall save ourselves and our society from corruption, vices, and underdevelopment. There is no doubt that jurisprudents thought of that, but they regarded it unlikely to found public places for women to satisfy their lusts, because this is a thing impermissible.

They might deduce that from the fact that Islam permits man to marry one, two, three, or four women at the same time, but prohibits that for women in order to preserve lineages and children, because woman is the one who bears and gives birth and not man. However, this instinct is always vital in woman. Therefore, sufficient solutions must be found to preserve woman's dignity, honor, and entity exactly like man.

Has Islam ignored this fact? Has Islam permitted for man what it has not permitted for woman? The Prophet (a.s.) talked much about the subject of sex and gave sufficient solutions to keep the Muslim society safe from corruption and sin. He said, "O folk of the youth, whoever can afford to get married let him get married, because it is better in lowering the (unlawful) gaze and better in being chaste. Whoever is not able let him fast, for it shall be as protection to him." 1

1 Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 6 p. 117.

It is a sufficient solution for the youth, who can afford to get married. Through marriage, the youth, males and females, can satisfy their sexual lust whenever it is required and save themselves from erring. The problem is only with those who cannot afford to get married. At the time of the Prophet (a.s.) where marriage was so easy and simple and did not cost much, there were young men who could not get married. Then how is it nowadays where marriage has become too difficult and costly for many reasons? From among these reasons is that young men and young women keep on learning until the age of twenty-five, and after that, they look for a suitable job that may assure their living. Then, they must prepare a house with its furniture in compliance with the requirements of the modern ages that have become necessary. One may be, at least, thirty years old to be able to get married.

A young man and a young woman, who can biologically get married in the tenth or twelfth year of age, cannot actually afford to get married, except in the age of thirty. Then, what do they do during all these long years? If we say that they have been so abstinent and chaste and have not thought of sex at all, we may be liars to ourselves, for they are human beings and not angels; especially in this age where mixing is something very natural everywhere. A male student mixes with a female one in the university. In fact, since primary school until high education, there is mixing between males and females that is often away from parents and observers. A girl may live with her boy classmate for nine months, but she does not live with her family except for three months. So what happens there?

The answer is well known by the students themselves and by their teachers, and by everyone who works inside or outside his house.

This Is AL-Mahdi

Muslims in general in the past and the present believe in the Savior who shall bring back to them their glory and honor and repair what tyrants and oppressors have corrupted and destroyed, and restore to them their religion. This savior and reformer is Imam al-Mahdi (a.s.), about whom the Prophet (a.s.) gave good news when saying, "If nothing remains in this life except one day, Allah will prolong that day until al-Mandi, who is from my progeny and whose name is like mine, shall appear to fill the earth with justice and fairness after it shall have been filled with injustice and oppression." ¹ This savior of humankind, who will complete the course of the prophets and messengers in the earth so that the Light of Allah be perfected at his hands, is the center of the attention of all three major religions; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The Jews, Christians, and Muslims all are waiting for him and claim him to be from them according to their many traditions about him.

Since we believe definitely that Islam is the last of religions and that there shall be no prophet after Muhammad (a.s.), so we are certain with no any bit of doubt that al-Mandi is from the progeny of the Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) and he is the last of the twelve infallible imams, behind whom Jesus Christ (a.s.) will offer prayer as a kind of honoring and glorifying.

_____ ¹ Refer to Al-Jam' bayna as-Sihah as-Sittah (gathering between the six sahihs), chapt. signs of the Day of Resurrection, and al-Aqa'id al-Islamiyyah (Islamic beliefs), by Sayyid Sabiq.

In this quick discussion, we do not want to study every thing about al-Mandi, as to the history and the Prophetic traditions, for we have already talked about that in our book To Be With the Truthful, besides that many books, theses, and encyclopedias have been written on al-Mandi (a.s.). We only want to show the belief of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) where they stand alone away from the rest of Muslims in rulings and beliefs that comply with the challenges of the world, and in fact, they may precede challenges sometimes.

