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## Transliteration:

		Long Vowels
ء - '	ع - '	آ - <u>a</u> , ā
ب - b	غ - gh	و - <u>u</u>
ت - t	ف - f	ي - <u>i</u>
ث - th	ق - q	
ج - j	ك - k	Short Vowels
ح - <u>h</u>	ل - l	ا - a
خ - kh	م - m	و - u
د - d	ن - n	ي - i
ذ - dh	ه - h	
ر - r	و - w	Diphthongs
ز - z	ي - y	او - aw
س - s		اي - ay
ش - sh		
ص - <u>s</u>		
ض - <u>d</u>		
ط - <u>t</u>		
ظ - <u>z</u>		
ة - ah; at		

# Editorial

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## **The Personality, Activities, and programs of Imam Husayn (p.b.u.h.)**

These days are coincided with the anniversary of the revolution of ‘Ashura in Muslim countries, which is respected in the Western countries under the title of Imam Husayn’s Day.

‘Ashura and the behavior of Imam Husayn (p.b.u.h.) was a pattern of rescue of the oppressed Shia peoples and thirsty followers of justice throughout history, against the oppressor caliphs.

From the very beginning, as soon as the holy family of the martyred Imam (a.s.) were taken, as slaves, to the court of the wicked Yazid bin Mu‘awiyah (may God damn them); and the young Imam Sajjad

(p.b.u.h.) and Her Excellency, Hadrat Zeinab, gave their enlightening speeches; all the audience, including the Yazid and his near family, condemned the brutal behavior of the aggressive army of the caliph, and the governor and the militia of Kufa town against the Innocent Imam and his fellows. The same has been repeated during the last 14 centuries, by all the free and aware noble people.

At this crucial and sorrowful time, we, as the followers of the Shia doctrine and school of thoughts, and the friends of Imam Husayn and Ahl- Bayt of the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h & h.f.) express our

solidarity with him and our disgust at his enemies, now and forever.

Some brilliant aspects of the characteristics of the holy Imam Husayn, that may be taken as a good pattern for the humankind, in the long history, can be summed up, as below:

- Neglecting Injustice
- Valor
- Firm Determination
- Firmness in the path of God and Truth
- Frankness
- Humility, and bereft of Pride and Arrogance

- Patience and forbearance

I cordially take this opportunity to invite our respected readers to think and study about the movement of the Imam Husayn, and publish his name, thought, and behavior, in all the possible ways.

# THE WILL OF ALLAH AND OUR DESTINY

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*Part XI: Misguiding the Disbelievers*

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Sept. 2018

**Abstract:** *In this part, the religious meaning of misguidance attributed to Allah is discussed in details, and that why Allah misguides, and whom He misguides. It is also discussed if this action of Allah negates His justice, and whether those who are misguided by Allah have any excuse for their wrong actions. Moreover, the role of the Satan in this type of misguidance is explained.*

**Keywords:** *Misguidance; gradual decline; will of Allah.*

## **1 Introduction**

As discussed in the previous part, everyone is lost, astray, and in darkness until Allah shows him His path. When

Allah does not will to provide initial religious guidance for a certain individual, he is called *Dhaal*, which means: lost, astray, misguided, or not guided. He is a person who does not

know the right path and is not informed of it. Allah did not provide initial religious guidance to everyone, but He does not punish those who are not exposed to His religious guidance. However, there is another type of misguidance that Allah decrees it as punishment on those who are exposed to His guidance but rejected it. In a number of tokens of the holy Quran, Allah attributes this type of misguidance to Himself as He is the One who set this rule for the consequence of human disbelief and disobedience. For instance, Allah states:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سُمْ وَ بُكُمْ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
اللَّهُ يُضِلُّهُ وَمَنْ يَشَاءُ يَجْعَلُهُ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ.

Those who reject Our signs are deaf and dumb (wandering) in darkness. Allah misguides whom He wills, and He puts whom He wills on a Straight path. (6:39)

On the other hand, in some other tokens, Allah attributes this misguidance to Satan and some people who misguide others. For example, we read:

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ  
لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ - وَأَنْ اعْبُدُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ - وَ

لَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا أَلَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْقِلُونَ.

Did I not charge you a (rational) covenant, O Children of Adam, that you should not serve Satan, surely he is a manifest foe to you, and that you should serve Me, (as) this is a straight path. He led astray many a throng of you! Did you not understand? (36:60-62)

وَأَضَلَّ فِرْعَوْنَ قَوْمَهُ وَمَا هَدَى.

Pharaoh led his folk astray and did not guide them. (20:79)

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِنَ الْكِتَابِ يَشْتَرُونَ  
الضَّلَالََةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيلَ.

Have you not regarded those who were given a share of the Book, who demand and buy misguidance, and (also) desire that you lose the way. (4:44)

This fact suggests that the action of misguidance, though Allah decreed it, planned its details and its extent, and allowed it to happen, may take place by His creations voluntarily. In this part, more insight is provided concerning this issue.

## 2 Decreeing Misguidance as Allah's Punishment

If one rejects Allah's guidance and light after He offered him, he is deserving of divine punishment. Of the punishments that Allah may decide for a person who insists on denying the truth, is to withdraw His guidance from him and to leave him in darkness. Such a divine rule would result in misguidance for that person due to lack of light, and temptation of Satan and his followers among men and the unseen creatures called *Jinn*. According to the traditions, in all instances in the holy Quran where the action of misguiding (*Idhlal*) has been attributed to Allah, it only means Allah's punishment for those who remain ungrateful to His favors and neglectful to His guiding signs. Thus, if Allah "misguides" such a person, He only acted according to His justice. Allah willed that avoiding the path guidance would result in misguidance and created the grounds for it to happen. Allah stresses this fact in Quran by saying:

فَمَاذَا بَعَدَ الْحَقَّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ.

Then after apart from truth, what

remains but misguidance (Dhalal)? (10:32)

كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الْكَافِرِينَ.

This way, Allah misguides those who disbelieve/conceal (the truth). (40:74)

وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ.

And He does not misguide anyone by it (i.e., the examples in the Quran) except the wicked. (2:26)

يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ وَالْآخِرَةَ وَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الْظَالِمِينَ وَ يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ.

Allah confirms those who believe by a firm word in this world and in the Hereafter. But Allah misguides the unjust, and Allah does what He wills. (14:27)

وَ لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ نُصْحِي إِنْ أَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَنْصَحَ لَكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُغْوِيَكُمْ هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ.

(Noah (*PBUH*) said to his disbelieving folk:) My advice shall not benefit you even though I intended to advise you if it be that Allah intended to mislead you. He is your Lord, and to Him will you return. (11:34)

وَ مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّى يُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ مَا يَتَّقُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ .

And Allah will not mislead a group of people after He has guided them until He makes clear to them as to what they should avoid, for Allah has knowledge of all things. (9:115)

بَلِ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَمَنْ يَهْدِي مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ.

Nay! Those who do wrong follow their own desires without knowledge. Then, who will guide those whom Allah has misguided? For them there will be no helpers. (30:29)

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَرَاكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا.

Why should you be divided into two parties about the hypocrites while Allah has cost them of their (evil) deeds? Do you want to guide those whom Allah has misguided? For those whom Allah misguides, never shall you find a way. (4:88)

From the context of the above tokens, it is clear that the misguidance is Allah's decision in response to hypocrisy.

Allah further states:

إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمْ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَ لِيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ

تَخْتَلِفُونَ وَ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَ لَكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

... Surely, Allah wishes to test you by him, and on the Day of Judgment He will certainly make clear to you (the truth of) that wherein you disagree. If Allah so willed, He would certainly have made you all one people. But He misguides whom He wills, and He guides whom He wills; And you will certainly be called to account for all your actions. (16:92-93)

Since Allah never calls to account the action of a person who was not shown the path, the misguidance mentioned in the above token is for a person to whom Allah showed guidance but rejected it. On the commentary of above tokens, Ali bin Ibrahim al-Qummi (d. 307 A.H., one of the students of Imam Hasan al-Askari (PBUH) (the eleventh Imam) and teacher of al-Kulaini, has mentioned in his Tafsir that:

إِنَّمَا «يَبْلُوكُمْ اللَّهُ بِهِ» يَعْنِي بَعْلِي بِنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ ع يَخْتَبِرُكُمْ «وَ لِيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ- وَ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً» قَالَ عَلَى مَذْهَبِ وَاحِدٍ وَ أَمْرٍ وَاحِدٍ «وَ لَكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ» قَالَ يُعَذِّبُ بِتَقْضِ الْعَهْدِ «وَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ» قَالَ

يُنْيِبُ.

“Surely Allah wishes to test you by him’ means He tests you by Ali bin Abi Talib (*PBUH*), ‘and on the Day of Judgment He will certainly make clear to you (the truth of) that wherein you disagree. And If Allah (so) willed, He could make you all one people’ means a single religion (*Madh’hab*) and single matter (i.e., *Walaya* of Ali (*PBUH*)). ‘But He misguides whom He wills’ means He punishes for breaking the (divine) covenant, ‘and He guides whom He wills’ means He rewards...”<sup>1</sup>

A person who rejects the guidance of the divinely assigned Imams and yet tries to live religious life without following their instructions, is on the path of destruction and falls prey to the temptations of Satan. So long as he continues this attitude, Allah continues to decree misguidance for him. In fact, by independent reason, one can prove that there exists no way towards Allah and His satisfaction except that which Allah opened, approved, and suggested. Moreover, it is clear from divine narrations (i.e., Quran and Hadith) that Allah has not opened any door towards

Himself except through the guides that He appointed. Mufadhhdhal bin Umar narrated that Imam al-Sadiq (*PBUH*) said:

مَنْ دَانَ اللَّهَ بِغَيْرِ سَمَاعٍ عَنْ صَادِقِ أَلِزَمَهُ اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّةَ إِلَى الْفَنَاءِ وَ مَنْ ادَّعَى سَمَاعاً مِنْ غَيْرِ الْبَابِ الَّذِي فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ مُشْرِكٌ وَ ذَلِكَ الْبَابُ الْمَأْمُونُ عَلَى سِرِّ اللَّهِ الْمَكْنُونِ .

“He who worships Allah without hearing from a truthful<sup>2</sup>, Allah necessitates for him to go astray towards destruction. He who claims there are (correct religious-related) sayings that he has heard from other than the door that Allah has opened, is a polytheist. And this is the secure door that has been treasured with the secrets of Allah.”<sup>3</sup>

A similar narration was reported by al-Hasan bin Is’haq from Imam al-Ridha (*PBUH*) from his ancestors with the following wording:

مَنْ دَانَ بِغَيْرِ سَمَاعٍ أَلِزَمَهُ اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّةَ إِلَى الْفَنَاءِ وَ مَنْ دَانَ بِسَمَاعٍ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْبَابِ الَّذِي فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ لِخَلْقِهِ فَهُوَ مُشْرِكٌ وَ الْبَابُ الْمَأْمُونُ عَلَى وَحْيِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٌ ص .

The Messenger of Allah (*PBUH&HF*) said, “He who humbly adopts a religion and devotes himself to it without hearing (from Allah’s Messenger), Allah

makes a binding decision about him (to go) towards (spiritual) destruction. He who adopts religion by hearing from other than the door that Allah has opened for His creation, is a polytheist.” Then, the Imam (*PBUH*) continued, “And the trustworthy door on Allah’s revelation is Muhammad (*PBUH&HF*).”<sup>4</sup>

Abd al-A’la narrated:

سَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِ وَ مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّى يُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ مَا يَتَّقُونَ قَالَ حَتَّى يُعْرِفَهُمْ مَا يُرْضِيهِ وَ مَا يُسْخِطُهُ.

I asked Imam al-Sadiq (*PBUH*) about Allah’s saying, “And Allah will not mislead a people after He has guided them until He makes clear to them whatever they should avoid.” (9:115) He (*PBUH*) replied, “(it means) until He lets them know what pleases Him and what displeases Him.”<sup>5</sup>

The punishment of misguidance manifests itself in different ways, some of which will be discussed in the rest of this article.

### 3 Misguiding From Paradise in the Hereafter

In several Hadith, the Imams (*PBUT*) interpreted the Quranic term of “guidance” as “direction to reach Paradise on the Day of Judgment”, and “misguidance” as “losing the address of Paradise and getting lost on the Day of Judgment”. A number of tokens in the holy Quran support this interpretation.

Al-Hashimi narrated:

سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ جَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ ع عَنْ قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ «مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَ مَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا» فَقَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى يُضِلُّ الظَّالِمِينَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَنْ دَارِ كَرَامَتِهِ وَ يَهْدِي أَهْلَ الْإِيمَانِ وَ الْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ كَمَا قَالَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ «وَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَ يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ» وَ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ «إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَ عَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِإِيمَانِهِمْ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ».

I asked Imam al-Sadiq (*PBUH*) about the saying of Allah, the mighty and the majestic, ‘He whom Allah guides, is rightly guided; but he whom Allah leaves astray, you will not find for him any advising guardian. (18:17)’ The Imam said, “Certainly, Allah—Whose name is holy, Whose remembrance is high—misguides the wrongdoers on the

Day of Judgment from the house of His blessings (i.e., Paradise), and guides those who had faith and good deeds to His Paradise just as He said, ‘Allah misguides the unjust, and Allah does what He wills.’ (14:27) Moreover, He, Allah, the glorious, said, ‘Those who believe, and do good deeds, their Lord shall guide them because of their faith (to the place where) beneath them will flow rivers in Gardens of Bliss.’ (10:9)”<sup>6</sup>

In addition, Allah says in the holy Quran:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَ ظَلَمُوا (آل محمد حقهم) لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيُغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَ لَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقاً إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَداً وَ كَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيراً.

Those who reject faith and oppress (the rights of the family of Muhammad (*PBUH&HF*) as per traditions<sup>7</sup>), Allah shall never forgive them nor guide them to a way except the way to Hell, to dwell therein forever, and this is easy for Allah. (4:168-169)

Regarding the following token:

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَ مَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقاً حَرَجاً كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

He whom Allah intends to guide, He opens his bosom for submission (*Islam*), and he whom Allah intends to misguide, He makes his bosom constricted (or even) closed, as if he should evaporate into the sky. This way Allah puts doubt (*al-Rijs*) on (the heart of) those who do not believe. (6:125)

On the commentary of this token, Hamdan bin Sulaiman narrated:

سَأَلْتُ أَبَا الْحَسَنِ عَلِيَّ بْنَ مُوسَى الرَّضَا عَ عَنْ قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ «فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ» قَالَ مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ بِإِيمَانِهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ وَ دَارِ كَرَامَتِهِ فِي الْآخِرَةِ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلتَّسْلِيمِ لِلَّهِ وَ النَّقَّةَ بِهِ وَ السُّكُونَ إِلَى مَا وَعَدَهُ مِنْ ثَوَابِهِ حَتَّى يَطْمَئِنَّ إِلَيْهِ «وَ مَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ» عَنْ جَنَّتِهِ وَ دَارِ كَرَامَتِهِ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لِكُفْرِهِ بِهِ وَ عَصْيَانِهِ لَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا «يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقاً حَرَجاً» حَتَّى تَشْكَّ فِي كُفْرِهِ وَ يَضْطَرِبَ مِنْ اعْتِقَادِهِ قَلْبُهُ حَتَّى يَصْبِرَ «كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ».

I asked Imam al-Ridha (*PBUH*) about the saying of Allah: “He whom Allah intends to guide, He opens his bosom for submission (*Islam*).” (6:125) He (*PBUH*) answered, ““He whom Allah intends to guide’ towards Paradise and to the house of honor in the Hereafter because of his faith in this world, He

opens his bosom for submitting to Allah, trusting in Him, and acquiring tranquility in what Allah has promised of the rewards to him until he becomes fully confident in Him. 'And he whom Allah intends to misguide' from His Paradise and the house of honor in the Hereafter, due to his disbelief and his disobedience toward Him in this world, 'He makes his bosom constricted (or even) closed,' until he becomes doubtful (even) in his *Kufr*, and his heart will (continue to) be perplexed in (false) beliefs 'as if he should evaporate into the sky. This way Allah puts doubt on (the heart of) those who do not believe.' (6:125)"<sup>8</sup>

Interpreting the term *al-Rijs* as doubt in the above-mentioned commentary of Chapter six, Token 125 by the Imam Ridha (*PBUH*) is noteworthy. According to the lexicons of Arabic<sup>9</sup> and the Hadith literature, The meanings of the word "*al-Rijs*" include, doubt (*Shakk*, *Raib*), perplexity, and temptations of Satan (*Waswasa*, *Hamaza*), as well as, filth and impurity. Doubt and perplexity is the most delicate and yet a very dangerous type of the impurity of heart.

As, noted in the above Hadith, Allah's will concerning one's misguidance is only because of one's denial of the truth. The outcome of misguidance is doubt in belief, darkness, losing the way to Paradise on the Day of Judgment, and arriving at Hell. On the other hand, the outcome of guidance for the believers is the increase of faith in Allah, peace of mind and confidence in His promises of rewards, and finally obtaining the rank of Paradise.

#### **4 Leaving Disbelievers in Doubt**

Allah has ruled some natural outcomes for rejection. One such outcome is that when one rejects a sign of Allah, doubt will gradually appear in his mind about the things he previously had no doubt. In this manner, when one continues to reject, one becomes increasingly doubtful about all of the signs of Allah, His rules, and His sayings.

The similitude of a disbeliever who has fallen into doubt to the extent that truth does not settle on his heart is the similitude of vapor that does not settle on earth and scatters in the sky. In other words, living with this much perplexity becomes intolerable for him as if he

should go to the sky. This is another worldly punishment of the disbelievers. When Allah leaves them on themselves, the devils induce doubt on them. Thus, to put doubt on the heart of disbelievers by Allah means to decree that the devils would could induce doubt in them, and then to do nothing to remove their doubt, to fully withhold divine protection from them, and to treat them according to divine Justice. Inducing doubt in the hearts of disbelievers is the action of Satan, entertaining the doubt and rejecting faith are the actions of disbelievers, and allowing all these things to take their natural courses is due to the will of Allah.

Generally, there are two stages of doubt that should be distinguished. One is the doubt that exists before receiving initial guidance by Allah, which is not disbelief. However, when Allah shows a person His signs, if he then continues to entertain doubt in his heart about the truth and admits Satan's whispers into his heart, he becomes a disbeliever. According to the Quran and the traditions, this latter type of doubt is equivalent to disbelief, which is a

voluntary practice of one's heart. Allah states:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا  
وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ  
الصَّادِقُونَ.

Believers are only those who believed in Allah and His Messenger, then never entertained doubt, and strove with their properties and their souls in the cause of Allah; such are the truthful. (49:15)

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِنْ قَبْلُ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا زُلْتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ  
مِمَّا جَاءَكُمْ بِهِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ لَنَ يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ  
رَسُولًا كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُرْتَابٌ.

And certainly in the past, Joseph came to you with clear evidence, but you kept doubt regarding some of what came to you through him; at length, when he died, you said, "Allah shall never send a messenger after him." This way Allah misguides the wasteful transgressors who entertain doubt. (40:34)

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَ  
إِرْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي رَيْبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ.

(O Prophet!) Only those ask you for exemption (from battle) who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, and whose hearts are in doubt, so that they

toss in their doubts back and forth.  
(9:45)

Hypocrites think that they can deceive while they are deceived by wandering in doubt and perplexity:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَ هُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاوِنَ النَّاسَ وَ لَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا - مُدْبِئِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَ لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَ مَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا.

