



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



One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man

Book Title: "The Two Hundred and Fifty-Year-Old Man"

The Political and Striving Lives of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T) in the Writings and Lectures of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei (May Allah Prolong His Lifetime)

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Preface

‘Abdullāh bin Ṣāliḥ al-Harawī narrates that Imam Riḍā (peace be upon him) has said, “May Allah have mercy on the one who revives our tenets.” I then asked him, “How can one revive your tenets?” “Through learning our knowledge and teaching it to others; If people find out about the merits of our words, they will certainly follow us”, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) replied.

‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.), vol. 1, p. 307

One of the great forms of Allah’s grace and kindness towards us is His bestowal of the Infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.) upon us so that we may learn how to lead a Godly life through observing their way of life and eventually achieve eternal prosperity through practising their valuable instructions.

The city of Mashhad is a piece of heaven as it is home to the son of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) who is the eighth star in the sky of Imamate. Every year millions of passionate pilgrims from around the world and other parts of Iran come to this spiritual sanctuary in order to quench the thirst of their souls by drinking from the limpid spring of the guidelines of the Infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.).

Each one of those serving at the Holy Shrine of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) is in one way or the other serving the respected pilgrims of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) so that such they may make their pilgrimage with peace of mind whilst being able to benefit from this heavenly shrine.

In line with the above, the Office for the Management of Foreign Pilgrims at the Holy Shrine of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) has also been making every effort to introduce in various ways the way of life of *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.)—and that of Imam Riḍā in particular—to the followers and devotees of this doctrine.

The measures taken by this office are in line with propagating the Islamic civilization and culture appropriate to the needs and requirements of foreign pilgrims in order to provide them with insight and spiritual growth. Such measures take place in conjunction with the remarks made by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the instructions given by the custodian of the Holy Shrine of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) while at the same time taking into account the provisions stipulated in the Twenty-year Outlook Document of the Holy Shrine of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.).

Some of the examples of the efforts made by this office in line with serving the foreign pilgrims of Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) in the international sphere are as follows:

- 1- Holding special cultural programmes
- 2- Holding regular seminars on Islamic knowledge known as ‘Circles of Knowledge’
- 3- Holding academic conferences
- 4- Holding educational classes and workshops
- 5- Holding cultural competitions and contests
- 6- Holding poetry readings
- 7- Holding conversion ceremonies for new converts to Islam
- 8- Responding to letters received from pilgrims

9- Dispatching books and other cultural products to all over the world

10- Responding to religious enquiries

11- Offering live internet interaction at Razavi Talk

12- Publishing the best of Islamic literature in several languages in the form of authored and translated books

It has been for some time that the call of Islam is echoing in every corner of the world with the hope of bringing people back to the truth to which they have been a stranger while at the same time inclinations towards Islam and the tendency of hearts towards seeking the truth is growing rapidly throughout the world.

We hope that the seekers of truth would find this book a useful and informative read and that it would be a step in the right direction as far as increasing the knowledge of pilgrims and devotees of the Infallible Imams (P.B.U.T) are concerned. Finally, we hope that this work would bring about the pleasure and satisfaction of the Glorious Allah.

O' Allah, bless Muḥammad and Muḥammad's household, provide me with a sound guidance which I seek not to replace, a path of truth from which I swerve not, and an intention of right conduct in which I have no doubts! Let me live so long as my life is spent in obeying you.

The Management of Foreign Pilgrims

*One
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and Fifty-Year-
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Introduction

The loneliness of the Imams, these noble figures (P.B.U.T.), did not come to an end in their own lifetimes, but centuries of disregard for the major aspects of the lives of these noble personages prolonged their loneliness. Books written in the course of these centuries are certainly unique in worth, for they have left for the future generation a collection of traditions on the lives of these noble personages. However, among the reports, *Hadiths*, and biographies dealing with the scholarly and spiritual aspects of their lives, the element of “intense political campaign”, forming a two-hundred-and-fifty-year continuum, is missing.

We should learn the lives of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) as a lesson and an example, not merely as valuable glorious memoirs, and this will not be possible except by considering the political manners and disposition of these noble personages. I first became fond of this dimension in the lives of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) in 1350 S. / 1970 C.E.—during a hard Divine trial. Although prior to that I regarded the Imams (P.B.U.T.) as great combatants who sacrificed their lives in exalting monotheism and establishing the Divine government, but the point that suddenly came to my mind in that period of time was that in spite of external differences the lives of these honorable personages are a long continuous movement although some people took parts of it as contradictory. This movement began in the 10th and 11th year after Hijra, continued for two hundred and fifty years,

and ended in the year two hundred and sixty after Hijra, which marks the onset of the minor occultation (of the twelfth Imam, may Allah hasten his reappearance).

These honorable personages are but one, a single personality, and there can be no doubt that they follow one single direction and purpose. Thus, instead of making an analysis of the life of Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) in isolation and separated from the life of Imam Ḥusayn and that of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.T.)—and making provisions for a possible fall into the dangerous and erroneous pitfall of considering the apparently varied lives of these three Imams (P.B.U.T.) as opposing each other—we need to imagine a human being who has lived for two hundred and fifty years; in the 11th year after Hijra he started off on a path and paved it by the year two hundred and sixty after Hijra.

On the basis of this view, it will be possible to understand and explain all attempts of these great and infallible personages (P.B.U.T.). Any man gifted with wisdom—though not with infallibility—devises local tactics and (considers) his options for his long-term moves. At times, he may move quickly or slowly. He may even make a wise retreat, but those who are aware of his knowledge, wisdom and purposefulness consider even this retreat as a forward move. When it is taken so, the lives of the Commander of the Faithful (Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.)) and of Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.), together with the life of the eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.), will be an unbroken move continued until the year two hundred and sixty after Hijra. This is what I realized in that year i.e. in 1350 S. With this in mind, I reviewed their lives; the further I proceeded, the more this impression was confirmed. Reviewing (the whole matter) is of course beyond the time limit of one session, but it should be noted that the lives of these infallible and honored personalities from

among the household of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is politically oriented. This (part of the) discussion deserves to be raised separately. Today, I am going to deal with it; God willing, I am going to develop the matter a bit more.

First of all, what is this political campaign or acute political campaign that we attribute to the Imams (P.B.U.T.)? By political campaign and acute political campaign we mean that the Infallible Imams' (P.B.U.T.) campaigns were not merely scholarly, ideological, and theological—similar to the Mu'tazilites' and Ash'aris'—in circulation within this particular period of the history of Islam. The Imams (P.B.U.T.) did not mean merely to establish an instructional circle, fully prove a theological or juridical school related to themselves, and have their foes silenced. They meant something more. Nor did the Imams (P.B.U.T.) lead armed uprisings—as did His Eminence Zayd and those who survived him, as well as Banī al-Ḥasan and some others from the offspring of Ja'far as mentioned in the life-history of the Imams (P.B.U.T.). Here, it should be noted that the Imams (P.B.U.T.) did not unconditionally charge all these moves as faulty; they refuted only some for reasons other than armed uprisings. They even gave their approval to some, and supported some others who were not directly involved in battles. This consisted of financial support, preserving (certain people's) prestige and that rendering assistance to conceal certain others. (It is quoted from the Imam (P.B.U.H.), "I would love (to see) one from among the household of Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) would rise up and I would be supporting his family financially."^{1,2} But as far as we know they (the Imams—P.B.U.T.), themselves, did not stage military campaigns. Political campaign is neither the

١- «لَوِدِدْتُ أَنْ الْحَارِجِيَّ مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ خَرَجَ وَعَلِيٌّ نَفَقَهُ عِيَالَهُ»

2- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 172.

former nor the latter. It is a politically-aimed struggle. That is the formation of the Islamic government, which we call the 'Alawī rule.

From the moment the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) passed away until the year 260 after Hijra, the Imams (P.B.U.T.) were planning to establish theocracy in society. This is the principle claim. We cannot of course say that each Imam (P.B.U.H.) meant to establish the Islamic rule in his own time; there were three kinds of future efforts: medium, distant, and sometimes near. For example, we believe that during the lifetime of Imam Muḥtabā (P.B.U.H.), exertions were made for the Islamic governance to be established within a short period of time. In answer to Musayyab b. Najaba and others, who asked why the Imam (P.B.U.H.) remained silent, he said, "If you understand, this might be sedition for you and {enjoyment till a time}"^{1,2}. In my opinion, in the time of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), efforts were of medium term, and for this I will present evidence. In the time of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) efforts were most probably for a near future. After the martyrdom of the eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.), the efforts were probably aimed at long term results. "Exactly when?" It differed, but persisted. This is the meaning of the political campaign.

Except for what concerns one's spiritual exaltation, which moves him closer to Allah-(engaging in) lessons, (narrating) *Ḥadīth*, (disseminating) knowledge, (studying) theology, (holding) debates with foes on knowledge and politics, and (being) exiled and supporting a certain group-the Imams' (P.B.U.T.) entire practice followed this course: the formation of

١- «وَإِنْ أَدْرِي لَعَلَّهُ فِتْنَةٌ لَكُمْ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ»

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Anbīyā' (21): 111.

the Islamic government. This is the (main) claim¹.

Have the Imams (P.B.U.T.) had a political life or not? Has the life of the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.) been summarized only in having a few students, a group of disciples, some people around themselves and teaching the provisions of performing prayer, paying alms and performing Hajj as well as Islamic morals over and above teachings and principles of religion and mysticism to them? Or nay, apart from these things that were said and the essence of what was alleged, there is another framework in the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) life which is the same political life of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.); this is a very important issue that should be clarified. However, there is no much time for argumentative and detailed arguments in short times [like this]. [In this regard,] I [only] outline main topics for those who have the desire to go looking for them, look once again at the traditions through this framework and flip through history books, then it would become clear which truth of the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) or our other Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) is still unclear, unspoken about and unknown. After the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) felt that, in terms of Imamate and Ahl al-Bayt, the aim of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) which means ﴿to purify them, and to teach them the Book and wisdom﴾²—had not been met; after they saw that the formation of an Islamic state, the formation of an Islamic world as the prophets had demanded had been totally forgotten after the early years of Islam, [that] the reign [and caliphate] took the place of prophethood and Imamate, and [people like] Khosrow, Caesar—the bullies, [as well as] Alexander and the other famous rebellious tyrants of the history came to power [as the] successor [of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)] and [the]

1- Delivered on July 19th, 1986.

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, Āl-i Imrān (3): 164.

caliph [of Muslims] by the name of Umayyad and ‘Abbasid dynasties; and the Holy Qur’an was interpreted in the way those who were in power sought, and the minds of people were affected by the insidious practice of those scholars who were fascinated with the ambitions and material friendship of [the then] rulers; after the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) saw all of these, they formed an overall plan in their life.

That I say the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) I mean all the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.)—from the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) to Imam ‘Askarī (P.B.U.H.). I have repeatedly said that the life of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) which had lasted 250 years should be considered as a person’s life—a **250 year old man**; they are not separated, “they are all one light”¹. If each of them said something, it was in fact the saying of others as well. If each of them did something, it was in fact what the others did too. It seems that [the Infallibles’ (P.B.U.T.) life] is like a man who had lived 250 years. [In other words,] what the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) did in these 250 years seems [as] the efforts of one man with one aim, one purpose but with different tactics.

When the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.) felt that Islam was relegated and the Islamic community was not established, they made some aims as their principal goals. One was “explaining Islam properly”. Islam was annoying in the eyes of those who had been in power for a long time during those years. The Islam of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the Islam of the Qur’an, the Islam of the battles of Badr and Ḥunayn, the anti-luxury Islam, the anti-discrimination Islam, the pro-oppressed Islam, the anti-arrogant Islam was not beneficial to those who wanted to disguise themselves as Moses while having the nature of

١- «كُلُّهُمْ نُورٌ وَاحِدٌ»

¹Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.), Translated by Ghaffari & Mustafid, vol. 2, p. 417.

Pharaoh or disguise themselves as Abraham while having the nature of Numrūd—it was not possible. They had to distort Islam, it was not possible [for them] to take Islam away from the hearts or minds of people at one time, because people were believers, [thus] they had to change and empty out Islam of its spirit, content, and nature.

[As] you remember and witnessed, this is just like what was practiced during the previous regime against the Islamic manifestations. Under the previous regime, there was no opposition against Islamic demonstrations but there was opposition against the meaning and the spirit of Islam, against the Islamic *Jihād*, against the enjoining good and forbidding wrong of Islam, and against telling the truths of Islam; however, there were no oppositions against those Islamic aspects that do not harm their cows and sheep (i.e. properties). This situation also existed during the caliphates of Umayyad and ‘Abbasid; for this reason, in order to make Islam devoid of its spirit and truth, they had [hired] a group of mercenary writers and eulogists whom they paid to praise them and write books for them. [Someone] says that when Sulaymān b. ‘Abdul Malik passed away, we saw that the books of a great scholar—whose name I would rather not mention here—were loaded on animals, they were loaded on mules and brought out of the treasury of Sulaymān b. ‘Abdul Malik. This means that this author, this great narrator, this famous scholar whose name is mentioned in many Islamic books, this very person wrote books for Sulaymān b. ‘Abdul Malik. Well, do you expect that in the book which is written for Sulaymān b. ‘Abdul Malik would be something that Sulaymān b. ‘Abdul Malik did not like? Well, what kind of Islam would Sulaymān b. ‘Abdul Malik—who had oppressed [people], had drunk wine,

had compromised with the infidels, had put Muslims under pressure, had discriminated among people, had put [economic] pressures on the poor and had taken people's property—have preferred? This great pain of our community was also the same problem of Islamic community during the first centuries. The Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) saw this; they felt that the precious legacy of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) i.e. Islamic provisions, which should have been remained throughout history and led the human being [to the truth] all the time, had been distorted. [Thus,] one of the goals of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), which was very important, was explaining Islam properly, [introducing] the true interpretation of Qur'an and exposing distortions and the misleading.

