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Editorial

On the occasion of 13rd of Rajab, the anniversary of the birth of Imam Ali ibn Taalib (p.b.u.h.), the first infallible Imam

Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) is the most unique character of the Islamic history. He was born in the holy Ka'aba, and was martyred in the mosque. According to the Quranic verse, Imam Ali was the pure soul of the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h. and h.f.).

Let us go through one of the verses and related explanations from both the Sunni and Shia writers, about the magnificent values and virtues of the holy Imam.

"And from people there is one who sells his own soul to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the servants." (The holy Quran/2:207)

In Ghaayat al-Maraam, it is recorded from Tafseer al-ha'labi, Part I, in the exegesis of chapter Baqarah, verse 207, the sayings of Allah ***"And from people..."*** that when the Messenger of Allah intended to migrate (to Medina), he left behind Ali Ibn Abi Taalib in Mecca, to repay the Prophet's debts, return the trusts that were lying with the Prophet, and ordered him in the night- while his house surrounded by the polytheists

- that he should sleep in the Prophet's bed. He said to Ali, "O Ali! Cover yourself with my sheet and sleep on my bed. God willing, no difficulty shall reach unto you from them." Ali duly obliged. So, Allah revealed to Gabriel and Michel, **"Verily, I made brotherhood between you two and made the age of one more than the other. Which one of you is willing to sacrifice his life for the other?"** Both of them chose life, So Allah revealed unto both of them, **"Can't you two be like Ali Ibn Abi Taalib? I created between him and Muhammad while he was willing to sleep in the bed of Muhammad and sacrifice his life. Descend to the earth and protect him from his enemies."** So Gabriel stood near his head while Michel came near his feet. Gabriel said:

'Congratulations to a person like you, o son of Abu Taalib- Allah is taking pride in you in front of the angels.' At this juncture, Allah revealed on His Messenger who was on his way to Medina - in praise of Ali Ibn Abi Taalib- **"And from people there is one who ..."**

Al-Maaleki records *al-Ghauaali* in his book, 'Ehyaa ai-Uloom al-Deen' writes, "The night when Ali Ibn Abi Taalib slept in the bed of the Messenger of Allah, Allah revealed to **"Gabriel and Michel, "Verily, I made brotherhood between you two, and made the age of one more than the other. Which one of you is willing to sacrifice his life for the other?"** Both of them chose life and loved it.

So, Allah revealed unto them, **"Can't you two be like Ali ibn Abi Taalib? I created between him and Muhammad while he was willing to sleep in the bed of Muhammad, protecting him with his life: and preferring the Prophet's life to his own. Descend to the earth and protect him from his enemies,"** So Gabriel descended near his head while Michel came near his feet. Gabriel said, 'Congratulations to a person like you, o son of Abu Taalib, Allah is taking pride in you in front of the angels' At this juncture, Allah revealed. **"And from people..."**

In *Majma' al-Bayaan*, it is also narrated from *al-Sudi*, from *ibn Abbas*,

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that this verse was revealed concerning Ali Ibn Abi Taalib, when the holy Prophet took flight from the polytheists to the cave and Ali slept in his bed. As a result, this verse descended when the Prophet was between Mecca and Medina. It is narrated that when Ali slept in his bed, Gabriel stood his head while Michel was near his feet.

Gabriel told him, "Congratulations! Congratulations to a person like you, o son of Abu Taalib! Allah is taking pride in you, in front of the angels."

Hamid Farnagh

Lessons about Prophethood

The Philosophy of Besat

(Part three)

Muhammad Biabani Oskouei

Abstract: the present article is the third part of the series "lessons about Prophethood" which deals with the issues like differences between prophets, the reasons of sending them and the ways to know them. In this article the issue of "the philosophy of Besat", and "differences in the grades of prophets" have been dealt with.

1. *Differences in the grades of Prophets and its relationship with the philosophy of Besat*

In the holy Quran and traditions from infallible imams, a lot of reasons and benefits have been mentioned regarding appointing Prophets; but as the holy prophets are not at the same level and their responsibilities and goals are different according to their differences in their grades, it is essential to study these different grades prior to the philosophy of Besat.

God the Almighty states these differences regarding their grades in the holy Quran: ***“we have made some of these messengers to excel the others among them are they to whom Allah spoke, and some of them he exalted by (many degrees of) rank; and we gave clear miracles to Isa son of Maryam, and strengthened him with the holy spirit Some of these differences are being God’s”*** (the holy Quran, 2: 253)

Some other differences have been mentioned in Infallibles’ traditions which will come later.

One of the aspects of excelling some prophets over others is that some of them brought a new religion and others, in fact, followed them.

As we have read, Noah, Moses, Jesus and Mohammad were like this. Imam Riza said, “in fact, some Prophets called Ulul-Azm as they were owners of a religion, because all prophets who came after Noah up to the time of Abraham were Noah’s followers, and they followed his book. All prophets in the time of Abraham and after him, followed Abraham, and his book up to the time of Moses. Then all prophets in the time of Moses and after him up to the Jesus’ time were his

followers and all prophets in the time of Jesus and after him up to Muhammad were his followers”¹

There exist other reasons for them being Ulul-Azm.²

It is worth mentioning though Jesus possessed a religion and a book but mostly he followed Torah’s Ahkams and commands; because Bible was the book of examples and sermons, rather than commands, laws and regulations. Jesus made some difficult commands of Torah easier, facilitated religion for his followers.

Imam Sadiq said, “In Bible, sermons, examples and boundaries of religions (do’s and don’ts) had been revealed to Jesus.

“And there was no word about Ghisas (taking revenge), laws and regulations regarding religious limitations,... .The easier version of laws which were declared to Moses had been revealed to Jesus, as it has been narrated from Jesus who has said to Bani Israel, ‘to permit you to use the things which were forbidden for you.’”³ ...”⁴

On the other hand, before Noah, Adam had a book; but it is clear that merely possessing a book does not mean having a religion; as David had a book “Psalms” but did not had a religion. In a tradition, the number of books of Prophets had been counted to be 104 books which from them 50 books belonged to Shias, 30 books belonged to Idris and 20 books belonged to Abraham, add to them Torah, Psalms, Bible and Quran.⁵

¹ Oyon Al-Akhbar Al-Riza, 2/80 & ref. Bihar Al-Anvar 11/34

² Ref.Bihar A-Anvar 11/33, 35,41,43,56; Mostadrik Safinah Al-Bihar 7/206 & 207.

³ The holy Quran; 3:50

⁴ Bihar A-Anvar 14/251 , rf. 14/234

⁵ Bihar A-Anvar 11/32 & 60

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The other aspect of superiority of some prophets over other prophets is that some of them could reach the position of Imamat. Imam Sadiq has stated 4 levels for prophets:

- For some prophets, their prophethood did not exceed their own self and no one else has prophethood on them.
- For some, though their prophethood did not exceed themselves, they had to follow Imams of their time.
- For some, they were appointed to be leader of a tribe, but they were under the guardianship of another imam as well and they were not Imam themselves.
- And the last group, they were Prophets and Imam both. The tradition of Imam Sadiq regarding the mentioned 4 levels is as follows:

The prophets are in 4 levels:

1. A prophet who is prophet for himself only and do not go above this.

2. A prophet who could see in his dreams and could hear (holy things) but not in other time; he is not appointed to anyone and an Imam has custody over him, like Loot and Abraham; Abraham was Imam for Loot.

3. A prophet who could see in his dreams and hear and could see the angle of revelation while he is awake , and he is appointed to others, a few or a lot of people, like Jonah ***“and he was sent to 100000 or more... .”***

4. A prophet who could see in his dreams, and could hear and he could see and hear while he is awake and also he is Imam, such as Ulu-Azm prophets. Abraham was a prophet but did not have Imamat position until God Almighty said, ***“I appoint you to be Imam of people.”***

Therefore, we can conclude that some prophets even didn't have the responsibility of propagating to their own relatives even. And a lot of prophets, in fact, were unknown to people. In the intervals of the era of Adam and the era of Noah there existed a lot of prophets who were not mentioned in Quran. Noah spent a lot of years of his prophethood lonely, without any follower or companion.

Imam Baqir said, "Between Adam and Noah, there existed some prophets who were unknown to people, and because of this, their names did not mentioned in Quran, unlike the declared prophets whose names are in Quran. Noah lived among his people about 950 years and no one shared prophethood with him. He went to a group of people who denied those prophets who lived between Adam's time and his time. And the proof of this claim is God's words as He said, **'Noah's tribe denied prophets.'**"

Therefore when some prophets' prophethood did not exceed themselves, and while some others should hide their prophethood, it becomes clear that the philosophy of Besat and its results and benefits do not include all prophets; these results and benefits mostly are related to those prophets who were imams in addition to be prophet.

2. The philosophy of Besat

2.1. Awakening Fitrat

As we know, and as it has been mentioned in Quran and infallibles' traditions, all human beings enjoy the innate gnosis of God.

It means God the Almighty introduced Himself to the soul of people all in the Zar world and then He made people confess to His-Being-God.

So all people came to this world knowing this reality, but upon coming to this world they forget (by God's will.)

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Therefore, this knowledge about existing God is an inborn fact and due to this all prophets said, **“their messengers said: 'is there any doubt about Allah, the originator of the heavens and the earth?’”** (*The holy Quran; 14/10*)

It means there is no doubt in (the existence of) God. But this inborn knowledge could not blossom per se. Therefore God sent His prophets to people to awaken people from ignorance, to remind them of that forgotten blessing which is "knowing God", asking them about the treaty they made to God in the Zar world.

Imam Ali said, he appointed messengers among them and He sent prophets consequently to ask people about their treaty and remind them of that forgotten blessing. Because of this God Almighty mentioned His prophet as a reminder and named Quran as Zikr.

God says, **“therefore remind, you are only a reminder, you are not charged to oversee them.”**(*The holy Quran; 88:21-22*)

“This is only a remembrance and a clear holy reading (Qoran).”(*The holy Quran; 36: 69*)

“I do not ask you a wage for it. Surely, it is a reminder to the worlds.”(*The holy Quran; 6:90*)

Therefore one of the benefits of prophethood and messengership is to remind people what they have forgotten about their innate knowledge about God, drawing people’s attention to God and ask them to follow their Fitra.

It is worth mentioning that religious commands and regulations are all based on Fitra, aiming at stabilizing and strengthening that Fitrah.

2.2. Introducing the true way of worshipping God

Worshipping God means being humble, a follower and being a servant to God¹.

Worshipping is of the duties of a servant in front of his/her Lord and Owner. Imam Sadiq summarized the truth of being a servant in 3 things: 1. The servant should comprehend everything belongs to God, and use them as God orders. 2. The servant should rely on God for his affairs. 3. Allocate all his/her time to serve Him. Imam has been said, "What is the truth of worshipping?" He answered, "3 things": 1. The servant does not recognize any right for possessing things that God has donated him; he knows everything belongs to God, and applies things as God ordered. 2. He trusts God for his affair. 3. He uses all his time for the things God ordered.²

One of the basic goals of creation of human beings and Jinn, as the holy Quran asserts, is worshipping God: "***I have not created mankind and jinn except to worship me.***" (The holy Quran; 51:56)

The meaning of worshipping here is willingly worship not imposed-inborn worship, as all things are humble inside in front of God, worshipping Him. It is impossible to find anything which is not dependent on God. Imam Ali said, all things are humble for him and in front of His Majesty everything is humble. No one can escape from Him to another one to prevent any harm or absorb any benefit.³

The purposeful and deliberate worship will find its real meaning when we bear in our minds, we not only in knowing God's instructions and teaching but also in the quality of this worship need prophets. Because human beings when notice the majesty of God feel humble

¹ Lisan Al-Arab, 3/271

² Meshkat Al-Anvar/325; Bihar Al-Anvar, 1/224.

³ Nahj Al-Balaghe/sermon 186; Bihar Al-Anvar 74/315

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with all their heart in front of God's Greatness and will realize how invaluable and needy they are.

At this time he does not know how to appreciate all His blessings while he is so small. Therefore human beings even after knowing God need a guide to be guided how to worship; lots of nations by going away from prophets and their instructions became dualist or atheist.

Noah propagated about 950 years among his nation, inviting them to God, ***"for you have no god except him. Will you not be cautious?"*** (the holy Quran; 23:23)

But they insisted on their false belief, saying,

"Do not renounce your gods, do not leave Waddan or Suwa'an or Yaghutha, or Ya'uqa, or Nasra." (the holy Quran; 71:23)

Hood also invited his nation to worship God, asking them to leave their idols, warned them about God's Torture, but they insisted on their idol-worshipping and asked Hood to fulfill his threats. ***"Remember Aad's brother who warned his nation in (the valley of) al Ahqaf. Warners had already preceded and succeeded him saying: 'worship none except Allah! (he said) 'Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a dreadful day. "Have you come to turn us away from our gods (they replied)? If what you say is true then bring down that which you promise us!"*** (The holy Quran; 46/21-22)

The story of Abraham and breaking the idols, the story of Moses and his leaving nations for several dayshave been mentioned in the holy Quran. Likewise, God has narrated the story of Jesus – Jesus and his mother who worshipped Him and God questioned Jesus if he asked his nation to know him and his mother as God; he answered that I never said anything but the command of my God.

"And when Allah said: '(prophet) Jesus, son of Mary, did you ever say to the people: "take me and my mother for two gods, other than

***Allah?... I spoke to them of nothing except that which you ordered me, that you worship Allah, my lord and our lord"* (the holy Quran; 5/116-117)**

There is no doubt in the idol-worshipping of the people of Arab countries before Prophet.

The Ka'ba was turned into a home for idols and imam Ali on the day of overcoming Mecca, broke them all by Prophet's order, cleansed every corner; because of this, Imam Ali mentioned one of the goals of Prophet's Besat is releasing servants of God from worshipping idols and leading them towards God.

"For sure God Almighty has appointed Muhammad to be his messenger in right; to release His servants from worshipping another people to worship Him... ." ¹

In another word, those nations in which prophets have been appointed were pictured as promise-breakers, dualist, atheist

And it shows one of the most important goals of holy messengers was to release people from boundaries of worshipping idols. And lead them to the unity of God, as God says, "***we never sent a messenger before you except that we revealed to him saying: 'there is no god except me, therefore, worship me.'***" (The holy Quran; 21: 25)

Imam Husain said in this regard if someone worship God in right will be needless of worshipping others.

Oh, people, by God! For sure God does not create human beings unless to know Him, then when they know Him, they will worship Him, and then due to His worship they would be needless of worshipping other ones. ²

¹ Kafi 8/386; Fallah Al-Sael/212; Bihar Al-Anvar 74/367

² Kanz Al-Foad 1/328; Elal Al-Sharaye/ 9; Bihar Al-Anvar 23/93.