The hypocrites seek to trick Allah, but Allah is tricking them: When they stand up to pray they stand up lazily, showing off to the people and not remembering Allah save a little; wavering all the time not toward these, not toward those, and whom Allah leads astray, you will not find for him a way. (4:142-143)

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبُؤُا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَ عَادٍ وَ ثَمُودَ وَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّهُ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَدُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَ قَالُوا إِنَّا كَفَرْنَا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ وَ إِنَّا لَفِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَنَا إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ.

Has not the story reached you, (O people), of those who were before you, of the people of Noah, Aad, Thamud, and those who (came) after them? None knows them but Allah. To them came

messengers with evidence, but they put their hands over their mouths (to protest), and said, “We do deny (the mission) on which you have been sent, and we are really in (disquieting) doubt about what you invite us.” (14:9)

As we pointed out, although the doubt comes to mind without having control over it, and thus it is not one’s action and cannot be categorized as disbelief, entertaining doubt and admitting it into the heart after the truth is presented by Allah is equivalent to disbelief. Abu Is’haq al-Khurasani and others narrated that the Leader of the Faithful, Ali (PBUH), said in some of his sermons:

لَا تَرْتَابُوا فَتَشْكُوا وَ لَا تَشْكُوا فَتَكْفُرُوا.

“Do not entertain doubt for you will fall into doubt. And do not (admit) doubt for you will disbelieve.”<sup>10</sup>

Several traditionists narrated from Imam al-Sadiq (PBUH) and Musa bin Ja’far (PBUH) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH&HF) said:

الرَّيْبُ كُفْرٌ.

“Suspicion is a disbelief.”<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, in his advice to Mufadhhal bin Umar, Imam al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

مَنْ شَكَّ أَوْ ظَنَّ وَ أَقَامَ عَلَى أَحَدِهِمَا أَحْبَبَ اللَّهُ عَمَلَهُ إِنَّ حُجَّةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْحُجَّةُ الْوَاضِحَةُ.

“He who doubts (in Allah’s vicegerents and His commandments) or distrusts, and keeps up any of these two, Allah shall nullify his deeds. Certainly, the Proof of Allah (*Hujjat Allah*) is the clear proof.”<sup>12</sup>

Zurara narrated:

فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَ مِنْ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ وَ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ فِتْنَةٌ انْقَلَبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةَ قَالَ زُرَّارَةُ سَأَلْتُ عَنْهَا أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ ع فَقَالَ هُوَ لِأَنَّ قَوْمَ عَبْدُوا اللَّهَ وَ خَلَعُوا عِبَادَةَ مَنْ يُعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَ شَكُّوا فِي مُحَمَّدٍ ص وَ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ فَتَكَلَّمُوا بِالْإِسْلَامِ وَ شَهِدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَ أَقْرَأُوا بِالْقُرْآنِ وَ هُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ شَاكُونَ فِي مُحَمَّدٍ ص وَ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ وَ لَيْسُوا شَكَّاكًا فِي اللَّهِ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَ مِنْ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ يَعْنِي عَلَى شَكٍّ فِي مُحَمَّدٍ ص وَ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ يَعْنِي عَافِيَةٌ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَ مَالِهِ وَ وُلْدِهِ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ وَ رَضِيَ بِهِ وَ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ فِتْنَةٌ يَعْنِي بَلَاءٌ فِي جَسَدِهِ أَوْ مَالِهِ تَطَيَّرَ وَ كَرِهَ الْمَقَامَ عَلَى الْإِفْرَارِ بِالنَّبِيِّ ص فَرَجَعَ إِلَى الْوُفُوفِ وَ الشُّكِّ فَتَصَبَّ الْعِدَاوَةَ لِلَّهِ وَ لِرَسُولِهِ وَ الْجُحُودَ بِالنَّبِيِّ وَ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ.

I asked Imam al-Baqir (PBUH) about the saying of the Lord of might and majesty,

“Of people is he who worships Allah on the edge (of faith). If good befalls him, he is, therewith, well content; but if a trial befalls him, he makes a turnabout (on his faith). He loses both this world and the Hereafter. (22:11)” The Imam (PBUH) said, “They were people who (apparently) worshipped Allah and disowned worshipping the idols. But they had doubt about (the virtues of) Muhammad (PBUH&HF) and his teachings. They became Muslims and witnessed that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger and affirmed the Quran while they were doubtful about (the virtues of) Muhammad (PBUH&HF) and his teachings. They were not doubtful in (the existence of One) Allah. The Lord of might and majesty says, ‘Of people is he who worships Allah on the edge (of faith),’ means on doubt in Muhammad (PBUH&HF) and his instructions. ‘If good befalls him,’ means well-being in his health, wealth and children ‘he is, therewith, well content’ and is satisfied by it, ‘but if a trial befalls him,’ means an affliction in health or his wealth, he regards it as an evil omen and stops acknowledging the Prophet (PBUH&HF)

and returns to his doubt and suspicion. Thus, he sets up enmity against Allah, and His Messenger, and denies the Prophet (*PBUH&HF*) and what came to him.”<sup>13</sup>

There is a very interesting Hadith from Imam al-Baqir (*PBUH*) or Imam al-Sadiq (*PBUH*) through Muhammad bin Muslim, who related:

قُلْتُ لَهُ إِنَّا نَرَى الرَّجُلَ مِنَ الْمُخَالِفِينَ عَلَيْكُمْ لَهُ عِبَادَةٌ وَ اجْتِهَادٌ وَ خُشُوعٌ فَهَلْ يَنْفَعُهُ ذَلِكَ شَيْئاً فَقَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنَّ مَثَلَنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ مَثَلُ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ كَانُوا فِي بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَ كَانَ لَا يَجْتَهُدُ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً إِلَّا دَعَا فَأَجِيبَ وَ إِنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْهُمْ اجْتَهَدَ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ دَعَا فَلَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لَهُ فَأَتَى عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ عَ يَشْكُو إِلَيْهِ مَا هُوَ فِيهِ وَ يَسْأَلُهُ الدُّعَاءَ لَهُ فَتَطَهَّرَ عِيسَى عَ وَ صَلَّى ثُمَّ دَعَا فَأَوْحَى اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ يَا عِيسَى إِنَّ عَيْدِي أَتَانِي مِنْ غَيْرِ الْبَابِ الَّذِي أُوتِيَ مِنْهُ إِنَّهُ دَعَانِي وَ فِي قَلْبِهِ شَكٌّ مِنْكَ فَلَوْ دَعَانِي حَتَّى يَنْقَطِعَ عُنُقُهُ وَ تَنْتَبِرَ أَنَامِلُهُ مَا اسْتَجَبْتُ لَهُ فَالْتَقَتْ عِيسَى عَ فَقَالَ تَدْعُو رَبَّكَ وَ فِي قَلْبِكَ شَكٌّ مِنْ نَبِيِّهِ قَالَ يَا رُوحَ اللَّهِ وَ كَلِمَتَهُ فَمَا كَانَ وَ اللَّهُ مَا قُلْتُ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ بِهِ عَنِّي فَدَعَا لَهُ عِيسَى عَ فَتَقَبَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ وَ صَارَ فِي أَحَدِ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ كَذَلِكَ نَحْنُ أَهْلُ الْبَيْتِ لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ عَمَلَ عَبْدٍ وَ هُوَ يَشْكُ فِينَا.

I said to the Imam (*PBUH*), “We see a man among your opponents who worships (Allah), makes hard efforts (in acting upon good deeds), and is very humble. Do these acts benefit him

anything?” He (*PBUH*) replied, “O Muhammad! The similitude of us Ahl al-Bait (*PBUT*) (and people) is the similitude of (Jesus and) a family who were among the Children of Israel. If any of them worshiped Allah for forty nights and then he called upon Allah, his prayer would have been granted (by Allah). Once, one of them spent forty nights in worship and then called upon Allah, but he was not answered. He came to Jesus (*PBUH*), complained about what happened to him, and asked him to pray for him. Jesus (*PBUH*) made an ablution, performed Salat, and then prayed. Thereupon Allah revealed to him, “O Jesus! Certainly, this servant of mine came to me from other than the door that should arrive. He called upon me while he has doubt about you in his heart. Even if he calls upon me to the extent that his neck is broken and his fingers fall out, I shall not answer him.” Jesus (*PBUH*) turned his face to the man and said, “Do you call upon Allah while you have doubt about (the rights and virtues of) His Prophet in your heart?” He replied, “O the spirit of Allah and His word! It was, by Allah, exactly as you said. So. Ask Allah that He may

remove the doubt from my heart.” Thereupon, Jesus (*PBUH*) prayed to Allah for him, and Allah accepted his request. Thus, he became like other members of his family (whose prayers were granted).” Then, the Imam (*PBUH*) continued: “Like this is the case of us Ahl al-Bait (*PBUT*). Allah does not accept the deed of a servant who doubts in us (i.e., doubts in our rights and virtues).”<sup>14</sup>

When one is doubtful, it is his duty to try his best to eliminate his doubt. This may involve several primary steps. The man mentioned in the above tradition did an intelligent shortcut for removing his doubt. He chose to ask Allah’s vicegerent to pray for on his behalf for eliminating his doubt. Going to Jesus (*PBUH*) and making him the means of his prayed comprised the voluntary steps that he took for removing his doubt.

Resorting (*Tawassul*) to the Prophet (*PBUH&HF*) and his Ahl al-Bait (*PBUT*) and asking them to call upon Allah on our behalf are the best and the quickest remedy for clearing up the impurities doubts from our heart by leave of Allah. Moreover, the divinely appointed

leaders have prescribed many supplications by which we can beseech Allah so that He may remove doubts from our heart and grant us certainty (*Yaqin*).

## 5 Authorizing the devils

When one voluntarily rejects the guardianship of Allah, which is manifested by the guardianship of His vicegerents on the earth, he has made himself ready for the guardianship of the devils (*Shayatin*) and their temptations because he has willingly left Allah’s protection. Allah decreed that a person who leaves His protection becomes susceptible to satanic incitements. *Iblis* was the first creature who was named Satan (*Shaitan*). He was from the *Jinn* (a type of creature made of fire whom Allah granted volition just like the human being) and was the first person who violated the command of His Lord. *Iblis* arrogantly disobeyed Allah’s order concerning submission to His vicegerent, Adam (*PBUH*), and prostrate before him. For that matter, Allah cursed him and distanced him from His mercy. In the holy Quran, we read:

قَالَ فَاحْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ لعَنْتِي إِلَى يَوْمِ

الَّذِينَ قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ قَالَ فَالْحَقُّ وَالْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكَ وَمِمَّنْ تَتَّبَعُ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ.

(Allah) said, “Then, get out from there (i.e., the garden) for you are outcast, and unto you is My curse until the Day of Judgment.” (Iblis) said, “O my Lord! Give me then respite until the day the (dead) are resurrected.” (Allah) said, “Respite is then granted you until the Appointed Day.” (Iblis) said, “Then, I swear by Your might, I will lead them all astray except those of your sincere servants.” (Allah) said, “Thus, the truth is, and the truth I say, that I shall most certainly fill the Hell with you and those who follow you all together.” (38:77-85)

Thus, Satan swore that he would mislead all humankind except those who put themselves purely under Allah’s guardianship, and Allah permitted him to exercise his choice. In another location in the holy Quran we read:

قَالَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسْتَقِيمٌ إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ.

(Allah) said, “This is My straight path.

Certainly you will have no authority over My servants, except he who follows you and puts himself in the wrong.” (15:41-42)

Those among the human being and the *Jinn* who chose *Iblis* as their guardian and totally submitted to him, were also called devils. They follow what their master, *Iblis* (the greater devil), commands them. They are the enemies of the prophets (*PBUT*) and their teachings. Allah states:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا وَ لَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ.

And this way, We made for every prophet a (group of) enemy, devils from men and Jinn, inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception. If your Lord had so willed, they would not have done it. Thus, leave them and the lies they forge. (6:112)

Allah has decreed that to the extent that an individual chooses to distance himself from Allah’s guardianship, devils gain more authority over him as his guardian. However, giving permission to devils over the

disbelievers does not make Allah responsible for the devils' actions. Allah may let them exercise their choice as He has let other wrongdoers do so. Moreover, satanic temptations are not the cause for the action of such people as they still exercise their own choice. It is only about losing Allah's shield, protection and assistance, losing discernment and awareness concerning the delusions and seductions of the devils, and being exposed more to their enticements. The devils only suggest and whisper. Accepting the devils as one's advisors and listening to their whispers is the voluntary action of a disbeliever. Thus, although enticing a disbeliever is the choice of the devils, admitting the devils' temptations into one's heart and rejecting faith is the choice of a disbeliever. About authorizing the devils, Allah says in the holy Quran:

وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُفَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ.

And for anyone who withdraws from remembrance of the gracious Lord, We appoint for him a devil that will be an intimate companion to him. (43:36)

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ تَؤْزُهُمْ أَزًّا.

Don't you see that We have sent the devils to the disbelievers and they excite them to a great degree? (19:83)

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ.

We made the devils guardians and masters for those who do not believe. (7:27)

Sending devils to entice men or making them their guardians refers to the will and plan of Allah to free them to exercise their choice, and Allah does not compel them do wrong.

وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ.

And the devils indeed inspire their friends to argue with you. And if you were to obey them, you would indeed be polytheists. (6:121)

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَ يَتَّبِعُ كُلَّ شَيْطَانٍ مَرِيدٍ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ مَنْ تَوَلَّاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يُضِلُّهُ وَ يَهْدِيهِ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ.

And among people is he who argues about Allah (and His sayings and commandments) without (divine) knowledge and follows every rebellious devil. It is written for him who follows a

devil and accepts his guardianship that he will lead him astray, and will guide him to the blazing fire. (22:3-4)

اسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَاهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ.

Satan has gained the mastery over them, so he has made them forget the remembrance of Allah. They are the Party of Satan. Truly, it is the Party of Satan that will lose! (58:19)

Muhammad bin Muslim narrated via Imam al-Sadiq (PBUH) and through his fathers that the Leader of the Faithful, Ali (PBUH), said:

مَنْ تَصَدَّى بِالْإِثْمِ أَعْتَى عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَ مَنْ تَرَكَ الْأَخْذَ عَمَّنْ أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِطَاعَتِهِ قَبِضَ «لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ».

“Anyone who turn to sin shall withdraw from the remembrance of Allah, the Glorious. He who desists taking (religious issues) from whom Allah has commanded to his obedience, Allah ‘shall appoint a devil for him and he shall become an intimate companion to him.’ (43:36)<sup>15</sup>

The fact is that no one on the earth is “free” in an absolute sense. People are

only free in a relative sense. Those who make themselves free from Allah’s obedience have already become the slaves of their desires, which, in reality, means they have yielded themselves to the slavery of Satan. On the other hand, the believers, by their service to Allah, become free from the obedience of Satan. What an intelligent choice!

Our protection against the Satan only comes from Allah. The believers are instructed to seek refuge in Allah so that He may guard them from the temptations of the Satan. The more we choose to request Allah’s protection, the less are we influenced by the devils. This is how our volition takes part in keeping us away from the temptations of the devils. The glorious Allah says:

وَ إِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ.

If a temptation from the Satan attacks your (mind), seek refuge in Allah, for He hears and knows (all things). Those who observe piety, when an evil thought from Satan reaches them, remember (Allah) and become mindful (of His command), and then, they get insight

and find (true) vision! (7:200-201)

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمًا.

As for those who believe in Allah and seek protection from Him, He shall soon enter them to His mercy and grace, and shall guide them to him (who is) a straight way. (4:175)

وَمَنْ يَعْصِمْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ.

... And whoever seeks protection from Allah, he was, indeed, guided to a straight way. (3:101)

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي مَقَامٍ أَمِينٍ.

Surely the watchful are in a secure position. (44:51)

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا.

... And whoever is watchful of (his duty to) Allah, He shall make for him an outlet, and shall give him from whence he thinks not. And whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him; surely Allah attains His purpose; Allah indeed has appointed a measure for everything. (65:2-3)

The claim that Allah cannot or may not protect one who resorts to Him and submits to His command is the denial of Allah's power and or denial of His justice. As we have seen in the above tokens, Allah has promised help for a person who observes *Taqwa* (i.e., he is mindful of his duties towards Allah) and seeks refuge in Him in facing the temptations of Satan. More protection from Allah paves the way for more submission to His command given that one steadfast in submission to the command of his Lord. On the other hand, more submission to His command will be rewarded with more protection from Allah. This positive loop may lead to a perfect protection if one always chooses what Allah chooses for him. Abdullah bin Sanan narrated that Imam al-Sadiq (*PBUH*) said:

أَيُّمَا عَبْدٍ أَقْبَلَ قَبْلَ مَا يُجِبُّ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَقْبَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَبْلَ كُلِّ مَا يُجِبُّ وَمَنْ اعْتَصَمَ بِاللَّهِ وَبِتَقْوَاهُ عَصَمَهُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَقْبَلَ قَبْلَهُ وَعَصَمَهُ لَمْ يُبَالِ لَوْ سَقَطَتِ السَّمَاءُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانَتْ نَازِلَةً عَلَى أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ فَسَمِلَتْهُمْ بَلِيَّةٌ وَكَانَ فِي حِرْزِ اللَّهِ بِالتَّقْوَى مِنْ كُلِّ بَلِيَّةٍ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى يَقُولُ إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي مَقَامٍ أَمِينٍ.

“Any servant who proceeds towards

what Allah loves, Allah, the Lord of might and majesty, shall proceed towards all what the servant loves. He who seeks protection from Allah and holds fast to His shield, Allah shall protect him. And he towards whom Allah advances and protects, will not worry if the heaven falls over the earth or an encompassing affliction befalls the inhabitants of the earth, since he is in Allah's sanctuary and is shielded from every affliction. Is not that Allah, the— Whose name is holy, Whose remembrance is high—said, 'Surely the watchful are in a secure position?' (44:51)"<sup>16</sup>

Allah further says:

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ  
إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ.

When you recite the Quran, seek Allah's protection against the outcast and the accursed Satan. Certainly, he has no authority over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. His authority is only over those who take him as guardian and who join partners with Allah. (16:98-100)

In the following Hadith, which has been attributed to Imam al-Sadiq (PBUH) without documentation, some of the schemes of Satan in approaching the humans and some practical ways to confront him have been explained. According to this narration, Imam al-Sadiq (PBUH) said:

وَاللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ دَعَا عِبَادَهُ لِبُلْطَفِ دَعْوَتِهِ وَعَرَفَهُمْ  
عِدَاوَةَ إِبْلِيسَ فَقَالَ تَعَالَى إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ وَ  
قَالَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا فَكُنْ مَعَهُ  
كَالْغَرِيبِ مَعَ كَلْبِ الرَّاعِي يَفْرَغُ إِلَى صَاحِبِهِ مَنْ  
صَرَفَهُ عَنْهُ كَذَلِكَ إِذَا أَتَاكَ الشَّيْطَانُ مُوسِسًا لِيُضِلَّكَ  
عَنْ سَبِيلِ الْحَقِّ وَ يَنْسِيكَ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَعِذْ مِنْهُ بِرَبِّكَ وَ  
رَبِّهِ فَإِنَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ الْحَقَّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ وَ يَنْصُرُ الْمَظْلُومَ  
بِقَوْلِهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَ  
عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ وَ لَنْ يُفْزَرَ عَلَى هَذَا وَ مَعْرِفَةَ  
إِثْبَانِهِ وَ مَذَاهِبِ وَسُوسَتِهِ إِلَّا بِدَوَامِ الْمُرَاقَبَةِ وَ  
الِاسْتِقَامَةِ عَلَى بَسَاطَةِ الْخِدْمَةِ وَ هَيِّبَةِ الْمُطَّلَعِ وَ كَثْرَةِ  
الذِّكْرِ وَ أَمَّا الْمُهْمِلُ لِأَوْقَاتِهِ فَهُوَ صَيْدُ الشَّيْطَانِ لِأَنَّ  
مَحَالَةَ وَ اعْتِبَارَ بِمَا فَعَلَ يَنْفَسِهِ مِنَ الْإِغْوَاءِ وَ الْإِعْتِرَارِ  
وَ الْإِسْتِكْبَارِ حَيْثُ عَرَّهَ وَ أَعْجَبَهُ عَمَلُهُ وَ عِبَادَتُهُ وَ  
بَصِيرَتُهُ وَ رَأْيُهُ وَ جُرْأَتُهُ عَلَيْهِ قَدْ أَوْرَثَهُ عِلْمُهُ وَ  
مَعْرِفَتُهُ وَ اسْتِدْلَالُهُ بِعَقْلِهِ اللَّغْنَةَ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ فَمَا ظَنَّاكَ  
بِنُصْحِهِ وَ دَعْوَتِهِ غَيْرَهُ فَاعْتَصِمْ بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ الْأَوْثَقِ وَ  
هُوَ الْإِلْتِمَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَ الْإِضْطِرَارُ بِصِحَّةِ الْإِيقَانِ إِلَى  
اللَّهِ فِي كُلِّ نَفْسٍ وَ لَا يَغُرُّكَ تَرْبِيئُهُ لِلطَّاعَةِ عَلَيْكَ فَإِنَّهُ  
يَفْتَحُ عَلَيْكَ تَسْعَةً وَ تِسْعِينَ بَاباً مِنَ الْخَيْرِ لِيُظْفَرَ بِكَ  
عِنْدَ تَمَامِ الْمِائَةِ فَقَابِلُهُ بِالْخِلَافِ وَ الصِّدْقِ عَنِ سَبِيلِهِ وَ

الْمُضَادَّةَ بِاسْتِهْوَائِهِ.