If you look at the words of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), you would find what they had stated refers in many cases to the things that the scholars, jurists, and narrators dependent on the then governmental organizations and royal courts had uttered in the name of Islam; the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) rejected their sayings and elucidated the truth; this was a major goal for the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.): to explain the Islamic ordinances, this is the first.

Well, this has also a political nature. We know that when the distortion is performed by the nudge of monarchy and caliphate; and the apparent mercenary writers and hirelings distort [religion] for the sake of sovereigns and rulers; it is natural that if a person does something against [these] distortions, it is indeed deemed contrary to the policies of those sovereigns and rulers. Today, in some Islamic countries, some mercenary writers, authors and paid scholars write books on behalf of their states in order to sow discord between Muslims or show an ugly face of their Muslim brethren; if in these countries there be a liberal writer who writes a

book about Islamic unity and brotherhood among Muslim communities, in fact his work is deemed political and against ruling classes. One of the main activities of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) was stating Islamic ordinances. This does not mean that the Islamic ordinances were not stated on those days in the Islamic community. Yes, there were people in every corner of the Islamic world who recited the Holy Qur'an, narrated *Ḥadīths*, quoted from the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Some of the narrators knew around thousands of *Ḥadīths*. This was not specific to Mecca, Medina, Kūfa and Baghdad but the entire Islamic world. Look at the history. For example, in Khurāsān, there was a young scholar who compiled some thousands of *Ḥadīths*. In Tapuria, a great scholar quoted several thousands of *Ḥadīths* from the Prophet [P.B.U.H. & H.H.] and his companions. There were *Ḥadīths*, the Islamic ordinances were also stated, yet what were not stated were the true interpretation and explanation of Islam in all aspects and affairs of the Islamic community. The Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) wanted to stop this; this was one of the important activities of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.).

Another important activity of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) was to discuss the issue of Imamate. Imamate means the leadership of Muslim community. A major issue for the then Muslims—which was obvious that it was practically and theoretically distorted—was the issue of Imamate and leadership. Who is responsible for the Imamate and leadership of the Islamic community? It reached a point that those who did not practice Islamic provisions and performed most prohibitions publicly, claimed to be the successor of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), took his position and felt no shame. It was not the case that people did not know about these. People saw that a person as the caliph—drunken and unaware—came to the Friday Prayers

and performed prayers as the leader. People were aware that Yazīd b. Mu‘āwīya had great moral diseases and committed mortal sins. While at the same time when they were told to stand against Yazīd, they [simply] said, “[Since] we had sworn allegiance to Yazīd, we cannot revolt against him”. The Imamate and leadership issues were not clear to the people. The people thought that the Imam of Muslims and Islamic community could perpetrate these sins, these offenses, these cruelties and these acts which are contrary to the Holy Qur’an and Islam; this was not an important issue for the [then] people. This was a big problem that due to the importance of a government in a society and its dominant influence on the orientation of the society is regarded as the greatest threat for the Islamic world. Therefore, the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) feel the need to state two things to people.

One is to say that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) has certain conditions; that the Islamic governor should have certain characteristics. Their innocence, their virtue, their knowledge, their spirituality, their manner toward people, their act in front of Allah showed the characteristics of an Imam—which means the Islamic governor—to people. This is the first, and the second is to identify who has these qualities at the moment. They identified that person and expressed themselves. This is a great activity of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) and you see that it is one of the most important political activities, propagations and teachings.

If the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had not done something other than the two that I mentioned, it would have been sufficient for us to say that the life of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) from the beginning to the end had been a political life. Wherever they interpreted the Holy Qur’an, they had stated the Islamic teachings as well;

in fact, they performed a political act yet again wherever they talked about the characteristics of an Imam, they performed a political act as well. This means that if the teachings of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had been summarized in these two features—the two titles and topics which I had mentioned, their life still would have been regarded as a political one; however, they would have not been content with these [two].

In addition to all these, the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.)—at least from the time of Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) on ward—initiated an all-out political and revolutionary underground movement in order to seize [back] the government. This would leave no doubt for the researcher of the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) lives that the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had such a movement. What I say has been remained unknown is this part of the story that unfortunately has not been mentioned in the books written about the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) lives; Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) life, Imam Kāzīm's (P.B.U.H.) life, and the lives of many other Imams (P.B.U.T.). That the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had established a broad political and organized movement has not been mentioned and remained untold despite all the evidence; and this is the major problem for understanding the life of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). The truth is that the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had initiated this. Of course, there are many evidence in this regard.

So to summarize, all the brothers and sisters should know that as soon as all the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) were entrusted with the Imamate, one of the things they established was a political campaign—a political struggle to seize [back] the government. This political struggle is like all the struggles of those who seek to form a government and the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) did so.¹

1- Delivered on April 12th, 1985.

You see that all the disputes and conflicts during the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) lives between them and the tyranny and oppressive governments were over this issue. The dispute of those who opposed our infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.), poisoned them, murdered them, sent them to prison, surrounded them, was over their claim to the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) rule. If the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had not had a claim to the government—even if they had attributed any knowledge to themselves—if it had not been a political issue, if there had been no claim to the political power, no aggression would have been shown toward them or at least it would have not been so severely; in general, the problem is this! This is why you see that there is a great sensitivity on the term and issue of Imamate among the invitations and propagation of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). In other words, whenever Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) sought to have a claim to the government and political power, he stated, “O’ people, indeed, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was an Imam”¹. The Imam—stood at the gathering of the people in ‘Arafāt—and stated, “O’ people, indeed, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was an Imam”; that the Imam of the society, the leader of the society, the governor of the society was the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). “Then there was ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, then Ḥasan and Ḥusayn”^{2,3} until he reached himself. This means that all the disputes and arguments of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) with their opponents over and above the disputes of the Infallibles’ (P.B.U.T.) companions in their campaigns were over the same issue of government, sovereignty, absolute and general authority over Muslims as well as political power;

١- «إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ كَانَ الْإِمَامَ»

٢- «ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ ثُمَّ الْحَسَنُ ثُمَّ الْحُسَيْنُ ثُمَّ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ ثُمَّ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ ثُمَّ هُوَ قَبِيْلَادِي ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ لِمَنْ بِيْنَ يَدَيْهِ»

3- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 466.

[the opponents] had no dispute over the spiritual authority of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). It often happened that there were some people in the community—at the time of the caliphs—who were pious, knowledgeable, known for their interpretations [of the Holy Qur'an], knowledge and so forth that the caliphs not only did not oppose them but they were also very sincere toward these people, the caliphs showed intense devotion to them, they went to these people and sought their advice. Why? Because they had no political claim for the caliphate; certain prominent figures like Ḥasan Baṣrī and Ibn Shubruma or 'Amr b. 'Ubayd were of the scholars whom the caliphs had respect for and accepted. Even though these people made claims for knowledge, made claim for piety, made claim for spirituality, made claim for the [best] interpretation [of the Holy Qur'an], made claim for knowledge of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); and they made all of these claims, there was no opposition from the caliphs; why? There were no such claims to political power. The conflict of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) with the caliphs of [both] Umayyad and 'Abbasid was over the same issues of Imamate and vicegerency which is [or has been] the same meaning we will apply today¹.

1- Delivered on January 22nd, 1988.

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



Prologue

The important task of the Prophet of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was to invite people to the truth, reality, and *jihād* (holy struggle) in the way of this call. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) never became apprehensive over the dark world of his time. He did not panic, whether on that day when he was alone in Mecca or with a small gathering of Muslims that had surrounded him and he faced the arrogant Arab leaders, the valiant dignitaries¹ of the Quraysh, and the stubborn groups with violent conducts and powerful hands, or the general public who had not been granted any comprehension. He spoke the truth, repeated it, explained it, clarified it, tolerated insults, withstood hardships and suffering, until he was able to convert a large number of people to Islam; and when he was able to form the Islamic state and place himself in the position of the head of this government, he took the reins of power in his own hands. That day, too, there were various enemies and opponents who stood up against the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), whether the armed groups of Arabs–ruffians who were all scattered throughout the deserts of Ḥijāz and Yamāma² and the invitation to Islam should have corrected them, yet they resisted–or the great kings of the world of that day–two superpowers of the world in those time–namely the Persian and the Roman Empires to which the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) wrote letters, had disputes,

1- Ṣanādīd (*ṣa na da*): the eminent brave men.

2-A large area of Saudi Arabia–between Najd and Bahrain–where there were abundant villages, mountain peaks, springs, and groves.

gave speeches, sent military expeditions, faced hardships, went under economic siege, and the situation got so bad that sometimes the people of Medina could not even find bread to eat for two or three days. Numerous threats from all sides had encompassed the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Some people became worried. Some people would become uncertain, some would nag, some would encourage the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to be lenient and to compromise; but the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not become weak in this scene of invitation and holy struggle for one moment and pushed Muslim community forward with power and strength, until he had brought them to the pinnacle of glory and power; and it was that very system and society, in which, thanks to the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) stand in the fields of combat and invitation, that it was able to become the world's first power in later years.

09 /27/1991

The Mission of the Seal of the Prophets (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the Beginning of the Awakening

According to a frequently narrated (*mutawātir*) *Ḥadīth*, his holiness himself said,

«بُعِثْتُ لِاتِّمَمِ مَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ»

“The beginning of my Prophetic Mission (*bi'tha*) was to complete moral characteristics”. The Prophetic Mission emerged in the world in order that the moral characteristics¹ and the spiritual virtues of humankind become universalized and attain perfection. Unless someone has the most superior moral characteristics, Allah Almighty will not give this great

1- *Makramat*: greatness, chivalry

and vital mission to him; that is why at the beginning of the Prophetic Mission of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), Allah Almighty said to him,

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

The Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) being [self-] made and disciplined until he becomes a vessel that Allah Almighty finds that vessel to be fit for His Revelation is related to his life before the beginning of his Prophetic Mission; thus it has been reported that as a young man, the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was engaged in trade and had acquired a huge income through trade, all of which was given in the way of Allah in the form of alms that were divided among the needy.

During this period, which is the latter period of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) development and before the descent of revelation—a period when he had not become a prophet yet either—the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) would climb up Mount Ḥarā' and look at the Divine signs; at the sky, at the stars, at the Earth, at those folks who lived on the land with different emotions and in a variety of ways. He could see Divine signs in all of these things and his humility toward Allah, the humility of his heart toward Divine orders and Divine will, would increase day by day and gradually the seedlings of good morals began to rise in him. It is narrated in a *ḥadīth*,

«كَانَ أَعْقَلَ النَّاسِ وَأَكْرَمَهُمْ»

[The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was the most intellectual and the most generous among the people]; before the beginning of the Prophetic Mission, by observing the Divine signs, the Prophet

1- Sūrat Al-Qalam [The Pen] (68): 4: And indeed you possess a great character.

(P.B.U.H. & H.H.) became more and more prolific and matured, until he became forty years old.

«فَلَمَّا اسْتَكْمَلَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً وَنَظَرَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ إِلَى قَلْبِهِ فَوَجَدَهُ أَفْضَلَ
الْقُلُوبِ وَأَجَلَّهَا، وَأَطْوَعَهَا وَأَخْشَعَهَا وَأَخْضَعَهَا»

[When he reached forty years, Allah looked at his heart and found it the best, the most splendid, obedient, fearful, and submissive of all.] At the age of forty years, his heart became the most luminous of hearts, the most humbled of hearts for receiving the Divine message.

«أُذِنَ لِأَبْوَابِ السَّمَاءِ فَفُتِّحَتْ، وَ مُحَمَّدٌ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهَا»

[Allah allowed the doors of the heavens to open and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) began looking at them.] When he reached this stage of spirituality, sanctity, luminosity, and the height of perfection, then Allah Almighty opened the gates of heaven and the gates to the unseen worlds to him and opened his eyes to the spiritual worlds and the unseen worlds.

«وَأُذِنَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ فَتَزَلُّوا وَ مُحَمَّدٌ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ»

[And Allah commanded the angels to descend from Heaven and Muḥammad began looking at them.] He would see the angels, they were speaking with him; he could hear their words, until the Angel Gabriel, the trusted one, descended upon him and said,

﴿اقْرَأْ﴾

“[Read!]; (this was) the beginning of the Prophetic Mission.”

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 309.

2- *Sūrat al-'Alaq* [The Clinging Mass] (96): 1.

This unique Divine creature, this perfect human being who had reached this stage of perfection before the decent of revelation from the very moment of the beginning of his Mission started a composite, comprehensive, and difficult *jihād* and he carried out this holy struggle under extreme hardship for twenty three years. His holy struggle within himself was a holy struggle with a people who had no perception of reality and was a holy struggle with that absolute oppressive environment, where Amīr al-Mu'minīn [‘Alī] (P.B.U.H), said in *Nahj al-Balāgha*,

«فِي فِتْنٍ دَاسَتْهُمْ بِأَخْفَائِهَا وَوَطَّئَتْهُمْ بِأُظْلَافِهَا وَقَامَتْ عَلَى سَنَايِكِهَا»

Seditious are putting pressure on the people from all sides; worldliness, lustfulness, oppression, and encroachment, moral vices in the depths of human souls, and the encroaching hands of the powerful that were stretched toward the weak without any hindrance and impediment. This encroachment not only existed in Mecca and the Arabian Peninsula, but also in the greatest civilizations in the world of that day; namely in the Roman Empire and in the Persian Monarchy. Look at history; the dark pages of history had engulfed the life of humankind. For the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), struggling with this great power and the ceaseless unthinkable effort began from the early hours of the beginning of the Prophetic Mission and receiving the interconnected Divine Revelation, which was like pure water that reaches a fertile land being revealed to the sacred heart of that great man and giving him strength. He used all his power to be able to place this world on the verge of a great transformation and he succeeded.

1- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon No. 2: Seditious have trampled the people under their hooves and trod upon them with their feet, yet they [seditious] stood on their toes [in full stature].

The first cells of the body of the Islamic nation was built with mighty hands of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) during the difficult days of Mecca; fortified pillars on which the base of Islamic nation should be built; [it was] the first believers, the first of those who professed faith, the first who had this knowledge, this bravery, this luminosity by which they were able to understand the meaning of the message of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and become attached to him.

﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ﴾

Prepared hearts and opened doors of the heart toward this Divine wisdom and these Divine instructions were made by the mighty hands of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); these minds became illuminated, day by day these wills became stronger; and hardships occurred for these same few believers—who also increase day by day—during this period that are unimaginable for you and I. In an atmosphere that all values are values of the pagan ignorance (*jāhiliyya*), and the prejudices, zeal for false pride, acting on deep vengeance, atrocities, wretchedness, oppressions, and lustfulness are intermixed and put pressure on people's lives and engulfed them, these lush seedlings sprouted from among these granite and impenetrable rocks.

﴿وَإِنَّ الشَّجَرَةَ الْبَرِّيَّةَ أَصْلَبُ غُودًا وَأَقْوَى وَقُودًا﴾

That is, what Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) says is this. No hurricane could move these sprouts, these seedlings, and these trees that have grown out of these rocks and taken root and have grown. Thirteen years passed and then, based on these

1- Sūrat al-An'ām [Cattle] (6): 125: ﴿Whomever Allah desires to guide, He opens his breast to Islam.﴾

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon No. 45: The timber of the desert trees is harder and its fire is more blazing.

fortified pillars, the Islamic nation and the civic and Prophetic society was established on these pillars.

Laying the Foundation of the Islamic System

This nation-building was not just politics; one part of it was politics. Another major part of this system was the education of every individual:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ﴾

“It is He who sent to the unlettered [people] an Apostle from among themselves, to recite to them His signs, to purify them, and to teach them the Book and wisdom”.

“To purify them”; each and every person’s heart was under the training of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) indoctrinated science and knowledge to each and every mind and wisdom. “To purify them and to teach them the Book and wisdom.”

Wisdom is one level higher. It was not only to teach them the rules and regulations and religious law; rather, he taught them wisdom, too. He was opening their eyes to the facts of the world. For ten years the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) proceeded in this manner and with this method. On the one hand, [he was engaged in] politics, governance, defending the nature and existence of the Islamic society, expanding the scope of Islam, opening the way so that groups outside Medina could slowly and one by one enter the illuminated realm of Islam and Islamic science, culture, and education. On the other hand, he proceeded in training each and every individual. These two

1- Sūrat al-Jum‘ah [Friday] (62): 2.

cannot be separated.

A number of people considered Islam to be just a personal issue and took politics away from Islam. While the first thing the holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did at the beginning of the migration when he was able to save himself from the hardships of Mecca, was [practicing] politics. The foundation of an Islamic society, the establishment of Islamic rule, the establishment of an Islamic system, the establishment of Islamic army troops, sending letters to the great politicians of the world, entering into great human political sphere of those days, is indeed politics.

How can Islam be separate from politics? How can politics be defined and interpreted and formed with a guiding hand other than a guiding hand of Islam?!

﴿الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ عِضِينَ﴾

“Who reduced the Qur’an into pieces]; certain people shred the Holy Qur’an into pieces.”

﴿يُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَيَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضِ﴾

They come to believe in devotional aspect of the Qur’an, but they do not come to believe in the politics of the Qur’an.

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ﴾

1- Sūrat al-Hijr (15): 91.

2- *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 485, “He came to believe in some verses of the Holy Qur’an and rejected some others.”

3- Sūrat al-Ḥadid [Iron] (57): 25: “Certainly [We] sent Our apostles with manifest proofs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that mankind may maintain justice.”

What is *qist* (justice)? *Qist* means implementing social justice in society. Who can do this? The establishment of a society with justice and equity is a political task; it is a task of the administrators of a country. This is the objective of the prophets. Not only our prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), but also Jesus, Moses, Abraham and all Divine prophets (P.B.U.T.) came to establish policies and to establish an Islamic system.

08/22/2006

An Exemplar of the Islamic System

The holy Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) *sīra* (practical way of life) in the ten-year period of Islamic governance in Medina, is one of the brightest—and it is not an exaggeration if we say that it is most brilliant—periods of administration in the history of mankind. This short, prolific, and enormously influential period in the history of mankind must be recognized. The Medina period, is the second chapter of the twenty-three-year mission of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Thirteen years in Mecca was the first chapter—which is considered to be the introduction of the second chapter—and the period in Medina is also almost ten years, which is a period of laying the foundation of the Islamic system and making an exemplar and a model out of the Islamic sovereignty for all times and periods of the history of man and all places. Of course, this exemplar is a perfect exemplar and we don't know of another of its kind in any other period, yet by looking at this perfect exemplar, it is possible to discover the criteria or indicators. These indicators are marks for human beings and Muslims, by which systems and human beings must be judged.

The Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) objective for migrating to Medina was to fight the oppressive, tyrannical environment,

and political, economical, and social corruption which were predominant that day throughout the world and the objective was not only fighting the infidels of Mecca; it was indeed a global issue. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) pursued this objective that wherever the grounds were favorable he would plant the seed of thought and opinion; with the hope that this seed will germinate and grow. The objective was that the message of freedom, vigilance, and prosperity would reach the hearts of all human beings. It was not possible except by creating an exemplary system and model; hence, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) came to Medina to create this exemplary system. As to how much longer they could carry on and how much the succeeding ones could bring themselves closer to that depended on their efforts. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) makes the sample and makes it available to all of humanity and history. The system that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) made has various criteria, among which seven are more important and more prominent.

The first criterion is faith and spirituality. The real motivation and driving engine in the prophetic system is a faith that gushes from the spring of the hearts and minds and moves their hand, arm, leg, and existence in the right direction. So, the first criterion is the breathing and strengthening the spirit of faith and spirituality into people [’s souls], giving them trust and correct thought, which the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) started from Mecca and powerfully lifted his flag in Medina.

The second criterion is justice and equity. The cornerstone of any work is equity and justice and conveying every due to the rightful person—without any reserve.

The third criterion is knowledge and education. In the

prophetic system, the foundation of all things is knowing, understanding, awareness, and vigilance. No one is guided blindly in some direction; and the people are transformed into an active force—not a passive one—through awareness, education, and the power of discernment.

The fourth criterion is purity and fraternity. In the prophetic system, clashes that arise from superstitious, personal, profit seeking, and profiteering motives are hated¹ and a battle is being fought with it. The sphere is a sphere of sincerity, fraternity, brotherhood, and empathy.

The fifth criterion is moral and behavioral soundness. This purifies human beings and cleanses them from corruption and moral vices; it makes a moral and purified² person out of him;

﴿وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ﴾³

Purification is one of those main pillars; meaning that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was working on the education and the humanization of each and every person.

The sixth criterion is might and dignity. The prophetic system and society are not an underdog, dependent, follower in others' footsteps, and one that begs from this person and that; it is dignified, mighty, and decisive; when it has recognized its interest, it strives to secure it and advances its task.

The seventh criterion is work, movement, and constant progress. Cessation does not have a place in prophetic system;

1- *Mabqūd* (ba qa ḍa): to suffer a strong vengeful anger of someone.

2- *Muzakkā* (za ka ya) cleansed

3- Sūrat Āl-i 'Imrān [The Family of 'Imrān] (3): 164: "And to purify them, and to teach them the Book and wisdom."

there is constant movement, work, and progress. It does not happen that one time they say, “It is over, now let’s sit down and relax!” This does not exist. Of course the work brings enjoyment and well-being; it is not irksome and boring, or causing fatigue; it is a job that gives humans vitality, strength, and motivation.

Pillars of This Islamic System

The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) entered Medina to perfect this system and help it stand on its own feet and leave it as a sample in history forever so that anyone wherever in history—from his time until Doomsday—could bring someone like it into existence and create enthusiasm in hearts so that human beings can go toward such a society. Of course, creating such a system requires pillars of belief and humanity.

First, there must exist correct beliefs and thoughts for this system to be built on the bases of those thoughts. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had already explained these thoughts in the form of oneness of Allah, man’s esteem, and the rest of Islamic teachings during the thirteen-year Meccan period; then in Medina too, he continually and at any moment taught and made others understand these thoughts and high learnings, which were the pillars of this system, until his death.

Secondly, human bases and columns are necessary so that this structure can be placed upon their shoulders because the Islamic system is not dependent on one individual. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had created and had prepared many of these columns in Mecca. A number of them were the honorable companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—with different ranks that they had—who were the result and the product of the effort and endeavor of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) during that difficult

thirteen-year period in Mecca. A number of them such as Sa'd b. Ma'adh, Abi Ayyub, and others were also among those who had emerged in Yathrib (Medina) before the migration of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) along with the message of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Then when the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) came he started the fostering of human beings from the moment of [his] arrival and day by day capable managers, great, brave, forgiving, believing, strong, and knowledgeable men entered Medina as fortified columns of this lofty and elevated structure.

The Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) migration to Medina—which was named Yathrib before the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) entrance to this city and after his holiness' coming it was named Madinat al-Nabi (the city of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)), was like a sweet spring breeze that spread throughout the atmosphere of this city and everyone felt as if it was like a relief of difficulties has come about. Thus, people's hearts became aware and woke up when they heard that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has entered Qubā. Qubā is close to Medina and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) stayed there for fifteen days. The passion to see him increased in the hearts of the people day by day. Some people would go to Qubā to visit the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and would return (to their cities); some were also waiting in Medina for him to come. Then when he entered Medina, this eagerness and this pleasant and gentle breeze turned into a storm in hearts of the people and changed these hearts. Suddenly they felt that their beliefs and emotions and tribal affiliation and prejudices, had disappeared from the face and behavior and the words of this man and they have become acquainted with a new gateway to the truths of the world of creation and moral knowledge. It was this very storm that created a revolution in their hearts first; then it spread all around Medina. Then it conquered

the natural fortress of Mecca and finally found its way to far routes and advanced to depths of two empires and great nations of that day; and wherever it went it shook the hearts and created a revolution within humans. The Muslims of early Islam conquered Iran and Rome with the power of faith. As soon as these nations that had been invaded would see them, faith would be created in their hearts. The sword was for the purpose of getting rid of barriers and those who were the ring leaders of wealth and the powerful; otherwise the mass of the people, everywhere, had perceived that same storm and the two great empires—namely Rome and Iran—had profoundly become a part of the Islamic system and country. All of these took forty years to happen; ten years during the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), and thirty years after his demise.

As soon as the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) entered Medina, he began his work. Among the wonders of the life of his holiness is that during these ten years, he did not waste even one moment. It had not been observed that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had not subsisted from casting the light of spirituality, guidance, teaching, and training. His being awake, his sleep, his mosque, his house, his waging wars, his going to alleys and markets, his family interaction and his existence—wherever he was—was a lesson. What a blessing there is in such a life! Somebody who subjected all of history to his thoughts and influenced it—which I have said many times, many of the concepts such as the connotation of equity, brotherhood, justice, and democracy, that became sacred for humanity in centuries thereafter were all under the influence of his teaching; such things did not exist in the teachings of other religions or at least had not emerged on the scene—he had only done ten years of governmental, political, and collective work. What a blessed life! From the

first instant of his entrance he had specified his position.

Social Behaviour of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)

The camel on which the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was mounted entered the city of Yathrib (Medina) and people surrounded it. In that time the city of Medina was divided into neighborhoods; each neighborhood had houses for itself, it had alleys and fences and commerce for itself and belonged to a certain tribe; some tribes were affiliated to “Aws” and some others to “Khazraj”. When the camel of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) entered the city of Yathrib and when it reached each of the fortresses, the elders would come out and would stop (and say), “O’ Messenger of Allah! Come here! Our house, life, wealth, and our comfort are at your disposal”. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “Please, open the way for this camel”;

«إِنَّهَا مَأْمُورَةٌ»

[It is commissioned]; it moves according to instruction; let him go. They opened the way for the camel until it reached the next neighborhood. Again the elders, nobility, old men, personalities, and young people stopped the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) camel: “O’ Messenger of Allah! Come down here; your home is here; whatever you want, we will place at your disposal; we are all at your service. He said, “Step aside; let the camel continue its way;

«إِنَّهَا مَأْمُورَةٌ»

[It is commissioned]. So the camel went from neighborhood to neighborhood until it reached the neighborhood of Banī al-Najjār—the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) mother was from this family.

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 19, p. 109.