Conclusion:

Prophets and messengers have different levels. For some of them, the prophethood only limits to themselves and for some it includes a specific group; for others it includes a vast domain.

Some prophets have hidden prophethood and some open. Some prophets have the position of being prophet and being imam at the same time but some just the position of being a prophet.

According to the various levels of prophets the results and benefits will vary.

One of the fundamental benefits of prophethood is reminding human beings of God.

Worship means to be humble. One of the most important goals of prophets was to invite people to worship God and leave worshipping idols aside.

Twenty Three Days with Ghadir

From medina to the pond of Ghadir-khum

(11 days left to Ghadir)

Adnan Derakhshan

Zahra Sabouhi

Abstract: the present article is a summary of what has happened before Ghadir. In the previous issue of Safinah we went through the first twelve days before Ghadir and now we will start from the eleventh day left to Ghadir " 7th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH" to the day of Ghadir 18th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 A.H.

*Only 11 days left to the Day Abraham Was
Saved from Fire*

Thursday, 7th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 7th, 632 AD

Mecca is still accommodating its honorable guest, a guest who is deep in thought about a mission, which he must accomplish. On one hand, he must carry out the rituals of Hajj one by one and familiarize the Muslims with its sacraments, and on the other, he must attend to the greatest and most crucial duty in this journey.

What has made the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) so anxious? What does the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) fear that he senses danger concerning the destiny of his followers? Let us take a closer look and search amongst his companions to find the reason, which has distressed the Prophet (PBUH)!

We know that upon leaving Medina towards Mecca, the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) had more than sixty sacrifices with him and there were others too who had sacrifices with themselves.

By the Prophet's (*p.b.u.h.*) order, these people were to stay in Ihram after performing the Hajj ceremony Mecca until they slaughtered the sacrifices in Mina. However, the duty of those who had not brought any sacrifice with them was also clear. They were to come out from Ihram after doing the Safa and Marvah rituals and then again wear the pilgrimage garb to leave for Arafat. This was their religious duty, which the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) had ordained.

Alas! There were ill-minded ones, who despite their Prophet's (*p.b.u.h.*) insistence, went their own imprudent way and opened their mouths in objection. As if they had more knowledge about the laws of religion than the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) himself!

How will these ill-minded people submit to Allah's crucial orders regarding the successor of His messenger?

Only 10 days left to the day of joy and happiness

Friday, 8th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 8th, 632 AD

Today is the day of Tarviah. "Tarviah" means storing water. The reason this day is called the day of Tarviah is that the pilgrims must store water in this day to use in Arafat, Mash'ar-ul-Haram and the special rituals of Mina. This is a tradition originating from the Hajj of Abraham (*p.b.u.h.*). He had been commanded by Gabriel to take water with him to perform the Arafat, Mash'ar and Mina rituals. It was in this particular day that the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) and all his companions left Mecca for Arafat by the way of Mina.

The Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) had brought sixty animals for sacrifice with him from Dhil Holaifa, the same place where he had put his pilgrimage garb on. Because of this, after finishing the tavaf (circling Ka'ba) and Safa and Marva rituals in Mecca he kept on his garb so he could continue with the rituals in Arafat and Mina. Amir-almo'mineen (AS) and all those which had sacrifices with them did the same thing. But those people who didn't have sacrifices with them and had taken off their pilgrimage garbs in Mecca - except for a minority who looked like Muslims but disobeyed orders - wore their pilgrimage garbs again but this time with the intention of The Greater Hajj (Tamatto'e), and set off with the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*).

Mecca, in the last months of the Prophet's life, refreshes the memories from the beginning of the Prophet's (*p.b.u.h.*) mission; the time that he had orders from God to announce Ali (AS) as his successor. In a feast, which he had invited his relatives, he held Amir-almo'mineen's (AS) hand -who had at most 13 years of age - and said:

“This (youth) is my brother (akhi), inheritor (vasiei) and successor (khalifati) among you; listen to what he says and obey his orders .”

Only 9 days left to the celebrations of the Angels in the Skies

Saturday, 9th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 9th, 632 AD

Today is a day to revise all we have done and all we have not done; a day to confess to all our sins and ask God for forgiveness; today is the day of Arafah and the place that we are speaking about is the desert of Arafat.

The Arafat desert is an extraordinary place and more extraordinary is the day of Arafah.

In such a day, the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) stayed in Mina until sunrise and then went to Arafat. If we look clearly, we will see his tent in a place called Namrah and if we pay attention to what he says we can infer that he is somehow announcing his departure from this world. The sun of the life of Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) is slowly setting. The last voyage of the Messenger of God (*p.b.u.h.*) will end with him announcing the last duties of his mission.

The Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) is very worried about something. He knows that in the final days of his life he must introduce his successor to the Islamic community.

The Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) has Harsh and sensitive days ahead of him. The trustworthy Messenger of God must make his followers prepared in order to receive the message from God. It was just last night that he was announcing for the believers the message Gabriel had brought him:

“Real welfare, complete salvation (and genuine prosperity) is for those who love Ali (AS) during his lifetime and after his death.”

*Only 8 days left to the Day that Adam's
(AS) Repentance was accepted*

Sunday, 10th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 10th, 632 AD

Today is a memorable day, a day which has the fragrance of the pure servitude of Abraham and Ishmael (AS). Centuries back, on this day, the father and son, successfully completed the test of Allah and won the badge of honor for centuries to come. After their sacrifice, that day became known as “The Feast of the Sacrifice” (Eid al-adha).

Today the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) and His companions sacrificed their animals in Mina. Probably sometime after this incident the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) addressed His companions and repeated what he had said many times:

“I leave two weighty and precious (Thaqalayn) things between you which if you hold on to, you will never go astray; the book of Allah and My Ahlul-bayt (etrah). These two will never be separated from each other until they are returned to me at the pond of Kowthar”

This brilliant speech of the Prophet is known as The ‘Thaqalayn Tradition’. It was repeated again in the sermon of Ghadir. Alas, with all the emphasis the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) put towards his Ahlul-Bayt and their importance it didn’t take long for events like the Saqifa, martyrdom of Fatimah (AS) and the tragedy of Karbala to occur.

Only 7 days left to the day of greeting

Monday, 11th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 11th, 632 AD

The 11th of Dhil-hajjah is the day of fighting with Satan. Following the rituals done in Mina, the Prophet of God (*p.b.u.h.*) and His followers passed the night in this place and now, they are performing the 'Stoning' ritual (ramye jamarat) to show their hatred towards Satan.

No one has fought Satan and his followers better than Amir-almo'mineen (AS) :

"He alone put to death twenty seven of the seventy pagans (mushrekeen) killed in 'The Battle of Badr'. In 'The Battle of Uhud', He killed the flag-holders of the enemy and it was then that Allah made the Muslim's victorious. In The 'Battle of the Ditch' (khandaq or Ahzab) he had a duel with amr ibn abde vod that excelled all the (good) deeds of the Prophet's (*p.b.u.h.*) nation until the Day of Judgment. 'Khaibar' narrates the legend of a fighter who stood alone against the Jewish hero. He is the one whose blow halved the helmet and the head of 'Marhab', –the Jewish hero- down to his teeth.

It was then that the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) said to Amir-almo'mineen's (AS) , "O Ali, go on forward, for Gabriel will accompany you in killing from the right, Michael from the left, Izrael from the front, and Esraphiel from the back and Victory of Allah will accompany you from above and my prayers will follow you ."

Only 6 days left to the Day of Adornment

Tuesday, 12th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 12th, 632 A.D

Today is the last day of staying in Mina and the last stages of Hajj will finish. The Prophet has a sermon in the Mosque of Khif in which he again repeats the hadith of thaqalayn .

The Prophet of Islam (*p.b.u.h.*) is going to bring to an end, one of his most important duties, which is the practical teaching of the rituals of Hajj according to the customs of Abraham (AS). He has explained the mostahabbat (recommended rituals) and the wajibat (compulsory rituals) of Hajj to the people.

There is some evidence that shows after the ceremony finished, Gabriel (AS) came with a message:

“...Allah sends you his salutes and says: ‘I have sent no Prophet except that I have ordered him to install the person that will take up his position and bring to life his rituals and orders, once the time of his death arrives. Those who obey this order of the Messenger of Allah - because of Allah- are the truthful and those who oppose him are the liars. O Mohammad your fate (or return) to Allah and his Heaven is close and He orders you to Install for your nation after yourself Ali ibn abi-Talib... Allah the Most Majestic orders you to teach him everything that he has taught you, put in his protection what He has put into yours and (give him the things given to you as) trusts”

The heritages of the Prophets, the Books of Adam, Noah, and Abraham (*p.b.u.h.*), the Torah and the Bible, the stick of Moses, the ring of Solomon (*p.b.u.h.*) and the inheritances which must only be in the hands of the ones chosen by Allah and have been passed on to the Prophet of Islam from the previous Prophets and saints, must now be given to Amir-almo'mineen (AS).

Days later and sometime before his death, the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) calls on to Ali (AS) and in a private sitting passes on the divine legacies to His Holiness.

In this way, the ancient Legacies of the Prophets are given to Amir-almo'mineen (AS) and these will in turn be passed on to the Imams after Him...and now are in the hands of the Chosen One, Imam Mahdi (AJTF).

Only 5 days left to Gathering of the Faithful for celebrations and Joy

Wednesday, 13th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 13th, 632 AD

It is the last hours of the presence of the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) in Mecca and the caravan of the hajjis will soon leave towards their own lands.

In only a few days Gabriel (AS) will descend with another honor for Asadullah (the lion of Allah) Ali (AS). Gabriel (AS) will come to the Prophet of God (*p.b.u.h.*) and bring with himself the beautiful title of "The Leader of The Faithful" (Amir-almo'mineen) from God, exclusively for Ali (AS). Then the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) will order each of His followers to greet the Owner of Dholfaqr, and call him by the title of "Leader of the Believers" and say to him:

"Peace Be Upon You, O' Amir-almo'mineen"

In these few days during the Hajj rituals the Prophet has been constantly speaking about the virtues of Ali (AS) and Hinting that he will be his successor. The hypocrites and those who lusted for power are now starting to conspire. The first acts of conspiracy are carried out in these days, while the caravan is still in Mecca. A group of the Prophets (*p.b.u.h.*) companions secretly gather inside Ka'ba and signed a pact:

“If Mohammad passes away or is killed, we shall not allow His succession to be passed on to his family.”

This pledge is known as the “Sahifat-ul-Mal'unah” or the “Cursed Script”.

*Only 4 days left to the Day of Being Beneficent
to the Faithful*

Thursday, 14th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 14th, 632 AD

Today, Mecca farewells forever with its dear guest: the Messenger of Allah (*p.b.u.h.*). By the command of God, the hajjis start their trip back and crowds of people, which their number exceeds one hundred and twenty thousand, start their five-day journey towards Ghadir. About twelve thousand people from Yemen and five thousand residents of Mecca are accompanying the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) to be present at the Ghadir ceremony.

As time goes by, the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) gets closer to conveying the last Message of Allah. He is still thinking of the outcome of this message. Friend and foe have no doubt that the only person appropriate for the succession of the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) is Amir-also'mineen (AS); He is the first Muslim and the first person who prayed behind the Prophet.

Years before, on the day that the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) called his relatives to Islam (called Yom-ul-Inzar) Amir-also'mineen (AS) was introduced as the brother, legatee, and successor of the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*)

On Lailat-ul-Mabeit , it was he, who put his life in danger for the sake of prophet-hood. In the Battle of Badr, He broke the back of polytheism. In the Battle of Uhud, the sky sings for Him:

“There is no sword but Dholfaqar and there is no courageous youth but Ali”.

He is the conqueror of Khaibar.

His virtues are mentioned in the Quran and the Prophet of Islam (*p.b.u.h.*) knows all these wonderful qualities more than anyone else; Yet, there are seditious ones among His followers whose hearts are filled with hatred and jealousy towards Ali (AS).

“O' Ali nobody loves you, but the believers and nobody dislikes you but the hypocrites”

A heart that is filled with faith, loves Ali. Ali and his children are the axis of the affection of Allah. Those who love them love Allah and their hearts fly towards them. Imam Hasan al-Askari (AS) has said:

“My child, Mahdi... Know that the hearts of the people who Obey God and who are pure are eager towards you as birds are towards their nests.”

Only 3 days left to the day that Allah forgives the sins

Friday, 15th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 15th, 632 AD

After leaving Mecca, the caravans reached “Saref” and have now arrived at “Mar-o-Zahran”. There are still a few stops left to “Ghadir al-khom”. Choosing “Ghadir” as the ceremony place is important because of several reasons:

First, it is near the place where the roads separate for different lands and countries.

Second, the future Hajj caravans, either leaving or arriving at this place, can refresh their memories and their commitment; so the memory will always stay in the hearts.

Third, “Ghadir” is a perfect place for the three-day program and the sermon which the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) will give to that large population. The region of “Ghadir” is a vast desert. Every year, the floodwaters flow from the east towards the west and after passing through “Ghadir”, come to “Johfa” and continue their way towards the red sea.

In these regions, natural lakes have been formed which get filled up by the floodwaters. The water remaining in these lakes is used by people who have given them the name “Ghadir”. A lot of “Ghadirs” have been formed in different regions which have been given different names. This particular Ghadir has been given the name “The Ghadir of Khom”. Beside this lake, five ancient ‘Somar’ trees have been a means of shade and resting place for tired passengers, for years. The Prophet’s speech will take place under the shade of these trees.

*Only 2 days left to the sending of blessings to
Mohammad and his family*

Friday, 16th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 16th, 632 AD

The great caravan of the Prophet is still on its way to Ghadir. It has left “Marrozahran” and is getting closer to the next village called “Osfan”.

There is only a little way left to Ghadir. The place that God has decreed His Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) to announce the authority (Wilayah) of Ali (AS) and the eleven Imams from his descendants (*p.b.u.h.*) and also introduce Ali (AS) as the ruler of the faithful. God will never leave

earth without a proof (Hujjah) and after the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*), Ali and his descendants (*p.b.u.h.*) are the Hujjahs on earth.

Meanwhile the founders of the saqifa have signed a treaty and are readying their forces to prevent Ali (AS) from becoming the successor of the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*). It was in these final days of the Prophet's life that the wars of "Jamal", "Seffin" and "Nahravan" really started, and the religion of Islam, instead of taking peoples souls from earth to the Heavens, itself became a prisoner of the hell created from the desires of light-headed people. A group of worldly men have set up their dirty tents in the gardens of religion and a group of hypocrites are destroying the religion in the name of defending it.