“... The Lord of might and majesty called His servants a call of mercy and made them aware of the enmity of *Iblis*. He—Whose remembrance is high—said, ‘Verily Satan is an evident enemy of you,’ (7:22) and said, ‘Certainly, Satan is an enemy to you, so take him as an enemy.’ (35:6) Thus, treat him the way a stranger treats a shepherd dog, that in order to repel it, he fearfully resort to the owner of dog. Thus, when the Satan comes to you with temptation to mislead you from the path of truth and to make you forget Allah, seek refuge from him in your Lord and his Lord. Certainly, Allah supports truth against falsehood and helps the oppressed, as He, the mighty and the majestic, said, ‘Certainly, he has no authority over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord.’ (16:99) No one has the ability to do this (i.e., to avoid the Satan) and to know of his presence and the methods of his temptations except by persistent watchfulness and commitment in sincere service (to Allah’s cause), by fear from what was informed (by Allah), and by abundant

remembrance. But, those who are negligent about their times are undoubtedly the prey of the Satan... Thus, hold fast to the rope of Allah, the most confident rope, which is seeking refuge in Allah and truly feeling urgent need before Allah with every breath. Let not Satan’s embellishment of (your previous) worship allures you. Verily he may open for you ninety-nine gates of goodness in order to overcome you at the hundredth. Thus, confront him by opposition and by blocking his path and counteracting his temptations.”<sup>17</sup>

## 6 Gradual Decline

One of the most terrible punishments for those who repeatedly reject the signs of Allah is mentioned in the holy Quran as *the gradual decline (al-Istidraj)*. Allah states:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

Those who reject Our signs, We shall lead them gradually to ruin in such a way that they do not realize. (7:182)

On the commentary of this token, Sufyan bin Samt narrated that Imam al-Sadiq (*PBUH*) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَرَادَ بِعَبْدٍ خَيْرًا فَادْنَبَ ذَنْبًا اتَّبَعَهُ بِقِيمَةٍ وَ  
يَذْكُرُهُ الْإِسْتِعْفَارَ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ بِعَبْدٍ شَرًّا فَادْنَبَ ذَنْبًا اتَّبَعَهُ  
بِنِعْمَةٍ لِيُنْسِيَهُ الْإِسْتِعْفَارَ وَ يَتِمَادَى بِهَا وَ هُوَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ  
عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ بِالنَّعَمِ عِنْدَ  
الْمَعَاصِي .

“Certainly, when Allah intends a goodness (*Khair*) for a servant, if he commits a sin, He causes it to be followed by a (hasty) reprisal so that it reminds him to ask for forgiveness. But when Allah intends an evil (*Sharr*) for a servant, if he commits a sin, He makes it followed by a worldly favor and benefit so as to make him forget asking for forgiveness and to let him continue (the sin) excessively. And this is the saying of Allah, ‘We shall lead them gradually to decline in such a way that they do not realize.’ (7:182) This is done by (granting worldly) benefits when committing sins.”<sup>18</sup>

Intending evil (*Sharr*), as we explained in Part 8, is intending punishment. What punishment is greater than depriving a disbeliever a correct feedback about his deeds? Since he is inattentive to the signs of Allah and continues to disbelieve, Allah deprives him His signs and may let him increase his sins

excessively without further reproach. Allah states in the holy Quran:

ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ الْحَسَنَةَ حَتَّىٰ عَفَوْا وَقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ  
آبَاءَنَا الصَّرَاءُ وَ السَّرَاءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَ هُمْ لَا  
يَشْعُرُونَ.

Then We replaced (their) suffering/sins with (worldly) comfort until they increased, and they began to say, “Our fathers were (also) touched by suffering and affluence.” Thereafter We took them (i.e., their souls) suddenly while they were unaware. (7:95)

وَ لَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُؤْتِيهِمْ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ  
إِنَّمَا نُؤْتِيهِمْ لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ .

The disbelievers should not think that our respite to them is good for them. We give them respite in order to let them increase their sins, and for them is a humiliating punishment. (3:178)

فَلَمَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا حَتَّىٰ  
إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَ إِمَّا السَّاعَةَ  
فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَ أضعَفُ جُنْدًا.

Say, “Whoever is in misguidance, the gracious Lord extends (His respite) to them, a great extension, until they see what was promised to them either in punishment or in (the approach of) the

Hour (of rising (of *al-Qa'im*)). Then, they will at length realize who is worst in position, and (who is) weakest in forces!" (19:75)

Moreover, Allah may decree that the devils would be allowed to make evil deed of a disbeliever seem good to him. In the holy Quran, we read:

تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَرَىٰ لَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ  
أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ.

By Allah, We (also) sent (Our messengers) to peoples before you; but the Satan made their acts seem alluring to them. He is also their guardian today, and they shall have a painful chastisement. (16:63)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ  
يَعْمَهُونَ .

As to those who believe not in the Hereafter, We have made their deeds pleasing in their eyes; and so they wander about blindly. (27:4)

أَفَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ فَرَآهُ حَسَنًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ  
يَشَاءُ وَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
حَسْرَاتٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ .

Is he, then, to whom the evil of his deed is made alluring, so that he looks upon it

as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)? Verily, Allah misguides whom He wills, and guides whom He wills. So let not your soul be wasted in regret for them. Certainly, Allah knows well all that they perform! (35:8)

The more we sin, the more we habituate ourselves to sinfulness and the less we feel guilty and even the more virtuous those acts appear to us in some viewpoints. The more we sin, the harder it is to choose light over darkness, and the more repulsive the right action seems to us; it is like someone living in a cave who is gradually pained by the light of the sun and runs back into the darkness for comfort. The more we do something, the more we tend to do it again. This situation is similar to classical behavioral conditioning. However, instead of “urgency” we consider “tendency” to relate the actions. Although, we may tend to a certain action due to our previous actions, we are not compelled to do it since we have been granted volition.

Allah has ruled that when one insists on committing a sin, his heart would gradually repel the truth so much so that

he would no longer believe that such an action is a sin, and would effectively assume such attribution a lie to Allah and His religion. In other words, indulging into sin may gradually lead to disbelief and lying upon Allah. In holy Quran, we read:

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاؤُا السُّوَاىَ أَنْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَ كَانُوا بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ.

“The outcome of those who (indulged into) committing evil deeds was that they denied the signs of Allah and held them up to ridicule. (30:10)”

According to the traditions, a person who does not regret the sin that he has committed—even if he has committed it only once—is considered an insistent (*Musir*) and a disbeliever because he does not believe in the hereafter penalty that Allah has set for that specific sin. Believing in the Hereafter penalty of an action, makes one distressed and regretful, which is an introduction to repentance (*Tawba*). Regret obligates one to comply all other requirements of repentance. Regret is a voluntary internal reaction of a believer to sin by which he guards his heart from decline and maintains his faith according to the

will of Allah. A believer is always repentant while a disbeliever does not feel sorry before Allah for his misconducts. Ibn Abi Umair narrated:

سَمِعْتُ مُوسَى بْنَ جَعْفَرٍ ع يَقُولُ لَا يُخَلِّدُ اللَّهُ فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا أَهْلَ الْكُفْرِ وَالْجُحُودِ وَأَهْلَ الضَّلَالِ وَالشَّرْكِ ... مَا مِنْ مُؤْمِنٍ يَرْتَكِبُ ذَنْبًا إِلَّا سَاءَهُ ذَلِكَ وَ نَدِمَ عَلَيْهِ وَ قَدْ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ص كَفَى بِالنَّدَمِ تَوْبَهُ وَ قَالَ مَنْ سَرَّهُ حَسَنَةٌ وَ سَاءَتْهُ سَيِّئَةٌ فَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَنْدَمْ عَلَى ذَنْبٍ يَرْتَكِبُهُ فَلَيْسَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ وَ لَمْ تَجِبْ لَهُ الشَّفَاعَةُ وَ كَانَ ظَالِمًا وَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى يَقُولُ «مَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَ لَا شَفِيعٍ يُطَاعُ» فَقُلْتُ لَهُ يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَ كَيْفَ لَا يَكُونُ مُؤْمِنًا مَنْ لَمْ يَنْدَمْ عَلَى ذَنْبٍ يَرْتَكِبُهُ فَقَالَ يَا أَبَا أَحْمَدَ مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَرْتَكِبُ كَبِيرَةً مِنَ الْمَعَاصِي وَ هُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ سَيُعَاقَبُ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا نَدِمَ عَلَى مَا ارْتَكَبَ وَ مَتَى نَدِمَ كَانَ تَائِبًا مُسْتَجِقًا لِلشَّفَاعَةِ وَ مَتَى لَمْ يَنْدَمْ عَلَيْهَا كَانَ مُصِرًّا وَ الْمُصِرُّ لَا يُعْفَرُ لَهُ لِأَنَّهُ غَيْرُ مُؤْمِنٍ بِعُقُوبَةِ مَا ارْتَكَبَ وَ لَوْ كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا بِالْعُقُوبَةِ لَنَدِمَ وَ قَدْ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ص لَا كَبِيرَةَ مَعَ الْإِسْتِعْفَارِ وَ لَا صَغِيرَةَ مَعَ الْإِصْرَارِ وَ أَمَا قَوْلُ اللَّهِ «وَ لَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ ارْتَضَى» فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ ارْتَضَى اللَّهُ دِينَهُ وَ الدِّينُ الْإِفْرَارُ بِالْجَزَاءِ عَلَى الْحَسَنَاتِ وَ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَ مَنْ ارْتَضَى اللَّهُ دِينَهُ نَدِمَ عَلَى مَا يَرْتَكِبُهُ مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ لِمَعْرِفَتِهِ بِعَاقِبَتِهِ فِي الْقِيَامَةِ.

I heard Imam Musa bin Ja'far (*PBUH*) saying, “Allah does not keep anyone in Fire forever except people of disbelief, denial, misguidance and polytheism... There is no believer committing a sin

except that it offends him and he regrets his action. Verily, the Prophet (*PBUH&HF*) said, 'Enough is regret for repentance,' and he (*PBUH&HF*) said, "Whoever is delighted by good deeds and is saddened by evil deeds is a believer." On the other hand, he who does not regret for a sin that has committed is not a believer and is not entitled to intercession as he is unjust and Allah states, 'For the unjust there is neither a protecting friend nor an intercessor whose intercession is accepted.' (40:18)" I asked, "O son of the Messenger of Allah! How come is he not a believer if he does not feel regretful for his evil deeds?" He (*PBUH*) replied, "O Aba Ahmad! No one commits a great sin knowing that he will be soon chastised for that except that he regrets for what he has committed, and once he regrets he is a repentant and becomes entitled to intercession. On the other hand, if he does not regret for that, he is considered insistent. A person who insists on evil deeds will not be forgiven because his is not a believer in the divine penalty of what he has committed. Had he believed in punishment he would have surely

regretted. Indeed, the Prophet (*PBUH&HF*) said, "There is no great sin with asking for forgiveness (*Istighfar*) and there is no small sin with insistence (*Israr*) (i.e., by asking for forgiveness no great sin will remain in one's record and by persistence no sin will be counted as small in the record due to disbelief). As for the saying of Allah, 'They do not intercede save with whom Allah is pleased, (21:28)' it means they do not intercede except whom Allah is pleased with his religion. The religion is confession to the recompense for the good and evil deeds. For an individual whom Allah is pleased with his religion, regrets for what he commits of the sins due to his recognition of their consequences on the Day of Judgment."<sup>19</sup>

A person who is offended by the good deeds of others and is pleased with his or others' evil deeds is a disbeliever. Allah will record every sins of such a person as great sins and will not forgive him due to his disbelief. One should always view any of his sins before Allah a great sin and constantly keep himself in the state of regret and repentance

besech Allah for forgiveness and promise to His Lord that he will never return to those wrong deeds, because once he becomes careless about his sins, overlooks them, and considers them small, he becomes a disbeliever with a record replete with the greater sins. On the other hand, so long as he remains regretful and asks for forgiveness his record remains cleared.

## 7 Conclusion

In this article, we provided several pieces of evidence from the holy Quran and the sayings of the Prophet (*PBUH&HF*) and the Imams (*PBUT*) concerning the notion of misguidance attributed to Allah. Based on them, one can conclude that the misguidance attributed to Allah is just a natural rule that Allah set in His will as the outcome of people's wrongdoing and disbelief. The reason it is attributed to Allah is due to the creation of the will and planning of this rule by Him, not the action itself. In reality, the outcomes of unjust beliefs and unjust actions of the wrongdoers cause that they misguide their own soul and make themselves vulnerable to the temptations of the devils. This

misguidance appears in the Hereafter as losing the address of Paradise and getting lost in the Hell. The custom and will of Allah should be regarded as a punishment for the individual's bad response to Allah's initial guidance. Therefore, if Allah does not guide such a person to the path of salvation, He has only acted according to His justice.

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<sup>1</sup> *Tafsir*, Ali bin Ibrahim al-Qumi, vol. 1, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> Truthful in the domain of religion is limited to those assigned by Allah and supported by His revelation who relate the true message of Allah to people. Other individuals who invent a saying and attribute it to Allah are liars and impostors because there is no way to know what pleases or displeases Allah except through His apostles.

<sup>3</sup> *Wasq'il al-Shia*, vol. 27, p. 128, Hadith 33393, cited from *al-Kafi*.

<sup>4</sup> *Wasq'il al-Shia*, vol. 27, p. 129, Hadith 33395, cited from *Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha (PBUH)*.

<sup>5</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 163, Hadith 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 5, p. 199, Hadith 21, cited from *al-Tawhid*.

<sup>7</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 424, Hadith 59; *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 24, p. 224, Hadith 15.

<sup>8</sup> *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 5, p. 200, Hadith 22, quoted from '*Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (PBUH)*.

<sup>9</sup> Refer to *Lisan al-'Arab*, vol. 6, p. 52, and p. 95.

<sup>10</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 399, Hadith 2.

<sup>11</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 8, p. 82, Hadith 29; Mustadrik al-Wasa'il, vol. 18, p. 179, Hadith 22441; *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 69, p. 127, Hadith 9.

<sup>12</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 400, Hadith 8.

<sup>13</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 413, Hadith 1; *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 22, p. 132, Hadith 113.

<sup>14</sup> *al-Amali*, al-Mufid, p. 2, Hadith 2; *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 400, Hadith 9 (a similar narration).

<sup>15</sup> *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 60, p. 192; *al-Khisal*, p. 634; *Tafsir*, Furat al-Kufi, p. 368.

<sup>16</sup> *Mishkat al-Anwar*, p. 18; a similar narration exists in *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 65, Hadith 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Misbah al-Shari'a*, pp 79-80; *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 69, pp. 124-125.

<sup>18</sup> *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 452, Hadith 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 8, p. 351, Hadith 1, cited from *al-Tawhid*.

# Thieves of Religion

## Pathology of Religion and Religiosity

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***Abstract:** Nahj al-Balaghah is a book of teachings of Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib which was compiled by Sharif Radi (400 A.H.). Since then, it has been a source to know true Islam, in the best possible way as he was the closest companion of the Prophet.*

*Dr. Mostafa Delshad, along with teaching at university, has more than 20 years of experience in researching about topics related to Nahj al-Balaghah. He has written around 30 books in this topic so far. The present article is dealing with religious pathology and religiosity in Nahj al-Balaghah.*

*Key words: religion, religiosity, Nahj al-Balaghah*

Religion is the most beautiful manifestation of Mercy of God to guide human beings and religiosity is the way to approach this Mercy and to move in the way of Guidance. Imam ‘Ali in a tactful teaching about Islam said, “Truly this Islam is the religion of God which God chose it for Himself and developed it by His blessing. He appointed his best creature responsible of transferring it to

people and established its principle based on His friendship.”

The Mercy of God is manifested in everything sent down which is to guide people by the hand of the best of His servants. The goal of religion is that human beings embellish themselves by God’s attributes and is to live an ethical life and to manifest virtues that human beings deserve to attain.

In this way we continuously face thieves who are like pests of religion and religiosity, which we need to know them and pay attention to them.

If the religion can not be perceived truly and can not be manifested in people, the route of religion and religiosity will be altered and harms will surround religiosity from all sides.

Appearance of various harms in religion and religiosity causes religion can not play its role as it is expected, so injured religiosity will result in behaviors and actions which have no relationship with the truth of religion. Therefore, true perception of religion (according to which should be the soul of religion and its goals and directions) and religiosity are the most significant aspects which should be noticed.

### **The Truth of Religion**

Religion is an elevated truth and due to this is above and immune from any harm.

In God’s actions no error, mistake, harm or shortcoming can exist. Errors and mistakes are for human beings; any shortcomings introduced in the realm of pathology of religion does not return to the religion per.se, but it refers to how people approach religion, their perception of it, their religious understanding and their religiosity type. These issues are continuously the subjects of discord and harms.

### **Various Perception of Religion and Potentiality of Mistakes in Religious Perception**

People’s understanding of religion is different and necessarily every type of religious understanding is not compatible with the soul of religion, its goals and orientation. It can be realized from the teachings of imam ‘Ali there are various recognition of religion: ignorant understanding, elites understanding, emotional understanding.

Ignorant perception of religion is the ground for misunderstandings, and root of harms. Imam ‘Ali while sending ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas to talk to khavarij, pointed out to this and said,

لا تخاصمهم بالقران، فان القرآن حمال ذو وجه، تقول و يقولون، و لكن حاججهم بالسنة، فانهم لن يجدوا عنها محيصا.<sup>1</sup>

*Do not support your words by Quran, as it can be interpreted in different ways. You say something from Quran and they say something else. Talk with them by Sunnah which they have no alternative and they accept it.*

Khavarij by their shallow understanding of religion and dogmatic perception of Quran was on the wrong track ending up in destruction. They assumed their understanding flawless and regarded imam 'Ali as Kafir (disbeliever). They advised others to hate 'Ali. Imam 'Ali in his advice to ibn 'Abbas mentioned that Quran can be interpreted differently so the perception can be various. Khavarij took the wrong perception which caused vulnerability of religion.