The men of Banī al-Najjār were considered to be the uncles of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); thus they came forward and said, “O Messenger of Allah! We are your kin, everything we have will be at your disposal, come down at our house.” He said, “No,

«إِنَّهَا مَأْمُورَةٌ»

[It is commissioned]; step aside, Open the way.” The camel came to one of the neighborhoods of Medina that had the poorest residents and sat in a place. Everyone looked to see whose house it was. They saw that it is the Abī Ayyūb Anṣārī’s house; the poorest or one of the poorest people of Medina. He and his needy and poor family came and picked up the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) belongings and took them inside the house. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) also entered their house as a guest and refused the invitations of the lords and nobles and influential people and the owners of these tribes and the like; meaning that he [thereby] specified his social stance. It turned out that this person is not dependent on money and prestige and honor of the chief of a certain tribe and is not dependent upon a clan, kin, family, or brassy and charlatan people and the like and never will be. From the very hour and the first moment, he specified that which side of the group he was and which population he supported and for whom his existence would be beneficial. Everyone benefits from the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and his teachings, however that person who is more disadvantaged will inevitably get more share and his deprivation must be compensated.

There was an unused land in front of Abī Ayyūb Anṣārī’s house. His holiness asked, “Whose land is this?” They said, “It belongs to two orphans.” His holiness took money from his pouch and bought that land. Then he said, “We will build a

mosque on this land”; meaning a political, devotional, social, and governmental center; meaning a center for the assemblage of the people. Somewhere for gatherings was needed; thus they began to build the mosque. His holiness did not ask anyone for land for the mosque and did not ask for donation [of the land]; he bought it with his own money. Although those two children had no father or someone to defend them; but like a father and defender, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) fully observed their rights. When it was decided that the mosque would be built, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), himself was among the first persons or the first person to come, took the shovel in his hand and started to dig the foundation of the mosque; not as ceremonial deed, but rather he really started working and sweated. He worked in such a way that some of those who were sitting on the sideway, said, “Should we sit and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) work like this? So we will go and work.” Thus, they came and built the mosque in a short period of time. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—this sublime and powerful leader—showed that he did not claim any specific right for himself. If a job is supposed to be done he must have a share of it.

He then designed the strategies and policies to manage that system. When one looks and sees that this task has proceeded step by step, prudently, and consciously, one understands what thought and contemplation and precise calculation is behind this determination and strong and decisive decision that is not obviously possible except with Divine Revelation. Today also, those who want to pursue the circumstances of that ten-year period step by step, they cannot understand anything. If one wishes to calculate each event separately one will not comprehend anything. He must look and see what order these events have had and how all of these tasks have been done

diplomatically, consciously, and with correct calculation.

First is the creation of unity. All the people of Medina did not become Muslim; [but] the majority embraced Islam and a small number of people remained non-Muslims. In addition to these, three important tribes of Jews—the Banī Qaynuqā‘, the Banī al-Naḍīr and the Banī Qurayḍah—were settled in Medina; that is, they were living in their private fortresses that were almost attached to Medina. Their coming to Medina dated back to one or two hundred years earlier and why they had come, itself is a long and detailed story. When the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) entered Medina, these Jewish tribes had two or three characteristics. One was that the main wealth of Medina was the best farmlands, the best profitable businesses, and the most profitable industries—gold jewelries and things like these—were at their disposal. In times of need, most of the people of Medina would refer to them and would borrow money and would pay interest [usury]. This means that all were financially under the obligation of the Jews. Secondly, the Jews were culturally superior to the people of Medina. This was because they believed in a Holy Book and they were familiar with various knowledge; religious knowledge and matters that were quite far from the minds the half-wild people of Medina, thus they had intellectual dominance. In fact, if we speak in today’s language, the Jews were considered to be an intellectual class; thus, they would depreciate, humiliate, and ridicule other people living there. Of course, wherever they were in danger and found it necessary, they would also belittle themselves, yet they were naturally superior.

The third quality was that they had links with faraway places; that is they were not confined to the area of Medina. The Jews were a reality in Medina; therefore the Prophet (P.B.U.H.

& H.H.) had to take these Jews into account. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) created a general collective covenant. When his holiness entered Medina, without there being any contract, without wanting anything from the people and without having done any negotiations in this regard with the people, it was made clear that the leadership of this society belonged to this man; that is the personality and the greatness of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) naturally made all submissive toward him; it turned out that he was the leader and all had to move on with his leadership and take action according to what he says. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) wrote a covenant that was accepted by all. This covenant was about social interaction, transactions, disputes, blood money, the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) relationships with dissidents, with the Jews, and with non-Muslims. All of these were written and recorded; it is also detailed, perhaps it has taken up two or three pages of big old history books.

The next very important step was to create fraternity. Aristocracy, superstitious prejudices and tribal pride and the separation of various strata of people from one another were the major calamities of the prejudiced and ignorant societies of that day of the Arabs. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) trampled them by creating fraternity. He created fraternity between such and such a chieftain of a tribe and such and such a person of the very low or middle class. He said, "You two people are brothers"; and they both quite willingly accepted this brotherhood. The aristocrats and the dignitaries embraced Islam alongside the slaves and those who had attained their freedom and in doing this all barriers to social unity were removed. Despite the fact that there were many people who had a good voice and were handsome, and there were numerous educated and professional personalities; when they wanted to choose

someone to become the muezzin (the one who call people to prayers), yet they chose Bilāl Ḥabashī from among all these people. Neither beauty, nor voice, not even family and parental prestige were considered as critical; only Islam and faith, striving in the way of Allah, and showing dedication in this path were the grounds (for this choice). See how, in practice, he determined these values. More than one would expect his words to affect the hearts of the people, his deeds, lifestyle, and method had affected the hearts of the people.

Safeguarding the Islamic System

For this task to take effect, it had three stages: The first phase was to lay the groundwork of the system, which was accomplished with these deeds. The second phase was safeguarding this system. If all of those in power recognize and sense danger from a living system which is growing and developing they will inevitably consider it to be the enemy. If the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is not able to consciously safeguard this auspicious naturally born thing against its enemies, this system will be destroyed and all of his accomplishments will have been in vain; thus it must be safeguarded. The third stage includes the completion and construction of the structure. The laying of groundwork is not enough; the laying of groundwork is the first step. These three tasks are done parallel to one another. The laying of groundwork is first and foremost; yet in this very laying of groundwork enemies have been taken into consideration as well and after this, safeguarding will continue. In this same laying of groundwork attention has also been paid to the building of personalities and the foundations of society and it will be continued after that, as well.

The Enemies Threaten the Islamic System

The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) looks and sees that five main enemies threaten this newly born society. An enemy may be small and insignificant; but, at the same time one must not be negligent of him. Some time it might create a great danger. Which one is that? The half-wild tribes around Medina. There are half-wild tribes existing at a distance of 90 ,60 or 120 kilometers from Medina whose lives included war, bloodshed, looting, attacking each other, and grabbing each other's possession. If the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) wants to create a healthy and sure and calm social system, he must take them into account. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had thought about what to do with them. If there was a sign of good and guidance in any one of them, he would make a covenant with them; first he did not say that they must come and embrace Islam; no, there were also infidels and atheists; but they made a covenant with them so that they would not remonstrate. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) insisted quite a lot on his treaty and remained steadfast to it. I will explain it, as well. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) found a remedy for those who were wicked and unreliable, and went to them, himself. These expeditions¹ that you have heard of that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) sent fifty people to a certain tribe, he sent twenty persons to a certain tribe are relevant to these people; those whose temperament and nature can not be quieted, guided, or accept good and they cannot live without anything other than shedding blood and using power. Thus, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went to them and suppressed them and put them in their place.

1- *Sarira* (*sa ra ya*): An army with less than four hundred soldiers/ idiomatically it is opposite to the term *ghazwa* (battle) and it includes those wars that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not take part in directly.

The second enemy is Mecca, which is a centrality. It is true that, in Mecca, a government did not exist in its current meaning, but one aristocratic, proud, powerful, and influential group governed over Mecca collectively. There was discord between them, but they were complicit with each other against this newly born system. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) knew that they were the main cause of danger; and this also happened in practice. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) sensed that if he sits around until they come after him, surely they would find the chance (have the upper hand); thus, he went to them; albeit, he did not move toward Mecca. The route of their caravan would pass close to Medina; the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) began his attacks on them, the most important of which was the Battle of Badr as the most important battle of the early periods. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) began the attack; and they also came to fight against his holiness (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) with bias, insistence, and obstinacy.

05/18/2001

According to the promise of Allah Almighty, the Muslims were informed that they would be victorious over a group of infidels and this was in the second year of Hijra. A caravan carrying articles of merchandise and the property of the Quraysh was coming from Shām to Medina so as to go past Medina to reach Mecca. When the threat of the heroes and the Arab fighters and the Muslims became clear for the infidels of the Quraysh, they dispatched armed forces toward Medina to defend their wealth. Muslims were more willing to stop the caravan that was carrying wealth and commodities that did not have well-prepared defenders. But, the command of Allah was to confront the combatants of the unbelieving Quraysh:

﴿وَإِذْ يَعِدُّكُمْ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ

الشُّوْكَةُ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ^١

The Muslims knew that they would be victorious in this skirmish, but they did not know that their victory was over the armed forces of the Quraysh; they imagined that their victory was over the carriers of the caravan who had returned from Shām. But the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) changed their route, took them to fight against the combatants; the caravan left, but the Muslims got engaged in battle against the unbelievers in a place called Badr. Why had Allah Almighty changed the route of the Muslims from confronting the caravan to a battle against the armed forces? The reason was that the Muslims had seen the near future and the Divine will and ordinance were all in the chasing of one distant goal.

﴿وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ﴾^٢

Allah wants the truth to become well-matured on the global scene,

﴿لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ﴾^٣

He wants falsehood that must be erased and its nature is perishable, to be eradicated. Isn't Islam supposed to eradicate all the evil and tyrannical powers and kingships? Isn't the Muslim nation supposed to become witness?

﴿لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ﴾^٤

1- Sūrat al-Anfāl [The Spoils] (8): 7: "When Allah promised you [victory over] one of the two companies, [saying], 'It is for you,' you were eager that it should be the one that was unarmed."

2- Sūrat al-Anfāl [The Spoils] (8): 7: "But Allah desires to confirm the truth with His words."

3- Sūrat al-Anfāl [The Spoils] (8): 8: "So that He may confirm the truth and bring falsehood to naught, though the guilty should be averse."

4- Sūrat al-Baqara [The Cow] (2): 143: "That you may be witnesses to the people."

Isn't the flag of Islam supposed to fly over the peaks of humanity and humankind? So, when, how, and in what way?

Muslims of that day thought to themselves that if we confiscate this wealthy caravan and procure some wealth, this young newly established Islam will become strong. They were thinking correctly, but a more sublime and a more valuable thought is another thought. A better idea is that today we, the Muslims around the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), have reached such an extent that we are able to penetrate our ideas and our path to poor, deprived societies and within those worlds of evil and darkness. This pool (of Islam) has so much water within it that is able to flow and reach these seedlings and trees, and dry and arid lands. This idea is more sublime. If Islam is supposed to obtain its real victory and if the awe-inspiring wheel of Islam is supposed to be sent to predominantly poor regions and if the palaces of oppression are supposed to be destroyed one after the other, this must begin from somewhere. The devoted and sincere Muslim of early Islam does not know where it must begin from; Allah teaches him, Allah makes it happen for him, he who has arisen to confiscate the property of the Quraysh, Allah pulls him into an unwanted war so that, even though there is a lack of military equipment, he pushes the enemy back and in one day with firm faith opens the way for advancement and infiltration, opens the way for the flowing of Islamic thought; he opens the way for the reinforcement of Allah's power to make the enemy understand that Islam does exist and they have to take it seriously.

﴿لِيُحَقِّقَ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ﴾

[So that He may confirm the truth and bring falsehood

to naught]; O' Muslims! We have inadvertently placed you against a massive army of the enemy to show them your force and flaunt the Divine power to them.

10/03/1980

After Divine victory and triumph in the Battle of Badr was granted to the Muslim forces by the mercy and grace of Allah and upon the efforts of the Muslims, the enemy, who would not desist from its enmity, prepared for the Battle of Uḥud. Because of their unity and concord in the early part of the Battle of Uḥud, the Muslims defeated the enemy's ranks once again. But after they had achieved an early victory, those fifty people who were commissioned to protect the mountain cliff from the access of the enemy, abandoned their mission and went to the area where the spoils were to be collected so that they would not fall behind in collecting the spoils of this war and joined them at that gathering scene of those negligent Muslims. Only ten of those who were assigned to protect the mountain cliff remained there and fulfilled their duty; but the enemy found an opportunity—after circling the mountain and the split and vent which did not have enough guards—to attack the Muslims from behind. This attack proved costly for Muslims; Islam did not lose this battle, but firstly, the victory of Islam was attained later on; secondly, the soul of the brave and dear commanders (of the army) such as Ḥamza, Sayyid al-Shuhadā (the master of the martyrs), were sacrificed in the way of Islam. Allah Almighty invites Muslims to learn a lesson and to reflect, saying, “We have fulfilled our promise; we told you will be victorious over the enemy and you were, but after these three attributes and these three qualities appeared in you, you were struck by the blow. These three qualities are: firstly,

﴿تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ﴾

[You disputed about the matter] You were at odds with each other about the matter, you disconcerted the oneness of your words and your ranks; secondly,

﴿فَشَلْتُمْ﴾

[You lost courage,]; you became weak, you no longer had that passion and enthusiasm and readiness for service or being in the service of Islam and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) in the beginning. Thirdly,

﴿عَصَيْتُمْ﴾

[You disobeyed], you evaded your duty and refused to obey the orders of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the leader and those who were responsible for the administration of your affairs. From the time that these three traits appeared in you, the enemy found an opportunity to strike you from behind and make dearest people in Islam roll in their blood, be martyred and gain a position of honor and caused the Muslim world to incur the great loss of such a personality.