All evil thoughts in Islam originated here. One of the effects of this filthy agreement and ominous leaflet is that the successor of Ghadir is -years later- martyred in his prayer place and the worshippers of money and lust who oppose his judgments become stronger. In the "cursed script" (Sahifat-ul-Mal'unah), there are unwritten lines which adjoin Ghadir to the slaughter yard of Karbala. As Imam Sadiq (AS) said:

"Hossein (AS) became martyred, when that agreement was written down"

The day of Ghadir truly separated the faithful from the hypocrites. Imam al-Ridha (AS) said:

"The example of those who accepted the guardianship of Ali (AS) in the day of Ghadir is like the Angels who prostrated to Adam (AS) and the example of those who refused his authority is like Satan (who didn't prostrate)."

*Only 1 day left to the day of Thanking Allah
and Praising Him*

Sunday, 17th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 AH

March 17th, 632 AD

After passing “Osfan” the great caravan of Ghadir with its five suns: the Prophet, his daughter Fatemah, Imam Ali, Imam Hassan and Imam Hossein (*pbut*), has reached “Ghodaid”. “Ghodaid” is only a little way from “Johfa” which lies beside the Ghadir of Khom.

The message that will be announced in Ghadir is the greatest message of Islam and that is the wilayah and guardianship of the Ahlul-bayt (AS) which is the most important principle in Islam. The five pillars of Islam are the prayers (salat), Zikah, Hajj, Fasting and wilayah. The prayers are decreased while on a journey. The elderly, sick and those on a journey are not allowed to fast. Zikah must be paid by only a special group of people and Hajj only becomes compulsory when special conditions occur. But accepting the wilayah is compulsory for all men, women, young and old, and they are not excused to reject it in any situation. The Ghadir has a story to tell about those who rejected the wilayah:

In the last hours of the third day after the ceremony of Ghadir (21st of Dhil-hajjah) a man called “Nu’man ibn Mundhir” came to the Prophet with some of his followers and said:

“Oh, Mohammad... When you said: 'who ever that I had authority over now Ali has authority over them' (man kunto mowlah fahadha ali’un muwlah) were these your own words or were they gods orders?”

The Prophet of Islam (*p.b.u.h.*) answered: “By the Allah that there is no God but He, what I said was from Allah”. The ill-fated man turned back to go back to his camel and said:

“Oh God, if what Mohammad is saying is true and they are your orders then hit me with a stone from the sky and send a chastisement on me.”

He hadn't reached his camel when suddenly a stone fell onto him from the sky and killed him. After this Gabriel brought this verse of the Quran: “A requester asked for a chastisement to befall, (A chastisement) for the disbelievers that no one can repel.”

*Congratulations on The Greatest Eid of Allah,
perfection of Islam and completion of God's
Blessings.*

Monday, 18th of Dhil-hajjah, year 10 A.H

March 18th, year 632 A.D

Near midday, after arriving near the “Ghadir of Khum” the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) takes the road to the right which will lead him to the Ghadir. He then says:

“Oh People, grant God's request. I am the Messenger of God.”

This means that the time has come to announce an important message. Therefore, the following orders are given: Everyone must stay here. Those who have already left must return and those that have not arrived yet must speed up...little by little the crowd gathers at the specified place. All those present are asked not to stand beneath the ancient trees growing there, because it is the place that the speech is going to be delivered at.

After these orders, all riding animals are halted and their riders get off. Then tents are set up for the three-day stay. The sunlight is so hot and the heat of the ground is so intense that the people have put a part of their dress on their heads and part of it underneath them to sit on.

Meanwhile the Prophet has ordered his special followers, Salman, Meqdad, Abu-Dhar and Ammar to prepare a place for the speech beside the trees. They cut the thorny bushes from beneath the trees and remove large stones. Then they broom the ground and spray the soil with water to make it cool. After that, they hang a canvas between two trees to shade the speech place. They then pile up rocks onto each other in the shaded place and on top of the rocks, put horse and camel saddles. This is then covered with a cloth. The formed structure is about the height of the Prophet and is situated in the middle of the crowd so that everyone can hear the Prophet's voice.

Because of the massive population, 'Rabi'ah' who has a loud voice is chosen to repeat the Prophet's speech.

After the midday prayers, the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) goes up the special place made ready for him. He then calls Amir-almo'mineen (AS) to come up and stand beside him on his right. He then puts his right hand on Amir-almo'mineen (AS) shoulder and after praising God starts his historical speech which took more than an hour to deliver:

“Oh people, I have to announce an important order from God concerning Ali ibn Abi-Talib and if I don't deliver this message, it is as if I haven't delivered any of God's messages.

“O Prophet! Announce (to the people) what has been descended to you from your lord and if you don't, you have not announced His message(s)”

“Gabriel has come to me three times and has ordered me from God to stand in this place and announce to (all people) black and white, that Ali ibn Abi-Talib is my brother and executor of my will and my successor over my nation (ummah) and that he is the Imam after me. His position towards me is the same position that Aaron had towards Moses (*p.b.u.h.*) except that there is no Prophet after me. After God and me, he is the one that has authority over you. God has sent down a verse to me about this matter:

“Your guardian is only Allah, his messenger and the believers; those who perform (daily) prayers (salat) and pay the zakah while they are bowing.”

“My cousin, the son of Abu-Talib (*p.b.u.h.*), is the person who said his prayers and paid zakah while he was bowing. He has God in mind in all situations. My lord will not become satisfied with me unless I announce what he has sent to me about Ali (AS).”

The Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) then announces the leadership (Imamah) of the twelve Imams after him until the end of the world so that no one would have greed in having authority over the Muslims.

“There is no Halal but what God, His Messenger, and they (the Imams) have made Halal, there is no Haram but what God, His Messenger, and they (the Imams) have made Haram. The Almighty God has informed me about His Halal and Haram and I have taught all of the Haram and Halal of the Book of God to Ali. Oh people, God has announced him as His Imam and he who denies Ali's authority, God will never accept their repentance and will not forgive their sins. Gabriel has brought me a message from God and has said: ‘Those who become Ali's enemy and do not accept his authority, God will curse them and will always be angry with them.’

Oh people, Ali and my noble children from his generation are ‘the smaller precious thing’ and the Quran is ‘the larger precious thing’. Each one of these informs about the other and they always agree with each other. These two precious things will never be separated from each other until they come to me at the pond of Kowthar. Be aware that Amir-almo'mineen (AS) is not anyone but my brother here: Ali. Know that no one is allowed to be the leader of the believers except for him.”

The Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) then summoned Amir-almo'mineen (AS) towards himself and held his elbows and rose him so that everyone would be assured that this is the Ali that the Prophet is speaking of. The Prophet then said with a loud voice:

“All those that I had authority over, now Ali has authority over them.”

The Prophet then faced the sky and said:

“Oh lord, when you made this subject clear about Ali and set him (as the guardian of the believers) in this day, you sent down this verse about him:

“Today I perfected your religion and completed my favor on you and I am satisfied of your religion being Islam.”

“He who chooses a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him and he will be a loser in the after world.”

It is as if the Prophet knows that the hypocrites and the devils would be waiting on the roads of guidance to martyr the Imams for their own profits. Because of this, the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) said in another part of his speech:

“Be aware that the last Imam (Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance)) is from us. He will be victorious over all religions. He is the one that takes revenge from tyrants...He is the one that God has chosen. He is the inheritor of all knowledge...He is the one that the people of the past have been told about. Be aware that he is the person that God has given authority to on earth.”

The Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) said:

“Oh lord, witness that I announced your message.”

The Prophet then ordered everyone to pledge allegiance with Ali (AS) by shaking hands with him. Umar and Abubakr were among the first people to come forward to do this. They said:

“Congratulations O’ Ali, You have been given authority over us and all the Muslims”

They were also the first people who broke this pledge!

34. *Safinah, No. 18*

Finally, the ceremony of Ghadir ended on Thursday the 21st of Dhil-hajjah, of the year 10 AH, After 3 days and nights of taking oath for the guardianship of Ali from everybody.

It was like this that the lights of guidance were illuminated and the life-saving ships were introduced. Now we await the arrival of the Promised Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) ; he who will fill the earth with justice. It is now our duty to spread the message of Ghadir, because this is what the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) wants from us:

“Those present must send this message to those who are absent and fathers must tell their children...until the Day of Judgment.”

*Devotion and Thirst: The Role of
"Water " in the Permanence of the
Battle of Ashura in Muslims '
Historical Memory*

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Introduction

Shiites can easily be identified by their utmost devotion to the 3rd Infallible Imam al-Husayn, especially on the ground of the Battle of Ashura of 61 AH/ 680. Out of several phenomena associated with the Battle of Ashura, paucity of water and its restricted availability to and in the camp of Imam al-Husayn has exerted the most heart-rending effect on the Shiites' historical memory. A manifest mark of brutality and ruthlessness, the Umayyads and the Abbasids did all sorts of efforts to destroy and wipe off any slightest mark of the crime committed on Ashura. To achieve this end, composing a single couplet meant death sentence for the poet and the reciter. Still more striking was the Abbasids' severe restrictions for anybody who showed the slightest inclination to pay a visit to the blessed tomb of Imam al-Husayn in Karbala, Iraq. Nevertheless, the memory of Imam al-Husayn and the Battle of Ashura have reached us. This never-fading memory and devotion has something to do with water.

Granted that water is a sign and symbol of life, it has double functions in the Ashura incident. On the 2nd day of Muharram 61 AH, water meant life when Imam al-Husayn ordered his associates to give water to the enemy soldiers whose mission was to corner him in a remote place, far from water. It means the intense thirst which Imam al-Husayn's camp endured for three successive days.

The revival of the memory of Ashura owes to a lot to the efforts of the 6th Infallible Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq. According to an authentic piece of hadith, anybody who invokes God's curse for the enemies of Imam al-Husayn after each instance of drinking water they will be rewarded with ample rewards. Ashura survives so long as man needs water for survival.

Shiite Muslims venerate their religious dignitaries and the Infallibles. This veneration reaches its high when it comes to commemorating the tragic martyrdom of the 3rd Infallible Imam al-Husayn. This comes from the fact that Imam al-Husayn and his more than 100 companions were martyred thirsty by the troops dispatched by `Ubayd Allah b.Ziyad, then the Yazid-appointed governor of al-Kufah.

Although the first horde of the Kufan army, under al-Hurr b. Yazid al-Riyahi (a former enemy commander who later on repented and joined Imam al-Husayn and was martyred) upon arriving the region of Karbala on 2nd Muharram 61 AH/ 2 October 680 received water from the camp of Imam al-Husayn, the Kufan army banned Imam al-Husayn's encampment from having access to water from the 7th Muharram to Ashura, 10 Muharram. In consequence, Imam al-Husayn's front had to defend their noble Islamic faith and themselves and took part in the imposed Battle of Ashura despite intense thirst. This paucity of water for the camp of Imam al-Husayn has since made the imposed Battle of Ashura a manifest example of a perennial battle between humanity and brutality.

Since the Battle of Ashura and the tragic martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn, the Umayyad, Marwanid, and Abbasid rulers were keen to nip in the bud any endeavor to revive the memory of Imam al-Husayn, and the Battle of Ashura. To achieve this end, it was not until the time of the basically Iranian Shiite Buyid dynasty that Baghdad never witnessed any public and open commemorative demonstration and mourning commemoration in memoriam Imam al-Husayn and the Battle of Ashura. In the time of the Umayyad, Marwanid, and Abbasid rulers, it was regarded as an act of dissidence to compose even a couplet in praise of Imam al-Husayn. Even in the relatively open time of the 6th Infallible Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq it was not that easy for the

Shiites to perform pilgrimage to the sacred tomb of Imam al-Husayn in Karbala, for an instruction from him asserts that the pilgrim was supposed to perform the ziarat from afar, not beside the tomb. In such harsh and hazardous situation the Infallible Imams were still enthusiastic to urge their followers and Shiites to remember the Battle of Ashura in Karbala.

The Infallible Imams made use of various mechanisms to remind the Shiites of the Battle of Karbala and the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn. Amongst the various ways of this propagation are the following:

enumerating the lofty rewards and virtues of performing ziarat to Imam al-Husayn's sacred tomb, the virtues of the soil of Karbala, the immediate and far-fetched effects of paying ziarat to Imam al-Husayn's sacred tomb, recommendations to pay visit to the pilgrims who have visited Imam al-Husayn's sacred tomb, and especially remembering Imam al-Husayn and invoking God's curse for his slayers after each and every instance of drinking water.

Generally, "water" stands for life; it stands for "thirst" in the context of the Battle of Ashura. "Water" stands for "life" everywhere: all living things need water for "survival". This can be discerned in Imam al-Husayn's humane act of giving water to the enemy's thirsty troops upon their arrival in the region of Karbala. (This life-granting act has received a fine semiotic interpretation in Hylen's PhD dissertation.) [1] Another facet of "water" is that it holds for the raging "thirst" Imam al-Husayn's front endured in support of the noble Islam he typified and symbolized. In this way, "water" functions as a reminder to invoke God's curse for and upon the slayer's of Imam al-Husayn.

The invocation of God's curse is reported in a piece of reliable hadith. As mentioned in Sheikh al-Saduq's *al-Amaali*, the account is

such that Dawoud al-Riqqi, a companion of Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq received the instruction from him that anybody who remembers Imam al-Husayn and invokes God's curse and wrath for the slayers of Imam al-Husayn, God certainly records the rewards of 100,000 good deeds in their records, forgives 100,000 sins of theirs, raise them 100,000degrees, it is as if they have liberated 100,000 slaves, and God will resurrect them on the Resurrection Day in a delighted state. [2, 3]

From the point of linguistic pragmatics, invocation of God's curse for and unto Imam al-Husayn's slayers and foes has a double meaning. It can be regarded as both a direct and an indirect speech act. As a direct speech act, it is the drinker's invocation of God's curse for the foes of Imam al-Husayn's front. As an indirect speech act, it signifies the drinker's implicit veneration in favor of Imam al-Husayn and his front.

In addition, it has a permanent lesson: the mankind must always venerate Imam al-Husayn. Despite the attempts of the Umayyid, Marwanid, and Abbasid rulers to wipe off the memory of Imam al-Husayn and the martyrdom he endured to revive humanity, Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq eternalized the memory of Imam al-Husayn not only for the Shiites but broadly in the historical memory of the mankind. Ashura survives so long as man needs water for survival.

Notes:

1. Torsten Hylan, *Husayn, the Mediator: A Structural Analysis of the Karbala Drama According to Abu Ja`far Muhammad b. Ja`far al-Tabari* (d. 310/923) (Uppsala, 2007), pp. 176-191.
2. Muhammad-Jawad al-Tabasi, ed., *Al-Maqtal al-Husayni al-Ma'thur*, 2nd ed. (Tehran, 2007), p. 244.