'Ali said in this regard,

فَإِنْ أَبِيئْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ تَزْعُمُوا أَنِّي أَخْطَأْتُ وَ ضَلَّأْتُ، فَلَمْ تُضَلَّلُونِ غَايَةً أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِضَلَالِي وَ تَأْخُذُونَهُمْ بِخَطِيئِي وَ تُكْفَرُونَهُمْ بِذُنُوبِي؟ سَيُوفِكُمْ عَلَى عَوَاتِقِكُمْ تَصْعُقُونَهَا مَوَاضِعَ الْبُرْءِ وَ السُّقْمِ وَ تَخْلِطُونَ مَنْ أَنْتَبَ بِمَنْ لَمْ يُذْنِبْ!<sup>2</sup>

*If you do not accept this claim I am in wrong way but why because of my aberration you know all Muhammad's nation aberrant? And includes them in my mistake and consider them kafir*

*because of my sins?! Your swords on your shoulder, you take them down on innocent ones and sinful ones.*

This unfortunately is what which becomes clear after injuries inflicted to religion; in that time, its importance becomes clear.

### **Realms of Religion and Religiosity**

Religion is a collection of theoretical and practical points which is planned to be realized in the society by three indicators of faith, piety and benevolence, then ethical life can blossom in all its aspects, preparing the ground for human beings growth.

Religiosity also includes both the practical side and theoretical side, which can embrace thought, belief and religious faith, and is confession, intentions, religious behavior and manner. 'Ali in his Hikmah said,

الايمن معرفة بالقلب و اقرار باللسان و عمل بالاركان.<sup>3</sup>

These aspects, i.e. thought, knowledge, religious faith and belief, and confession, intention, religious manner and behavior all can be exposed to harm. It is necessary that all these aspects are being reviewed continuously and organized in support of the soul of the religion.

### The Meaning of Harm to Religion and Religiosity

Harm and injuries in these issues mean appearance of a shortcoming or flaw, transforming from normal shape, gradual turn to declination. As imam ‘Ali discussed this in his speeches a lot:

الشك يفسد الدين<sup>4</sup>

“Doubt corrupts religion.”

آفة الدين سوء الظن<sup>5</sup>

“The pest of religiosity is to distrust God.”

سبب فساد الدين الهوى<sup>6</sup>

“The cause of ruining religion is the lusts.”

غلبة الهوى تفسد الدين<sup>7</sup>

“Obsessing with lusts will ruin religion.”

فساد الدين الدنيا.

“The destruction of religion is in obsessing with worldly life.”

طاعة الشهوة تفسد الدين<sup>8</sup>

“Obedience of lusts will ruin religion.”

لا يسلم الدين مع الطمع.

“Religion will remain safe besides greed.”

فساد الدين الطمع.<sup>9</sup>

“Ruin of religion is by greed.”

كثرة الكذب تفسد الدين.<sup>10</sup>

“Frequent lies ruin religion.”

دع الحسد و الكذب و الحقد فانهن ثلاثة تشين الدين.<sup>11</sup>

“Leave jealousy, grudge, lies; these are three characteristics that harm religion.”

### Pathology of Religion and Religiosity

Pathology of religion and religiosity is the study of mentioned concepts theoretic-wise and religious-wise. For example, misunderstanding of ascetic in religion will cause human beings’ exiting from normal life style and falling into the abyss of extremes. The words of ‘Ali (a) with ‘Ala’, the son of Ziyad Harithi and his brother ‘Asim is representative of this issue. His holiness ‘Ali went to ‘Ala’s home, who was of his friends, to visit him.

When he saw his very big home said,

مَا كُنْتُ تَصْنَعُ بِسَعَةِ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ فِي الدُّنْيَا - وَ أَنْتَ إِلَيْهَا فِي الآخِرَةِ كُنْتَ أَحْوَجَ وَ بَلَى إِنْ شِئْتَ بَلَّغْتَ بِهَا الآخِرَةَ تُقْرِي فِيهَا الصَّبْفَ وَ تَصِلُ فِيهَا الرَّحِمَ وَ تُطْلَعُ مِنْهَا الْحُقُوقَ مَطْلَعَهَا فَإِذَا أَنْتَ قَدْ بَلَّغْتَ بِهَا الآخِرَةَ.<sup>12</sup>

“What is the benefit of such a big home for you in the world while you need it in hereafter more? Of course,

*if you want, you can gain a home in hereafter by this very house if you feed your guests there, hospitalize your relatives there and pay whatever of rights you should pay. In this way, you also make your home in hereafter.”*

‘Ala’ said, “Oh, Ali! I complain of my brother ‘Asim ibn Ziyad to you.” He said, “What’s wrong with him?” he answered, “he is wearing a woolen clothes on and forgets life.” ‘Ali said, “Take him here.”

When he went there, Imam told him,

”يا عدى نفسه! لقد استهام بك الخبيث! أما رحمت  
أهلك و ولدك! أترى الله أحل لك الطيبات، و هو  
يكره أن تاخذها! أنت أهون على الله من ذلك!”<sup>13</sup>

*“Oh! You the valueless enemy of you! Satan makes you puzzled and misguided you! Do not you have mercy on your wife and children? Do you think that God makes good things Halal for you but He is not satisfied if you use them? You are lower that what you think in front of God!”*

‘Asim said, “Oh Amirul Mumenin Ali! You yourself wear rough clothes and eat bad food!” imam answered,

”ويحك! انى لست كانت. ان الله تعالى فرض على  
أئمة العدل أن يقدروا أنفسهم بضعفة الناس، كيلا  
يتبغ بالفقير فقره!”<sup>14</sup>

*“Wo unto you! What are our similarities? God has obliged on Just rulers to live a life similar to the poorest people of their society so as not to make any poor person of their society sad.”*

### **Levels and Aspects of Pathology of Religion and Religiosity**

Harm to religion as it has been mentioned has various levels and aspects, we can outline the following aspects for it:

- a. Lack of deep understanding of religion and religious life
- b. Misunderstanding of religious concepts
- c. Attenuation of religious beliefs and behavior
- d. Weakening the ethical foundations
- e. Discrediting religious values
- f. Losing faith in religion and religious affairs
- g. Infidelity
- h. Not caring for religious rules
- i. Escaping from each religious topic

Sometimes, religious pathology and religiosity equals lack of deep

understanding of religion and obsessing yourself with superficial issues; if religion is not understood deeply, will come up with shortcomings and it loses its true identity. And sometimes distorting religious concepts and incorrect perception of them change the religion and religiosity from its normal and inborn state into fake identity. And sometimes noticing the causes of weakness of beliefs and religious behaviors, and appearance of weakness in ethical foundations or ignorance of religious values will result in each of these harms which is a pest in thought, cognition, faith and religious faith and also religious thought, behavior and life style.

### **The necessity of pathology of Religion and religiosity**

Dealing with **pathology of Religion** and religiosity is in fact taking care of religious health and religiosity. This issue is not less important than health of body and soul, but as religion and religiosity are dealing with the truth of humanity and his various aspects of life and has a determining role in it, the crisis of religion and religiosity harms can be devastating and can result in social and political crisis, breaking the boarders of personal privacy and finally

human beings' lack of identity. In the great words of 'Ali, we read,

المصيبة بالدين أعظم المصيبات.<sup>15</sup>

*"The greatest and the most significant harms is the harm to religion."*

Because of harming religion and religiosity, personal privacies and social borders will shake and evils will come into life, as 'Ali (a.s) said,

" الخيانة دليل على قلة الورع و عدم الديانة."<sup>16</sup>

*"Betrayal is the cause of less piety and lack of faith."*

Lack of religiosity is a factor which causes appearance of betrayal in different affairs. As imam 'Ali said, it is a fortress sheltering human beings:

اجعل الدين كهفك

*"Know religion as your safeguard."*

If religion is sound, it can protect us in the best way, guide us to the right path, and save us. In the words of 'Ali we read,

سبب الورع صحة الدين<sup>17</sup>

*"The cause of fear is sound of religiosity."*

الوفاء عنوان وفور الدين

*"To be loyal is the sign of profound religiosity."*

The more soundness of religion, the more human being's health and power, as Ali (a.) has pointed out to it and said,

صيانة المرء على قدر ديانته.<sup>18</sup>

*"Abstinence of a human being from sins is equal to his religiosity."*

By breaching religious privacies, all things of human beings will be subject to harms, as imam 'Ali said in a sermon where he is expressing his wonder of harms penetrating in muslims' religion and its outcomes, he said,<sup>19</sup>

فيا عجباً! و مالى لا اعجب من خطأ هذه الفرق على اختلاف حججها فى دينا لا يقتصون اثر نبي و لا يقتدون بعمل وصى و لا يؤمنون بغيب و لا يعفون عن عيب، يعملون فى الشبهات ويسبرون فى الشهوات، المعروف فيهم ما عرفوا و المنكر عندهم ما انكروا مفزعهم فى المعضلات الى انفسهم و تعويلهم فى المهمات على آرائهم كان كل امرى ء منهم امام نفسه، قد أخذ منها فيما يرى بعري ثقات، و أسباب محكمات.<sup>20</sup>

*"How surprising! And why I should not be surprised from the mistakes of sects with their claims in religion! They do not obey any prophet, and they do not follow any successor of the prophet. They do not believe in unseen nor leave evils. They tread on the way of doubts, follow lusts, good deeds are what they know good and bad are what they themselves judge as bad. In problems they take refuge in their own thoughts*

*and while facing doubts, they rely on their own ideas. It seems each one of them is an imam for himself and assumes themselves as the strongest ropes and the most stable tools."*

### **Health in Religion and Religiosity in the Opinion of Imam 'Ali**

In the thought and life style of imam 'Ali, religious health and religiosity is of the greatest affair in life and the most basic aspect of the human being life, as we see in a teaching of imam 'Ali,

أَلَا وَ إِنَّهُ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ تَضْيِيعُ شَيْءٍ مِنْ دُنْيَاكُمْ بَعْدَ حِفْظِكُمْ قَائِمَةَ دِينِكُمْ أَلَا وَ إِنَّهُ لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ بَعْدَ تَضْيِيعِ دِينِكُمْ شَيْءٌ حَافِظْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْرِ دُنْيَاكُمْ.<sup>21</sup>

*"Be aware that you are not harmed if you lose a thing from the world of you, in case you keep safe the foundation of your religion. Be aware that there is no benefit in whatever you save up in if you lose your religion."*

In his opinion, tolerating hardship was easy in the light of soundness of religion and he knew sound religion prior to anything. 'Ali and the holy Prophet are the proof of this. Sheikh Saduq narrated from 'Ali (a.s.) on his authority that the holy Prophet of Islam was delivering a lecture for us at the end of Sha'ban and said,

أيها الناس، إنه قد أقبل إليكم شهر الله بالبركة و  
الرحمة والمغفرة ...

*“Truly, the month of God’s Mercy is approaching you with its blessings, bounty and forgiving.”*

After the sermon of the holy Prophet regarding the merits of Ramadan Month, ‘Ali said, I stood up and told the holy Prophet what are the best practices in this month? The holy Prophet said, “Oh, Abul-Hasan! The best actions in this month is to have fear of (disobeying of) whatever God has set.” ‘Ali reported that after this remark, the holy Prophet cried. I asked what makes you cry? He said, “I remember what they will do to you in this month. It is as if in that time I am with you and I can see you; you are in the pray and the one who is the worst of people, worst of ancestors and of descendants, and is similar to the killer of the camel of Saleh trib, will touch your head by his sword and your bears will be colored by the blood of your head.” ‘Ali said,

"قلت يا رسول الله، و ذلك في سلامة من ديني؟"

I said, “oh the holy Prophet of God! In that time is my religion safe?” He answered,

في سلامة من دينك.

“In that time your religion is sound.”<sup>22</sup>

It is apparent that the most important concerns of imam ‘Ali in life was soundness of religion. In the changes after the Prophet also the most important issue that imam ‘Ali noticed was the soundness of religion. He wrote in his letter to Egyptian sent by Malik Ashtar (when he was appointed as their governor):

أما بعد فإن الله سبحانه بعث محمداً (صلى الله عليه و  
آله) نذيراً للعالمين و مهيمناً على المرسلين، فلما  
مضى صلى الله عليه و آله تنازع المسلمون الأمر من  
بعده فو الله ما كان يُلقى في رُوعى و لا يخطر ببالي  
أنّ العرب تُزعج هذا الأمر من بعده - صلى الله عليه  
و آله - عن اهل بيته، و لا أتهم مُنحوه عني من بعده؟  
فما راعنى إلا انثيال الناس على فلان يبايعونه

فامسكتُ يدى حتى رأيت راجعة الناس قد رجعت عن  
الاسلام يدعون الى محق دين محمد صلى الله عليه و  
آله - فخشيت ان لم انصر الاسلام و اهله ان ارى فيه  
ثُلماً او هدماً تكون المصيبة به على اعظم من فوت  
ولايتكم التى انما هى متاع ايام قلائل يزول منها ما  
كان كما يزول السراب، او كما يتشع السحاب،  
فنهضت فى تلك الاحداث حتى زاح الباطل و زهق،  
و اطمأن الدين و تُنهته<sup>23</sup>.

*And then truly God Almighty appointed Muhammad to warn people by Him not to disobey Him and he is the proof of his previous prophets. When he left the world to meet his God (after his demise), Muslims came in discord about rulership and started fighting. I swear by God I did not think and it didn't past*

*my mind that Arabs, after the demise of the holy Prophet, would seize caliphate from my family or stopped me of caliphate after the Prophet. Nothing made me worried or surprised me unless people's hurriedness to that person and swore allegiance with him. So I stepped away and I saw a group did not stay in his religion and turned their back to Islam and invited people to destroy the religion of Muhammad. Then I scared if I do not help Islam and Muslims, a division or destruction might strike it, that one would be more severe to me than deprivation of rulership. ... then I stood up amongst all storm and stress to scatter wrong communities, they were destroyed and religion became stable and calmed down”.*

‘Ali (a.), following the transitions after the Prophet and changes in the path of rulership, stepped away but when the soul of Islam was triggered, he stood up. He gave priority to the health of religion over rulership. Nothing was considered as important as the soundness of religion in his opinion. Saqifa event happened, then one of the sons of Abu Lahab ibn Abdul-Mutalib composed some poetries to defend ‘Ali complaining of Saqifa. It included some threats in his poetries. When ‘Ali heard them, sent someone to

him and ordered not to read them again. Then ‘Ali said,

سلامة الدين أحب إلينا من غيره<sup>24</sup>

“The health of religion in our opinion is the most beloved things.”

### **Religious Pathology and Religiosity in the Sermons and Writings of Imam ‘Ali**

According to the importance of soundness of religion and religiosity in the opinion of Imam ‘Ali, it is natural that his attitude towards this subject be very serious. And basically taking the path of God that He wants for us is not feasible without recognizing the thieves on the way. ‘Ali (a.s.) is the son of Quran trained by Prophet. As long as religious pathology and religiosity are mentioned in the holy book of God and teachings of prophets, therefore it becomes manifested in the words of Ali (a.s.) which is the interpretation of holy Quran and extension of teachings of Prophet. In addition, the transition after the holy Prophet and harms in religion and religiosity caused imam ‘Ali talked in this regard and issued solutions and did his best in this way.

In his words, Imam ‘Ali used various words to refer to this topic. Words like “منقصة<sup>27</sup> للدين<sup>26</sup>”, “فساد الدين”, “آفة الدين<sup>25</sup>”,

“<sup>28</sup>منهكة للدين“<sup>29</sup>، and more.

In addition to these words, sometimes Imam ‘Ali talked about alteration of these words and said in a sermon:

”أيها الناس، سيأتي عليكم زمان يكفأ فيه الإسلام كما يكفأ الإناء بما فيه.“<sup>30</sup>

“Oh people! Soon it will be a time when Islam will be similar to a container which is holding upside down and whatever in it is poured out.”

Or in another sermon said,

لَيْسَ الْإِسْلَامَ لِبَسِ الْفَرِّو مَقْلُوبًا<sup>31</sup>

“The sheepskin (the coat) of Islam is wore inside out.”

Sometimes ‘Ali warned about religious pathology:

كأنكم تريدون أن تكفنوا الإسلام على وجهه ... ألا و قد قطعتم قيد الإسلام، و عطلتم حدوده، و أتمم أحكامه<sup>32</sup>

*It is as if you want to overturn Islam... right! Be aware that you tear apart the rope between you and Islam, you violate its borders, and did not put into practice its rules. He also said,*

يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يَبْقَى فِيهِمْ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ إِلَّا رَسْمُهُ وَ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ إِلَّا اسْمُهُ وَ مَسَاجِدُهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَامِرَةٌ مِنَ الْبِنَاءِ خَرَابٌ مِنَ الْهُدَى سَكَّانُهَا وَ عَمَارُهَا شَرُّ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ مِنْهُمْ تَخْرُجُ الْفِتْنَةُ<sup>33</sup>

*It will come a time when people do not know anything of Quran but its name and from Islam a name. In that time, people will renovate their mosques but destroy its spirituality and the maker of those mosques are the worst people of the earth; seditions are traced back to them and errors find security in their custody.*

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Nahj al-Balaghah, *Sharif Radj*, letter 77

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, sermon 127

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, Hikmah 227

<sup>4</sup> Ghurar al-Hikam, vol.1, No.748

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 3924

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.431, H.32

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.473

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, No.6957

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, vol.4, p.416

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, No.4421

<sup>11</sup> Tasnif Ghurar al-Hikam, 6780

<sup>12</sup> Nahj al-Balaghah, words 209

<sup>13</sup> ibid

<sup>14</sup> ibid

<sup>15</sup> Sharh Ghurar al-Hikam, vol.1, p.364

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p.375

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, vol.4, p.125

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, vol.4, p.211

<sup>19</sup> Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, ibn Meytham al-Bahrani, vol.2, pp.306-307

<sup>20</sup> Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 88

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, sermon 173

<sup>22</sup> Al-Amali (Saduq), pp.84-86

<sup>23</sup> Nahj al-Balaghah, letter 62

- <sup>24</sup> Al-Akhbar al-Mufaqqiyat, p.581; Sharh  
Ibn Abi al-Hadid, vol.6, p.21  
<sup>25</sup> Sharh Ghurar al-Hikam, vol.3, p.101  
<sup>26</sup> Nahj al-Balaghah, Hikmat, 319  
<sup>27</sup> Sharh Ghurar al-Hikam, vol.4, pp.125,  
383, 417

- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, letter 53  
<sup>29</sup> Ibid, sermon 216  
<sup>30</sup> Ibid, sermon 103  
<sup>31</sup> Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 108  
<sup>32</sup> Ibid, sermon 192  
<sup>33</sup> Ibid, Hikmat 369

# Virtue of Hasan (a.s.)

## Imam Hasan in the Mirror of Benevolence

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**Abstract:** *We select some sayings of imam Hasan from “Tuhaf al-‘Uqul an Ale al-Rasul” by ibn Shube’ Harrani and explain them. These wisdom words are taken from one of the Shia resources (i.e. Tuhaf al-‘Uqul an Ale al-Rasul) which is of the most organized and beautiful works written during Shia history and is regarded of great research-based innovation.*

### **Introduction:**

The author of the book “Tuhaf al-‘Uqul an Ale al-Rasul” is “Abu-Muhammad Hasan ibn ‘Ali ibn Husayn ibn Shube’ Harrani” lived in the fourth century. In

his book first he mentioned an important sermon from one of the infallibles and then collected short sayings of them. Another feature which is very interesting is the point that author did not mention the chain of narrators and just sufficed to say “from the holy

... قال الله "God said", عن رسول الله "Prophet". The content of traditions are mostly ethical, religious and preaching. The name of the book is "تحف العقول عن آل الرسول" (*Tuhaf al-'Uqul an Ale al-Rasul*): which means "the gifts of wisdom from the family of Prophet". This book is famous among religious scholars, although the documents of traditions are not mentioned, they pointed out to them. Now we bring a summary of the first tradition from imam Hasan Mujtaba cited in the chapter related to him here.