05/09/1980

The last war by which they came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was the Battle of the Trench (Al-Khandaq), which was one of those very important wars. They gathered all of their troops and also got assistance from others and said, “We will go and massacre the Prophet and two hundred, three hundred, five hundred of his close companions; we will also plunder Medina and we will return relieved; no trace will remain of them.

Before they arrived in Medina, the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had been informed of what was going on and dug the famous trench. One side of the Medina was penetrable, so they dug a trench approximately forty meters in width. It was the month of Ramadan. According to some narrations, the weather was very cold; there had been no rainfall that year, either and people did not have any income; so there were many problems. Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) worked harder than all. In digging the trench, whenever he saw that someone was exhausted or was stuck or could not go forward, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) would take his pick and would begin to work; meaning that he was not there only to give order; he was present in the middle of that crowd in person. The infidels came before the trench but they saw that they could not penetrate it; so defeated, disgraced, disappointed, and frustrated they were forced to turn back. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “It’s over; this is the last attack of the Quraysh of Mecca against us. From now on it is our turn, we will go to Mecca to (confront) them.”

The next year, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “We want to come for the ‘Umrah (the Lesser Hajj) pilgrimage”. The treaty of Hudaibiyah—which is one of those meaningful and significant incidents—took place at this time. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) moved toward Mecca with the intention of performing ‘Umrah pilgrimage. They saw that in the month of *Muḥarram*—which is not the month of war and they were also revering the month of *Muḥarram*—the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was coming toward Mecca. What should they do? Should they leave the way open and let him enter? What would they do with this success and how could they stand against him? Do they go to fight with him during the month of *Muḥarram*? How should they fight? Finally, they made a decision and said,

“We will go and prevent them from coming to Mecca; and if we find an excuse, we will massacre them.” The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), with the most excellent policy, did something that they had to sit down and sign an agreement with him, so that he would return, but come back the following year and perform ‘Umrah and also leave the scene open across the whole region for the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) propagation. Its name is ‘peace’; but Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur’an:

﴿إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا﴾

[Indeed We have inaugurated for you a clear victory.] We created a clear victory for you. If people refer to the correct and solid historical references, they will see how odd the incident of Ḥudaybiyah is. The following year, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went to Mecca for the ‘Umrah and in spite of them, the glory of his holiness increased day by day. The next year—that is the eighth year—when the infidels breached the agreement, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went on to conquer Mecca, which was a great victory suggesting his holinesses mastery and effort. Therefore, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) confronted this enemy both prudently and powerfully, with patience, without hastiness, and even without retreating one step, advancing day by day and moment by moment.

The third enemy was the Jews; that is, the uncertain foreigners who were ready to temporarily live in Medina with the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), but they would not stop mischief, disruption, and destruction. If you can look (at the Holy Qur’an) you will see that an important part of the Sūrat al-Baqara (The Cow) and some of the other chapters of the Holy Qur’an are related to the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) treatment and cultural struggle with the

1- Sūrat al-Fath [Victory] (48): 1.

Jews. As we said these were cultural; they had knowledge; they had a great affect on the people with weak faith; they conspired; they made them lose hope and they caused people to attack one another. They were an organized enemy. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was tolerant with these Jews as much as he could, but later when he saw that they will not accept tolerance, he punished them. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not go after them without prior notice and unwarranted; each of these three tribes did something and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) punished them according to that deed. Firstly, there was Banī Qaynuqā' who betrayed the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went after them and said, "You must leave this place"; he caused them to migrate and expelled them from that region and all their properties and belongings were left behind for the Muslims. The second group was Banī Naḍīr. They also betrayed him—and the story of their betrayal is important—so the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) told them, "Take a few of your belongings and go"; they were also forced to leave and did so. The third group, Banī Qurayḍah to whom the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) gave respite and permission to stay; he did not throw them out; he made a pact with them not to let the enemy enter Medina from their neighborhood in the Battle of the Trench; but they showed unmanliness and made a pact with the enemy in order to attack the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) alongside them. That is, not only were they not faithful to the agreement that they had made with the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); rather, while the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had dug one side of the trench—which could be penetrated—and their neighborhoods were on the other side that must prevent the enemy from coming there, they left to parley and hold discourses with the enemy so that the enemy and they—jointly—enter Medina from there and stab the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) in the back (to betray him).

The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) found out about the plot in the middle of these (betrayers) conspiracy. The siege of Medina lasted nearly a month; it was in the middle of this month that they had committed this treason. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was informed that they had made such a decision. With a very clever strategy, he did something so that there would be a breakage between these (betrayers) and the Quraysh—which is recorded in history—he did something that these (traitors) and the Quraysh lost trust in each other. One of Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) very beautiful military-political tricks was carried out here; that is, that the traitors' war was temporarily stopped so that they would not be able to do any harm. After the Quraysh and their allies were defeated and left the ditch and went toward Mecca, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) returned to Medina. The same day that he returned, he performed the noon prayer and said that they would perform the evening prayer in front of the Banī Qurayḍah fortress, saying, "Let's move on and go there"; meaning that he did not linger even one night; he left and besieged them. There was a siege and fighting between them for twenty-five days; then the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) killed all of these traitor's combatants, because their treason was greater and they were not amendable. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) treated them in this way; meaning the hostility of the Jews—was mainly on the issue of Banī Qurayḍah, previously in Banī Naḍīr and then on the issue of Jews of Khaybar—in this way he removed the issue from the Muslims with prudence and power and follow-up and high humane morality. In none of these cases, did the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) breach the covenant; even the enemies of Islam agree that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not breach the covenant; it was them who breached the covenant.

The fourth enemy was the hypocrites. The hypocrites were among the people; those who had expressed their faith verbally, but inwardly did not believe; they were mean, obstinate, niggardly, and ready to collaborate with the enemy, yet disorganized; that was their difference with the Jewish. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) treated the enemy who is ready and waiting for an attack organized and ready to strike, like he treated with the Jews and he does not grant them respite; but he tolerates the enemy who is not organized, is obstinate, has animosities and individual malice, and lacks faith. ‘Abdullāh b. Ubayy was one of the most hostile enemies of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). This person was alive almost until the end of the life of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); but the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) never treated him badly. While they all knew he was a hypocrite; but they pretended concordance with him; he treated him like the rest of the Muslims, he gave him his share from the treasury house, he made sure he was safe, he was respectful to him, even though they were doing all this malevolence and malice, which again there is a section in Sūrat al-Baqara about these very hypocrites. When some of these hypocrites took organized actions, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went after them. In the incident of the Ḍirār Mosque, these hypocrites established a center and began to communicate with those who were outside the Islamic system—that is to say, with people who were in the Roman region, like Abū ‘Āmir, the monk,—and made preparations to launch a military campaign against the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) from Rome. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went after them from here and tore down and burned the mosque that they had built. He said, “This mosque is not a mosque; this is a place of conspiracy against the mosque and against the name of Allah and against the people”. Or where one group from among these very hypocrites, revealed their hypocrisy

and left Medina and formed an army; the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) struggled with these (hypocrites) and said, “If they come close, we will go after them and fight them,” although the hypocrites were inside Medina and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had nothing to do with them. Therefore he dealt with the third group with an organized decisiveness; however, he treated the fourth group decisively along with leniency; because these were not organized, and theirs was an individual danger. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) would often make them feel ashamed with his behavior.

The fifth enemy included the enemy that existed inside each of the Muslim and pious individuals. This is the most dangerous of all enemies. This enemy is also inside us; carnal desires, selfishness, and the desire for deviations, the desire for human missteps, and misguidedness, the grounds for which is provided by the human being himself. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) also struggled with this enemy severely; however, the struggle against this enemy is not with the sword but through training, purification, education, and warning the people. So when people with all that trouble returned from the war, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “You have returned from the minor *jihād*, now it is the time for the major *jihād*”. “What! Messenger of Allah! What is the major *jihād*? We had accomplished this *jihād* of this magnitude and with this inconvenience; does a greater *jihād* than this exist? He said, “Yes, the *jihād* against your own carnal self.”¹ If the Qur’an says:

﴿الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ﴾

1- *Wasā'il Al-Shī'a*, vol. 11, p. 122;

«مَرَحَبًا يَقُومُ قَضَا الْجِهَادِ الْأَصْغَرَ وَ يَتِي عَلَيْهِمُ الْجِهَادُ الْأَكْبَرُ، فَتَقِيلُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا الْجِهَادُ الْأَكْبَرُ؟ قَالَ: جِهَادُ النَّفْسِ.»

2- Sūrat al-Tawba [Repentance] (9): 125.

[As for those in whose heart is a sickness], these are not hypocrites, of course a number of the hypocrites are also among “those in whose heart is a sickness”, but any person who is among those in whose heart is a sickness—that is, there is a disease in their heart—is not among the hypocrites; sometime they are believers, but inside their heart there is a disease. What does this “sickness” mean? It means weaknesses of morality and character, sensuality, and desire for different types of selfishness; which, if you do not stop and you do not struggle against them, they will take your faith away from you and will make you hollow from within. When it takes your faith from you, your heart will be without faith but your outer appearance (will show) you have faith; at that time, the name of such a person is a hypocrite.

If, Allah forbid, your heart and mine become void of faith whilst our appearance is one that shows we have faith, [and if] we lose our doctrinal and ideological fidelities and attachments, but our tongue continues to say the same words of faith that it used to say previously, this would be hypocrisy; this is also dangerous. The Holy Qur’an says:

﴿ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاؤُا السُّوْاىَ اُنْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللّٰهِ وَكَانُوا بِهَا
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ﴾

[Then the fate of those who committed misdeeds was that they denied the signs of Allah and they used to deride them]; those who have done evil deeds, will be allotted the worst. What is that ‘worst’? (The worst is) the denial of Divine signs. In another verse it says: “Those who do not fulfil this great responsibility—giving in the way of Allah—,

1- Sūrat al-Rūm [The Byzantines] (30): 10.

﴿فَاعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا
كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ﴾

[So He caused hypocrisy to ensue in their hearts until the day they will encounter Him, because of their going back on what they had promised Allah and because of the lies they used to tell]; because they broke their promise to Allah, hypocrisy was created in their hearts. This is the great danger for the Muslim society; anywhere in the history you see that the Muslim community has become deviated, it has deviated in this very respect. It is possible that the outer enemy comes, suppresses, defeats, puts one to flight, but it can not destroy. Eventually, faith remains and in a place it lifts up the head and thrives. But when this army of the inner enemy attacks man and makes the inside of man void and empty, he will deviate from his path. Wherever there is deviation, its source is this. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) also struggled with this enemy.

In his behavior, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) acted prudently and was quick in action. He was wise in his behavior. He did not let time pass on idly in any matter. He was a person of frugality and cleanliness and there was no weak point in his blessed being. He was innocent and pure; this was, in itself, the most important factor in his making an impact (on others). Making an impact through action is much enveloping and deeper than the impact with the tongue. He was decisive and forthright. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) never spoke in an equivocal manner. Of course, when he faced the enemy, he took precise political action and confused the enemy into making mistakes. On frequent occasions, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has surprised the enemy, whether militarily or politically, but he always spoke

1- Sūrat al-Tawbah [Repentance] (9):77.

explicitly, clearly, and transparently to the believers and people and did not make a political pushball out of his actions and showed the flexibility when it was necessary such as in the case of ‘Abdullāh b. Ubayy, which has a detailed story. He never broke his covenant with the people and the groups whom he had made the covenant with—even with his enemies, even with the infidels of Mecca. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not violate his covenant with them; they violated it, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) gave a firm response. He never breached his contract with anyone; so, everyone knew that when he signed the contract with this person, he could be trusted.

On the other hand, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not lose his humility and made his relationship with Allah stronger every day. In the middle of the battlefield, at the same time when he organized his forces; he would encourage and urge them, he would take up arms and decisively commanded his troops or else, he would teach them what to do. He would kneel down and raise his hands to the Almighty Allah and would begin crying in front of people and shedding tears and talking with Allah, “Our Lord! Help us; Lord! Support us, Lord! Repel Your enemies Yourself!” Neither did his prayer cause him not to use his energy, nor did utilizing this energy would cause him to become unaware of his resorting to, and the supplication of, and relationship with Allah; he paid attention to both. He never become doubtful or frightened before the obstinate enemy. Amīr al-Mu’minīn (P.B.U.H.)—who is the symbol of courage—says, “Whenever the conditions of battles became difficult—or as we say nowadays, when we fell short—we would rely on the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Whenever somebody felt weak in difficult places, he would take refuge in the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).” He ruled for ten years; but if we want to assign

the work that was accomplished in this ten-year period to a very active complex to do, it would not be able to accomplish all the work, efforts, and services that he accomplished even in one hundred years. If we compare the things that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) accomplished to our accomplishments today, then we will come to understand what the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has done. Managing that state, and establishing that society and developing such an exemplar are one of the miracles of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).

People lived with him ten years, day and night; they went to his home and he came to their houses, they were together in the mosque, they walked on the road together, they traveled together, they starved together, they rejoiced together. The atmosphere of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) house was joyful. He joked with the people; he held competitions and participated in them himself. Those people who had lived with the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) for ten years, their love of and their belief in their hearts for him deepened day by day. In the conquest of Mecca, when Abū Sufyān with the support of 'Abbās—the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) uncle—secretly came to his holinesses' camp in order to seek safety, he saw that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was performing ablution in the morning and the people around him had gathered in order to catch the droplets of water that were dripping from his face and hands from one another! He said, "I have seen Kasra and Kaiser—these great and mighty kings of the world—but I have never seen such might [‘izzat glory, honor] in them. Yes, spiritual might is real might;

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

1- Sūrat al-Munāfiqūn [The Hypocrites] (63): 8: "Yet all might belongs to Allah and His Apostle, and the faithful."