40. *Safinah*, No. 18

3. The same hadith, with some slight variation, is quoted in Ja`far b. Muhammad b. Qulawayh al-Qummi, *Kamil al-Ziyarat*, trans. Sayyid Muhsin

al-Husaini al-Milani (Miami, FL, 2008), p. 214. In the Arabic version, available in various editions (published in Najaf, Tehran, and Qom), the same hadith is indicated in Ch. 37, hadith no. 1.

Hesitation and Decision

Nader Fazli

Raziye Naghashzade

Abstract: hesitation and decision is the third part of the story about confrontation of Christians and the holy Prophet Muhammad concerning Mubahelah. In the holy Quran, there is a verse referring to this event in which Muslims and Christians agreed to gather to ask God's Anger for each other.

That night, there triggered such turmoil among Christians. Christian were divided into different groups, each of them were talking about the Prophet's unpredictable suggestion. They had different ideas:

-some of them were against "Mubahelah" because they did not know what will happen.

-some of them agreed because they believed that they were not sure that something bad was going to happen.

-some of them were hesitators. They believed that this travel was worth nothing.

-a few of them had become Muslims but they did not say any word about it.

After talking inside each group, Christians had public assembly to debate.

This time "Monzer" ibn harethe's brother talked.

When Christians in Najran were talking about the Prophet's letter, Monzer was on a trip. At the very time when they decided to go to "Medina", Monzer came back to Najran. Monzer was counted as lord of Najran. He was wise and an ideologist. On his way to Najran when he was informed of the Prophet's letter and Christian discussion of going to Najran, immediately he prepared himself and companied the group to Medina. But the majesty was not satisfied with Monzer's presence, because they believed that he has the same system of thinking which Harethe and Abui Harethe has. And it was true. On the way, Harethe let Monzer to be informed of all discussion of church and induced him. Monzer was impressed by his words.

Among Christian, Monzer as a first lecturer aroused and addressed the majesty and Aagheb:

All of us know that you, two, are the main apostles of Najranian and also apostle of this group. ***So leader of people should never betray them***¹. Now you are in a very important historical situation.

Christian's destiny depends on your decision. If Mohammad is indeed God's Prophet and you accept "Mobahelah" with them, undoubtedly, you will be inexistent as we see in history of previous religions, if any prophet curses anybody or any group, Divine Torment will descend to that person or group.²

Then Monzer made his voice louder and addressed Christians:

O' Christians, fear God's Torment. Again he addressed the majesty and Aagheb: during these days, in facing Mohammad and other Muslims I understood that they did not have any envy toward us. Even they respected us. They knew us as believers of divine book and they counted us as their friends in comparison to Jews. They believed that Jews' behavior towards Muslims was aggressive, but Christians were not like that. I heard one of Muslim's reciting Quran: "***the worst enemies to Muslims are Jews and pagans; and their best friends are those who say we are Nasara. And this is because there are God fearing and monks who are not arrogant.***" (*The holy Quran; 5:82*) Mohammad knew very well that old divine books had announced his coming and he knew that these books said something about his family and their Lord clearly.

When Jews were talking to him, asked him about some subjects which they hide them consciously, he told them whatever they have known and said: it has been mentioned in Bible that Mohammad is the God's messenger.

¹Biharul Anwar, 7:47; 18:197. This sentence was said in the open invitation of Prophet to Bani Hashim. It had been a famous saying and it had been used as a proverb among Arabs.

² Like the request of Noah from God (the holy Quran, 71: 26-27).

In order to prove the rightness of his claim, Mohammad recited a verse from Quran to them:

“Ahl –al kitab (Jews and Christians) will find Mohammad’s name about themselves in Bible and Gospels”. (The holy Quran: 7:157)

And also he recited this verse (which addresses Bani Israel: ***“I give you this glad tiding of coming a prophet who will come after me and his name is Ahmed.”*** (The holy Quran: 61:7)

Then Mohammad revealed another truth to Jews. He told them: in the second line where my name is, you can also see my minister’s name, Ali -, Abu Taaleb’s son. And in the third and fourth line you can see my two offspring’s name, Hassan and Hussain and in the fifth line their mother’s name damn of women of the world, Fatemah. My minister’s name in Bible is “Elya” and my two offspring’s names are “Shabbar” and “Shabir”, they are Fatemah’s light.

The Jewish man who was asking his questions from the Prophet, by hearing these words which indicated knowledge of Mohammad about true Bible's and Gospels' writings, admitted them and acknowledged that these words are true.¹ He along with Jews and Christians knew that in Bible and Gospels not only did his minister have mentioned, but also it mentioned the promised one, who had earlier been mentioned in the old books, a Raised one who will stand up against tyranny and will command to do good deeds.²

Mohammad knew that both Jews and Christian knew him very well, as they knew their son at their home; but some war-monger Jews and biased Christians hide rightfulness and did not confess to the rightness of Mohammad’s invitation, though they knew Mohammad very well.³

¹ Kafi, 1:429; Biharul Anvar, 24:353.

²

³ As in the holy Quran, we read about it in Baqara, verse, 146.

"Those wretched ones are those who harmed themselves, their future and hereafter. And those who harmed themselves will not have faith in Mohammad." (The holy Quran, 6:20)

Yes, Muslims were optimist about Christians. And did not count them as enemy; so, be careful you should not do something to result in your regret.

And know that I've heard from Jews whom I had known previously, that they are really interested in the performance of this Mubahelah. The reason is that Jews are both Muslims' and our enemy. In their opinion, there is no difference who is successful and who is defeated. If Mohammad's pray will be answered and Christians will be inexistent, it will be their benefit. And also, if Christians would curse Muslims and harm Mohammad and Muslims, they will be happy. So, I warn you to think about this Mubahelah and then take any action.

After Monzer's speech, anxious Aagheb said:

All of us know that God's messengers are prepared to sacrifice themselves and their dear ones in order to reach their (holy) and divine goal. Death in God's way is sweeter than life. So, tomorrow will be an important testing day. Tomorrow we will see that Mohammad is indeed God's Prophet or not?

There was such turmoil among them. Someone said: how can we understand this? Till the end of Mubahelah we cannot understand it.

Aagheb answered:

No, we will understand it before Mubahelah.

They became so curious. Even the majesty and Abu Harethe and Harethe could not understand his words. Aagheb continued thoughtfully and calmly:

Yes, tomorrow, before Mubahelah we will know the rightfulness of Mohammad. Then strongly he said:

O' Christians, be informed that, if tomorrow Mohammad comes with his army and friends in splendor, definitely, we will perform Mubahelah. And undoubtedly we will be successful in this war, but if...

In this moment Aagheb was silent for some moment and looked at the population and said:

But if Mohammad comes with his loving ones, we understand that he is right and we will not perform Mubahelah. Do not forget that he asked us to bring our lives, wives and offspring to Mubahelah scene.

Aagheb delayed for a few moments and remembered how two of his offspring and the majesty insisted in coming to this trip. Suddenly he scared a little. Indeed why they accompanied us? What if God has decided the performance of this Mubahelah? What if accompanying his dear ones was not only a coincidence? These thoughts which flashes Aagheb's mind, did not prevent the continuation of his speech and he said: tomorrow we should go to Mubahelah when we risk our life. Tomorrow we will see wheatear Mohammad comes with his loving one or asks other to come.

Yes it is the sign of the rightness of Mohammad's claim. We should see how Mohammad will come; the destiny of this war without sword will depend on the Mohammad's coming status.

Aagheb has told the last word. The end of his speech was the end of the meeting.

*Qualifications of people who have insight in
Hadrat Abbas (a.s)*

Raziye Naghashzade

Abstract: how can people differ from truth and untruth and make a sound decision based on their realization? According to the sayings of infallible imams "having insight" is the light that can lighten up the way. In the present article, the ways to attain this light has been discussed.

About hazrat Abbas we read: he was the most jurisprudent of his age; therefore he became the best martyr of Karbala.

Karbala is as an extended area as history and people who want to acquire saintship have to acquire it from Abbas' holy hands.

We have a tradition from Imam sadegh (a.s): ... he had awareness, perseverance and deep faith; he accompanied Hussain (a.s) and bravely fought for him in hard tests of life. With having difficulties and problems in God's way he was honored to sacrifice his life in God's way.

Hazrat Abbas (a.s) had an over ruling insight. "Insight" is an important element in reaching great goals, if there was insight the event of 61 of Hejrah might not have happened. It was not much time after the Prophet's death when Islamic society went astray and because of this it did the greatest crime of history. All of these were because of lack of insight.

Imam Ali (a.s) describes misgiving as an invalid thing which wears a cloth of truthfulness; realizing right from wrong, where it has the cloths of truthfulness is difficult and if human does not have insight, he would make a mistake in realizing the truth. In traditions, Hazrat abbas (a.s) is called "the one who has insight" this quality is one of the most important qualities that help us to know him. Sometimes inside of something is truth, but its appearance is bitter. Therefore it looks like as invalid; and sometimes its appearance is very sweet and beautiful and its inside is bitter. In both cases just people who have insight can realize right and wrong. And if people have difficulty recognizing these two, it is not the problem of the truth but it is the problem of them, because they do not know the truth and attribute it to invalid things; having insight results in deep understanding. In hazrat Abbas case, all he did was because of his deep insight. Some of his companions joined Yazid's Army and in fact joined tyranny.

How can we acquire insight? "

Quran explains that this insight is the result of fighting in God's way and those who made effort in our way, indeed we show them our ways and indeed God is with benefic.

Meaning of fight here is not just fighting with external enemy. Most emphasis has been put on fighting with internal enemy and filthy concupiscence.

Whoever used to fight with this internal enemy (and in this way avoided whatever which is related to paganism and became the champion of this fight) will be guided as a result. And one effect of this guidance is acquiring insight. The truth is one but it has many antitypes and when Quran tell about "ways" it means its antitype.

In this verse God says in each case we show the right path to human being that is fighting.

How does a human being lose this insight?

Another important point that should be taken into consideration is that sometimes this insight can be robbed by devil because of some reasons. One of these reasons is being fed by illegal money. Imam Hussain (a.s) in his magnificent sermon addressed Yazid ibn Moavia: your stomachs have been filled with illegal (illegal food which is from illegal money); therefore, God has deprived you from understanding the truth (He did it because of your sins).

Imam (a.s) stood in front of Koufa army and asked them to be quiet, but they did not accept!! Imam (a.s) told them:" woe on you! Why do not you keep quiet to hear me?! I invite you to the right path, whoever obeys me will be guided to the right path and whoever disobeys me will be perished. You disobey me and do not listen to me

because what you have received as present for killing me was just from illegal money and your stomachs are filled with illegal (food which is from illegal money). And God has set a seal on your hearts. Woe on you! Do not you keep quiet? Do not you listen to me? Illegal food (which is from illegal money) has prevented you from the recognition of the truth; for anyone who has virtue and devotions, and do not be deceived by worldly things and is a believer and fighter in the God's way, the great God gives him the power of recognition between truth and invalid things. Whoever moves in this path, God will guide him and give him insight.

We have a verse in Quran it says: "**Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.**" (*the holy Quran,6:160*) Here "doing good deed" is not only giving alms, but this verse's general perspective refers to some other things.

For example the one who makes effort in God's way and fights in God's way can be included in the generalization of this verse. And one result of fighting in God's way is acquiring insight which can be extended by God's help. Therefore the best people from the people who have insight are the believers. They are not into playing. And they do not use the religion as a means for reaching worldly things.

Qualifications of owners of insight

These qualifications can be put on four axis:

A- Keeping the promises: keeping the promises is the result of a true faith. If Koufa people had used to keep their promises, the event of Karbala would have not happened. In contrast to owners of insight, people who do not have insight are generally truthworthy and will be deceived easily.

B- sacrifice: Owners of insight use to sacrifice and they prefer others instead of themselves.

C- bravery: Bravery cannot be summarized in the battlefield, bravery in belief is more important.

If hazrat Abbas did not have such bravery in belief he would not reach such dignity; In any time, believers should have bravery of defending their believes.

D: patience: Another quality of owners of insight is patience. Patience means stability and resistance. These people are resistant in all aspects, they are patience against devils from human and nonhumans. And in God's way they resist every difficulty.

The last word:

Hazrat Abbas (a.s) is Bab -al- havaej (the door through which anyone can answer his request or dreams, it is a quality which God has given him. It means that he makes wishes to come true: he does this under the God's permission)

Hazrat Abbas (a.s) is fast in making wishes to come true. Those who have any wishes do not forget to say it to hazrat Abbas. We have many stories about it from pioneer of knowledge hazrat Abbas (a.s) who was Imam Hussain's flag holder.

In addition, he controlled water division (in army); he always distributed water justly. He always tried to bring water. He brought water a couple of time.

Hazrat Abbas' behavior and way of life is the criteria of believer's and those who have insight.

"Invite people toward yourself without your tongue (but with your behavior).

Verses of life

Education: the greatest goal of the Besat

He is the one who instigate a messenger among illiterates in order to recite his verses for them and purify them (from dirty thought and immoral actions) and teach them (the divine) book and religious knowledge.

The Prophet (A.S) stated: “In dooms day, a man will be brought with as much as clouds and firm mountains of good deeds. He says: O’ God! I did not do them. Where did they come from? God states: these are the knowledge that you taught people and after you they applied it.”¹ Also, the Prophet stated: “the best alm is to learn something and teach it to a person.”

Imam Bagher (A.S) stated: “all beings on the earth and even fishes in seas praise a person who seeks knowledge.”²

¹- Behar –al- Anvar, vol2, p 18.

²- Behar –al- Anvar, vol 1, p 173.

Mohammad: a people-person, kind and diligent leader

Indeed a messenger among yourself came to you (not from angels or fairies) who cannot see your hardships. (And) he is avaricious to you(r faith and perfection). (Tobah: 128)

We review whatever God has stated in this verse one more time: firstly, your leader is of you and he is a people-person. He knows your needs, weaknesses and abilities; secondly, he is a compassionate leader who cannot see your difficulties and it is difficult for him to see you in trouble; thirdly, he is avaricious to see your life, your family, your offspring, your society and yourself prosperous; fourthly, he is very concerned with believers and he is very kind with them.