قيل له: ما الزهد؟ قال: "الرغبة في التقوى و الزهادة في الدنيا."

Imam Hasan was asked, "What is acetic?" he answered, "interest in piety and inattention to the world."

Inattention to the world is a matter felt in heart. A pious person in his heart is reluctant to the world.

قيل: فما الحلم؟ قال: "كظم الغيظ و ملك النفس."

He was asked, "What is forbearance?" he said, "suppressing anger and be owner of your soul."

Forbearance has two parts: first كظم الغيظ which means a person should suppress his anger. When he gets angry and wants

to shout, hesitates and does not do anything. Second "ملك النفس" when his animal soul starts outbursting and eruption and is excited, he can control it. Sometimes those who are angry would say, if I get angry, I would not know even my father! I can't understand anything, nothing can stop me, I even do not know myself!... they think that this is good. While it is the definite weakness! The meaning of these sentences is when I get angry I lose my logic. I become crazy. Between people who argue especially spouses it happens that one of them said: I got angry, then I did this. We say, we you got angry, could you came out of home while you were naked? He said, no, I never do this. We say, so you are not a crazy person! Still you have your mind. Losing mind while you are crazy is not what is proper in religious ethics. We have not heard from a person who could succeed suppressing his anger that he regrets and say, I am regretful why in that day I do not got angry; vice versa, those who got angry will regret. How frequent are the cases when we feel regretful but regret can not solve anything.

قيل: فما الشرف؟ قال: "اصطناع العشيبة و حمل الجريفة."

It was asked, "What is nobility?" imam said, "kindness to relatives and compensating their mistakes."

Our traditions include exact ethical points but unfortunately it seems necessary to cover these important points in colorful academic terms, otherwise we do not show interest in them. In the religion of Islam and Shia, a lot of points regarding social issues has been mentioned that we are not informed of them. One of these extensive advice is in this tradition. Human should be nice and help his immediate relatives, tribe, family members, ... financially, spiritually and tries to compensate their mistakes. If they made a mistake and got into trouble, for example had an accident with someone and got hurt and was in hospital, others should take care of them. And do not say, it is his fault. It's not my business. Nobility is when human is nice to his tribe and family, tries to compensate for his mistake to some extent, and whenever needed gives warning to them.

قيل: فما النجدة؟ قال: "الذب عن الجار و الصبر في المواطن."

Imam Hasan was told, "What is brevity?" he answered, "Defending neighbors and patience at different situations."

نجدة means helping out and brevity both.

I came up with a tradition about right of neighbor in which imam said, "The right of family is you do not annoy him; tolerate his annoyance and do not react."

Defending a neighbor means if a neighbor is gossiping another neighbor, you defend the ansent neighbor and save his face. Another part of brevity is to be patient in the special sensitive situations.

قيل: فما المروة؟ قال: " حفظ الدين و إعزاز النفس و لين الكنف."

Again he asked, "What is magnanimity?" he said, "Keeping religion, honoring ..... and be good-tempered with people."

Therefore first, human should save his religion and then do not humiliate himself, it means by controlling, guarding and paying attention to himself respect himself." كنف means to support and guard. Is a person is wealthier, the impact of this magnanimity which is being kind is more. (It means magnanimity is a kind of wealth.)

Wealth is not just money; money is one type of the wealth. If a person is more knowledgeable, if his social credit is more, his words influence more, his actions have more impact, this person should be more humble; he should have a kind of personality that if anyone has a pain can tell him or if has a problem can talk about it or when in need can ask him and people can keep in touch with him easily. This is the meaning of لين الكنف.

قيل: فما الكرم؟ قال: " الابتداء بالعطية قبل المسألة و  
إطعام الطعام في المحل."

They asked, "What is munificence?" Imam answered, "Donating before request and feeding at the time of hardship (famine)."

There was a knowledgeable person who passed away some years ago. About 30 years ago, one day, he called me and said, if you have financial need, tell me first. I said, ok. During this 30 years after his words I did not have any problem that I had to tell him; but his words were always like a strong mountain behind me. It is very valuable if human according to the sayings of imam before someone's request can answer his need. Those who act to solve

people's problems, God will give them bounty and will solve people's problem by them. God will give them honor and will solve their problems fast. Therefore, before anyone's request, you start donation and listen to the problems of your friends and relatives.

Some people even are stingy for their own family. For example, their family wanted to go to a party and do not have proper clothes; they should say again and again to get money for new clothes! And some people also get used to nagging non-stop. Their usual habit is to hide their wealth and hoard. A stingy person will wake up when he is said,

اسمع افهم يا عبدالله و ابن عبدالله .... إذا أتاك  
الملك المقربان!...

The munificent is answering someone's need before their request. Some get used to behaving the needy ones even their family in a way that they should beg for everything. Therefore, we need to train ourselves that if we are going to do a good deed, for example help a mosque or religious ceremony, help before we are asked for.

It is very important that a person shows his magnanimity by helping before any request.

The second part is to feed people who have problems and shortages. We all know some who have financial problems. We should think of them. If they are relatives, we should help them by different excuses and respectfully. Young people should practice this. They should show these magnanimity to see the blessings after that. Against a magnanimous person we have لئيم and بخيل mean and parsimonious. In traditions, friendship with these people and trading with them are forbidden.

قيل: فما اللوم؟ قال: " قلة الندى و أن ينطق بالخناء"

He was asked, what is menial? He answered, "Donate a little and have impolite vituperative tongue."

ندى in word means palm of a hand. A menial person has a small palm. It means does not donate. His fists are closed. In this tradition, "ندى" referred to donation; it means no one could benefit from a menial person as a menial person is so tight-fisted.

As much as we close our hands, God will close His Hands as well. The amount of wealth is not important what is important is how this wealth is used.

A menial person is the one besides stinginess is a bad-mouthed and no one is safe from the razor of his tongue.

### **Teaching points from ethical codes of imam Hasan**

When a religious school of thought or training program or a political idea is introduced, wise people at first hesitate accepting it; first they want to see how the trained ones by this school of thought, or program or idea behave. This point is very important. Regarding the training school of the holy Prophet, this question can be raised that: whom are they trained? Who are the role models prepared by them? Because one of the aspects of human instinct is to train human beings, he needs a role model. He desires to see first the model of what is presented to him first. Shia believe that – and could prove by Quran, logical reasoning, and traditions - the holy Prophet has trained thirteen individuals, from them four are directly trained by him: ‘Ali, Zahra, imam Hasan and Imam Husayn. Besides imam Hasan and Imam Husayn we see Omme-Kulthum and Zeinab. We are to introduce role models known as infallibles. The holy Prophet has trained four perfect role models in

his life time. One of them is imam Hasan.

From the brief and useful books concerning the life of imams we could refer to a two volume book named "أذمتنا". Useful information from Shia source books are gathered in these books. Its author is 'Ali Muḥammad 'Ali Dukhayīl, who is Shia and lives in Lebanon. Whatever we mention about Imam Hasan is from his books:

1. قال الامام الصادق: حدثني أبي عن أبيه: أن الحسن بن علي بن أبي طالب كان أعبد الناس في زمانه و أزهدهم و أفضلهم و كان إذا حج، حج ماشيا و ربما مشى حافيا و كان إذا ذكر الموت بكى و إذا ذكر القبر بكى و إذا ذكر البعث و النشور بكى و إذا ذكر الممر على الصراط بكى و إذا ذكر العرض على الله تعالى ذكره شهق شهقة يغشى عليه منها و كان إذا قام في صلاته ترتعد فرائضه بين يدي ربه عزوجل و كان إذا ذكر الجنة و النار اضطرب اضطراب السليم و يسأل الله الجنة و يعوذ به من النار و كان لا يقرأ من كتاب الله عزوجل " يا ايها الذين آمنوا" إلا قال: لبيك اللهم لبيك و لم ير في شيء من أحواله إلا ذاكر الله سبحانه و كان أصدق الناس لهجةً و أفصحهم منطقا.

Imam Sadiq said, "My father narrated from his father that imam Hasan was the most God worshipper of his time, the most pious one, the most virtuous one. He walked to Hajj and sometimes he

walked the path barefoot. Whenever he remembered death he cried and when he remembered grave he cried. When he remembered resurrection, drops of tears fell out of his eyes and when he remembered passing through the Sirat Bridge, he cried, when he remembered being present at the court of God, he cried until he fainted and when he stood up for pray- feeling standing in front of God- his back started shaking. When he remembered heaven and hell he twisted like a snake. He asked God for heaven and took shelter with Him from the Fire of hell. He did not recite any verse of Quran which started by "Oh, you believers!" unless he said, "Oh God! I am at your service" he was remembering God in all time. He was the most honest, the most eloquent person of his time."

2. حج خمسا و عشرين حجة ماشيا و إن النجايب لتقاد معه

"He walked to Hajj from Medina 25 times and camels and horses were walking besides him." (But no one got on them.)

كان إذا توحا ارتعدت مفاصله، و اصفر لونه فقيل له في ذلك فقال: " حق على كل من وقف بين يدي رب العرش أن يصفر لونه و ترتعد مفاصله و كان

إذا بلغ باب المسجد يرفع رأسه و يقول: إلهي ضيفك  
ببابك يا محسن قد أتاك المسيء فتجاوز عن قبيح ما  
عندي بجميل ما عندك يا كريم.

When he took ablution for pray, his body shivered and turned pale. Someone asked him about this. He said, it is on each one who stands in front of his God to turn pale and his body shook. “

When he got to the entrance of a mosque, he looked up at skies and said, *“oh my Lord! Your guest is standing by your door, oh my benefactor! This bad servant of you is coming to your home. Forgive my ugliness by your beauties. Oh the Great Merciful Generous God!”*

In this tradition, it is imam Sajjad who is introducing imam Hasan. The topic of discussion is life style and moral code of imam Hasan which its result will be our revolution. Imam Hasan was the most pious and knowledgeable ones of his time. He walked from Medina to Mecca which was about 460 k.m in that hot weather of that time. He did this to show his obedience to God. He walked a long distance barefoot. When he remembered death, he could not stop crying. When he remembered graves cried.

But we have no fear. Why? Because we do not have that knowledge, faith and belief that he had.

Imam Hasan cried so hard that he fainted. When he stood up for pray – by feeling standing in front of God- his back started to shake.

A meaning of سليم is someone who is stung by snake. In the holy verses of Quran when he read about heaven and hell, he twisted himself and said, “oh God! Hell or heaven? Heaven or Fire?” Imam Hasan was informed about Shafa‘at (meddling) and he himself is one of the meddlers. He knew about Shifa‘ah of holy Prophet of him. But out of fear of God, heaven and hell, noticing details of behavior caused him to react like that. It may come to one’s mind that these words are exaggeration but see from whom I am quoting: imam Sadiq. His words are words of God. He is not a journalist or newsman to say something to catch eyes.

Whenever that grandchild of Prophet recited Quran and reached this part: ***oh who you believe! Answered, I am at your service.***

He was told you are the son of the holy Prophet. You have a special position in front of God. Why are you like that?

He said, *“There is no wonder if a person who is standing in front of the Lord of all universe becomes pale and starts shaking.”*

I should say something here. There are some characteristics that make us apart from God. They are common between men and women, open-minded or not open-minded, literate and illiterate, old and young, poor and rich. One of them is this: we all forget we are servant of God.

From the life style of holy Prophet and imam Hasan and other infallibles we can conclude that they put signs on the way of their life like a traveler. This is to remind them they are servants of God. Now, if we all always remember that we are servants of God and do not forget this, our behavior would be different from now. تذكر changes people's manner. Generally people do not remember God. Our way of thinking is different from imam Hasan's thinking. For this reason, the practical method of muslims is different from infallibles'.

The foundation of imam Hasan's behavior is this: I am the servant of God.

In this tradition, the word mosque is mentioned, mosque is the place of prostrating and prostrating means put your forehead on the soil which is the symbol of humbleness. In our face, forehead is the top part. It means we should put our most important member of our body on the less valuable things in the world which is soil. It means we should be humble. This religious practice is the highest point in servitude. Mosque for imam Hasan is a place where he could go up to 'Arsh by putting his foot in the stairs of servitude.

The stairs going up to the 'Arsh are through falling on the soil and breaking the sense of pride inside ourself.

The spirit of being pride in young people is dominant. The perfect role model of young of heaven (Imam Hasan) put his step in the stairways of servitude and said,

ضيفك بياك. يا محسن قد أتاك المسىء فتجاوز عن قبيح ما عندي بجميل ما عندك يا كريم.

If we consider this tradition as a logical principle, the result would be the gist of following hadith:

إن شاميا رآه راكبا فجعل يلعنه و الحسن لا يرد، فلما فرغ، أقبل الحسن عليه و ضحك و قال: " أيها الشيخ أظنك غريبا و لعلك شبهت، فلو استعبتنا أعتبناك و لو سألتنا أعطيناك و لو استرشدتنا أرشدناك و لو استحملتنا حملناك و إن كنت محتاجا أغنيك و إن كنت طريدا آويناك و إن كانت لك حاجة قضيناها لك ، فلو حركت رحلك إلينا و كنت ضيفا إلى وقت ارتحالك، كان أعود عليك، لأن لنا موضعا رحبا، و جاها عريضا و مالا كبيرا.

فلما سمع الرجل كلامه بكى. ثم قال: أشهد أنك خليفة الله في أرضه، الله أعلم حيث يجعل رسالته و كنت أنت و أبوك أبغض خلق الله إلى و الآن أنت أحب خلق الله إلى و حول رحله إليه و كان ضيفه إلى أن ارتحل و صار معتقدا لمحبتهم.

A man from Shaam saw imam Hasan while imam Hasan was riding on a camel. He started cursing, but imam did not answer him. When he became quite, imam turned to him and said kindly, I guess you are stranger and you have mistaken me with another one. If you ask me anything, I will give you and if you are looking for a guide, I will show you the way, if you need to get on a camel, I let you; if you are in need of something, I meet your need. If you don't have a shelter, I give you. If you come to my house and stay there before you leave this city, it is better for you. We have a big guest room and we can afford taking care of you. When this man heard him, cried and said, I testify

that you are the caliph of God on earth. God knows better where to put His mission. You and your father were the most hated ones in my eyes, but now you are the most beloved ones. Then he went to imam's home and was there until his departure from that city. The citizens of Shaam took grudge against 'Ali and imam Hasan. Because Shaam was the home of Mu'awiyah and he as much as he could propagated against them. The rumors of Mu'awiyah's agents against him were spread there first, then they reached other cities. Therefore, shaam was against him. In our daily life, we say to those who have problems with others, forgive him/her. But they say, no, I can't. This person bothers me and harms me a lot. If he did not harm, you want to forgive what? After all, chivalry finds its meaning when some one's right is oppressed. Some people could not forgive. What is the root of enmity? arrogance and forgetting God. All financial, personal, emotional disputes start from this. Imam Hasan smiled at that old man. Imam Hasan is a clear example of some one who is trained in the school of someone about whom God has sent:

انك لعلی خلق عظیم

The man from Shaam cursed imam Hasan and his father. But he heard good

things in return. This is the true morality of a person who is the leader of Shia. This is the manner and the life style of a person raised by holy Prophet.

# Imam Rida's Endeavor Concerning Hadith

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**Abstract:** *The life of Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al- Rida - since his birth till his martyrdom – includes very valuable and informative points. The relatively long period of imamate of the Imam from one hand, and the formation of deviated groups and trends and also political events of the time from the other hand, has made his life attention-worthy. In the following, we are studying his attempts to record traditions.*

**Keywords:** *Ahlul-Bayt, circles of Hadith*

## **1. Emphasis on the spreading Hadiths of Ahlul-Bayt:**

Considering the expansion of “the public Hadith-centered congregations”

and the distorted “Kilami-oriented groups” during this period, Imam Rida (AS) recommended Shiite to be wise in receiving the hadith, lest they would not repeat what dishonest narrators قصاص

مخالفينا or Mutikallims who are strangers with the school of Ahlul-Bayt have been saying, as in fact these narrators are not wise.[1] Imam told his student-companion, Abasalt Hirawi, that رحمة الله (which means may God have mercy on the servant who revitalizes our traditions.). And Abasalt Hirawi, who is interested in keeping Willayat alive, asked how to do this significant issue and heard:

يتعلم علومنا و يعلمها الناس فان الناس لو علموا  
محاسن كلامنا لا تبعونا.[2]

In the following, Imam said to Abasalt that knowledge must be obtained from ‘Ulamā and in the definition of the ‘Ulamā he said:

هم علماء ال محمد الذين فرض الله طاعتهم و اوجب  
مونتهم.[3]

## 2. Circles of Hadith

The establishment of numerous “hadithic circles” (gatherance to talk about hadith) by Shiite scholars, and at the head of them, Imam ‘Ali ibn Mūsā al-Ridā (AS) is a feature of this era. In spite of the moves of distorted group of Waghifiyan and their harm to identity and solidarity of Shiite, there are various

reports indicating people were referring to imam greatly. These reports indicate that people in Mecca, Medina, Kufa, Mena and Khorasan eagerly attended Imam's meetings.[4]

Imam Ridā held meetings in Medina in 194 A.H., in which he narrated the traditions from the holy prophet. The result of these meetings was the book of “**Sahifah al-Rida**”, narrated by Ahmad ibn ‘Amir Tayyi. Another narrator, David Bin Suleiman Ghazi, also participated in these meetings and collected the book of “**Musnad al-Rida**”. In some traditions, even the place of the meetings of the Imam has been mentioned, as an example the Imam in the mosque of Dar Mu‘awiyah [5] in Medina. It is noteworthy that several circles in Hejaz have been formed by the presence of the imam and a large number of people.[6]

The widespread presence of people in Medina and in Khorasan has been reported frequently. Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Nasr Bazanti, describing Imam's meeting about Ghadir hold in Madinah like this: " كنا عند الرضا و المجلس غاص باهله فتذاكروا يوم الغدير فانكره

... بعض الناس ... This report shows the enthusiastic presence of people of all walks of life and even opponents in the meeting. Then Imam expressed one Hadith that the narrator said Bazanti had narrated this narration for more than fifty times in various meetings.[7]

In Khorasan, this population increased even more. In the meetings of Ma'mun, where the Imam was present, this term و المجلس غاص باهله was used precisely the [8], and even in some cases the number of audience was also reported: "كان على بن موسى الرضا بمدينة مرو و معه ثلاث مائة و ستون رجلا من شيعته من بلاد [9]"

### 3. Debate sessions:

Many reasonings have been reported from the eighth Imam, most of them on the issue of monotheism and then Imamate. The debate between the Imam and Zanadiqeh [10], debating people like Suleiman Marwazi [11], Muslim scholars [12], the controversial discussions with the followers of the Mu'tazilites [13], the Murji'ah [14], the Sunni commentators [15], or the Thanawiyah [16] and other cases has been reported. Only Tabarsi has reported

38th of imam's debate in *Ihtijaj*. Among the debates of the Imam, the meeting with Ma'mun about the prophets and their infallibility is very beautiful. This meeting begins with the following statement by the caliph: "يا ابن رسول الله! ا ليس من قولك ان الانبياء معصومون؟" And when he receives positive response of the Imam, he asks: "فما معنى قول الله عز و ؟" "جل و عصى آدم ربه فغوى؟"

The beauty of this meeting is that Imam responds him by only referring to Quranic verses. This discussion is explicit, bilateral, and long, and at the end Ma'mun can not hide his wonders. Therefore, he says:

يا ابا الحسن و الله ما يوجد العلم الصحيح إلا عند اهل هذا البيت و إليك انتهي علوم أبائك فجزاك الله عن الإسلام و أهله خيرا. [17]

And during the meeting, Ma'mun repeatedly says:

اشهد أنك ابن رسول الله حقا [18]

Ma'mun, known as a knowledgeable Caliph, has repeatedly defeated by the knowledge of Imam, and at the end of one of these meetings, he told Imam:

لا أبقاني الله بعدك يا أبا الحسن أشهد أنك وارث علم  
رسول الله [19]

#### 4. Hadith presentation and teaching how to review Hadith

Of the features of this era was that the forging hadith was being penetrated into the Shi'a under the titles of affection and eulogy or theological issues like Jabr, Tafid and Tashbih. Imam said in this regard:

إنما وضع الأخبار عنا في الجبر و التشبيه الغلاة  
الذين صغروا عظمة الله. [20]

Ghaliyans غالى who belittled the divine Majesty fabricated narrations in the area of Jabr and Tashbih claiming those are said by us.