If believers go that way, they will have esteem.

05/18/2001

Stabilization of the Islamic State

The event of Ghadīr Khum is a very important and decisive event in the history of Islam. This event can be looked at from two viewpoints and two dimensions. One dimension is especially for the Shi'ites and one dimension belongs to all Islamic sects. Given the second aspect of this event, this spirit and this feeling must be created in all Muslims of the world that Eid al-Ghadīr, which is a reminder of this great event, does not belong only to Shi'ites.

As was said, the first dimension is especially for the Shi'ites, because in that event Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) has been appointed to the Caliphate through the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), and on that same day, and in that same event there were those who asked the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), "Has this announcement been made by you or by Allah?" He replied,

«مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ»

meaning that it is Allah's command and it is from me as well. The Shi'ites celebrate this event from this viewpoint that the Shi'ites' belief—that is, the immediate Caliphate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.)—more than all reasons, relies on this event. Of course, discussion concerning the deduction and reasoning for this event has continued in many numerous books throughout the history of Islam, from the first day until today, and I do not intend to add anything to this topic that

1- "From Allah and His Messenger". (*Al-Ihtijāj 'ala Ahl al-Lijāh*, al-Ṭabrisī, vol. 1, p. 82.)

thousands of tongues have talked about and thousands of pens have written about.

But the second dimension of the event, which is not less important than this dimension, is common between the Shi'ites and the Sunnis; which, I will explain a little more.

The fact of the matter is that in 10 A.H. the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went on the Hajj pilgrimage with a group of Muslims from Medina and from other parts of the Arabian Peninsula who had become Muslim. During this journey the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) made full and noteworthy use of this pilgrimage to the House of Allah to explain Islamic concepts, whether political, military, moral, or doctrinal. Two speeches from the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) have been quoted that he made in Minā, where one, apparently is delivered on the tenth day or around that same tenth day and one is delivered at the end of the days of *Tashrīq*¹ of the Islamic calendar which has been asserted and it appears that this included two speeches and not one. In these speeches, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has roughly stated all the major topics, which are primarily political issues that Muslims should pay profound attention to. One understands quite well that these people in the Muslim world today who consider political issues to be apart from the Hajj pilgrimage and assume that at the Hajj one must only be engaged in worship in the common meaning of the word and that any political activity is considered to be outside the stature of the pilgrimage; how distant and alienated they have become from the history of

1- (*sha ra qa*): To make clear; paying attention to the East; it is a title that refers to the days of the eleventh to the thirteenth month of Dhul Hijjah in the Qur'an it is named "appointed days". Sūrat al-Baqara [The Cow] (2): 203.

Islam and the tradition (*Sunna*) of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)!

The matters at hand that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) stated in these speeches, that have been quoted in typical Shi'ite and Sunni books, are a compendium of these matters that include: Firstly, he talks about holy struggle and brings up the issue of holy struggle against the polytheists and the infidels and he announces that this holy struggle will continue until the word **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ** (There is no god but Allah) becomes pandemic. Concerning Islamic unity the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has noted some matters and has asserted that the Muslims should not get involved in a civil war and insisted upon Muslim unity and Muslim cohesion. Concerning the values of ignorance, stating explicitly he asserted that according to Islam these values are considered insignificant and naught and are not values.

«أَلَا وَكُلُّ مَأْتِرَةٍ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ تَحْتَ قَدَمَيْ هَاتَيْنِ»

[Any value and dignity that was considered a value in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance, I trample under my feet at this moment!]; he completely negated the values of the pre-Islamic period of ignorance. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) rejected and abrogated those financial disputes between Muslims left behind from the pre-Islamic period; including, for example, any cases wherein someone had lent money to someone, and would have demanded the money and the interest and the usury of the money they owed.

«أَلَا وَإِنَّ كُلَّ رَبٍّ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَهُوَ تَحْتَ قَدَمَيْ هَاتَيْنِ»

1- *Sirat al-Nabawīyya*, vol. 2, p. 412.

[And the first monetary interest (usury) that I will remove is the usurious debts of my uncle ‘Abbās—who used to give loans and he was owed money from many people during the pre-Islamic period of ignorance—he said, “I have removed and abrogated them”. He repeated the value of virtue as the highest value of Islam and he reiterated that no one has preference over no one else except by the blessing of piety and God-wariness. They raised the necessity for advising the Muslim leaders, namely the involvement in the political issues and the declaration of opinion to the rulers and its leaders and proclaimed it as a hypothesis that all Muslims are duty-bound express their benevolent comments to the Islamic statesmen.

The Guarantee of the Islamic System

The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) stated much of the political and social issues of the Islamic world in these speeches and he also mentioned the *Thaqalayn* tradition in the same speeches, and the *Thaqalayn* tradition is that he said, “Verily, I am leaving behind two precious things (*Thaqalayn*) among you, ﴿كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَ عِتْرَتِي﴾ the Book of Allah and my progeny (*‘itra*).” Then he placed his two index fingers next to each other and said, “Those two things are like these two; as two index fingers they are not different from each other.” Then he said, “They are not like these two”; he held up the index finger and his middle finger of one of his hands and he said, “I do not consider the Book of Allah and my progeny to be like these two; that of the index finger and the middle finger one is taller than the other; rather they are like two index fingers, neither of which is preferred to the other.¹ Then, he raised the issue

1- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 415:

﴿إِنِّي قَدْ تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَ عِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي فَإِنَّ اللَّطِيفَ الْخَبِيرَ قَدْ عَاهَدَ إِلَيَّ أَنْهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عِلْيَةَ الْحَوْضِ كَهَاتَيْنِ وَ جَمَعَ بَيْنَ مُسَبِّحَتَيْهِ وَ لَا أَقُولُ كَهَاتَيْنِ وَ جَمَعَ بَيْنَ الْمُسَبِّحَةِ

of *'itra*. After the Hajj rituals were performed he immediately set off toward Medina. On the way, at a three-way junction, where the caravans of Medina and caravans of Yemen should separate, his holiness (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) stopped at a place named Ghadīr Khum, while the witnesses and those present narrate that the weather was so hot that if they had put meat on the ground it would have become grilled, in such a situation the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) goes and stands upon an elevated place until the people gradually gather together. When he sees that everyone has gathered together, then he announces the issue of *Wilāya* (guardianship),

«وَمَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ»

and takes the hand of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H) and holds it up so that everyone can see it. And in numerous traditions it is recorded that the armpits of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H) could be seen when they raised their hands for everyone to see. Following is a brief account of the accident.

That dimension that I have in mind—the Islamic international and inter-sectarian dimension that is not exclusive to the Shi'ites—is that if we suppose that in this declaration, which has definitely been made and this sentence has been stated with the tongue of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), if we suppose that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did not want to declare the immediate rulership of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.), at least he wanted the Muslims to establish and consolidate a profound

وَالْوَسْطَى فَنَسِيقَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى فَنَنسُكُوا بِهِمَا»

“Verily, I am leaving behind two precious things (*Thaqalayn*) among you: the Book of Allah and my progeny, my household (Ahl al-Bayt), for indeed, the two will never separate until they come back to me by the Pond (of al-Kawthar on the Day of Judgment).”

1- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 420, “Whoever I am the master of, 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) is also the master of.”

friendliness, bond, and relationship with Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) and his progeny in this statement. The reason the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) places his progeny beside the Holy Qur'an, both in his speech in *Minā* and in the Tradition of *Thaqalayn*—which apparently the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has issued the Tradition of *Thaqalayn* many times—and also in the Tradition of Ghadīr and in the event of Ghadīr—and places emphasis on Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) and his personality—the reason he establishes this relationship, among other things, is that for example, over time, he would firstly present to the people and all the future generations a complete example of a leading human being in Islam and a plausible and acceptable human being according to Islam. The complete example of a human being to be placed at the disposal of all human beings in the form of a personified and irreplaceable being with clear and unquestionable states, to say that Islamic training must move in this direction and the character of a Muslim person is the character, of which the ultimate and complete samples are these people. Human beings whose purity, knowledge, piety, honesty, submission to Allah, mastery of Islamic issues, courageous self-sacrifice for the realization of Islamic ideals, and self-sacrifice are apparent to all. He introduces Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) as a role model that people—whether the people of that time or the people of later generations—can establish a bond with him, and have a relationship with him. Now, granted that in practice he did not become a Caliph immediately after the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and he became his successor after twenty-five years, he finally became the Caliph of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), finally his position as an Imam was established, and finally all the Muslims accepted him as an individual who was the leader of the society. This feature, this bond, this relationship, all Muslims in regard to the personality that all the people widely

accept as the Caliph of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—however some say that he was the Caliph immediately after the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), some believe he was the Caliph after twenty-five years—this personality that all Muslims widely accept must be an everlasting role model, a complete sample of a Muslim human being. Thus, the bond between him and the Muslims must remain forever an intellectual, doctrinal, emotional, and practical relationship.

With this point of view, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) is no longer just for the Shi'ites; rather, he is for all Muslims, and it is not exclusive to Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.), rather all of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) descendants and the Shi'ite Imams (P.B.U.T.) who are the progeny of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.), because they are included among the *'itra* and from the viewpoint of Muslims, they must always remain a perfect exemplar of an Islamic human being. This is one point. Secondly, by determining the *'itra* alongside the Holy Qur'an and by announcing the necessity of the bond between the Muslims and the *'itra*, in reality the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) settled the issue of the distortions in the Qur'an and the deviation of the main concepts of the Qur'an. Since the systems of wealth and oppression distort Islamic concepts for their own interests, they misinterpret and misrepresent the Holy Qur'an, mislead the Muslims, deprive people from understanding the Islamic doctrine. That authority, that pivot, and that pole that must inform the people as to what the truth is, what concept and knowledge is true, and who could save the people from going astray, and people should listen to his words, he is the *'itra*. Thus, this is the very thing that is a necessity and a requirement today for the Islamic world. Today, all Muslims need to utilize the Islamic teachings that

come through the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); it makes no difference whether they believe in the immediate Imamate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) and the Imamate of his descendants or not. Of course, the Shi'ites consider the true belief about and decisive implication of this tradition as the immediate Caliphate and believe in it and are committed to it. Those who are not committed to this belief either—namely, our Sunni brothers—must not sever their intellectual, mental, doctrinal, and emotional relationship and bond with the descendents of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.). Hence, the issue of Ghadīr, by this second dimension, which is the dimension of the creation of the bond between 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) and the *'itra* of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) with Muslims from all walks of life, belongs to all Muslims.

08/14/1987

The Future of the Islamic System

The issue of Ghadīr is not a merely historical one; it is a sign of the universality of Islam. If the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), who had accomplished the task of turning a primitive society that was tainted with prejudices and bigotry into a progressive Islamic society with the great efforts that his holiness had invested and with the help of his loyal companions within a ten-year span, and if he had not thought of something for the years after these ten years and had not provided the Muslim nation with a plan, this task would have been unfinished. The residue of the prejudices of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance was so deep that it would perhaps need many long years to obliterate. Apparently, it was all good and well; the faith of the people was good. Of course, they were not at the same level, some embraced Islam at the time of the demise of the Prophet

(P.B.U.H. & H.H.), others had embraced Islam one year before the death of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), some had embraced Islam six months before and for some it had been two years since they had embraced Islam; the military power of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) along with the attractions of Islam had drawn these people to Islam. Not all of them were among the deeply faithful Muslims of the early period. In order to clean the residue of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance from the depths of this society and preserving the straight path of Islamic guidance ten years after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), a measure was needed to be taken. If this measure had not been taken, the task would be unfinished. That, in chapter Mā'ida it is said,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي﴾

it is asserting this same concept that this blessing—the blessing of Islam, the blessing of guidance, the blessing of showing the straight path to human society—would have been perfected when the roadmap had also been completed for after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); this is a natural affair. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) accomplished this task at Ghadīr; he appointed Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) who, in terms of character—whether a character of faith, or a revolutionary or military character, whether of behavioral character with people of different classes—was a distinctive and unique personality and obliged the people to follow him.

This was not the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) idea, either; this was Divine guidance, it was a Divine command, it was a Divine nomination; like the rest of the holy Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) speeches and guidance that were all Divine inspirations. This

1-Sūrat al-Mā'ida [The Table] (5): 3: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you."

was the explicit command of the Lord to the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) also acted on this command. This was the issue of Ghadīr; that is, it represents the Muslim society and a look into the future and that which is a precondition in guidance and leadership of the Islamic society. What is that? It is those things that the characters of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) is their manifestation; namely piety, devotion, absolute adherence to religion, not caring for any deity other than Allah and other than the way of Allah, recklessly moving in the way of Allah, enjoyment of knowledge, enjoyment of wisdom and prudence, enjoyment of resoluteness and determination. This is a real action and is at the same time symbolic. Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) was appointed with these same characteristics; albeit, this symbol of leadership of the Islamic nation all through the life span of Islam—whatever may happen—is this very action; namely, the symbol of the Islamic rule and leadership in the span of time is this same truth that was realized in the Divine selection of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.). Ghadīr is one such truth.