The Jews, Christians, and Muslims have been overcome by materialism to an extent that they have gone away from religion and been liable to atheistic, materialistic, and secularist doctrines, where spiritualities have become too weak in them. Therefore, they are looking for solutions, which they do not find except in the divine good news.

Moreover, the violent wars that have exhausted humankind, especially the poor and the weak

everywhere in the world, who die of hunger in millions, while tyrants and oppressors compete with each other to possess the most fatal weapons and to occupy nations by all means; culturally, economically, and technologically. Were it not for the hope of a better future with justice, peace, and noble life that man looks forward to, there would be no meaning or sense in this life. And were it not for the belief of Muslims in Allah, Who has promised to support His religion to prevail over all religions when saying :

He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse. 1 Were it not for this faith, despair would fill their souls and they would be losers! It is this faith that fills souls with energy, vitality, the love of life, expectation of a better future, and the waiting for deliverance, because after hardship there shall come easiness.

1 Qur'an, 9:33.

This is al-Mandi, who is the hope of Muslims, or in fact the hope of all humankind. The belief in al-Mandi is not a matter of mocking. Allah the Almighty says :

Say: O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return to your Lord time after time and submit to Him before there comes to you the punishment, then you shall not be helped. And follow the best that has been revealed to you from your Lord before there comes to you the punishment all of a sudden while you do not even perceive. Lest a soul should say: O woe to me, for what I fell short of my duty to Allah, and most surely I was among scoffers. 1

1 Qur'an, 39:53-56.

1 Ashraf in Tunisia are the sharifs or sayyids who are the descendants of the

them." One hundred Sharifs came to him, and before finishing the prayer, and though it was very hot, the sky rained heavily. It rained for three days and all valleys overflowed until people were afraid of drowning. 1 When I was guided to the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), thanks be to Allah, and wrote my first book "Then I was Guided", I did not imagine that it would receive all this reception and fame.

By the way, it would be not useless to mention here an anecdote that my dear friend and great scholar Dr. As'ad Ali, who was a great man of letters, told me once when I visited him in his house

in Mazza in Damascus. As we were talking, among a group of his disciples and friends, he reminded me of something that delighted me too much. He said, "I read your book Then I was Guided and knew its secret."

I asked astonishedly, "What is the secret of the book?" He said, "When you came in to visit our master (Imam) Musa al Kadhim (a.s.) and said, 'O Allah, have mercy on him if he is from the righteous', he did according to the saving of Allah "And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet with a better (greeting) than it or return it" 2 and greeted you better than your greeting to him. When you greeted him, saying, 'O Allah have mercy on him', he greeted you with better than your greeting, saying, 'O Allah, guide him (to the right path)!' So Allah responded to him and guided you, and after that came this book, and this was the secret of its success."

Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) via Ali and Fatima (peace be on them).

1 Sheikh Jallool al-Jaziri mentioned in his book "al-Fawa'id al-Fakhira Lezad ad-Dunya wel Aakhira- the excellent benefits for the provision of this life and the afterlife", p. 78, quoting Tarikh (history of) ibn Dhayyaf that once when the epidemic (plague) spread in Tunisia, the ulama met in the Zeytoonah Mosque and decided to gather forty sharifs who all had the name Muhammad and to pray Allah to save them from that plague. They gathered the forty men by whose means Allah saved people and the plague vanished.

2 Qur'an, 4:86.

This is a fact that I have believed in and it has entered into the deep of my heart. I have believed that the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) were the secret behind the success of the book with no doubt. I met no one except that he showed me his admiration of the book. The book has been published more than twenty times and translated into seventeen languages in the world. Thousands of Muslims everywhere in the world were guided to the truth by this book, especially in Africa where there were no Shia there and Muslims lived there naturally with no sectarian backgrounds. 1

1 In Iraq and Iran, people narrate many true stories about the charismata of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) that have actually taken place. The visitors, students, and scholars from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other places, who have visited or come to study and live near the shrines of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and been blessed by their holy tombs, also narrate such stories.