Presenting Hadith led to the elimination of many untrue thoughts about Tawhid [21], such as Jabr, Tashbih [22], etc., and also the stories of the prophets, and the like, were refined by the Imam and erased from Shi'a hadith.

#### 5. Writing and dictating hadith

There are various reports that Imam Rida had written the words of the Prophet or his words and prayers down for his companions and sometimes they

spelled them to his students. Sometimes they were written for the requesters in their presence, and sometimes in correspondence. Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Nijran said that Imam Rida wrote a hadith from Imam Sajjad to me and then read it:

كتب ابو الحسن الرضا رساله و اقرانيها [ 23 ]

The Shi'ites also learned to quote Imam's writings for each other. [24] Husein ibn Sa'id was one of those who received letters sent by Imam to Muhammad ibn Ibrahim, and recite it to his students. [25] Even preparing copies of imam's words and answers to questions were common. In a narration, Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Nasr Bazanti said,

نسخت من كتاب بخط ابي الحسن [26]

From Imam Rida, about one hundred and eighty-eight hundred letters have been left, most of them are in the subject of Islamic jurisprudence (about one hundred and twelve). Some of the most important writings ascribed to him are: **the book of jurisprudence [27], the book of causes [28], the text of the prayers of Sajdah [29], the writing of**

numerous prayers [30], and the **Risalah Al-Dhahabiyah**.

The late Ayatullah Ahmadi Miyaneji, who gathered the collection of writings of imams in *Makātib al-A'imah*, categorized Imam's writings as follows:

Tawhid: 8, Imamate and Miracles: 29, Jurisprudence: 111, Medicine: 1 (Risalah Al-Dhahabiyah) [31], Prayer: 13, sermons: 10, Letters to *Waghifiyan*: 7, Politics: 4, Various Issues: 4.

### 6. Number of hadiths

Based on the latest research on the collection of the hadiths of the eighth Imam, the number of his narrations in all hadith books is about 2427 traditions. [32] The various topics of these narratives are:

- Islamic jurisprudence: 1038 narrations.
- Beliefs: 794 narrations.
- Ethical narrations and sermons: 61 narratives.
- Traditions of Prayer and debates: 118 narrations.

- Interpretative narrations: 204 narratives.
- traditions about narrators and elites: 212

### 7. Training students:

Many narrators were among the companions of Imam. Barghi named 62 people [33] and Sheikh *Tusi* [34] identified 318 narrators. One of the contemporary researchers has named 312 narrators with his narrations. [35] This number of narrators is only taken from the texts, which recorded documented narratives.

Imam's students also knew well to record everything that were going to learn. They carefully monitored and reported Imam's reactions even in speaking and their worship. Narrators have narrated his way of praying, their *Tawaf* in Hajj [36], how to farewell with Kaba [37], how to pray [38], as well as his pilgrimage to Najaf Ashraf [39].

Some of the most famous narrators of Imam Rida, who have reported the most narratives in the books of the *Arba* and *Wasa'il al-Shia* are the following in order

of the most tradition-narrator to the least:

Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Nasr Bazanati, Muhammad bin Sinan, Fadl ibn Shadhan, Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', Hasan bin 'Ali al-Washa', Hasan ibn 'Ali bin Fadal Taymi, Safwan bin Yahya, Yunus bin 'Abdul Rahman, Suleiman bin Ja'far bin Ibrahim Jafari, Ahmad Bin 'Amir Ta'yi, Muhammad bin Fudayl Seyrafi and Mu'ammir bin Khilad. These narrators have reported more than forty percent of the narrations of the Imam.

### **8. The presence of Shi'i narrators in Khorasan:**

The short time of residence of Imam Rida in the Khorasan region caused a number of interested Shiites and narrators of news came to Khorasan from Iraq and Hejaz. The Shiites in Khorasan also benefited greatly from this opportunity, and even from distant areas of Khorasan, such as Transoxiana [40], traveled to Marw and Sarakhs to gain knowledge.

Some of the narrators who have traveled to this area include Ibrahim b. Musa al-

Qazaz [41], Hasan ibn Juhm bin Bukayr bin A'yun [42], Hasan bin 'Ali al-Washa' [43], Khalaf ibn Hammad Asadi [44], Musa bin Sayyar, Riyan Bin Salt Ash'ari Qumi [45], Abdul Rahman bin Yahya, Di'bil Khuza'i, Muhammad bin Yahya bin 'Umar bin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib [46], Yazid ibn 'Umayr bin Mu'awiyah Shami [47], Mu'ammir [48] Bin Khilad, Muhammad bin Sinan [49] and...

### **Endnotes:**

1. Ma'ani al-Akhbar, 180.
2. ibid.
3. ibid.
4. Qurb al-Isnad p. 200.
5. ibid 200. It is probably the same Mubahilah mosque or mosque al-ljabah, belonged to Banu Mu'awiyah bin 'Afw and today it is located near the al-Nabi mosque.
6. Al-Kafi 4/23 From the evidence in the text, one can find that the meeting was in Hejaz, and it is not clear whether it was in Medina or in Mana, Qisas Rawandi, p. 160.
7. Tahdhīb al-Ahkām, vol. 6 p. 24 h 9.
8. Al-Ihtijaj, vol. 2 p. 415
9. Al-Mujtanj, p. 22. Also, visits to Imam were held at these meetings in Marw: hint: 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 1 p. 124.
10. Al-Tawhid pp. 250, 269

11. Ibid, p. 254-441.
12. Tuḥaf al-'Uqul an Ale al-Rasul 313.
13. Al-Tawḥid p. 406.
14. Tafsir 'Ayashī vol.1 p. 18.
15. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida 1 p. 149.
16. Al-Tawḥid p. 269.
17. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida vol.2 p. 200.
18. Ḥasan ibn Jahm, who was at the meeting with Shiites along with Imam Rida, was glad of the respect of Ma'mun to the Imam, but the Imam said to him يا ابن الجهم لا يغرّنك ما ألقىته عليه من إكرامى و الاستماع منى فانه سيقتلنى بالسم و هو ظالم لى أعرف ذلك بعهد معهود إلى من ابانى عن رسول الله فآكتم هذا على ما دمت حيا.
19. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida vol.2 p. 86.
20. Al-Ihtijaj, vol. 2 p. 414.
21. Al-Faqih, vol.1 p. 271
22. Look at 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida vol.1, chaptor 11
23. Basa'ir al-Darajat 119 .
24. Look: Musnad al-Imam al-Rida vol.2 p. 165, h 44; pp. 193 h 26; pp. 265 h 38.
25. Tahdhib al-Aḥkam, p. 364
26. Al-Kafi: 7 p. 29 h.
27. Tuḥaf al-'Uqul an Ale al-Rasul p. 406.
28. Makatib Al-Ae'mmah, vol.5 pp. 95 109 .
29. Muhaj al-Da'wat p. 307.
30. Muhaj al-Da'wat, p. 303, Iqbal al-'Amal, 76.
31. Although this is not perfect, it is the most comprehensive work in this topic.
32. Musnad al-Imam al-Rida, 'Atarudī (2 vols). Of course, this number is with repetition, but the frequencies in this book are very small.
33. Al-Rijal al-Barqī, pp. 127 to 130.
34. Rijal al-Tusi, p. 351370. The narratives of some of the narrators who came in Rijal Tuṣī are not present in new narrative texts.
35. Musnad al-Imam al-Rida, vol. 2 pp. 511 - 556.
36. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida 2/16
37. Al-Kafi 4/529, 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida 2/17 and 18.
38. Al-Kafi C: 3 p. 320 H 5, 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida 2, p. 181 H 5.
39. Kamil al-Ziyarat h. 41.
40. Al-Kafi vol.1, p. 88 & al-Tawḥid p. 125.
41. Al-Kharaj'ij vol.1 p. 337 .
42. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida 2 p. 200.
43. Al-Kharaj'ij vol.1 p. 364.
44. Al-Kafi, vol.6 p. 491.
45. Qurb al-Isnad 198.
46. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida vol.1 p. 135.
47. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida vol.1 p. 124.
48. Qurb al-Isnad 198.
49. 'Uyūn Akhbar al-Rida vol.1 p. 263 h. 1.

# What Problems Did Contemporary Cultural Challenges Create for Islamic Thought?

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*A question and answer*

*Answered by: Late scholar Abdul-Hadi Fazli*

*Abdul Hadi Fazli (1314-1392 AH) was a Shiite cleric and influential figure in the 14th century in the Eastern region of Saudi Arabia. He had a comprehensive education in seminary and university science. Fazli has many publications in various fields of Islamic sciences.*

*In the following, a part of his answers to some questions about Islam and contemporary challenges in front of it are mentioned.*

**Key words:** *cultural challenges, Scientific achievements, Islam*

We must first define the meaning of the challenge. We have expanded this concept to group concept and social to political. Today's competition is between the west and other countries.

The west seeks to dominate the Muslims through it, we call this competition, politically and socially, a cultural challenge or contemporary cultural challenges. These names give a special sensibility and importance to Islamic thought. Because cultural challenges put Islamic countries and thoughts in the stream of cultural invasion, in case of not overcoming these cultural invasion, Islamic thoughts will be destroyed.

But what is significant is Muslims, who from the first moments of western cultural invasion with various instruments in various fields of education and advertising, declared their stance. Their attitude and way of thinking became apparent by passing time. Of its results was expansion of realm of confrontation to western countries, therefore after that they founded cultural institutions there and challenges and confrontation became more complex. We are moving fast towards the equilibrium point, that we are undoubtedly witnessing it in the light of global events. The victory of Muslims in this struggle brought about bright future and justice. I believe that we must continue the cultural process

with great effort. We must concentrate our facilities and energy on it.

***Sectarianism is one of the most complex problems in Islamic society. How do you look at this problem? What is your Islamic view of the notion of citizenship in Islamic society?***

Sectarianism is moving in two lines in Muslim societies: 1. The line of thought  
2. The line of affection

In the line of thought, there are differences in the religious, theological and jurisprudential dimension.

In the line of affection, it is fanaticism that is interpreted as religious and sectarian fanaticism. Disagreement in the vote and the point of view on the cases and intellectual issues are moving in two lines :1. a realistic and logical line 2.mental and internal line. Disagreement in the realistic line is normal. Because disagreement in method or disagreement in attitude returns to scientific disagreement. This is the case in all human thoughts and we can not call that sectarian disagreement. Most of these disagreement that move in the inner and mental line naturally are

being affected by prejudice, we must treat our fanaticism and selfishness. I have suggestion for closeness and proximity between religions and Islamic sects. 1. A window to comparative studies should be opened, expanded to all institutions and areas of Islam 2.Enhance the spirit of joining and following the Islamic origins and Islamic homeland, and also following and having good understanding of Islam and also understanding of the present condition, and keeping unity can limit sectarianism. Because keeping unity requires the Muslims to pay attention to the principles of peace so we could finally pay attention to the peace of Muslims. This does not mean people should not evaluate their thoughts, because the duty of comparative study is to promote thoughts leading them to the level of belief.

*What is the position of Islam against the scientific achievements and the new technology?*

*How do you imagine the process of using the products of contemporary civilization in building contemporary Islamic program?*

Islamic law has goals that has been looking for in the field of Tashri and the Muslim jurists examined them and revealed their meanings. Just like that there are general foundations in Islamic law that are emphasized on and are taken from view of Islam towards life and human. Whenever these foundations are distinguished from foreign civilizations and cultures we are safe from mistakes.We can learn technology and natural sciences in framework of the general Islamic foundation, and we must islamitize the human sciences to be able to use them for Islamic goals.

*In contemporary thought, the subject of different understandings of religion was raised. And they claim the sacredness and stability of religion because of its heavenly credibility is different from recognizing the religious variable; They say religious knowledge is what perceived by human understanding and religion does not have sacredness. That's why we can criticize it. What is your analysis of this?*

I think you are referring to separation theory نظريہ تفکیکی. The meaning of that separation is in the domain of Islamic

thought in terms of the divine root. The Holy Quran is definitely sent from God and as God says: *“The Prophet does not speak without thinking or cravings, it is a revelation that is sent by God.”* Both divine knowledge are sacred. But the intellectual product of Muslim scholars, which has been laid down for studying the Holy Qur'an and all other things similar to that, is connected to revelation. This product is of a type of human knowledge and it is not in Quran and sunnah and can be the subject of criticism. Because the results of the Islamic scholars' discussions have been made through usual academic researches carried out in Islamic centers. Some criticized others in their method and others even by knowing the academic requisites of criticism can avoid entering this realm. Islam is strong and does not fear from criticism. This review can sometimes bring something new and useful and sometimes is deteriorated and lose its correctness and in either case, the result will be useful.

# Imamat

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***Abstract:** The present article is dealing with the issues related to necessity of presence of Imams. After talking about this necessity, Imams are introduced and in the following issues related to obeying imams, Tawasul and Tamasuk, their knowledge about unseen, Willayah and rulership, kindness towards them and ziyarah have been mentioned.*

***Key words:** Prophecy, Khatamiyat, successorship, Caliphate*

## ***Necessity of Presence of Imams***

He was a young adult but Imam Sadiq respected him more than his other companions. He sat him next to himself and said, tell me what did you say to

that elite who was denying imamat... “ I told him”, Hisham said, “ do you have hands, feet, eyes, ears and nose? He said, yes. I asked, what about heart? He said, yes. Then I asked, what does your

heart do for your body members? I said, all members of our body can do their responsibilities by the help of heart. I said, what if our heart stops working? The other members of our body continue working? He said, "No". He continued, "God in your body does not leave your organs without a guide, how come He may leave the world without a leader? Imam is the heart of creation. Without him creation is sustained..." he could not answer, and surrendered to this reason. Imam admitted his method in debate.

All responsibilities of a prophet such as leadership, rulership, invitation to religion, advertising and guiding, training, explaining Quran, except receiving revelation of God, are delegated to imams. Prophet is appointed by God, similarly imam is appointed by God. Piety, knowledge, power, bravery, and other moral virtues, are manifested in him. As far as this religion is the last religion and the prophet of Islam is the last Prophet sent by God, the duty of leading people is given to imams; this mission of them is lasted till the last day of the world. Imam is the cause of saving religion from distortion and its freshness which

is able to answer all needs and questions no matter when or where they are brought up.

Imamat is so important that when in Ghadir khum imam was announced by Prophet to a group of one hundred and twenty thousand pilgrims returning from Haj, this verse has been revealed that God stated, " today, I make your religion perfect and I complete my blessing to you." *أليوم أكملت لكم دينكم و اتممت عليكم نعمتى...*

This public announcement was so significant that when the order of God was received by Prophet to announce imam, *(يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك)*, the holy Prophet said immediately, the value of this announcement is equal to the value of the whole prophethood; and if this announcement is not done, it is as if there was no prophethood. *و إن لم تفعل فما بلغت رسالته*

This key principle is also cited by the holy Prophet about the necessity of knowing imam for the people of all times, "if any one dies while he does not know imam of his time, perished as a person of ignorance time." *من مات و لم يعرف امام زمانه، مات ميتة جاهلية* ( i.e. anyone who does not know imam of his time is

not a muslim.” Who is this imam whose familiarity is equal to being a muslim? Who is this imam whose acquaintance has such a great importance? It is obvious that he is someone equal to Prophet whose familiarity and friendship guarantee being a true holder of Islam religion. Otherwise, that person is lost but he does not know. This person should be innocent if it is supposed following him stands next to following God and Prophet *اطيعوا الله واطيعوا الرسول واولى الامر منكم*. The reference of “*اولى الامر*” in this holy verse is only imam because following him is similar to following God and the holy Prophet and no human being can reach this level of magnanimity unless innocent imam.

### **Characteristics and virtues of imams**

I went to Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida in Marw and I gave a report of what people believe in terms of imam. He gave a comprehensive sermon about imam by referring to the holy verses of Quran and then added, “Do this people who assume can choose an innocent imam for themselves recognize the position and grandeur of imam and imam position’s among nation to be qualified to choose imam? Truly, imam has a vast domain, elevated position, a profound depth

higher than what people can understand by their minds or can comprehend it by their own idea or choose an imam willingly? Imam is a position that Abraham was given after becoming a Prophet. It means in the first step Abraham became a Prophet, in second step he was honored to be the friend of God (خلت) and in the third step God appointed him as an imam. God says, “truly I have appointed you as a leader for the nation..” Abraham happily said, “Will this leadership also continue through my descendants?” God said, “the harmdoers shall not receive it.” This verse shows that no tyrant will be appointed as Imam until the Day of Doom.

Imam continued, “imamat is having the rein of religion, muslim life and dignity at your hands; imamat is the pure foundation of islam and its fruitful branch. Through imamat prayer, zakat, Haj and Jihad are exercised correctly; ahkam and laws are obeyed, borders will be secured, imam announces Hallals and harams set by God, carries out what God’s orders, he defends the religion of God, he invites people to the path of God by advice and reasoning; imam rises like a sun in the world, he is there

in the horizon like sun where people can not reach him, imam is like a luminous moon, a bright lamp, a shining light and a shining star in the darkness of nights, deserted deserts, and seas whirlpool, imam is refreshing water for thirsts and a leader of rightness and a savior from destruction.

Imam Rida continued enthusiastically, “imam is like fire on a hill for the ones struck by hypothermia and a rope in darkness anyone lets it go will perish. Imam is a rainy clouds, a heavy rain, a shining sunlight, and a sky over heads and a land spread under us, a overflowing well, and a garden, imam is a helpful trustee, a kind father and a compassionate brother, a shelter for the servants of God at the time of fear and misfortunes, imam is trustee of God among His creations and a proof of Him for His servants, and His caliph in His world, a caller to God and defender of rights of God.

Imam is the one who is pure of any sins and impeccably faultless, he enjoys special knowledge, patience and wisdom, he is foundation of religion, dignity of muslims, cause of hypocrites rage, and destruction; imam is unique in his time, no one is equal to him, no

scholar is as knowledgeable as him, he has no similar, nor equal, he is given this level by God...

And to choose imam, he said, “ who is the one who can acquire complete recognition of Imam and then choose him? Impossible, impossible!” wisdom and memories are puzzled about it and eyes short sighted; great people are unable, men of knowledge are astonished, patients impatient, wise ones puzzled, poets dumb, and men of eloquence are speechless, they are unable to explain a virtues of him or define part of his position, all are confessing their inabilities. How could they picture his reality and understand his truth? How could anyone stand in his stance and meet the needs he does? No, how? From where? He is like a star shining, far reaching by finders and beyond description of describers? How could a human have such a choice?...<sup>1</sup>

### **Introducing imams**

According to Quran, when God appointed Abraham as an imam and told him I appoint you as an imam for people ائىى جاعلك للناس اماماً, he asked God this imamat was given to his descendants. God accepted this but by a condition.