01/08/2007



Chapter Two: Imamate

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

Imamate in the Shi'ite School of Thought

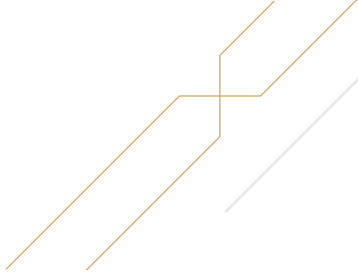
Imamate in Islam

Imamate means the very pinnacle of the optimum reality required for administering the society in contrast to various types of society administrations that originate from human weaknesses, lust, haughtiness, and acquisitiveness. Islam provides man with the procedure and prescription of Imamate; that is to say, a human being should have a heart replete and overflowed with the grace of Divine guidance, know and understand religious knowledge—that is, to realize the right path—have the power in [pursuing] practical actions—“O John! Take hold of the Book with might”¹—and his soul, wishes, and personal life should be of no importance to him; however, other people’s life and happiness should be of utter importance to him, like that which Amīr al-Mu’minīn (P.B.U.H.) practically showed in the period of less than five years of his *ḥukūma*. You see that the short period of less than five years of Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s (P.B.U.H.) *ḥukūma* is still shining on and remaining [radiant] throughout centuries as a paradigm, a role model, and that which the humanity will never forget. This is outcome of the lesson, meaning, and interpretation of Ghadīr.

(03/03/2002)

The term Imamate—which in principle means leadership—is more applied to a particular referent of the term in the Islamic culture, and that is leadership in social aspects; whether

1- The Holy Qur’an (19): 12 (Adopted from: *The Qur’an, with an English Paraphrase*, Trans. of Sayyid ‘Alī Qulī Qarā’ī, the Center for Translation of the Holy Qur’an, Qum, 2003)



intellectual or political. Wherever in the Qur'an that the derivatives of the term *Imāmat*—such as *Imām* and *A'imma*—are used, they concern this particular meaning, that is, leadership of the *umma*; [either] intellectual leadership, political leadership or both of them. After the demise of the prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and upon the Muslims' intellectual and political schism, which resulted in the division of the followers of Islam into several sects, [and] since the political leadership of the *umma* consisted of the main point of difference and the term *Imāmat* and *Imām* acquired an especial destiny, it was used as “political leadership” more than any other concept and the other meanings were gradually overshadowed by this meaning; so that, when in the second century A.H. theological schools of Islam were created one after another and various Islamic tendencies were formed as specific demarcated ideologies and schools, one of the significant issues of these school included Imamate, which meant political leadership. In this issue, the qualifications and features of the Imam—that is, the ruler and governor of the society—were usually talked about and each group expressed their own opinion and discourse in this regard.

In Shi'ism, which according to its followers is the most authentic intellectual trend of Islam, Imamate is taken as this same meaning and the theory of that school about the Imam is summarized as follows: the Imam and political leader of the Muslim community has to be appointed by Allah and introduced by the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); he should be the intellectual leader, the interpreter of the Qur'an, and should be aware of all the mysteries and intricacies of religion. He should also be immaculate and free from any defect and creational and dispositional shortcomings and should have been born through a pure and chaste lineage, and so on and so forth. And thus, Imamate, which in the convention of the Muslims of the first and second centuries [A.H.] was a political leader, in the con-

vention particular to the Shi'ites, included the concept of an intellectual and moral leader besides being a political leader, as well.

When the Shi'ites recognized someone as an Imam, they would expect of him not only the administration of the social affairs but also the intellectual guidance, religious education, and moral purification, too. If, however, he was not able to fulfill these duties, they would not know him as the "Rightful Imam" and would not be content with good political management, political power-wielding, chivalry, conquests—which in others' view are regarded as sufficient standards.

According to the Shi'ite's impression of the concept of Imamate, the Imam of a community is the very dominating authority who justifies and guides the collective movement and the individual character of that community's people and is at the same time both a teacher of religion and ethics and a commander of their life and efforts. With this definition, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is also an Imam; that is because he holds the intellectual and political leadership of the community that he himself has founded. After the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the community needs an Imam who can be his successor—Caliph—and can bear the burden of his responsibilities—including the political leadership. And the Shi'ites believe that this succession, as the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has asserted, belongs to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) and then to the Infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.) of that household. (For details and arguments, one should refer to the related books.)

It is worth mentioning that the intermingling of the three concepts, "political leadership", "religious education", and "spiritual purification" in the Caliphate and rule of Islam—as the Imamate and rule of Islam are regarded as possessing three aspects and dimensions; which is rightly stated by some of the

outstanding thinkers of this time—results from the fact that Islam has principally not separated these three aspects from one another and has been presented to man as a program [consisting] of these three aspects. Therefore, leadership of the umma is interpreted as the leadership in these three aspects; and it is for this very widespread meaning of Imamate that the Shi'ites believe that the Imam is to be appointed by Allah.

The result is that, contrary to the superficial view of those who have assumed "Imamate" to be something vis-a-vis "caliphate" and *ḥukūma* (rule) and have considered it to be simply a spiritual, mental, and intellectual position, in Shi'ite culture, Imam is the "leader of the *umma*"; both in worldly affairs, handling people's life, and the political and social administration of society (as head of state), and spiritual teaching and guidance, solving the intellectual problems, and elucidation of the ideology of Islam (as an ideologue).

This obvious point is so absent from the minds of most believers of Imamate that mentioning some examples of hundreds of the Qur'anic and *ḥadīth* evidences does not sound superfluous.

There is a detailed *ḥadīth* related from Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) in *Kitāb al-Ḥujja* of *Al-Kāfī* on the virtue and qualifications of Imamate and description of the Imam, consisting of meaningful and interesting features; some of which are: reins of religion, order of Muslims, soundness of this world, and honor of the believers, the status of the prophets, the heritage of the successors, the representation of Allah, the deputy to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). It says about the Imam: the increaser of the public wealth, executor and protector of Divine laws and limits, Allah's trustee among people, a luminous flame on lofty heights, a guide to the Allah's path, defender of Divine sanctum, [source of] anger for the hypocrites, demolisher of the foundations of unbelievers, conveyor of honor to

the righteous, proficient and deft in statesmanship, well-versed in politics, ready to obey Divine commands, ready to receive Allah's commands, well-wisher of servants of Allah, and safe-guard of Allah's religion.¹

In another narration from Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), it is asserted that, "All the virtues and all the responsibilities of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is possessed by 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) and other Imams (P.B.U.T.), too."²

In another tradition, the necessity of obeying the *awṣiyyā'* (the successors to the Prophet [P.B.U.H. & H.H.]) is reminded and then it is explained that the *awṣiyyā'* are those whom the Qur'an has referred to as *uli al-amr*³(those vested with authority).⁴

Hundreds of scattered narrations in different chapters of various books have evidently regarded the concept of Imam and Imamate in the Shi'ite culture as "statesmanship" and "administration of the affairs of the Muslim umma" and introduced the Imams (P.B.U.T.) as the true state authorities (holder of government), so that it does not leave room for any doubt for the

1- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 200. "Imamate is the reins of the religion, the social system of the Muslims. It is best for the world, and honor for the believers. Imamate is Islam's maturing root, and its towering branch. Through the Imam (P.B.U.H.), prayers are complete, *zakāt*, (legal alms) is paid, fasting is maintained, Hajj pilgrimage is performed, and *jihād* (holy struggle) is exercised, the wealth of the nation (*ḥaṣ*) and charities (*ṣadaqāt*) are increased, the laws are enforced and the frontiers and borders are protected and defended. The Imam declares as lawful what Allah has done so and prohibits what Allah has prohibited. He enforces the criminal laws (*ḥudūd*) of Allah, defends the religion of Allah, and calls to the Path of Allah with wisdom, good advice, and with the topmost strong evidence (*ḥujja*). The Imam is like the risen sun that beautifies the world with its light and is in the horizon above the harm of hands and eyes. The Imam is as the bright moon, the shining lamp, the brilliant light, and the guiding star in the depth of darkness, in the middle of the towns, in the wilderness, and in the depths of the seas..."

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 196, "Whatever virtues that were found in the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) were found in Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) also... I am held responsible for all such matters that he was held responsible... This is also true of all the Imams of guidance, one after the other."

3- *The Qur'an* (4): 59, ﴿O' you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority among you.﴾

4- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 189.

fair researcher that claim of Imamate by the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.), apart from the intellectual and spiritual status, is exactly a claim of the right to govern, as well; and their all-pervasive invitation to a politico-military struggle for taking over the *ḥukūma*.¹

If someone imagines that the nine and eight Imams (P.B.U.T.) from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) up to Imam ‘Askarī (P.B.U.H.) had been only dealing with religious rulings and religious knowledge and had not engaged in political struggle befitting their time, they have certainly not have sufficient deliberation on the life of these noble figures. As it is clearly implied from the conditions of those noble figures and the meaning of Imamate in Islam and the philosophy that the Shi‘ites maintain for Imamate, they would not accept other than this at all and it is not compatible, either. Even if we did not have a clear evidence for the struggle of the Imams (P.B.U.T.), we should have believed that we did not know, that we have not been informed, and those noble figures have indeed struggled. It is not plausible that we know the meaning of Imamate as it is common in the Islamic culture—and not only in the Shi‘ite culture—and believe in it and at the same time accept that the Imams (P.B.U.T.) have remained at home and stood by with folded arms and have merely been pleased that they had been explaining the ordinances of the Qur’an and Islamic knowledge and having had no political struggle; such a thing is not true at all. Of course, when we say that the Imams (P.B.U.T.) used to struggle, we should also know that struggle at any time is in a specific form. Sometime, struggle is carried out through cultural, scientific, and political work or organizing groups and forming organizations, and sometimes by blood-shedding, martial activities, and open combats; at any time struggle is in a [specific] way.

07/31/1987

1- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 96-97.

Some may express doubt that how the Imams (P.B.U.T.) fought for overtaking the *ḥukūma*, whereas they knew by their Divine knowledge that they would not take over the *ḥukūma*. Well, it is obvious that the life of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) showed that they could not take over the *ḥukūma* and establish the Islamic state and community as they desired and as it was their duty. But why did the Imams (P.B.U.T.) did so despite the fact that they knew this and were aware of it through Divine inspiration? In response to this idea, we should say that knowing that they would not reach their goal would not prevent them from doing their duty. Look at the life of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) knew that he would be defeated in the battle of Uḥud. He knew that those whom he had assigned at the hillock would not stay on and would come down the hill by greed for the spoils. The day when the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) went to Ṭā'if in order to guide the Bani Ṭhaqīf and took refuge in the people of Ṭā'if from the evil of the people of Mecca, he knew that the people of Ṭā'if would welcome him with stones. They stoned him so much that his leg got injured and bleeding and he was forced to leave. The Imams (P.B.U.T.) all knew this. Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn (P.B.U.H.) knew that he would be martyred on the twenty first of Ramadan; yet, a little while before the month of Ramadan, he set up a large camp outside Kūfa to go on fighting against Mu'āwīya. If his knowledge caused him not to act according to normal routine, why did he set up this camp? Why did he launch a military campaign? Why did he take the people outside Kūfa and keep them waiting? What was the use? That the Imams (P.B.U.T.) knew that they would not take over the *ḥukūma* should not have prevented them from doing their best. They should endeavor and struggle like the one who does not know and is not informed of what would happen; they should do all the things of a person who does not know what is going to happen.

04/12/1985

The Four Periods of the Imamate Trend

The Imamate trend (course of events) started since the first day after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—the month of Šafar, 11 A.H.—and continued through the Muslim community until the demise of Imam Ḥasan ‘Askarī (P.B.U.H.)—the month of Rabī‘ al-Awwal, 260 A.H. During this time, the Imamate went through nearly four periods and each period had its characteristics in terms of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) positioning against the dominant political powers.

The first trend is the period of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) silence or cooperation with these powers. The newly established and neonate Islamic community by no means have the power to stand the division and disagreement among the ranks. The least breach in the solid stature of this community can be a threat to its principle and foundation. Moreover, the deviation angle of reality from the truth is not so substantial that it would not be tolerable for someone like Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (P.B.U.H.)—who is himself the most compassionate and committed to the Islamic school and community—and perhaps it has been for these very reasons, which had been intuitively reflected in advance in the holy Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) insight, that he ordered his elect disciple to practice tolerance and patience before such events.

This period includes all the twenty five years between the demise of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—the year 11 A.H.—and the beginning of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn’s (P.B.U.H.) Caliphate—the year 35 A.H. In a letter to the Egyptians, his holiness (P.B.U.H.) explains his situation at the beginning of this intermission as follows,

«فَأَمَسَكْتُ يَدِي حَتَّى رَأَيْتُ رَاجِعَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ رَجَعَتْ عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ يَدْعُونَ
إِلَى مَحْقِ دِينِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ - فَخَشِيتُ إِنْ لَمْ أَنْصُرِ الْإِسْلَامَ
وَأَهْلَهُ أَنْ أَرَى فِيهِ تَلْمَازًا أَوْ هَدْمًا تَكُونُ الْمُصِيبَةُ بِهِ عَلَيَّ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ قَوْتِ

ولايتكم فنهضت في تلك الأحداث.»

[At first, I withdrew from all activities till I found the heretics had openly taken to heresy and schism and were trying to undermine and ruin the religion of Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). I felt afraid that if I did not stand up to help Islam and the Muslims it would be a worse calamity to me than my losing authority and power over you. Therefore, I stood up amidst the sweeping surge of innovations....]¹

The twenty-five-year life of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) in this period suggests his active intervention and the assistance and protection that he has compassionately provided for Islam and the Muslim community. The responses and guidelines of his holiness to the Caliphs of the time concerning the political, military, social, and other issues are quoted in *Nahj al-Balāgha* and other books of *Ḥadīth* and history, which is an indubitable witness to this procedure in the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) life.