Anas said: “whenever the Prophet did not see one of his religious brothers for three days, he asked about him. If he had gone to travel, the Prophet would have prayed for him. If he was in the city, the Prophet would have seen him. And if he were ill, the Prophet would have visited him.”¹

He is the last Prophet

Mohammad is not father of any of your men; but he is God’s messenger and the last prophet; and God always knows everything. Ahzab: 40

In addition to this verse, there are some other verses which lead to the fact that the Prophet Mohammad is the last Prophet. These verses are: verse 1 of Forghan (sorah), verse 19 and 90 of Anam (sorah), verse 28 of Saba (soorah), verse 158 of Aaraf (sorah), verse 107 of Anbia (soorah).

¹- Makarem –al- Akhlagh, voll, p 55.

The Prophet stated: “O’ people! There is no prophet after me; and there is no tradition after my tradition. Therefore, whoever claims that he is Prophet, his claim would be in fire. Kill whoever claims such a thing.”¹ Imam Sadegh (A.S) stated: “... then Mohammad came and brought his book and tradition. So, whatever he said that it is lawful, it would be lawful until dooms day and whatever he said that it is unlawful, it would be unlawful until the dooms day.”²

Each prophet showed people a certain part of the map (life map). The last Prophet has announced the complete version of this map to the people. Of course, this reasoning is used to prove that the humanity has no need of any Prophet after the last Prophet; but humanity are always in need of a leader and Imams who observe religious rules and guide people.

Mohammad is the universal Prophet

We have not sent you to prophecy; but to the prophecy of all; messenger of good news (for the pious) and (bim dahande) (for wrong doers), but many of people do not know.Sabaa: 28.

All verses which guide to the fact that Mohammad is the final Prophet also guide us to another fact that the Prophet’s mission is universal.

The Prophet (A.S) stated: whoever receive the Quran (and he use it) is like the person to whom I speak face to face.” Then he recited this verse: “and this Quran has been descended to me to warn you and whoever receives it.”^{3,1}

¹- Amali, Sheikhe Mofid, p. 53.

²- Kafi, vol 1, p 269.

³- Ana’am: 19.

When the Prophet was teaching Abuzar stages of worshipping God, he stated: “after knowing God, you should acknowledge your faith to me and acknowledge that God has set me as guidance light for all human beings.”

Some people who do not have strong faith say: the rules which Prophet told people to obey are not necessary for the people of our era. It was for ignorant people who live in the Prophet chaotic age in Jazirah –al-Arab. If they believed this speech of the Prophet and Quran, they would not imagine any limitation for the Prophet’s apostleship; in fact, all deviation in religion, from the beginning until now, is because of weakness of the faith to the Prophet and his apostleship.

And finally Islam will rule the world

He is the one who sent his messenger with (vasayele) guidance and truthful religion in order to make him victorious to all antitypes of the religion (which is divin faiths) however the pagans do not like it. Saf: 9

In this verse God had promised about the final triumph of the monotheism and spreading the light of divine guidance (Islam) to all religions of the world.

The Prophet stated that: Islam is superior and there is no religion (after) and better than it.²

With a little difference in the last phrase, this meraning is also mentioned in verse 33 of Tobah (soorah) and verse 28 of Fath (soorah).

¹- al- dor –al- Mansoor, vol 3, p257.

²- Man la Yahzorohoo –al- faghiih, vol 4, p 334.

*Following the Prophet is a sign of true friendship with
God*

Say: if you love the God, follow me (ta khoda ham shoma ra doost bedarad) and forgive your sin; and the God is the most compassionate and forgiving. Ale Emran: 31.

The ultimate point of love is obedience. If you are truthful in your love toward the God, follow his messenger –he has communicated the God’s demand to you; and your love towards God should make you to obey him (the God).

Imam sadegh (A.S) stated: whoever commit sins, he does not love God. And then he wrote this poem:

You commit sins and claim that you love God. I swear by my life that it is strange. If your love were true, you would obey his commands; because whoever loves a person, he obeys his beloved.

He also stated: is the religion something except love? And then he recited verse 31 of Ale Emran (soorah).

The Breezes of Life

Hussain Fereidoni

Abstract: This article aims at showing Imam Mahdi (A.S) especially after his appearance.

Therefore firstly, it reviews verses, traditions and Islam's history in order to introduce "the family of mercy" whose remaining member inherits this family's accomplishments.

Also, Imam's divine program will be taken into consideration in order to show some stages of his invitation (to the religion) and how he is mercy to the world.

The Wise God addressed Prophet Mohammad (A.S):

“We send you as tranquility for people.”*(The holy Quran, Anbiya: 107)*

God declares about the last Prophet’s virtues like this:

*And I complete this (light and guidance line) with **his** offspring (Imam Hassan Askari’s son) who is tranquility to people of the world.*

An Outlook

From the first moment of the birth, a human being faces problems. Therefore, he is always waiting for justice, equity and courtesy to end all oppressions.

Thinkers and people who suffer from oppression from long ago described their feelings through writing. They wish to have pure world.

An ideal world that thinkers were looking for and was looking at it through blurred glasses is clearly described in Islam with all its details. This point is one of the most important differences of Islam and other schools about the ideal world, which it should be taken into deep consideration.

To achieve an ideal and just world, it is important to prepare people mentally. It means people should be educated in the way they themselves make an ideal world without any force.

Free will is an important point in this topic. It means that if human beings do not want justice, he should not be compelled to do good deeds. Even God does not want any “compulsion” in the religion. Here, the important role of education, which is preparing and planning for “waiting”, can be seen. In addition, this point can show one of the duties of those who are waiting for Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.).

This ideal society is the starter of a renewed life in human’s history. Human being, who is oppressed for centuries, will achieve

justice and courtesy. This is a part of the rewards that God bestows to the truth-seeking and virtuous people in this world: fulfillment of justice in all aspects, in personal life and social life, inside and outside of him, in the whole world, in a way that no human being has not ever seen or even could understand.

On the other hand, some people use their free will in inappropriate ways. They prefer “Abu Lahab’s plots” to “the Prophet’s light” and “Abu Sofian oppression” to “Prophet’s justice”. They were ungrateful for the God’s blessings and their own free will.

God’s Will is to give a part of the reward of the good and the pure ones - prophets, imams and their followers - in this world because of their suffering during the history. This part of reward is to expand justice, equity and courtesy in the whole world.

In that day, the promised Imam guides people, explains verses clearly, solve problems of beliefs and solves all problems.

After all of these explanations, disbelievers prefer darkness to light and do not pay any attention to the truth. What should be done about these people who prevent the expansion of the justice and faith?

In this situation after centuries of waiting, divine justice will come out. Imam (A.S) after a lot of time of reasoning to them will take out his sword. He waits and reasons to them in order to show that he is the tranquility of the people of the world. In order to plant fresh flowers in the faith's garden, a gardener has no choice but cutting weeds. And this is the end of the gardener's mercy because he wants to change the world to a flower garden which does not have weed and thorn...

People who can not understand this point have rough and blood shedding imagination of Imam. The wrong point is that they think Imam will take out his sword to all people.

These people do not see his merciful hand extended to people which can complete their wisdom and give them complete ability to differ wrong and good deed from each other and choose the best way, but if they want...

The wrong point is here. They think that a gardener is the enemy of flowers or flower and weeds are equal in his eyes. None of these thoughts is true about Imam Mahdi (A.S), who is the symbol of justice, mercy and divine wisdom.

Family of mercy

Imam Mahdi (A.S) is the heir of accomplishments and goodness of the family who were the best people of their age. This article retells some manifestation of this family's mercy. After saying these points, which are of trust worthy traditions, it is appropriate to talk about heir of this family who is titled as "pervasive mercy". This title is of his characteristics.¹

Now, some samples about these family's mercy will be shown.

The Prophet

When the Prophet was sending his army for a defense, he advised them:

-move in God's name, by God's help and in God's way and follow his Prophet manner.

-do not play tricks, do not break your promises, do not slaughter anyone, and do not cut enemy's corps apart.

-do not kill old men, children and women.

-do not cut any tree unless you are obliged to.

¹- Ziyarat Ale Yasin.

-whenever a Muslim showed mercy to a pagan, that pagan will be in the Muslim's protection until he hears God's word. After that if he converts to your religion, he is your religious brother and if he does not want to convert, take him to a peaceful place. And in doing these works ask God's help.

-do not pour poison in their city.

-do not start war unless after talking and inviting them to the right path. (O' Ali) I swear by God if you guide just one person, it would be better than everything that sun glimmers at in sunset time for you.

-do not burn any palm trees and do not flooded them.

-do not cut any fruitful tree and do not burn any cultivation.

-do not break animals' leg whose meat is lawful for eating unless you have to eat.

About his social aspect, some traditions, which are from trustful sources, are told. These traditions indicate his mercy and also teaches us lesson of life:

-he helped his own servant.

-he ate any given food. He did not reject given food.

-he got on any prepared animal without any special request which shows self glorification.

-he respected great person of each group even if he had other religion.

-he did not want to be superior to his servants about food and cloths.

-he never cursed at anyone.

-he always said hello to anyone -adult or child- as the first person who says hello. And he always said I am not a king.

-he stated: the God has commanded me to do good and inhibited me from envy and oppression.

- he did not like disheveled hair.

-and he stated whoever is humble for God's sake, God will elevate his position and whoever is proud of himself, God will disparage him.¹

Amir -al- Momenin (Ali)

Once Imam Ali (A.S) was traveling with a person (the person was a Jew or a Christian). He asked Imam: O' God's servant! Where is your destination? He answered: Koufa. When they reached a junction Imam (A.S) left Koufa path and went to the other way. That person asked: you said you wanted to go to the Koufa. Didn't you? This path is not going to koufa. Imam stated: I know. That man asked: so, why do you come with me? Imam stated because it is a good manner to accompany our friend in his way even for a short distance. Our Prophet has advised us to do so.

As a result of this meeting that person converted to Islam².

Fatemah -al- Zahra

Imam Hassan Mojtaba (A.S) stated:

It was at night. My mother Fatimah (S.A) was performing pray to God. She was praying for believers of men and women, but she did not pray for herself.

I said: dear mother! Why did not you pray for yourself like others?

¹- Montahi -al- Aamaal, vol1, section 1, chapter 4.

²- Montahi -al- Aamaal, vol 1, section 1, chapter 4.

She stated: O' my son! Firstly, I pray for neighbors and then for myself.¹

Imam Hassan Mojtaba

There are many traditions about Imam's greatness:

A man came to Imam and he explained his financial problem:

"I do not have anything to sell even for one Derham. By looking at my face, You can understand that I have problem. What I have is just my reputation. I was trying to preserve it and do not sell it. And today I have to sell it to you."

Imam Mojtaba (A.S) wanted his accountant. Imam asked him: how much money do we have? He answered: twelve thousands of Derham. Imam stated: give it to this man. I am ashamed of him. Accountant said: if I give this money to him, there will be nothing for charity. Imam stated: give it to him and have good intention towards God. He will compensate.

Accountant gave the money to him. Imam apologized him and stated: we did not give you your right, we just gave you what we had and then he recited this in response to his poem:

"Take this little money and behave as if you did not sell your reputation and I did not buy it."²

Najih said: Imam Hassan (A.S) was eating and there was a dog in front of him. Each piece that he took, he threw a piece for the dog. I said: O' the Prophet's son! Do you allow me to keep this dog away

¹- Montahi -al- Aamaal, vol1, section 2, chapter 2.

²- Behar -al- Anvar vol 43, p 352.

from you? He stated: let him stay here, I am embarrassed from God if I eat something in front of a living thing and do not give it anything¹.”

One of Imam’s servants did something wrong and he should be punished. They brought him to Imam Hassan (A.S).

The servant said: “**and the people who repress their anger**”².” Imam stated: I repressed my anger.

The servant said: “**and the people who forgive people**.” Imam stated: I forgive you.

The servant said: “**and God loves beneficent**.” He stated: I set you free and I give you two times as much money as you received before.³

The great of all Martyrs (Imam Hussein)

A Beduin entered Medina and asked: who is the greatest person of the people?

They answered: Hussein bin Ali (A.S)

Looking for Imam, he entered the mosque. He saw that imam was praying. After his prayer, the man recited some poem and addressed Imam:

“Whoever comes hopeful to you would never become disappointed. You are merciful and trustworthy. Your father killed mischief makers. If blessing from you does not receive people, the fire of the hell would surround us.”

Imam Hussein (A.S) asked Ghanbar: is there anything remained from Hejaz wealth? He answered: four thousands Dinar. Imam stated: give it to that man. He deserves it more than us.

¹-Montahi –al- Aamaal, vol1, section 4, chapter 2.

²- Ale Emran, verse 134.

³- Montahi –al- Aamaal, vol1, section 4,chapter 2.

Imam (A.S) took off his cloths which was of Bord. Put Dinars in it. Because of his shame towards that man, he stood behind the door and brought his hand out and gave coins to the man. He recited some poems in order to apologize him:

“Take these. I apologize you. Know that I am merciful toward you. If these ages was merciful to us, we would give you much more money, but each time, these ages treat us in different manners. Therefore, I cannot give much more money.”

Beduin man took the coins and cried a lot. Imam asked: do you cry because I could not give you more? He answered no, I cry because I am wondering that how these merciful hands will be buried in the earth.¹

Imam Sajjad

It is time after the terrible event of Karbala. Omavi army has done worst oppression to the Prophet's family. Imam Sajjad sees all of these oppressions but could not say anything.

Now, Medina's people break their promises to Yazid and dismissed all governmental responsible. Abdullah bin Ommar is one of those people who has suitable political position because his father was caliph for many years.

Marvan –the king- comes to Abdullah bin Omar to take refuge to him in order to find a shelter for his family from the upheaval of Medina, but Abdullah does not accept it.

Marvan goes to Imam Sajjad and asks him to shelter his family. Knowing that Marvan was associated in his father's murder and his family did worst things to the Prophet family, Imam Sajjad shelters

¹- Behar –al- Anvar, vol 44, p 189.

them and sends his great wife with that family to “Yanbo” in order to secure them from the riot of Medina.

Ibn Athir – a famous Sunnite historian - wrote this historic event in his book named *Al- Kamel*.¹

Zamakhshari ,another Sunnite scholars, wrote that after this riot, Yazid ibn Moavia sent one of his hard-hearted commanders of army named “Moslem ibn Oghbah” in order to repress Medina people. Even after centuries, that event which is named “Harreh event” is still famous. In this event they murdered people and abused females. In this event, Imam Sajjad (A.S) sheltered four hundred women, who had many children. He gave them food, clothes and subsistence until Ibn Oghbeh’s army left Medina. One of those women said: I swear by God that even in my father’s home I did not have such tranquility which I had under Imam’s mercy.²

Depth of Imam’s mercy was shown when we see Medina people’s unkindness. Imam Sajjad (A.S) said: “in the whole Mecca and Medina there are not even twenty people who like us.”³

Imam Mohammad Bagher

Once a Christian wanted to insult imam Bagher (A.S) and said: are you a cow (Baghar in Arab language means cow)? Imam (A.S) calmly answered: no, I am Bagher. Again he said: you are son of that shef woman. Imam answered, that work was her job. For another time the Christian asked: are you son of that black scurrilous slave?! Imam answered if you are right, God may forgive and bless her and if you are wrong, God may forgive and bless you.