"THEN I WAS GUIDED" IN THE COURT

Believing that "people are on the religion of their rulers" and taking the messenger of Allah (a.s.) as my exemplar when he sent many letters to the kings of his time, inviting them to Islam, an idea

came to my mind. In his somehow similar letters to the kings of his time, the messenger of Allah (a.s.) said, "Be Muslim and you shall be safe and Allah will reward you twice, but if you turn your back, the sin of the magi shall be on you." This is an evidence that "people are on the religion of their kings" that if the kings believe, people believe, if they disbelieve, people disbelieve, and if they become polytheists, people become polytheists too. The idea that preoccupied my mind was to send copies of my book "Then I was Guided" to the Arab kings and presidents accompanied with friendly letters fitting their positions that they might remember (Allah), for surely reminding would benefit the believers! Since they are at the head of the countries of this nation, so they are the men of power and authority, and their responsibility for the fate of people and the fate of the Muslim nation is a very great responsibility. "Every one of you is a shepherd (responsible) and every one of you is responsible for his herd (subjects)" as the Prophet (a.s.) said.

Believing that the successful ones in this life and the afterlife are the true believers who do good, enjoin on each other the truth, and enjoin on each other patience, and that "No one of you is a true believer until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself", and "if Allah guides by you one man, it is better to you than the world and all what there is in it"...for all that, I sent copies of "Then I was Guided" to King Hasan the Second of Morocco, President ash-Shathli bin Jadid of Algeria, President Zaynol Aabidin bin Ali of Tunisia, President Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi of Libya, King Husayn bin Talal of Jordan and his brother (heir apparent) Hasan bin Talal, and to King Fahad ibn Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia. I sent each book with a special dedication and a letter of highly reverence by registered mail. The copies of the book were already received by all consignees. I knew that from the receipts I received from the post office that had the signatures of the secretaries of all the kings and presidents I sent the book to. I waited too long for the replies, but I received non except one reply from Zaynol Aabidin bin Ali the president of the Republic of Tunisia, who expressed to me his sincere thanks.

Once in a press conference in India when I mentioned this story, I was asked, "Do you think that President Zaynol Aabidin has read your book?" I replied, "The president is so busy that he has no time to read a book, but if he has read it, he is thanked for that, and if not, he is excused. The important thing is that he was the only one, from among the kings and presidents to whom I sent the book, who replied to my letter." While waiting for the replies and before receiving the reply of President Zaynol Aabidin, I traveled to Tunisia and there were two hundred copies of "Then I was Guided" with me in my car. In the port, the officials of the customhouse hesitated to detain the copies of the book. They sent for their boss, who said when he saw the book, "Is this the Green Book?"

I said, "Its color is green, but it is not the Green Book of al-Qadhdhafi."

He said to me, "Do you not know that letting books pass in this quantity is forbidden and it requires a permit of import?" I said, "O brother, this is my book and I am its author. I have offered

a copy as present to his Excellency the President." He took a copy of the book and compared the name of the author to the name in my passport. When he became certain, he said to me, "I too want you to give me a copy as gift."

I said, "With great pleasure! What is your noble name?" As I was writing a dedication to him, he was signing the permit. I arrived in Tunis the capital and gave some copies as present to some of my friends there. Then I traveled to my birthplace the city of Qafsah, where I met my relatives and old students. After two or three days, a half of the copies were distributed. I thought of my traditional opponents, too, and gifted each one a copy of the book with a dedication by name and with some nice words of courtesy, out of my belief in the saying of Allah :

And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend. 1 I said to myself that they might be guided to the truth and leave fanaticism, or at least they might refrain from troubling me. Then, I traveled to some neighboring towns and villages and distributed the rest of the copies. Nothing remained with me in my car except three or four copies that I kept for what would be later on.