And it was this imamat is not given to tyrants. According to imam Rida in that famous tradition, “ imamat was in the descendant of Abraham until it reached Prophet Muhammad, and he announced giving it to imam Ali in various occasions like Ghadir Khum, and then to his offspring. Imamat is the position of infallibles and inheritance of them; imamat is caliphate on behalf of God, the holy Prophet, and imam Ali and the inheritance of Hasan and Husayn and his children till twelve imam, Imam Mahdi (a.s.)

The position of imamat is the position of holy guidance and being a channel to receive blessings of God for people and leading nation. Caliphate as a being a ruler is just a part of that which if does not fulfill, their spiritual position of being imam which is eternal is not doubted. Knowing this imam is obligatory and according to the saying of the holy Prophet anyone who does not know imam of his time, is going to die as an ignorant person living in the era of ignorance. Name and characteristics of these twelve imams have been set since the beginning on behalf of God and announced by

Prophet. One of these documents is Louh of Fatemah.

Imam Sadiq said, once my father asked Jabber ibn Abdullah Ansari ( the famous companion) to say talk about the Louh he has seen in the hands of Zahra and what was written in that Louh. Jabir said, one day when the holy Prophet was alive I visited your mother Fatemah to expressed my congratulations for the birth of Husayn. I saw a green Louh in her hands that I think was emerald, in that Louh it was white shining written letters. I told her, may my mother and father be sacrifice for you! [it is an expression to show deep love?] What is this Louh? Fatemah said, this is what God has given as a gift to His prophet. In this Louh names of my father, my husband, my children and imams from my children are all cited.

My father gave it away to me, then whenever I take a look at it, I feel happy.” Your mother gave it to me to see it. I read what was written in it and I copied it. Jabir brought a sheet made from thin skin, opened it and let my father see it. My father told Jabber, oh Jabber! Look at what is with you and I read it by my heart. Jabber looked at it and my father read it all from his heart. I

swear by God! There was not even a letter different from what was what he said and what was written. when he finished, Jabir said, I take God as my witness that you read whatever I had seen in sahfah kept by Fatemah.

The text of this lough and the hadith are included in authentic books such as kafi and Kamaluddin and is of the most beautiful and strongest texts about imamat. The names of the twelve stars of imamat with their characteristics are written in this eternal charter who are: ‘Ali, Hasan, Husayn, ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn, Muhammad ibn ‘Ali, Jafar ibn Muhammad, Musa ibn Jafar, Ali ibn Musa, Muhammad ibn Ali, Ali ibn Muhammad, Hasan ibn Ali, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan. Regarding the twelve imam we read this in this tradition,

“Then (after him, i.e. Hasan ibn Ali) I will complete my proof by his son who is the blessing for world dwellers. You see might and perfection of Moses, Light and majesty of Jesus, and patience of Jacob all in him... they are truly my proof on the earth. By them I dispel any blind dark seduction or earthquake. By them hidden and subtle movements of enemies are revealed, chains of captivity are taken away by them. God’s blessings

and peace be on them! They are truly guided ones.”

### Obeying imams

He said, why do you say it is a must to accept all orders of the holy Prophet and infallible imams? I answered, be fair! Isn’t it nonsense to claim we accept the one sent by God but don’t want to listen to him? Don’t you regard the order of Prophet to be equal to the order of God? Shouldn’t we regard the words and judgments of this messenger of God as a must-to-obey? Yes, God in Quran points out to this and counts a complete obedience as a condition for truth of belief: “ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ” I swear by your God that these are not counted as faithfuls unless they choose you as a judge at the time of arguments and disputes and do not complain to whatever you judge. They should be surrendered to you from the depth of their heart.

He said, does obeying imam is as obligatory as obeying Prophet? I answered, yes. Obeying imam is equal to obeying God and Prophet. Our proof is this verse: أَلِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ

فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ  
 الْآخِرِ which means oh faithfuls! Obey  
 God and obey Prophet and Ulul-amr  
 (who are imams. Because it is only  
 Imam who enjoys infallibility level مقام  
 عصمت and following him is like  
 following God and Prophet otherwise it  
 is obvious that human beings who are  
 not immune from sins and mistakes and  
 tyrants shouldn't be followed. And if  
 you disagree on something, get  
 consultation from God and Prophet if  
 you believe in God and resurrection day.  
 It is clear that is you get consultation  
 from the book of God and the Prophet,  
 they will tell you you should obey ulul-  
 amr who are innocent. Jabir when asked  
 Prophet about ulul-amr received this  
 answer, the meaning of ulul-amr are  
 'Ali, Hasan, Husayn, 'Ali ibn al-  
Husayn,... to Mahdi (a.s.)...

He said, sometimes imams took various  
 approaches and we do not know which  
 way we should take. I replied, you ask  
 an interesting point. Luckily the holy  
 Prophet predicted this and suggested a  
 solution. He said, what's that? I  
 answered, he said, al-Hasan and al-  
 Husayn are imams. No matter to start a  
 revolution, or stay at home and don't do  
 anything. This shows that imam should

be our role model in movement or  
 peace.

Therefore, various approaches of imams  
 should not confuse muslims and these  
 differences are resulted from differences  
 at their time and different duties God  
 assigned them in various time. The duty  
 of us is to follow imam's orders.

He said, what is our duty in this specific  
 period of Imam's hidden life? I said, we  
 are living at the time of imamat of imam  
 Mahdi (a.s.). at this time which is the  
 time of tyrants, when faithfuls are faced  
 with difficulties, hardship and multitude  
 enemies like their imam (كثرة عدونا و قلة  
 عدتنا و تظاهر الزمان علينا) we should follow  
 imam's special orders mentioned in  
 traditions suitable to our time to be able  
 to save our faith... in this time of  
 hardship.

### **Recourse and resort**

Moving his hands and legs aimlessly in  
 water, no ray of hope left, his power all  
 gone, every where water, he was about  
 to die, to sink... suddenly his eyes, out  
 of sight, saw a rope... grasped it, took  
 hold of it fast, pull himself up, got  
 closed to the surface of water, and again  
 saw the blue sky above. He was saved  
 miraculously; the rope was thrown to

water from a lifeboat watching around. When he saw the sun again, it was as if someone inspired his heart that in the wild sea of life whenever you are lost in the waves of events and problems, there is a save rope you can grasp and rescue. The one whose name is imam. That is the holy rope and lifeboat, that is the rope which is included in this tradition, "عروة الوثقى" that is "واعتصموا بحبل الله" which is the strong rope which we should resort. و من استمسك بالعروة الوثقى لا (انفصام لها)..

اعتصام و تمسك I'tesam and Tamassok (i.e. resort and revoke) are two Quranic words meaning holding, grasping and connecting. Who deserve that people connect them and assist them? this rope of God عروة الوثقى is the same as ulul-amr whose obedience is the same as obedience of God and Prophet obligatory. They are imams joining them is the only way of salvation. To resort them, we should refer them in all aspects in terms of scientific guidance, getting closer to God, and even solving dead-ends and problems. This rope if it was not useful, God would not set it. It is our need because we are triggered by storms and whirlpool during our life...

They say, why don't we revoke God directly? I say, revoke and resort to God is exactly the same as revoking God. Because God, Himself, sets this rope to help us promote. God He Himself can lead us directly but Prophet and imam are sent to us, they are like us, from the same bone and body, we can connect them easier. They are ladders to God, a bridge between God and human beings; they are interpreters of God's message. They are rope of God. They put whatever they had in middle to get us to real prosperity.

He said, where, how, and when to resort? I answer, " wherever, whenever, by the simplest ways: in your seclusion, talk to them, in your heart feel them, tell them your secrets, ask for help from them, listen to them, follow them, take their advice, never leave them, imams are all rope of God, resorting them is a saving tool for us, but imams of each time is closer to the people of that time, and more helpful, because people of his time are his servants, he is responsible for them, he is committed to help and guide them.

## Aware of Unseen

Being aware of unseen affairs is called ilm gheib علم غيب. And of course unseen is something proportional. Which means a subject can be unseen for someone but seen for others. According to Quranic teachings, science of unseen belongs to God Who surrounds all worlds لا يعلم الغيب الا هو. He informs any one He likes to the extent that He likes, like in the story of Solomon, Asif Barkhiya, his assistance by having a part of this knowledge could move the seat of Belgheys at a wink from a far away land. Prophets and imams due to their mission enjoy knowledge of unseen.

According to Quran, عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَن ارْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ, therefore Prophet and imams and some pious people have the knowledge of unseen. The extent of this knowledge is different in different people and the most significant part is given to Prophet. Infallible imams whenever necessary were informed of the unseen. Imam Sadiq said in this regard, whenever an imam wishes to know something, God teaches him.”

Knowing about Unseen for infallible imams is a sign of their honesty and

truthfulness to help people realize them from liars. For this reason, God gives His knowledge of Unseen as much as He wants: يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ).

Quran narrated from Jesus who said, “I inform you of what you eat and save in your homes, truly in it there is a lesson for you if you are faithful.” In Quran also we read about the Prophet, “these are of unseen news we are revealing to you. Before this, neither did you know nor your tribe. تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَا إِلَيْكَ (.. ما كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُهَا أَنْتَ وَ لَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا

How imams were informed of unseen knowledge? From various ways: first, from Prophet for example the knowledge which gives to Imam Ali in the last hours of his life. According to traditions, in that time, he received knowledge which was equal to a thousand of gates of knowledge and to each gate a thousand other gates were opened. This science included knowing about past, future, death, sorrows and judgments.

This science rests in the realm of transferring knowledge, given to next imam by the previous imam. Another way is by the book of Jame’e and that is

the book written by Ali collecting whatever Prophet told to him; it was about news and necessary things for imam, which was given to imams subsequently. Third, through the book of Jejr which according to some traditions is the inheritance of infallible imams and this knowledge is the knowledge of infallibles. Fourth from Moshaf Fatemeh and that includes angels' talks with her. In it the news about future till the resurrection day exist. Hazrat Zahra narrated them to Ali and he wrote them down. In a tradition, from imam Sadiq we read that Moshaf by Fatemeh includes news of future. The last way is through inspiration and traditions. It is narrated from Hasan ibn Yahya Madaeni quoting from imam Sadiq who said, when imam is asked a question, he answered by which knowledge? He answered, sometimes it is inspired to him, and sometimes he hears from an angel and sometimes both.

Examples of this news of unseen can be found in Nahjul Balagheh, like the news about destruction of Kufa, the attack of Abdul malik Marvan to Kufa, bloodshed caused by Hajjaj ibn Yusef Thaghafi, the news about future of Basra, rulership of four corrupt rulers from Marvan,

attack of Mongolians, or for example when imam Mahdi who was a child said the content of letters written to his father and took there by Saad ibn Abdullah Qumi and a group of people.

### **Wilayat and rulership**

He said, what is the need of human beings, laws or executors? I said, both! Couldn't we, human beings, decide about what to do and how to do if we use our common sense and get consultation? I said, human beings are not only in the need of law, if they were, by receiving laws through prophets, they became needless and the responsibility of leaders would have been finished here. But it is not like this. After receiving the law the need to an executor of it is felt.; the need of a sovereignty that implements this divine order. Implimentation of the rules are faced thousands of challenges. To solve them, leadership is needed; a leadership immune from mistakes, corruption and deviation to be able to execute true justice. The name of this leadership is willayah granted to divine commanders by God.

He said: that is, only the divine rulers have the right to rule? I said: the best

and most impeccable sovereignty is the sovereignty heading by the Prophet and Imams, because they are not interested in bribes or corruption, not tended to make mistake or alteration, nor to discriminate, oppress and abuse power. They also have knowledge. They enjoy knowledge which shows them the challenges of law enforcement and by their vast knowledge, take into account all the tiniest things to prevent the loss of rights of even one person. He said: this is ideal, but possible? I said, "The point is this. If human beings accept their willayah, then it is possible, but if not, it is impossible!" He said: "Has God explicitly given this guardianship to the Prophet and Imam?" I said: "Yes, in the Qur'an," He said:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ  
الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

*“Your guide is only Allah, His Messenger, and the believers; those who establish the prayer, pay their obligatory charity, and bow down (in worship).”(5:55)*

He asked, “Who is the third category in the verse?” I said, “most of the commentators have said that it refers to Ali (as) who gave his ring to the poor in

pray while bowing, then this verse was revealed.” Interestingly, this verse begins with the word "إِنَّمَا" that is, the word which makes limitations. It means exclusively your guardian and their guardian are these people ...

He said: "What is the exact meaning of the word *ولاية*?" Some people say it only means friendship. I said: this is not so, because friendship is not exclusive to these three groups and includes all believers, but it has the meaning of guardianship and leadership and sovereignty that is unique for God and the divine leaders (the Prophet and Imams) who both are innocent and also have science of Unseen. Here the issue is guardianship, leadership and sovereignty, in order to organize communities. He said that they are not present at all times. I answered: they are, and the earth will never be without a proof of God. They are ulel-Amr whom we should obey.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ  
وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ...

He said: "What should be done in the absence of Imam, like now?" I said: the reason for the imam's absence is that the wrongdoers are against his rulership.

First of all, it is necessary to do everything that end this period, and to do so, Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.) said that we should pray and prepare ourself, then the grounding in any way possible through repelling the defects and deviations and improving the atmosphere and condition the individually or in groups, and giving up to the rule of divine law and jurisprudence. He said, “Does willayah only mean rulership? I answered, No, the rulership is one of the aspects of the willayah, and not all of it. The willayah is the guardianship and leadership of the people, as well as the Takwini, the Tashri'i, and the spiritual willayah and also the priority willayah which is knowing them having more rights to us rather than we. If the rulership is not realized, the rest of it remains, and today, we are under the authority of imam Mahdi (PBUH), and we must prove the acceptance of his willayah in the heart and action ....

### **Friendship مودت and kindness**

If we were supposed to thank the holy Prophet for the great blessings of guidance given to us through the Prophet (PBUH), how should we have thanked? Did not the Prophet himself

show us the way? He did and he has said: "As a wage and reward, I do not want anything from you but affection and kindness to my close relatives (which means Ahlul-Bayt)" **قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ** **عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى** (42:23) These are the same ones from whom Allah has removed all evil and made clean and pure **إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ (** **وَيُطَهِّرَكُم تَطْهِيرًا** (33:33) . These are the ones who were in Mubahelah along with the Prophet, those who created that wonder against the Christians of the Najran, those for whom Hadith Kasa was revealed, a divine group that Zahra is its center: she and her father and Her husband and her children from Hasan and Husayn to Mahdi (peace be upon him). Love of them is the reward for Prophethood; Be nice to them is the joy of the Prophet's heart ...

Basically, this love is the genuine religion (هل الدين الا الحب); Allah is the guardian of believers, but the guardian of disbelievers are tyrants (devils) (2:257). In the line of God's authority and guardianship, there are the guardianship of Prophet and Imams which are asserted in the verse five of surah Ma'adah. The holy Prophet also (PBUH) said, “Keep my respect by

respecting my progeny and my family. Everyone who does so will be saved by God. God's curse to those who hurt me by annoying them ( احفظوني في عترتي و نريتى، فمن حفظنى فيهم حفظه الله، ألا لعنة الله على من آذانى فيهم.) Imam Hasan, in his speech after the martyrdom of his father, addressed people and said, "I am from the family to whom Gabriel was descended; I am from the family from whom God has removed all evils, and I am from the family whom Allah has made loving them obligatory. He continued, "**Say: 'For this I ask of you no wage except the love of the (Prophet's) relatives. We will add good to whosoever gains a good deed,'**" (42:23) "A **good deed**" is to be our friends. Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) also said: "The affinity which Allah has mentioned it as something so great, and obligated all to observe, and set it as a reward of prophethood is for us Ahl al-Bayt ..."

If, according to the verse of friendship, the friendship with the Ahlul-Bayt (as) is equal to the reward of the Prophethood, its opposite, i.e. enmity with them, will be counted as denying and ungratefulness towards the Prophethood. Therefore, Ahlul Bayt and

Imams are the criterion of religion, Friendship with them, and the enmity towards their enemies are the genuine religion. This is **تولى** and **تبرى** which are considered as the pillars of religion. This is the rational principle that if someone claims to be your friend, he must leave your enemies and avoid them; not only in his heart but also in his action. He is not sincere if he does something you really hate. The same is true regarding Ahl al-Bayt and Imams (as): friendship with their friends and enmity with their enemies.

As we have seen friendship **مودت**, **Tawalla** **تولى** and **Tabarra** **تبرى** have Quranic roots, and faith is not realized without these principles. We adorn our sayings with two illuminated Hadiths. Imam Sadiq (as) said: "Whoever obeys God's obligations and avoids doubtfulness (محرمات), respect wilayah of Ahlul-Bayt of the Prophet (PBUH), and not to join enemies of God, in the Resurrection day, enter Paradise from each of the eight doors of the Paradise that He desires!" Imam Kadhim (peace be upon him) also said, "Blessed are our Shiites who in the time of the absence of our Mahdi (aj) grasp our strings and remain steadfast in

loving us and hating our enemies. They are from us, and we are from them.

**Pilgrimage (Ziyarat) and intercession (Shafa'at)**

When you are interested in a person, you love to spend your time with him, visit him, and if he is deceased, you go to his grave and talk to him and buy him flowers, and remember him. This is the concept of pilgrimage and is of the most beautiful manifestation of love and affection which is also compatible with human nature. When we are obliged to love Ahul Bayt as a reward for the mission of the Prophet, their pilgrimage, which is the symbol of this friendship, will also be necessary. Therefore, this pilgrimage is a kind of worship through which man approaches God, because he puts God's order into practice as God orders this friendship. The pilgrimage is a school, constructing our personality, because you, by getting closer to infallibles and friends of God stand in their side and renew your treaty. You can ask their help for your promotion in front of God. By asking their intercession and by resorting to them make yourself closer to God as God says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ  
وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

*“Believers, have fear of Allah and seek the means by which you come to Him. Struggle in His Way in order that you are prosperous.” (5:35)*

When we want to do Ziyarah, first we salute them. This has its root in Quran, as we read in the divine verses: *"Peace and salutation to Noah among the nations!" (37:79); "Peace and salutation to Abraham!" (37:109); "Peace and salutation to Moses and Aaron!" (37:120); "Peace and salutation to Ale-Yasin" (37:130) ...*

After salutation, the fundamentals of religion and then requests are mentioned which are another manifestation of their love and companionship. A pilgrim no matter paying his pilgrimage from a far or in close, should put aside materialistic obsessions and pays attention to God with all his heart; feel sweetness of this attention and love and attracts these infallibles' attention toward himself. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Everyone who comes to pay pilgrimage to my grave, I am obligated to give him my intercession. Everyone who come for Hajj and visits my grave for

pilgrimage, is like the one who visited me during my lifetime.” Imam Rida said: “My pilgrimage in the court of God will equal a thousand Hajj if it is done by knowledge. Also, the pilgrimage of Imam Husayn especially the pilgrimage of Arba’in, is considered as one of the fifth signs of faith.

But the position of intercession, which means helping and seeking support from a person who can support, has been given to the infallibles and even some faithfuls. The truth of intercession is that human beings ask the intercessor, Due to his closeness to God, pray for him and request God on behalf of him. Some verses like **“Who is he that shall intercede with Him except by His permission!”** (2:255) ; **“who have no power of intercession, except those who have taken a covenant with the Merciful”** (19:87); show that first, intercession is possible, second, God should let, third, it is a treaty between God and infallibles...

In fact by Ziyarat, we ask infallibles for their intercession to put us under their supporting shelter. When the brothers of Josef are hopeful that their father will intercede for them so as God forgives their sins and Jacob accepted this

intercession, why should not we be hopeful that Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.) intercede for us and enters us among his companions...