¹- *Al- Kamel Fi –al- Tarikh*, vol 4, p 113.

²- *Montahi –al- Aamal*, vol 2, p 4.

³- *Behar –al- Anvar*, vol 46, p 143.

When the Christian saw that patience and generosity in Imam's behavior, he converted to Islam.¹

Imam Jafar Sadegh

Abu Jafar Khathami said: Imam Sadegh (A.S) gave me a bag full of golden coins and he said give it to a certain person who is Hashemi and did not mention who had given it.

When I gave it to that person, he said God may bless the person who always send me this amount of money which I use to continue my life, but Jafar Sadegh does not give me even a Derham while he has lots of money!²

Sofian Thoory said: once I went to see Imam Sadegh (A.S). I saw that he was upset. I asked the reason. He said: I have said nobody is allowed to go to the roof. When I entered the house, I saw that a servant who is responsible for my little child is on the ladder. When she saw me, she shivered and surprised. The child fell from her hands and died.

Now, I am upset not because of the child's death, but because of the fear which was in the servant's heart.

In addition, Sofian Thoori said: this event has happened in a situation in which Imam said to the servant that you should not fear me, for the sake of God, I set you free!³

Imam Musa Kazem

One of the second Caliph's grand children who was in Medina always annoyed and offended Imam Musa Kazem (A.S). Whenever he

¹- Behar –al- Anvar, vol 46, p 289.

²- Behar –al- Anvar, vol 47, p 23.

³- Montahi –al- aamal vol 2, section 8, chapter 2.

saw Imam, he started to offend Amir –al- Momenin Ali (A.S). Once Imam’s companions asked, "do you allow us to kill this bad man?" Imam prohibited them from this action and asked: "where is that man?"

They answered he is farming in a certain place around Medina. Imam Kazem (A.S) went to visit him. Imam arrived when he was in his farm.

Imam sat down by him and asked him cheerfully:

How much did you spend on your agriculture? He answered hundred Ashrafi (it means a lot).

Imam asked: how much do you expect from it? He answered: I do not know the unseen.

Imam stated: I mean how much do you expect to earn from it? He answered two hundred Ashrafi.

Imam (A.S) bestowed him a bag full of golden coins. It was three hundred Ashrafi. Imam said: take this. You will have your agriculture benefit too. And God will give you what you expect.

The man stood up and kissed Imam’s head and apologized.

Imam smiled and returned. After some time, they saw that person in Mosque. As soon as he saw Imam, he recited this verse: ***“God is the most learned where to set his apostleship”***.¹

Imam’s companion asked: before this, you were against Imam. What is your story? He told his story and prayed for Imam.

Some narrators of tradition of Shia and Sunnite have narrated this event. Among Shia narrators are: Sheikh Mofid in Ershad book, Tabarsi in Aalam –al- Vara and among Sunnite are: Khatibe Baghdadi

¹- Anaam, verse 124.

in Baghdad history book and Zahabi in revolution of Aalam –al-nablaa.¹

Imam Reza

Al-Yasaa ibn Hamzah Ghomi said:

I was with Imam Reza (A.S) and I was talking to him. There were some people around him and they were talking about religion. A Khorasanian tall tanned man entered. He said hello to Imam and he said: I am a person who likes you and your ancestors. I am returning from Hajj and I lost my money. I do not have any money to reach my city. God has bestowed me his blessing and I am rich in my own city. If you help me and give me money for my trip to my city, I give alms on behalf of you there.

Imam said sit down; God may extend His mercy to you. Then Imam answered people's questions. People went out. There were just me, Soleiman Jafari, Khathimeh and that Khorasanian man. Imam asked our permission to go to his family. He was there for a while and came back again. From behind the door, he brought his hands out and asked: where is Khorasani? Khorasanian man said: I am here.

Imam Reza (A.S) said: take this bag of two hundred Ashrafi and do your work with it...

Soleiman asked: you bestowed him a lot of money? Why do you conceal yourself from him?

¹- Ershad, vol 2, p 233

Aalam –al- Vara, p 296,

Baghdad history, vol 13, p 28

Revolution of Aalam –al- Nablaa, vol 6, p 271

Montahi –al- Aamal, vol 3, section 9, chapter 2.

He stated: I did it because I did not want to see abjection of his face because of his need. Do not you hear the Prophet said: whoever do good and hid it, is like a person who does seventy Hajj and God do not help revealer of badness, and He will bless anyone who hides badness.¹

Imam Mohammad Javad

Baznati said: I read letter of Imam Reza to Imam Javad (A.S).

It was written: O' Aba jafar! I have been informed that when you get on palfrey, your servants take you out from the other door. They do it because they are jealous and they did not want poor to receive anything from you. Now, I want you to go out and come in just from the big door. (In this way people can see you and tell you their needs.) I want you not to reject anyone when you are on your palfrey and bestow them... God may elevate you. Never be afraid of poverty because God who has heaven definitely exists.

Imam Ali -al- Naghi

One day Imam Hadi (A.S) went from Samerra to a village. A Beduoin man went to Samerra in order to visit Imam Hadi (A.S). They said to him that Imam has gone to a certain village. The Beduion man went there. When he visited Imam (A.S), Imam asked him the reason of his coming after Imam.

He answered I live in a village of Koufa. I have villayat (custody) of your great grandfather, Ali ibne Abi Taleb (A.S). I am in a heavy debt. I cannot pay it. I know that nobody will help me, but you.

Imam said: be comfortable. Then he sheltered him there for a night. At the dawn of the next day imam said to him: I have something to tell you, Iswear you by God do not oppose me in this work.

¹- Montahi -al- Aamal, vol 3, section 10, chapter 2.

Villager said: I won't oppose you.

Imam Hadi (A.S) wrote on a paper that acknowledged he owed that man certain amount of money. He wrote more than the man's debt. The he said: take this paper. When we arrive at Samerra come to me in public and ask me this money and speak to me in bad manner. I swear you to God do not oppose me in this work.

The man promised not to oppose Imam and he took the paper. When Imam arrived at Samerra, a lot of Caliphah's companions and other people came to visit him. The villager also came. He took out the paper and spoke badly towards Imam (according to Imam's command). Imam (A.S) spoke calmly to him and apologized and promised him to pay the money.

When Motevakkal was informed of this event, he commanded to pay thousand Derham to Imam. Imam kept the money until the villager came to him.

Imam stated: take this money, pay your debt and use the rest for your family and accept my apology. The villager said: O' the Prophet's son! I swear by God that I wished less than one third of this money. "God knows where to set his apostleship." He took the money and went.¹

Imam Hasan Askari

Hussein ibn Hassan was a descent of Imam Sadegh (A.S). He lived at Qum and he drank wine openly. Once he went to Ahmad ibn Eshagh Asharie's home (Imam Hassan Askari's lawyer in Qum) to tell him his need. He asked permission to go in, but Ahmad did not allow him; therefore, he returned sadly.

¹- Behar -al- Anvar, vol 50, p 175.

After a while, Ahmad came back from Hajj trip and went to Samerra in order to see Imam. Imam did not allow him to enter. Ahmad cried until Imam allowed him to enter.

When he went in, he asked: O' the Prophet's son! I am your Shia why did not you permit me to come in?

Imam stated: because you did not allowed my cousin to your home. Ahmad cried a lot and said that he just did it because he wanted to prevent Hussein ibn Hassan from drinking.

Imam (A.S): yes you are right, but you should honor them in any situation, do not contempt them and do not insult them because they are our relative. If you do other than this you will be a looser.

Ahmad returned to Qum. Great people came to visit him. Hussein ibn Hassan was among them. Seeing him, Ahmad stood up and went towards him, welcomed him and sit him down at the good place of the house. Hussein was surprised. He asked the reason from Ahmad. Ahmad told him the story.

Hussein thought and he regretted his drinking and repented. He broke instrument of drinking. Then he became one of virtues and worshippers. He was always in mosques until the end of his life. He was buried near Fatemah-al-Masoomah, imam Kazem's great daughter, in Qum.¹

Imam Mahdi (Aj)

Sheikh Bagher Kazemi, a learned man of Najaf in 14 century said:

There was a great person in Najaf. He was very truthful one. He had an old father. He was always at his father's service and always

¹- Behar -al- Anvar, vol 50, p 323.

satisfied his father's need except on Thursday's nights when he went to Sahlah mosque.

Once, he did not go to Sahlah Mosque. I asked him the reason.

He answered: forty Thursday's nights I went to Sahlah mosque. The last thursday I could not go until evening. It became dark.

I continued my way. It was moonlit night. I saw an Arab man on a horse. He was coming towards me. I told myself that he will rob me! But when he reached me, in Arabic language he started talking. He asked my destination. I told him that my destination is Sahlah mosque.

He asked: do you have anything to eat? I said: no.

He said take your hand to your pocket. I said: there is nothing in my pocket. He harshly repeated what he had said before. Therefore, I took my hand in my pocket. I found some raisins in it. I had bought it for my little child, but I forgot to give him.

Then he said:“ I advise you to take care of your old father.” He repeated this sentence three times and disappeared.

I understood that he was Imam Mahdi (A.S). I understood that Imam is not satisfied with me if I separate from my father even for a Thursday's night. Therefore, I did not go to Sahlah mosque any more.

Imam Mohammad Baqer, Dissector of knowledge

"Peace be on you, oh Imams who guided aright! Peace be on you who guard yourselves against sins! Peace be on you who are the proof of Allah for the people of the world! Peace be on you who established righteousness in the world with justice! Peace be on you who place confidence in Allah! Peace be on you and may Allah bestow his mercy and blessings on you! And especial peace and blessings be upon you O Mohammad Baqer, the dissector of knowledge of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)." (Ziarat prayer for the visitation to Baqi Graveyard, Medina)

Friday, Rajab 1st, 1424 (August 29, 2003) is the birth anniversary of the 5th infallible Shia Imam named Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) son of Ali (p.b.u.h.), who was known as the dissector of knowledge. Therefore, we take this excellent opportunity to express our sincere best wishes and felicitations to all Shia Muslims on this happy occasion, raising our hands toward him and praying for the reappearance of his descendant Imam Mahdi (s.a.).

Birth and Blessed Personality

The months of Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadan are the most distinguished months in the year. The holy Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) said: "Rajab is a great month of Allah and no month can equal it in sanctity and merit. For any ummah (people) this month is for asking forgiveness from Allah because Rajab is the month of Allah, Sha'ban is my month, and Ramadan is the month of people. The mercy of Allah descends on my people during this month. Hence every Muslim should repent of his sins and ask Allah for forgiveness, and he will surely be pardoned."

In his blessed month, Imam Mohammad (*p.b.u.h.*), son of Imam Sajjad (*p.b.u.h.*), the fifth Imam, was born in Medina in 57 A.H./ 678 C.E. His mother Fatemeh was the daughter of Imam Hassan (*p.b.u.h.*) and the most pious lady of her time.

Imam Baqir (*p.b.u.h.*) witnessed his grandfather Imam Hussein's (*p.b.u.h.*) martyrdom when he was only 4 years old.

His wisdom and insight made him renowned as Baqir-ul-uloum (dissector knowledge). Learned scholars respected his great wisdom and superior intellect.

Imam Baqir (*p.b.u.h.*) made use of the situation created by the power struggle between rival groups to preach to people and teach genuine Islamic laws and their correct interpretations. He left behind tens of thousands of authentic traditions for guidance, which are read by speakers of truth.

Imam Baqir (*p.b.u.h.*) preached Islam and revived the teaching of the knowledge of the Shia, a teaching that reached its peak during the time of his son Imam Sadiq (*p.b.u.h.*).

Imam Baqir (*p.b.u.h.*) worked hard and chose agriculture as a means of earning his living. He lived for 57 years. After being poisoned, he

passed away in 114 A.H./ 735 C.E. and was buried in the Baqi graveyard in Medina.

Sayings of Imam Mohammad Baqir(*p.b.u.h.*)

1) And Supplication is the highest form of worship. (Usoul-e Kafi, volume 2, page 466)

2) "There is nothing better and nearer to Allah (mighty and glorified be He) than that He is asked and sought for what is with Him. And the most hateful and detestable person for Allah is he who is arrogant in His worship and does not ask Him for what is with Him," (Usoul-e Kafi, volume 2, page 466)

3) Worthy is the person who refuses to regard his wealth as his worth.

4) A learned person whose knowledge benefits people is superior to 70000 pious worshippers.

5) Our followers (Shia) are only those who are pious, obedient to God, humble, kind-hearted, and trustworthy; who always remember God, keep fasts, perform prayers, and do good to their parents and neighbors; who fulfill the needs of the poor, the weak, the needy, and the orphans; who are well known for recitation of the Quran, and who never distress people through abusive speech and speak only about the goodness of others.

6) A happy countenance and cheerful behavior toward others attract the love of people and closeness to God, and arrogance and self-exaltation in interactions with others generate enmity and spiteful feelings and result in the withdrawal of the mercy of God."

Fasting in Religious Theologies

Foroogh al-Zaman Aghdaee

Introduction

'Fasting' is an act of worship in coordination with human soul and spirit that in case of realizing the conditions and standards of veritable fasting, donates exorbitance to spiritual, mental, super sensory, health, economy etc. to individual or the society.

'Fasting' is to the sense of manifestation against Divine disciple's theology since it arises from the origins of faith and Divine Command and increases resistance enforced to reach one to the station position of God wariness.

In addition to the necessity of Divine theology, 'fasting' also holds primordial motivations because mortal man sublime seeker who does not want to bring down the level of creatures and is constantly convicted to beastly inclination and passions use this as means and movement resistance against such inclinations to reach perfectionism.

According to the Prophet of Islam ^(PBUH) states: "My religious community will weaken their lust and capricious by fasting and will never practice obscene repulsive deeds."

'Fasting' amongst Divine theologians dates long back including long life worship found coincident with the expelling of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

Some interpreters proclaim that God has obligated fasting on the days of thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of each month on the Day of Adam election for the reasons that when Adam came to earth he got burnt and turned black from the sun's warmth with no radiations. However, after fasting his body whitened and that is why these three days are called 'Days of Whitening'.

The word 'Soam' or 'fasting' means self-restraint from practices. Certainly the adverb clause has been supplemented to the semantics which mean self-restraint from typical practices that the human mind desires and has cravings for.