President Zaynol Aabidin returned the glory of the Zeytoonah University and it was reopened after it had been closed for thirty years. He sent government delegations to each district to appoint the director, whom the people of the district chose to manage the branch of the Zeytoonah University there. Unfortunately, the one, who was chosen in Qafsah and it was celebrated for his

1 Qur'an, 41:34.

appointment, was the most spiteful one to me and to the Shia. This man seized that opportunity and gave the copy that I had sent to him to the commissioner of the district, accusing me of dangerous accusations. The commissioner of the district gave permission to the governor to arrest me, take back all the copies of the book that I had gifted, and to send for the people, who would be found to have the book, in order to be questioned and a report to be written on the case.

The agents of police and security forces began carrying out the orders and looking for me everywhere. At that time, I was a guest of one of my friends, who was a manager of a big department. My son-in-law came to me there in a hurry and told me about the matter. He suggested that I should go immediately to the borders and leave the country. I thanked him for his feelings towards me and said to him, "If I do that, I shall give them an excuse against myself. I will wait for them with all courage, for I have nothing to fear of, nor have I done anything that I may regret."

The agents of the security forces came and took me with them to the police station. There,

questioning and argumentation began with the chief of the chief inspector with some of politeness and respect until the governor arrived. As soon as the governor saw me, he shouted at me, "Do you want to make a revolution in this peaceful country? Do you think that we are in Iran here?" He turned to inspector and said to him, "This master has brought three thousand copies of a book full of blasphemy, and brought one hundred millions of money to distribute them among people, inciting them to revolt and rebel."

I said to him with challenge, "Firstly, my book is not a book of blasphemy nor does it call for revolt. If it was so, I would not present a copy of it to his Excellency President Zaynol Aabidin, nor would I come to Tunisia at all. Secondly, if I have brought three thousand copies, I had to come with a big truck to carry them, but the car, which I have come with, is now distrained with you. You can fill it yourselves to see how many copies it may contain. Thirdly, you say that I have distributed one hundred millions of money among people. I gainsay and insist on you to bring even one man, saying that I have given him even one fits. After all, I did not come to the country stealthily or by force. I came in a lawful way and was searched like the rest of people. If I had one hundred millions, they would not let pass without a permit. Surely, you are more aware of these affairs than I am."

Finding my speech reasonable, he asked me, "How many copies of the book have you brought?" "Twenty copies", I replied. He said, "Give me two hundred names of the persons whom you have given copies of your book." I said, "This is not possible, not because I refuse to give you the names, but I really do not know them. For example, from among them there are some of my students, whom I have not seen for ten years or more; I know them by the face and do not remember their names."

After consultation, they decided to set me free that night, but to come back to them the next morning. Early in the morning, I came to them at the appointment. They made me ride in a car accompanied with two men from their agents. We went to the neighboring villages in order to take back the copies of the book from the houses that I knew. On the way, I discovered that my two companions were mustabsir 1 (Shia). One of them said to me, "Professor, have you forgotten me? Do you not remember me? I was one of your students in the seventies in the Preparatory School of Teachers. Last night I did not sleep, for I took your book from the (police) station and read it all. I swear by Allah that I am like you (Shia)." The second said, "I, too, read your book two days ago when one of my friends brought it to me. It opened my heart to many things that I doubted before and could not find convincing answers to them except in your book. Now, I

1 Mustabsir is a term used to refer to a Sunni who willingly turns Shia.

am a Shia." We all laughed for that chance and did not feel the distance. In three days and from

many villages, we collected copies of the book as possible as we could. According to the orders, the Security Force agents delivered a summons to everyone who was found to have a copy of the book. I met the commissioner and after a short talk, he said to me, "They frightened me of you and said that you are an extreme Shia and are financed by al-Khomeini. They said that you say it is permissible to marry one's sister."