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<sup>1</sup> Usul Kafi, Kitab al-Hujah, 2/117, Kamal al-Din/675, ‘Uyun Akhbar 2/195, Ma’ani al-Akhbar/96

# In the Path of Islamic Unity

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**Seyyed Reza Huseini-Nasab**

**Islamic researcher**

***Abstract:** In the present article, the meaning of Sahabi and issues concerning it which is very important in Islam has been mentioned in the form of question and answer to help their understanding easier.*

***What is the opinion of Shia towards Sahabeh (companions of Prophet)?***

From Shia's point of view, those who visited the holy Prophet of Islam are classified into several groups. But before

explaining this, it is appropriate to define Sahabi in brief.

There are various definitions regarding Sahabis. Here we mention some of them.

1. Sa'id ibn Muṣayib said, “Saḥābi was the one who spent his time accompanying Prophet for a year or two and attended one or two battle along with Prophet.”<sup>1</sup>

2. Waqidī said, “scholars believe that anyone who saw Prophet and converted to Islam, contemplated on Islam and was content with it, is regarded as a Saḥābi of Prophet in our opinion even if all this took just an hour of a day.”<sup>2</sup>

3. Muḥammad ibn Isma'il Bukhari said, “Anyone of muslims who spent his time with Prophet or just had seen him is counted of his companions.”<sup>3</sup>

4. Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, “Anyone who spent time with Prophet for a month or a day or an hour or just had seen him is regarded as his companion.”<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, among Sunnite scholars, “Saḥābi Justice” is accepted as a certain principle, which means anyone who perceived companionship of Prophet is Just.”<sup>5</sup>

Now, in the light of Quranic verses, we are going to review these definitions and explained Shia opinion which roots in vahi (revelation of God).

In history, names of more than 12000 individuals has been recorded as companions of Prophet, among them we can find different persons. There is no doubt that companionship with holy Prophet was a great honor which was given to some. Islamic nation always respects them because they were the pioneers of Islam whom put up the honorable flag of dignity for islam for the first time.

The holy Quran admired these pioneers of Islam and said,

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتَلَ  
أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَقَاتَلُوا  
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

*And why is it that you do not spend in the Way of Allah, when the inheritance of the heavens and earth belong to Allah alone? Those who spent before the victory and took part in the fighting are mightier in rank and are not equal to those who spent and fought thereafter. Yet, Allah has promised each a fine reward, and Allah is Aware of what you do.*

At the same time, it should be confessed that companionship of Prophet was a miracle which could change the identity

of people at once, guarantee their guidance and salvation for all their life time and put them among just people. To clarify this issue more, it is proper to refer to Quran before anything else as Quran is common point of all muslims.

### Sahabeh from Quranic point of view

In the opinion of Revelation, those who were present at the court of holy Prophet and accompanied him for a while are classified into two groups

#### First group

The first group are those whom Quran admires them and names them as the stabilshers of the palace of Islam dignity and magnificence. Here we mention some verses of holy Quran in this topic.

#### 1. First pioneers

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأُولُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

*As for the first outstrippers among the migrants and supporters and those who followed them in doing good, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens underneath which rivers flow, where they shall live for ever. That is the greatest winning.(9:100)*

#### 2. Those who take alligence “under the tree”.

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

*Allah was pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to you under the tree and He knew what was in their hearts. Therefore, He sent down tranquility upon them and rewarded them with a victory close by.(48:18)*

#### 3. Migrants

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

*A share of the spoils shall also be given) to the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their possessions, who seek the Favor and Pleasure of Allah, and help Allah and His Messenger. These are they that are truthful.(59: 8)*

#### 4. Companion of Fath

مَحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي النَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَصِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Those who are with him are harsh*

*against the unbelievers but merciful to one another. You see them bow and prostrate themselves seeking the bounty and pleasure of Allah. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the Gospel, as the seed which puts forth its shoot and strengthens it, so that it grows stout and rises straight upon its stalk, delighting the sowers, and through them He enrages the unbelievers. Allah has promised those of them who believe and do good deeds, forgiveness and a great wage.*(48:29)

### Second group

Another group which experienced companionship of the Prophet were hypocrites or in another term sick-hearted. Quran revealed their true Personality and warn Prophet of them. there are some examples in the following:

#### 1. Introduced hypocrites

#### 2. Non-introduced hypocrites

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ

*Some of the Bedouin Arabs around you are hypocrites, and so are some of the people of Madinah who are well versed in hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We do. Twice We will punish*

*them then they shall return to a mighty punishment. (9:101)*

### 3. Sick-hearted ones

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا

*The hypocrites and those in whose hearts there is a disease said: 'Allah and His Messenger promised nothing but delusion. (33:12)*

### 4. Sinful people

وَأَخْرُوعُوا اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَآخَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

*There are others who have confessed their sins; they intermixed good deeds with another evil. It may be that Allah will turn towards them in mercy. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (9:102)*

In addition to these holy verses of Quran, there are various traditions issued by Prophet in blaming some Sahabeh; here we include two examples.

1. Abu Hazim narrated from Sahl ibn Sa'ad from Prophet:

“ I sent you to the pool, Anyone who approaches it will drink of its water and anyone who drinks will not be thirsty for good. The groups will approach me that I know them and they know me as well, then we will be separated from each other.” Abu Hazim said while I was reciting this tradition Numan ibn Abi

Ayash heard it, then he said, is this what you heard from Sahl? I replied, yes. He said, I was witness that Abu Saeed Khudri added to this tradition this from Prophet who said,

انهم منى فيقال انك لا تدري ما أحدثوا بعدك فاقول  
سحقا سحقا لمن بدل بعدى

“They are from me. It is said you do not know what they did to me after me. I tell you be far away from Mercy of God anyone who changes Ahkam after me.” From this sentence I know them and they know me. And “after me, they change...” it becomes clear that them, they refer to his companions who were accompanying him for a while. (This tradition is also narrated by Bukhari and Moslem.)

2. Bukhari and Muslem narrated from Prophet who said,

يرد على يوم القيامة رهط من اصحابى – او قال من  
أمتى – فيحلون عن الحوض فاقول يا رب اصحابى  
فيقول انه لا علم لك بما أحدثوا بعدك انهم ارتدوا  
على أديبارهم القهقرى.

“On the Resurrection day, a group of my companions or he said my nation- will come close to you, then they will go away from the pool (they are not

allowed to get closer to the pool). Then I say oh, God! They are my companions. God said, you are not aware of what they did after you, you are not aware they returned to their previous state (time of ignorance.)

### Conclusion

It becomes clear from the verses of Quran and sunnah of Prophet that the people who accompanied Prophet are not in the same level but a group of them were pious people in the zenith of humanity which their services to Islam caused blossom of islam. There were other group whom from the first were hypocrites, double-faced, sick-hearted and sinful.

In this way, the opinion of Shia regarding Sahabah of Prophet which is the opinion of holy book of God and Sunnah becomes clear.

<sup>1</sup> 'Usdul Ghābah, vol.1.pp.11-12.Egypt Pub.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Istiāb fi Asma Al-Ashab, vol.1, p.2

# A Review of E.Szanto's PhD dissertation “ Following Sayida Zaynab: Twelve Shi'ism in Contemporary Syria (2012)”

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**Zeinab Sadat Mousavi, Maryam Sarbandi Farahani**

March.2018

**Abstract:** The research under review is concerned with the concept of tradition as accepted and practiced at the shrine-town of Lady Zaynab in Syria through an ethnographical investigation. It analyzes of the ritual of mourning gathering by women at the shrine, the annual commemoration of Imam al-Ḥusayn in Muḥarram, and finally the spiritual healings and miracles associated with it. The study was, to some extent, based upon Talāl Asad's (1986) notion of ethnography of Islam and various iterations of Karbala emanating from Fischer's (1981) framework of the Karbala paradigm. The present review, seeks to analyze the major issues raised by the author and propound a critical reading of the text.

**Key Words:** Lady Zaynab; Syria; Shi'a, Muḥarram; Mourning gathering.

## **About the Author**

Dr. Edith Szanto is currently an assistant professor at the American University of Iraq in Sulaymaniyah. She teaches

lessons in Middle Eastern History, Western Civilization, Comparative World Religions, and Islam. Her research area is Islam in the modern Middle East. Szanto received her PhD in Religious Studies from University of Toronto in 2012. She stayed in Syria for three years as a Fulbrighter and busied herself with conducting research on popular Islamic practices, while simultaneously working for the UN. Her current project aims to investigate contemporary Islam in Kurdistan of Iraq. She has published in the *Journal of Shi'a Islamic Studies*, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, and the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*.

## **Introduction**

Sayyida Zaynab, the elder sister of Imam al-Ḥusayn, is highly respected among the Shi'is all over the world for her participation in the episode of Karbala, cursing the Umayyad caliph in Damascus, and conveying the messages of Ashura to the world. The researcher, as an anthropologist, paid a visit to the shrine-town of Sayyida Zaynab and provided a detailed description of the

history, traditions, and rituals of the Shi'is who reside at the shrine-town of Sayyida Zaynab, to which the dissertation is dedicated.

After devoting one section of the first chapter to introducing the political, geographical, social, religious and ethnographical features of the inhabitants of Damascus as the city of Sayyida Zaynab's holy shrine, Dr. Edith Szanto scrutinized Shi'i women's rituals for mourning gatherings. Afterwards, she raised the subject of the Karbala Paradigm which was first coined by Fischer (1981), drawing an analogy between Shi'is practices in Muharram and those of Catholic Penitents' rituals.

Chapter two deals with seminaries of Shi'is in Damascus, their institutional changes, and their religious elites. Then, she recounted the institutional landscape of Sayyida Zaynab: the historical background, religious aid organizations, seminaries, and *Ḥusayniyyāhs*. After that, Szanto investigated multiple notions of learning which are set as premises in Shi'i seminary education.

In chapter three, Szanto first deployed an affective perspective in analyzing the mourning practices of Shi'i women,

using two modes of affect: *aththara* and *thāra*. Second, the researcher explored how such mourning gatherings allow for affective modes of transmission among the pious Shi'is. The third concern of the chapter goes for the procedure for Shi'is women to become preachers or *mullayāt*. Finally, the chapter ends in a perusal of the pious media and their influence on the Shi'is.

Throughout the fourth chapter, Szanto discussed the Muharram practices among the Shi'is in detail and paid attention to the dispute between Shi'i scholars over the permission and appropriateness of some ritual practices i.e. self-flagellation processions like *tatbīr* or *zanjīr*. However, in the fifth chapter, Szanto raised the subject of spiritual healing and the practices conducted for such a purpose. Then, she turned to magic, its permissible forms, and its relationship with religion.

In the final chapter, the researcher concludes that the concept of tradition should be reconsidered and even updated in accordance to the concept of modernity. In addition, she raised an idea of tradition not being a necessity to become a better and more pious Muslim. Accordingly, Szanto concluded that an

anthropology of Islam requires a perception of a chain of discourses connecting Shi'is to such fundamental texts (e.g. Qur'an) and influential individuals (e.g. the Infallible Imams).

### **A Critical Appraisal**

Having addressed the main and general issues raised by the dissertation and introducing the whole work to the readers, it is appropriate to tackle the chief subjects and themes of the study. It seems that the predominant issue with which the dissertation has dealt with is the subject of tradition as it makes sense among Shi'is in Syria. The author holds that Shi'is primarily resort to the 'traditional' interpretation of Lady Zaynab's life. According to Szanto, the traditional interpretation of this great character refers to perception of what Lady Zaynab went through during and after the massacre of Karbala with an emotional emphasis on the grief and affliction she coped with. The 'authenticated' or 'modern' interpretation deems Sayyida Zaynab from the aspect of her resistance to Yazīd and the ascendancy of her words in her lament.

Another key issue brought up by the author is the concept of 'affective piety' to observe the pious mourning practices for Sayyida Zaynab and the episode of Ashura. Szanto found that mourning and grief for Imam al-Ḥusayn turns a historical account into a "deeply affective kind of knowledge which makes particular demands upon Shi'is" (Szanto, 2012: 95). She states that remembering the sufferings of the Ahl al-Bayt, Shi'is tend to disregard their own calamities and misfortunes in life and ignore them in comparison to the afflictions that the Ahl al-Bayt went through.

As put forward above, the author reached the conclusion that tradition has to be modernized in accordance to contemporary concepts. It seems that using the following three justifications, Szanto has made such a claim: 1. The concept of tradition has been deployed rhetorically to claim legitimacy, 2. Referring to Talal Asad (1986) and William Graham (1993), she proposed the inter-subjective or rational aspects of tradition, and 3. She asserted that not all of the Islamic traditions culminate in the cultivation of piety.

To a large extent, the arguments propounded by the researcher appear to be supported by a wide range of evidence taken from the words or conducts of the Shi'is inhabiting in religious environments. However, it seems that Szanto's apprehension of Shi'is convictions is not as thorough and profound as it should be, or at least, some descriptions and information about Shi'is ethnography offered by her seem to be misinterpreted by the reader, and the result of such an inadequacy would be the deficient transfer of information which are discernable in some sections of the dissertation. An example of such a phenomenon goes for the author's assertion that Shi'is hold and sponsor mourning gatherings or *majālis* in order to bring about such events as marriage, graduation, and recovery. Although she has quoted this sentence from a local Shi'i woman, there exists the possibility that the local woman has skipped, either intentionally or unintentionally, the main and definite motivation for Shi'is to hold such gatherings which is primarily to commemorate the episode of Karbala and the passions of Sayyida Zaynab and Imam al-Ḥusayn, and at the second level their (i.e. the mourner's)

ordinary and spiritual desires to be fulfilled. Such shortcomings may cause misinterpretation of the readers and lead them to the estimation that Shi'is hold mourning gatherings for the sake of their own desires rather than for honoring the Ahl al-Bayt plus remembering their afflictions.

Considering coherence and rhetorical organization, the text has the appearance of being in acceptable quality. The logical order has been kept throughout most of the passage, except for some shortcomings that make some statements illogical for the contradiction they connote in comparison to the true Shi'ism ideology.

Ultimately, this piece of work deserves to be considered noteworthy a source for familiarity with the traditions and convictions of contemporary Shi'is in Syria, due to its rich and detailed descriptions. It suggests new ways to discern Shi'is daily practices in regard to their religious beliefs. It is hoped that further investigations be rendered in this realm just as thorough as the current one, but in a more comprehensive framework.

Note: The current piece of work was composed under the request of *Safinah Journal of Islamic Studies*.

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# Secular Messianism

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**H.E. Archbishop Cyril Salim Bustros, Archbishop of Beirut & Byblos**

## **An interview with Salim Bostrus**

***Abstract:** in the following, we are going to read an interview with **H.E. Archbishop Cyril Salim Bustros, Archbishop of Beirut & Byblos about commonalities between religions.** The questioned asked were more than what included here; We selected some questions related to Islam which were asked and mentioned them in this article. To explain the topic of our interview, knowing the meaning of Messianism seems necessary. Messianism is the belief in the advent of a messiah who acts as the savior or liberator of a group of people. Religions with a messiah concept include Zoroastrianism (Saoshyant), Judaism (the Mashiach), Buddhism (Maitreya), Hinduism (Kalki), Taoism (Li Hong), and Bábism (He whom God shall make manifest).*

**In your opinion what is the idea of Christianity concerning the issue of salvation of humanity? Especially about how Jesus returned as a savior?**

We have a sentence from saint Polos who said, "Truly God punishes everyone based on his actions." Salvation and entering heaven is related to the actions of human being. Those who do good deeds will enter heaven and be salvated and those who commits evil and bad actions during their lifetime will be losers. This means that all actions of human beings are not equal with one another. Goodness exist in front of evils, recognizing and differing these two from each other is what which should be studied in all religions. According to the holy book about the beginning of creation in that time God addressed Adam and Eva and said, "There is a tree there to gnosis and by that good and bad can be realized. Do not eat from its fruit." This means that human being is not the criteria of what is good and what is bad. God Almighty decides alone and independently. He is the One who determines what is good and what is bad. Human being should take His advices about good and bad.

Therefore, salvation is related to the behavior of people. But from other hand we say Jesus is our savior. This thought belonged to the past which said, "salvation does not fulfilled unless .... Exists." Because in that time, when human being makes a mistake, this mistake in fact in done in violation of God's right." So this person deserved to die. He to compensate his mistakes and to make up for that should devote something instead, which is he should give an animal instead but when Jesus revealed he gave himself as adevotion

**Nowadays Islam has been faced unkind reactions or even attacks in Christian worlds and it is introduced an equivalent for terrorism. Can you, as a Christian scholar, accept such a picture from a divine religion and its messenger?**

The religion history shows that we have always been faced a kind of harshness, violence and terrorism in applying religion. Once when Jews entered the land of Canaan, they killed its habitants. Their excuse was this that the inhabitants are idol-worshipper or Mushrik, so they are Unclean نجس. In Christian part of the West, magicians, astronomers and Satanists were killed.

Inquisition courts were held where human beings were sentenced to death. Even if we review Islamic history, we find out that Islamic conquerors were achieved by a kind of harshness towards Mushriks and pagans, as we read in Quran, for example surah Tubah ( verse: 5)

فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ

***When the sacred months are over, slay the idolaters wherever you find them.***

This is a kind of terrorism against Mushriks. It should be noticed that this kind of verses were sent down at the time of wars and Qazave but today we do not have any Qazave. The word today is about the legal rulership. Nowadays, we have armies and laws. We have constitution and our countries have borders. Now we can not talk of attacking other tribes in order to survive. The mentioned verse and likewise have been descended in a specific course of history. But now, if one does this kind of actions, it is truly called terrorism. For example ISIS resorted to these verses to justify its brutal actions. But Islam is the religion of balance. It says the time of these actions is expired. In

the last Islam and Christian conference, held in Al-Azhar, it was talked about citizenship. It was agreed that we should not focus on religions or sects as all people are citizens of a single homeland. Regarding religions and sects, we are all free to have our own belief. Religion of each person is for that person and all religions should be respected because all are equal in terms of principle of citizenship.

This is the base of common life. Nowadays, this idea is being spread and for this reason, now we have “balanced Islam” or “moderate Islam” these days. This balanced Islam is based on Quranic principles. This balance-orientation is of Islamic principles. We can not say Islam is a religion of terror. Some terms or phrases are interpreted terroristically. But in fact, Islam is the religion of mercy and kindness. It is highly impossible that God orders people kill each other. It is ordered, never commit any crime. Period. This is a comprehensive order. It is not disputable. Each murder is religiously forbidden (Haram) Do not we read in Quran that anyone who kills an innocent person is similar to one who kills all people? There is such a beautiful

sentence in Quran which also exists in all religions. Murder is forbidden. People must not be killed. There is an exception, though, which is Qisas (retaliate). Government is allowed to retaliate. The point is if by prisoning and rehabilitation, the wrongdoer can be punished and gives up wrong actions, this is what should be done. Murder should not be taken as a principle. We can not claim there is a religion which orders “to kill.” No, it is not true. We do not have any terrorist religion. Terroristic actions result from misunderstanding a religion.

**At the present time, in Christianity especially among American protestans called “*Millenarian*” or *Zionist Christianity*, there is an attitude which strongly believed in return of Jesus. They take radical political approaches and most of the political actions they take is in order to govern the present world where is in the treshhold of reappearance of Jesus. How do you evaluate these beliefs of returning Jesus backed by political supports?**

Notice that Millenarian is something and Zionist Christianity is another thing. Millenarian Christianity at first believed

that after passing a thousand years Jesus will come back. But when a thousand years ended, they said we made a mistake and he will return after two thousand years. The year 2000 has come but Jesus did not come, so it should be said that this claim was based upon literal meaning of a verse which says the rulership of churches are only a thousand year. But here a thousand means a lot, countless. Therefore, we can not interpret it literally. Some Christians made other alterations and mistakes. But wordly Christianity and Catholic Church disagree these claims. No one knows when Jesus will return. In gospel, we read the students of Jesus asked him about his return. He told them, “*no one knows when it will happen.*” Nor human being nor any angel, just God is aware of its time.