Yet 'Soam' in religious culture and Shariah 'Divine Law' comprises of restraint and abstinence from typical doings in a determined duration.

God has Commanded in Koran that:"Oh, those who have faith, 'fasting' has been inscribed for thee such that was inscribed for religious community prior thee."

The verse clearly indicates that 'fasting' was also obligatory upon Muslims or religious communities prior. In an Islamic anecdote it was mentioned that the great heavenly books like Torah, Bible, scriptures and Koran all have been descended during Ramadhan. Imam Sadique ^(PBUH) quotes: "Torah was descended on sixth day of Ramadhan, Bible on twelfth day, the Psalms on eighteenth and Koran on the night of 'Ghadr'."

The king of the faithful in this regard commands: "Fasting is an ancient worship that God has not exempted any religious community of. Yet,

it is not necessary to state that fasting is in order to support the ones which are similar to the Muslim way of fasting.

Discrepancies of 'fasting' in various religions lie upon the number of days and methods of performance. Although in various religions the specifications of the quality of fasting varies, nevertheless there is commandment basis for fasting and that the aim in general is refinement of soul and the creation of spiritual immaculacy and sanctity and obviation of distresses and disasters.

The aim of the aforesaid is in that one must bare in mind when studying the abstinence of fasting in other religions, should go beyond just a simple idiomatic expression in Islam and things which are reckoned invalidated unreal fasting in the Islamic law, specifically drinking and eating.

Fasting in Other Religions

According to Koran plain texts, 'fasting' in addition to Muslims has been obligatory for other religions in other communities; no doubt religious interpreters believe that despite fasting incumbents, fasting in other tribes and ethnics prior Islam were also not similar to that of Muslims; in other words, all prophets have ordered fasting to their religious communities although each have their typical method for its performance as a Divine Necessity e.g. fasting duration for Muslims commences from dawn until dusk that maybe different in other religions or perhaps fasting in other religions such as Jews which may propound other respects. As an example 'silence fasting'; this becomes incumbent through vow pledges or charitable offerings or etc. Nonetheless, this type of fasting is illicit in Islam. On behalf of Imam Sadique ^(PBUH) it is cited: "(Arabic.....)" ('silence fasting' is unlawful and this is for the reason of social condition changes.)

Therefore, among Divine literary figures there are numerous similar commandments and regulations; that is why one of the basic dialogues among Divine literary figures is the same similar commandments and regulations elsewhere.

'Fasting' in Prophet Enoch ^(PHUB)scriptures: In his scriptures Prophet Enoch commands: "Whenever thee enter the month of fasting, keep thyself pure from any evil and impurity and fast for God in clean and clear heart, pure from bad thinking. Your months should not thrift edibles, instead organs should also be kept away from evil deeds (i.e. organs should thrift God disobedience).

'Fasting' in Jewish religion: After Pharaoh drowning Moses' tribe requested his book from him; since God wanted to send them a book of guidance for the tribe, at first He sent a revelation and commanded that they should fast at Tore mountain step for thirty days. Moses ^(PBUH) did the same but noticed that by the effect of fasting, his mouth odour had changed. He thought to himself it may not be so appropriate to communion with God with such odour. Therefore, he used a balmy tree for brushing his teeth to obviate the odour. During communion, Gabriel came and said: "Mouth odour of the one fasting is more pleasant and fragrant to God. (4)

In various parts of ancient epoch, in the holy Book of the Jews has narrated about 'Jewish Community' and non-Jews fasting and has revealed that the ethno fasted in various epithet; like the fasts of David, Uzra, Elias, Daniel, etc. That is why a complete common religious literature existed among Jews for achieving intentions and objectives.

The Jewish community used to fast for various intentions like the intentions of achieving God Benevolence for the prevention of or in order to terminate Divine catastrophes; when a threat or attack on the enemies part or natural disasters were about to hit upon them, they would solely consider general fasting; so fasting was for the

preparation of acceptance of hazards or the manner of confrontation with perished spirits.

The common fasting amongst Jewish community is of two types: a) annual obligatory fasting in one day of 'Keypor' – the Sacrifice Day as expiate of transgressions which will continue from 5 p.m. of the tenth day of 'Eylool' (September) till 7 p.m. the next day i.e. 26 hours. b) During 'Moharram' – the Day of Zakaria (PBUH) Martydom and the devastation of Jerusalem performed from 9p.m. till the afternoon of the next day i.e. tenth day of the month of 'water'.

Some of the fasting rites in Jewish religious community are as follows:-

Abstinence from food and water; 'fasting' accompanying confessions to sins and repentance 'fasting', 'fasting' along with sack clothing and pouring soil or ash over head or sleeping on the ground or over ash accompanying Torah recital eventual.

Fasting in Christianity

(Arabic)'Nasarah' used to fast during Ramadhan and since they confronted extremely hot season, they transferred it into solar months in order to keep fasting days constant and not to face summer. They added ten more days and then a sultan offered charity for resolving the issue of seven days 'fast'; Nasarah, in any case added the seven days and another king added another three days to it and therefore in total Christianity fasting lasted fifty days.

Consequently just as Prophet Moses^(PHUB) to the Divine Command fasted for forty days; Jesus^(PHUB) was also taken to desert upon the spirit force to be examined by 'Satan'; so he fasted for forty night and day and eventually became hungry.(7)

From some individual point of views Jesus Christ ^(PHUB) has solely stated the principles and the essence of fasting and has entrusted the state of rules and regulations to the church. Yet from one side church has been slow in stating the rules of fasting and on the hand other during various epochs churches instructions have been contravened via other churches which in turn caused constant transformations and evolutions in the quantity and quality of fasting in Christianity. That is why the days which have been conventional for fasting in Christianity doctrines could undoubtedly have been abrogated contemporary like fasting on 'Friday' or fasting forty days prior 'Easter' or fasting forty days prior the Holy week.

There are numerous discrepancies about fasting among various branches of Christianity; like the Greek church every week on Saturdays and Wednesdays or forty days prior Christ birth or forty days after Easter or from Christian trinity till Saint Day, i.e. fasting from first till sixteenth August. In Catholic church which is held during the forty day seclusion feasts (except Sundays) Cathartanes and Vigils and the nights of some feasts. Protestants (exclusive to Anglicans) have abolished fasting instructions. Pharisees fast twice a week.

No doubt among Christians 'fasting' does not generally signify avoiding eating or drinking and it normally is to the sense of avoidance of eating some food and continuing habits. But what is obvious is that fasting doctrines do exist in Christianity such that from Gospel 'Logos' emerges that Christian Apostles used to fast too (9). Also, in the 'Lexicon of the Holy Book' it is stated: "Therefore Apostles lives and pious of the past had lifetime of replete pleasure denial and infinite inconveniences and 'fasting' (10).

The word Ramadhan has derived from 'Ramadha' to the signification of heat intensity and the sense of 'burning' (i) since in this month

individual sins are forgiven through ‘burning sensation’. They have also entitled the month ‘the month of Blessed Ramadhan’.

Prophet Muhammad^(PBUH) has stated: (ARABIC); Ramadhan is so called because sins are burnt. Ramadhan is the title of one of lunar month and the only lunar month inscribed in Koran and one of the four months that Sublime God has juridically forbidden war (unless there are defensive aspects).

Prophet Muhammad^(PBUH) about Ramadhan commands: (Arabic) (2) “Ramadhan has been so called because in this month sins are burnt.”

Ramadhan is the title of a lunar month and the only lunar month that its title has been mentioned in Koran and one of the four months that Sublime God has juridical forbidden war in (unless for defensive purposes).

The Prophet of Islam ^(PBUH) about Ramadhan commands: “Oh, people! The month of God has turned onto you with Divine Blessing and Benediction and remission of sins, a month that to the Almighty is superior to all months and its days are superior to all days and its nights to all nights and its hours to all hours. It’s a month that thy art invited to God’s feast and art blessed by Him, thy respiration rests upon exaltations, thy sleeping rests upon worships and thy practices are accepted and thy calls and prayers responded to; the best hours for Divine Blessings Bestowed towards His servants.”

In a discourse, Imam Sadiqqe ^(PBUH) quotes:

‘(Arabic) Ramadhan is a Divine month and is a month that God reduplicates beneficence and obliterates wickedness and evils; this month is the month of benedictions, return, penitence and remission and liberation from (hell) fire to reach Paradise, so be aware that in this month any unlawful must be avoided and the Koran should be

continuously recited and needs wanted from the Almighty; so recall God and never would the month of Ramadhan be like any other months from your perspective since this month has a special dignity and has virtues superior to the rest of the months and never is fasting this month is the same as other times.(1) And in other discourse the Eight Imam ^(PBUH) quotes:(Arabic) “Virtues are accepted in the month of Ramadhan and evils are forgiven. Anyone reading a verse of Koran in the month of Ramadhan is like reading all the Koran during other months and anyone smiling at a feature of pious brother will be smiled at in his feature in the Day of Resurrection and he will be annunciated paradise and anyone helping a faithful believer, Allah will help him when passing the path when he shivers taking steps and anyone restrains wrath in this month Allah will restrain His Anger from him and anyone who assists a troubled, Allah will assist him on the Day of Resurrection and on the day of “Faz-e-Akbar” (Great fearing) and anyone who helps an oppressed Allah will help him in life and resurrection. Ramadhan is the month of benediction and blessings, mercy, remission, return and the one not absolved in this month when will he be salivated? Call them upon Allah and request His compliance for ‘fasting’ and He will elongate his life and prosper him to piety distant from guilt and sin since He is the best liable.” (2)

1-(Bahar vol.93 /340)

2-The same 341

In a ‘hadith’(discourse) Imam Sadiqqe ^(PBUH) states: (ARABIC)“Ramadhan is the month of Allah, this is the month that Allah reduplicates benedictions and obliterates evils and this month is the month of benedictional blessings and return repentance and remission and the month of emancipation from hell fires to reach paradise. So be aware to avoid any unlawful in this month and constantly recite Koran and request your needs from Him and recall

Him and never is the month of Ramadhan like any other months whether this month has typical dignity and respect or has virtues superior to other months and never is the time of fasting similar to any other time.”

Fasting in Koran

For fasting rules in the month of Ramadhan interims of verses Baghara Surah have been specified concisely and in some verses of other Surahs varieties of fasting have been indicated. Verses of fasting during Ramadhan are found next to each other in Baghara Surah such as (ARABIC)First verse of Baghara Surah 183). “Oh those people who are believers! Fasting is obligatory onto thee just like others prior thee and it was inscribed to be ascetic.”

From Koran science interpreters and scholars are addressed as such: “(Arabic) Verses have been descended in Madina that are parts of Madina Surah. The command of ‘fasting’ is also like the order of Jihad (holy struggle/religious combat) and payment of Zikaat (alms) was issued in the second year of Hijjra.” (Noor Interpretations Vol. I, p. 364).

In the discussed verse and to the wording of another Divine Rules which is reckoned a significance in worships is ‘fasting’. In order to instigate believers sensations to the benefits of this rule and prepare them for acceptance, Koran gratifies the believers at the beginning addressed as ‘Oh, those who (true) believers!’

And to the elucidation of Imam Saddique ^(PBUH) it is stated: “The pleasure of this address will remove the security of fasting and in subsequence proclaim the description of ‘fasting rules/commands.’” Then, in order to reduce severity of such it states: “‘fasting’ was an obligation even upon other previous religious communities.”

Based on the studies, 'fasting' existed among all previous religious communities too such that even idol-worshippers for the sake of proximity to idolism used to fast at times to prevent Hindu idol believers fast on special occasions.

Jews, Christian and star worshippers also followed their own typical 'fasting manner'; in the present Torah and Bible 'fasting' has been praised and stated about the manner of 'fasting' of the Holies Mosses and Jesus. Also, in Koran the story about Mary's donation as a ritual of 'fasting' have been mentioned.

"So then say: 'I have donated fasting for God and will not speak to anyone.'"

Certainly Mary's fasting is called 'Somot' or 'silence' which means abstinence of speaking with people, nevertheless this can also be a type of fasting although what has been inscribed in Torah and Gospel is to the signification of eating and drinking abstinence.

At the end of the verse, the philosophical significance of 'fasting' has been explained in short phrase as being the fact that fasting creates piety in human and the one fasting can with abstinence of physical sensual pleasures deprived of for the sake of God can be a type of practice for self dominance and the dependent appeals and since one continues the practices within a month and creates the knowledge of piety and self-restraints, he will not easily commit sins and expropriate others property or violate others rights even if it may be to his benefit and also to control his soul and guide it to the direction of prevention from sin and disobedience with strong will and power.

'(You have to fast) for a few days and those from thee who art ill or travelling (to the same amount of missed days) from other remaining days (make up for the losses) and those who art somehow incapable (including those with chronic illnesses or elderliness) must pay

expiation and feed a poor and the one who grants boons is gratified more than providing for the poor; so it is better for him but still fasting is better for you in case you did not know it.

Comments:

After stating 'fasting' rules, commands and its philosophy like the previous verse, in order to reduce the severity of fasting some other orders have been stated in this respect:-

A) It is not that you are compelled to fast throughout the year or some particular periods but limited to solely a few days.

B) The ill or traveler is exempted from the command and fasting does not refer to him though he must compensate to the amount of days not fasted in the form of pre-ordination.

C) Those who are incapable and/or cannot tolerate like the sick, old, impregnated or breast feeders are exempted but should pay a ransom or atonement to the amount e.g. satiate a pauper instead of one fasting day, but if one satiates more than one day it is considered better.

D) At the end of the verse it is reminded that fasting is better for you and if the number of days is to your beneficence no one would desire to say: "I wish I was old enough to be able to feed a famished."

(For the few days) the month of Ramadhan, the month that Koran has been descended for individuals guidance along with obvious reasons of directorship and segregation of right from invalid. So the one who apprehends this month must also practice and the sick and traveler must fast and compensate on other days other than the days of fasting instead, since God desires your convenience and not severity. The objective is for you to fulfill for these days and praise and honour Almighty for His Guidance since this way you may pay your gratitude towards Him.

In Mathew's Gospel it is quoted: "After remedy, Jesus Christ commanded the young Egyptian 'Vaaye': "But the nature of this illness will not go away except by prayers and fasting, or, if you are fasting do not be morose like hypocrites." (11)

Fasting in non-Divine Religions

'Fasting' does not only exist in Divinity but other than Divinity too; like Egyptians during idolatry (epoch) considered fasting necessary namely for women and clergies.