I laughed saying to myself, "Now, I know my friend!" I told him that the matter was the matter of suckling and it was mentioned in the same book. He smiled and took out a copy of the book from his drawer, saying to me, "What you said is true, but I blame you, because you have not offered me a copy of the book. If you did since the day of your coming to Qafsah, nothing would happen. However now, the case is out of our hands. It is in the court that shall decide on the matter. After that, you come to us to give you back your passport to travel with peace."

I understood from this man's speech that they, after having been certain about my innocence of all rumors and having known, through the distrained documents, that the president had received my book from Paris, moved the case to the court to only see the contents of the book whether or not they were dangerous to the regime or religion. I went to the court after having known from the Shia agents that all the persons, who were questioned, did not say about me except good. The questions that they were asked are as the following :

1. What is your relation with at-Teejani?

The answer was either "my teacher" or "my friend".

2. Did he give you money?

The answer was "No, I have never seen even one fil from him."

3. Did he ask you for money?

The answer was "No at all! He did never ask me for anything". In the court, I requested to meet the vice-president. After his permission, I went in to him. I saw a copy of my book on his table with a piece of paper inside it. I said, "Sir, I am the author of the book. I have come to Tunisia for one week, but now I am detained since a month without any guilt. I am very worried about my wife and daughters who are alone in Paris."

He interrupted me, saying, "The book must be read and then to announce the judgment. I have read about one third of it, and inshallah I shall finish it tonight. Tomorrow, the judgment is given on it." I said, "Sir, I do not ask from you anything, but to act quickly." He said, "Come to us tomorrow afternoon!" The next day, I went there and was surprised by the vice-president who received me at the door and embraced me very warmly, saying, "I believe in every thing in this book, O doctor!"

My eyes were filled with tears and I did not believe what my ears heard. He said to me, "Please, come in! We will write down the judgment for you. If you had spent millions to make public your book, it would not have been made public, as it has become now. Some of my friends called me from Tunis asking me for your book, which has been called "Salman Rushdi al-Qafsi (of Qafsa)" I sat down, praising Allah and thanking Him too much for His favors and assistance to me in the same court in the case of suckling, and then in the case of the book where they intended evil against it, but it changed into good. Mr. Vice-president wrote down the judgment and gave it to the clerk to type it with a typewriter. He ordered his clerk to release the distrained copies of the book, and then said to me, "I would ask Your Honor for ten copies of the book to offer them to my friends. If you like, we can give the rest of copies back to their owners from whom they were taken."

I said, "I myself will do that after receiving the judgment." Some officials came to me asking for the book. I gave the Vice-president what he wanted and distributed more than ten copies in the court. Mr. Vice-president gave me the judgment after having signed it himself. He ordered his clerk to carry the rest of copies to my car. Then, he gave me my passport, and took leave of me.

I left, being so delighted and happy. I gave back the copies of the book to their owners, putting in every book a copy of the judgment. Thus, the book was circulated even in coffee-houses with no fear or embarrassment. Since forbidden fruit is sweet, this temporary distraintment made the book so famous and caused an intellectual revolution to some people. Because of this, many people turned to be Shia.

And Allah turned back the unbelievers in their rage; they did not obtain any advantage, and Allah sufficed the believers in fighting; and Allah is Strong, Mighty. 1 When I went back to Paris, I found among the letters that had come to me the letter of Mr. Zaynol Aabidin bin Ali, the president of the Tunisian Republic.

Really, I cannot hide my interest and pride in the charismata that I have seen and am still seeing by the virtue of the Ahlul Bayt (peace be on them). The last of our prayer is that praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be on the noblest of prophets and messengers, our master and guardian Muhammad and on his pure, immaculate progeny. Muhammad at-Teejani as-Sammawi the Tunisian

1 Qur'an, 33:25.

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