Also, in Saudi Arabia prior Islam reckoned 'fasting' a kind of worship and obligation. Other examples of 'fasting' also exist in other non-Divine religions as well like:

- (i) 'Fasting' in Hindu doctrine; Jain (Zahedan) the two doctrines are to reinforce self spirits in some feasts and celebrations. Even ascetics of Jain doctrine adherents acknowledged the best death a death caused by complete asceticism from food and water and numerous volunteer fasted to end their lives.
- (ii) 'Fasting' in Bhudda doctrine; many monks in this ritual believe in eating once a day and fast (complete) the first and fifteenth day of the month. Today, the general public of Bhudda doctrine fast four times per month and confess to their sins.
- (iii) In Tibet there is a ceremony entitled 'constant fasting' which lasts four days. On the first two days individuals put up the day by confession to their sins and recital of holy manuscripts and on the third day they do not eat anything or even swallow their saliva and continue the same by prayers and confessions to their sins until the sunrise to the next (fourth) day.

- (iv) American indigenous tribes believed that fasting has a great impact on guidance and leadership from the Great Spirit; including in their rituals was abstinence of food during mourning.
- (v) Ancient Mexicans considered abstinence of food, expiation of sins and the duration varied from one till few days. Ascetics upon incidences of public disasters used to thrift this to some months.

The Comparison of Fasting in Islam and Other Religions

On the contrary to what some unaware individuals may ponder, the most convenient manner of fasting is the one ordered in Islam; the duration during summer is approx. sixteen hours and in winter approx. twelve hours. This is so while in Judaism obligatory fasting is between 22 till 26 hours and in Christianity same severe regulations applies which enforces adherences evade. The duration of fasting in Islam is regular and in conformity with the beginning and the ending of the day whilst in other religions the same does not apply e.g. the duration of fasting for Jews and Christians is quite irregular and needs great care and attention.

After stating the rules and philosophy of 'fasting' and determining number of days for the same command, He then specifies the duration: "These limited days mean on the days of Ramadhan that has special priviledges. Ramadhan is the month of the Almighty which has virtues that other months lack. The time and location do not have any automatic virtues, instead these incidences are significant that priviledge time and location. In this verse, God has stated the reason of virtue of Ramadhan and emphasizes that Koran was descended in this month and in addition has described some qualities and eminence of Koran features:-

One is that Koran is a book of guidance and directs humans to the right path and that the signs of luminescence of directorship and command does exist i.e. Koran in addition to guidance of humans bestows the will of recognition to him and that through Koran mankind can distinguish the right from unreal and the path from ditch to reach esoteric truth.

At the end of this dignified verse, three issues have been discussed stating that God has explained the rules of ‘fasting’ for individuals which he is obligated to be performed:

- a) Fulfill the limited days and if you have not been able to fast during the period due to illness or trip, compensate for during some other time.
- b) Praise God for His guidance and honour Him; this maybe an indication to Eid-Al-Adha (Fitr) and that praising ‘The Almighty is Great’ by termination of Ramadhan will be called upon. Also, the praise of ‘God is Great’ is recommended but not obligatory during Eid-Al-Adha call, after regular compulsory prayers.
- c) Gratitude towards Divine, the significance of the rule has been stated for you that must be used during benefactions and blessings.

Footnotes:

- Baghara 183
- Vasaal-Al-Shiaa, Vol. 7, P.390 interpreted version, Vol. 13, p. 46
- R.K. Vaghaya-Al-Ayam Khaybani, p. 431
- The same, p. 423

- Rah Toosheh Rahiyan-e-Noor (supplies to the road for light pathfinders) 1996. P. 198 &199
- Tafsir-e-Fakhr Razi (Fakhr Razi Interpretations) Vol.5 p. 68
- Rah Tooshe (supplies to the road) 1996 p. 210
- Logha 12-18; Fasting Treatment to spiritual and physical illnesses
- Tafsir-e-Nemooneh (Interpreted Version) Vol. 1p. 634
- Ghamoos-e-Ketab-e Moghadas (Holy Book Lexicon) p. 428; the same
- Angil-e-Mati (Mathew's Gospel) 67 parts, verse 21
- The same; six chapters, verse 26
- Rah-Toosheh (supplies to the road), 1996, p. 220

Book Introduction

The Right Path: Translation of al-Muraja'at

By: Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din of Jabal 'Amil

Translated by Muhammad Amir Haider Khan

This book, consisting of a series of letters in the form of questions and answers [including 112 letters, and the book is 515 pages, published by Ansariyan publications] seeks to explain, justify and uphold the *raison d'etre* of Shi'ism. The Sunni 'Alim; Shaykh Salim al-Bishri, Head of Al-Azhar University at Cairo in the early years of the twentieth century, initiated the discussion, not in the nature of a heated debate, but rather out of an earnest desire to investigate and understand the Shi'i point of view.

Shaykh al-Bishri addressed his questions to an eminent scholar of the time, Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din of Jabal 'Amil (in the southern part of Lebanon), who visited Egypt in 1329-1330 A.H./1911-1912 A.D. and came in touch with him. The Shaykh was deeply impressed by the frank, outspoken, reasonable and learned Sayyid, The

¹ To introduce this book, we used the introduction part of the book.

Sayyid, being a man with a mission, was only too eager for a question that would open the discussion and afford him an opportunity to unburden himself, allowing him to unfold all his accumulated knowledge.

Thus, the correspondence began. The Sayyid spared no pains to answer each question as it came, dispelling doubts and exposing fallacies. He cited authorities for every principle of the Shi'i faith, giving chapter and verse of the Qur'an, and quoted the interpretations of the great commentators like Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Baydawi and Zamakhshari. Then he supported his claim on the basis of universally accepted traditions from Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dauid, jami'al-Tirmidhi, Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah and numerous other Sunni authorities. The Shaykh acknowledged all these letters, encouraged him to write more and, wherever necessary, pointed out any omission that remained. The Sayyid immediately proceeded to clarify doubts. This exchange of letters continued for three and one-half years, at the end of which the Shaykh praised and thanked his friend and admitted that the truth had been made clear to him.

The object of both these learned men, as they themselves expressly state in their correspondence, is not to display their dialectical powers or their knowledge of the Qur'an and the Sunnah in order to take advantage of the other party's weakness, but rather to embark upon a search for the truth and its underlying evidences in the calm and collected manner necessary for such a logical inquiry. In this aspect, therefore, the present book is a welcome departure from the usual form of polemical discussions which result in nothing but mudslinging.

After the correspondence had been completed, the Sayyid, with the permission of the Shaykh, eventually published it under the title of Al-Muraja'at in 1355 A.H./1936 A.D., and the book has been reprinted

several times since. This translation, from the Arabic original, has been entitled "The Right Path."

Al-Muraja'at had a strong impact on many Muslim scholars. Concomitant with its availability, a new generation of leading scholars emerged in Egypt, Iraq and Iran, who called for the different schools of thought in Islam to come closer together. They formed an organization to serve this purpose in Egypt known as Dar al-Taqrīb (the Abode of Peace and Understanding). As a result of this association, the head of Al-Azhar, the late Shaykh Mahmud Shaltut, declared a religious injunction in 1959 that recognized the Ithna 'Ashari school of thought as an acceptable school of thought in Islam. According to his fatwa Muslims may practice Islam according to its teachings like any' other school of jurisprudence amongst the Sunnis.

"The Right Path" is a treasure of information for the seeker of Truth. It must, however, be kept in mind that these are letters exchanged between two scholars who are apt to take for granted things that an ordinary person would have to study at length to understand. For those who wish to pursue any particular point still further, the book is full of exact and detailed references in the form of footnotes, written mainly by the Sayyid himself. The references are mostly from books recognized as authentic by the Sunni school of thought.

It is our fervent hope that those who genuinely wish to understand and follow the right" path will go through this correspondence with an open mind, a sincere heart, and a genuine desire to seek the Truth.

Some letters' subjects are as follows:

Why do not the Shi'is adopt the belief of the majority? Unity is necessary. Only the belief of the majority ought to be followed...

Theological reasons make it incumbent upon everyone to follow the faith of Ahlul Bayt. There is no proof that it is compulsory to follow the faith of the majority. The first three generations of Muslims

did not follow the Sunni Imams. The door of Ijtihad is still open. The faith of the Ahlul Bayt must be respected...

About Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf ai-Din and Shaykh Salim al-Bishri al-Maliki

Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf ai-Din, related to Imam Musa ibn Ja'far (A.S.) through both his father and mother, was born in Kathimiyah, Iraq, in the year 1290 A.H./1872 A.D. and died in the year 1377/1957. He was brought up in the house of Sayyid Hadi al-Sadr, his mother's father, until the age of eight, when his father brought him to Jabal 'Amil in Lebanon where he attended his father's lessons in Qur'anic studies, Arabic and fiqh, At the age of seventeen, Sayyid Sharaf al-Din married his cousin. Then his father returned him to Iraq to continue his studies as he himself had done before. At that time, the cities of Najaf, Karbala and Samara had religious schools where the main scholars and mujtahids (those who are capable of formulating independent decisions in legal or theological matters) gathered. Also during that period, the movements of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Al-Mashrutah wa al-Mustabidtzh (the Conditional and Authoritarian Movement) were emerging in the Ottoman and the Qajari states.

Sayyid Sharaf al-Din was influenced by these movements and among his teachers were Mulla Kathim al-Khurasani and Sayyid Kathim ai-Yazdi, both of whom were leaders of Al-Mashrutah wa al-Mustabidtzh. Shaykh Taha Najaf, Shaykh Hasan al-Karahali Sayyid Hasan al-Sadr, Sayyid Isma'il al-Sadr, Shaykh al-Shari'ah, and Fatahullah al-Isfahani were other scholars from whom the Sayyid acquired knowledge. His teachers noticed his abilities and paid specific attention to him. His classmates knew him as one who used to pose many questions and read much. The Sayyid questioned famous scholars whenever he had the opportunity, but he disliked arguments and pointless criticism. His main concern was to benefit from scholars and be of use to others.

In the year 1320 A.H., Sayyid Sharaf al-Din was preparing a research project under the supervision of Shaykh Muhammad Kathim al-Khurasani (a well-known scholar whose books, such as *Kifayat al-Usul*, are still taught today), and Shaykh al-Khurasani proposed a problem in *usul* (principles of jurisprudence), asking his students to solve it. He was amazed at what Sayyid Sharaf al-Din had to say. The Shaykh turned to him and said that the great exponent of the science of *usul*, Shaykh al-Ansari, had answered the problem in the same way.

Sayyid Sharaf al-Din gained the level of *Ijtihad* (independent judgment in legal questions) at the age of 32 in the year 1322 A.H. and then returned to his home in Jabal 'Amil, after having been away for fifteen years. He based himself in the city of Sur and became known to his people in a short period of time. Later, the highest-ranking religious authority in Lebanon, Sayyid 'Ali al-Amin, authorized him to issue *fatwas* (formal legal opinions).

In addition to his engagement in social work in Sur and Jabal 'Amil, Sayyid Sharaf al-Din continued his efforts writing and publishing. He struggled towards the unity of the Muslims, especially after he experienced colonialist attempts to exploit the sectarian divisions amongst them. In the year 1327 A.H. he published *Al-Fusul al-Muhimah fi Ta'lif al-Ummah*, a book which emphasized the necessity to unite the Muslim people. In this text, he addressed the dispute and differences between the Shi'is and the Sunnis.

In 1331 A.H., he had the opportunity to put his views expressed in the above book to the test. He visited Egypt and met Shaykh Salim al-Bishri, the head of Al-Azhar. The outcome of their discussions and long correspondence was the book *Al-Muraja 'at*, which is widely recognized and circulated in the Muslim world, having been translated into twenty languages. *Al-Muraja 'at* is one of the best known books in Islamic studies due to its panoramic approach, its depth, its concise language, and the strength of its argument.

At the time Sayyid Sharaf al-Din settled in Sur, the Shi'is did not have a mosque to bring them together, so he bought a house and donated it for holding prayers and teaching Islamic studies:- Then he built a grand mosque and pursued his efforts to teach and educate the Muslims. He saw that the west attempted to control the Muslims through their school system, and therefore, he adopted the slogan: "Guidance can only be spread from where misguidance is spreading." He put that slogan into action by establishing many schools that carried Islamic subjects in their curricula. He established the Ja'fari School in Sur which later became a college. He also formed a group called the Imam al-Sadiq Group, and a society to help the poor which was called Birr wa't-Ihsan., One of the steps he took to unite the Muslim ummah was choosing the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet rather than the 17th of Rabi' al-Awwal. He deliberately chose this date because it was the one recognized by the Sunni Muslims, and he wished to bring all the Muslims, Shi'is and Sunnis, closer to each other. After the observance of the event in his mosque, Sayyid Sharaf al-Din would go to the Sunni's mosque and share the celebration of the occasion with them. It was clear that the Sayyid had an open mind both on the theoretical level and in practice.

At the end of the First World War, the French attempted to colonize Lebanon. They felt that Sayyid Sharaf al-Din was an obstacle, so they sent someone to assassinate him _ fortunately the plot failed. Then they sent troops to his house in the village of Shahur and burned it. They also occupied his house in Sur and destroyed his library, which had, at that time, more than eighteen of his own manuscripts awaiting publication. The Sayyid was forced to leave for Syria accompanied by his family, then he went to Egypt and Palestine. The French Governor sentenced him to death after Sayyid Sharaf al-Din issued fa twas declaring jihad against the French invaders. He returned to Lebanon after the French had agreed to all the conditions of the Lebanese and had declared a general amnesty.

During his travels in Syria and Egypt, he met many politicians and leaders. The Syrian leader, Yusuf al-'Azamah, came to Sayyid Sharaf al-Din's residence in Salihyah frequently to meet with him. It is known that when Faisal the First (the King of Syria) sent him the sum of five thousand liras to see him through his difficult years in exile, he returned it to him requesting that it be used to arm the resistance against the French. In Egypt, his speeches were extremely influential in turning public sentiment against the British colonialists there. At that time, Shaykh Rashid Rida published in the journal *Al-Manar* most of his speeches that dealt with the problems of the Lebanese people facing French colonialism.

Shaykh Salim al-Bishri al-Maliki, Shaykh al-Islam and head of the scholars in Egypt, was born in the village of Bishr in the region of Al-Buhavra in the year 1248 A.D./1832 A.D. He studied at Al-Azhar and led it twice: the first period was from 1317/1900 to 1320/1904, and the second period was from 1327/1909 to 1335/1916, which was the time of his death.

He administrated Al-Azhar in a disciplined manner and still had time to continue teaching his students. He left several titles and books which were mainly commentaries on original and historical books, such as the commentary on *Tuhfat al-Talib li-Sharh Risalat al-Adab* and a commentary on the thesis of Shaykh 'Ali on monotheism.