The second period is the time for the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) rising to power. This period includes the forty-nine month Caliphate of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (P.B.U.H.) and the several months of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī’s (P.B.U.H.) Caliphate, which despite its brevity and the many annoyances and troubles that is inseparable from a revolutionary *ḥukūma*, were the most prominent years of the Islamic *ḥukūma*. Humane methods, absolute justice, and observance of various dimensions of Islam in social life along with decisiveness, frankness, and courage are recorded in this period more than ever in the history.

This period of the Imams’ (P.B.U.T.) life was a sample for *ḥukūma* and social life, two centuries after which the Shi‘ite Imams (P.B.U.T.) have constantly been called to it and endeavored in its way, and the Shi‘ites have remembered it as a cherished mem-

1- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, letter 62.

ory, felt pity for its loss, and condemned the latter regimes in comparison to it. At the same time, it has been an instructive lesson and experience that could show the state and condition of a revolutionary and one hundred percent Islamic *ḥukūma* among an uneducated or deviated people and from that day on impose long-term methods along with hard and uncompromising party trainings on the subsequent Imams (P.B.U.T.).

The third period is the twenty years between Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) peace treaty—the year 41 A.H.—and the event of Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) martyrdom—*Muḥarram* of the year 61 A.H. After the incidence of peace treaty, the Shi'ite's half-hidden task began and the planning that was targeted at attempting to restore the power back to household of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) began. As per a normal estimate, this planning was not much inaccessible and there was hope to fulfill it with the ending of the mischievous life of Mu'āwīya. Therefore, this period can be called “A short-term construction period attempting to create an Islamic state and *ḥukūma*.”¹

And finally, the fourth period is the time for pursuing and continuation of this same procedure in a long-term planning; in a time close to two centuries, with the victories and defeats in various stages, along with decisive victory in ideological work, intermingled with hundreds of tactics suiting the time and ornamented with thousands of manifestation of the sincerity, self-sacrifice, and representations of the magnificence of the typical human being in Islam.²

The most important notion that has not been properly taken into consideration in the life of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) is the element of “vigorous political struggle”. Since the beginning of the second half of the first century A.H., when the Islamic

1- I have discussed this issue in detail and with documents and evidences in several of my lectures. (Author)

2- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 16-19.

caliphate was mixed with monarchy and the Islamic Imamate turned into despotic royal rule, the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.) intensified their political struggle in a way proportionate to the conditions and circumstances. The greatest objective of this struggle was to establish an Islamic state and to set up a *ḥukūma* based on Imamate. Explanation and interpretation of religion from the specific viewpoint of the Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.) and the removal of deviations and misconceptions from the Islamic knowledge and religious rulings is also regarded as a significant objective of the Ahl al-Bayt's (P.B.U.T.) holy struggle (*jihād*). However, according to indispensable evidences, the Ahl al-Bayt's (P.B.U.T.) *jihād* was not limited to these objectives and its greatest objective was nothing but the "establishment of 'Alawite rule" and setting up an upright Islamic state. Most of the difficulties of the distressful and self-sacrificing life of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and their companions were for having this objective and the Imams (P.B.U.T.) were engaged in long-term preparation for this purpose since the era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and after the tragedy of *Āshūrā*.

In all the one-hundred-and-forty-year period between the tragedy of *Āshūrā* and the heir apparenancy of the Eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.), the movements affiliated to the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.)—that is, the Shi'ites—were always regarded as the largest and the most dangerous enemies of the caliphate. During this period, on many occasions the grounds were prepared and the Shi'ite struggles, which should be an "Alawite Movement", got close to great victories, but every time there were barriers created in the way to final victory and most of the time the greatest blow was struck from the invasion on the axis and the main center of this movement, that is, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) himself, and his incarceration or martyrdom; and when it was the turn for the next Imam, the strangulation, pressure, and restrictions were so much that the preparation of the ground

required another long period of time.

Amid the fierce storm of these incidents, the Imams (P.B.U.T.) cleverly and courageously led the Shi'ism like a small but deep, torrential, and persistent current through the labyrinth of the tortuous and dangerous passages. The Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphs were in no time able to destroy the trend of Imamate by destroying the Imam (P.B.U.H.); and this piercing dagger always remained driven in the flanks of the caliphate system and as a permanent threat, took away their peace of mind.

08/09/1984





*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The School of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)

The life of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), from various aspects and in various conditions, is an eternal lesson for all human generations. It is an eternal and unforgettable lesson, either in his individual practices, in personal life, in the niche of prayers, in his supplications, in his asceticism, in his rapture in remembrance of Allah, or in his struggles against carnal desires, Satan, and material motivations. The following sentences uttered by the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) still reverberate in atmosphere of universe and in the ambience of man's life, "O' manifestations of the world, attractive beauties and desires that tempt and entrap the strongest of men, go and tempt someone else".^{1,2} 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) is too great and strong for these things. Hence, each and every wakeful man finds unforgettable lessons in the life of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and his communion with Allah and spirituality.

Yet in another aspect, his holy struggle was for holding up the banner of righteousness and justice. When the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) shouldered the responsibility of prophethood, from the very first hour, he found a faithful, committed, and devoted striver on his side, who was in his early adolescence, that is, 'Alī (P.B.U.H.). The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not spare any effort until the last hours of the blissful life of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) in the way of struggle for establishing the Islamic system and safeguarding it. How much struggle he carried out, what dangers he plunged into and how rapt he was in

the way of struggle for establishing righteousness and administering justice! When no one dared to remain in the battlefield, he would stay. When no one dared to go to the battlefield, he would go. When difficulties, like heavy mountains, pressed the shoulders of the holy warriors, his stature remained firm and inspired hope in others. For him, the meaning of life was to utilize the God-given facilities, physical and spiritual power and whatever was at his disposal in the way of sublimation and preservation of the truth. Truth was revived through 'Alī's (P.B.U.H.) will, arm, and holy struggle.

If such concepts as truth, justice, humanity as well as those concepts which are valuable for the intelligent humans in the world today are alive and become stronger and well-established day by day, it is because of those holy struggles and devotions. Had not it been for people like 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.)—who are rare in the history of mankind—human values would not exist today, attractive titles would not have had any attraction for man, mankind would not have enjoyed any civilization, culture, aspiration, ideals and sublime objectives; and man would have turned into a savage, wild animal. Man is indebted to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and great people like him for the preservation of sublime ideas. Those holy struggles have this impact.

Another aspect of Imam 'Alī's (P.B.U.H.) life is manifested in the field of governance. When this great and farsighted man finally took over Caliphate and came to power, his performance was such that even if the writers, historians, and artists write and depict for years, they will still have not said much. Imam 'Alī's (P.B.U.H.) lifestyle during his rule is a real paradigm. Basically, Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) changed the meaning of governance.

He was the embodiment of Divine governance, the embodiment of the Qur'anic verses among Muslims, the embod-

iment of absolute justice and the embodiment of the Qur'anic verse, "...are hard against the faithless and merciful amongst themselves."^{1,2} He used to bring the poor close to himself–“He was closed to the poor.”^{3,4}–and paid especial attention to the down-trodden. The eminent figures who had illegally gained prestige through money, force, and other means were worthless to him. Faith, piety, sincerity, *jihād*, and humanity were valuable in his eyes. On the basis of these values, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) ruled for less than five years. Writers have been writing about the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) for centuries yet they have not been able to write or depict his image properly. The best writers have confessed their inability in this regard.⁵

His greatest characteristic is virtuousness. His *Nahj al-Balāgha* is the book of virtue and his life is the way of virtue.⁶

This holy verse, “And among the people is he who sells his soul, seeking the pleasure of Allah”^{7,8} has been revealed about the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and the interpretation of this verse is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.). This holy verse says there are people who have sacrificed their life, their being which means the dearest asset that every human has–this precious irreversible and exclusive asset which if you give it away, you will never have it back again–some of these assets, they give them all away to obtain the pleasure of Allah, just for

١- ﴿أَشَدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾.

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, al-Faḥ (48): 29.

٣- ﴿كَانَ يُقَرِّبُ الْمَسَاكِينَ﴾.

4- *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, vol. 18, chap. 75, p. 226.

5- Delivered on January 30th, 1991.

6- Delivered on February 8th, 1999.

٧- ﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ﴾.

8- *The Holy Qur'an*, al-Baqara (2): 207.

this. “And among the people is he who sells”^{1,2} he gives, he sells “his soul”^{3,4}, his life, his being; “Seeking the pleasure of Allah”^{5,6} there is no other purpose, no worldly aim, no selfish attitudes and motivations just to seek the pleasure of Allah. But in the face of such self-sacrifice and indulgence, Allah certainly does not leave it without a reward, “And Allah is most kind to [His] servants”^{7,8}; Allah has compassion toward His servants. The perfect example of this [verse] is the Commander of the Faithful—Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.). I will speak about this aspect later.

Look at the life of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Since his childhood, since the time he was nine or thirteen years old, he believed in the prophethood of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and found this truth consciously and deliberately, and held it tightly, from that moment until the moment he gave his life for Allah in the niche of prayers at the dawn of the nineteenth day of Ramadan and met his Lord happily, satisfied and with great joy. During this nearly fifty years, or fifty two or three years, from ten to sixty-three years old, you see there is a continuous line in the life of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) and it is the line of sacrifice and selflessness; In all these cases during the fifty-year history of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), you can see the sign of sacrifice which from the beginning to end it is indeed a life lesson for us. And we, you and I, who talk about ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), seek ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) and are famous in the world for bearing the love of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) in our hearts,

١- ﴿وَمَنْ يَبْتَئِمْ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِي﴾.

2- *The Holy Qur’an*, al-Baqara (2): 207.

٣- نَفْسَهُ.

4- *The Holy Qur’an*, al-Baqara (2): 207.

٥- ﴿الْبَيْعَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ﴾.

6- *The Holy Qur’an*, al-Baqara (2): 207.

٧- ﴿وَاللَّهُ رَؤُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ﴾.

8- *The Holy Qur’an*, al-Baqara (2): 207.

we should learn from the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.); To love 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) is not sufficient, to know the virtues of 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) is not sufficient, there were those who admit the virtues of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) in their hearts, perhaps even more than us who are a thousand and four hundred years away from that time, the same people or some of them loved 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) as an innocence and pious man at their hearts but their behavior was different. Because they do not have this characteristic, this sacrifice, this abandonment of selfishness, this not working for self. They were still caught in their "self". The advantage of 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) was that he was not caught in his "self". "Self" was never important to him. What was important to him was the duty, the aim, striving in the way of Allah and for Allah.

The very first time that the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) believed in the prophethood of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) at his early childhood, everyone harassed and ridiculed him in Mecca. Imagine a city whose people resorted to violence, were not civilized and peaceful, were violent and conflictive, were rough, fought over the smallest issues and very biased toward the same false beliefs; in a society like this, such a message was raised by a great man who took everything of this society into question: its beliefs, its etiquettes, and its traditions. Well, it is natural that everyone would oppose him and different strata opposed him; the masses of people also opposed the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Defending and joining such a man and such a message wholeheartedly demanded self-sacrifice; the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) took the first step in [this] self-sacrifice.

Thirteen years, in the hardest times, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) stood up beside the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Then when those thirteen years of suffering were about to come to an end—it was true that the migration of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) from Mecca was a migration forced and compelled under the

pressure of Quraysh and Meccans but it had a bright future; [when] everyone knew that this migration was the introduction of later success and victories—and just where a movement was about to enter a period of comfort and dignity from a period of distress, at this very time when everyone sought to arrive sooner [in Medina] in order to get better social positions and find a [better] status, in this very moment, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was getting ready to sleep in place of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), in the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) bed, in that dark and shadowy night so that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) could leave his house and the city. In that very night, the death of the person, who slept in that bed, was almost certain. It was not like that as you and I know about the incident, that the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was not martyred in that incident, everyone knew this too on the time. Nay, the issue is that [everyone knew that] someone was supposed definitely to be killed on a dark night at a certain point. [Some] said that someone should be in this man's place so that he could leave here and that if the spies looked at, they felt someone was there. Who would agree to do this? This sacrifice of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) is an extremely important incident, but the time of this sacrifice adds to its importance. When was the time? The minute the Muslims' distress were about to come to an end; [the minute] they were going to form a government, [the minute] they were going to be at ease, [the minute] the people of Medina—i.e. Yathrib—believed in the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and expected his [arrival], everybody knew these. At this very moment, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) made his sacrifice; there should certainly be no personal motivation in a person for making such a big move.

After entering Medina, the endless wars and campaigns of the newly established government of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) began. Battles and wars were permanent and so was the

characteristic of such government. Before the Battle of Badr, the clashes, and struggles were started and continued until the last day of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) life-these [last] ten years. During these ten years, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had several dozen wars and conflicts with the infidels, all kinds and cults of the infidels. In all these times, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was present as the vanguard, as the most devoted and dedicated to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), which the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) himself had admitted and the history revealed in all these dangerous stages and scenes. "I supported him with my life on occasions when even the brave turned away and feet remained behind."^{1,2} The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) stood [by the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)] in all these severe times. It was not important for him that there might be danger. Some may think that it is good for us to save our lives now so that we would be helpful later on for Islam. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) never deceived himself with such excuses and indeed the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) high esteem was not easily deceived. 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) was present at all of these dangerous stages in the front lines.

The Era of Silence and Cooperation

Soon after the holy Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) demise, I think the hardest part of the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) life in the thirty years after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) began; those days were the hardest period of the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) life. The day when the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was adored and venerable; and they were striving and fighting under his shadow; those days were sweet-the good old days. The darkest days were started after the demise of the

١- «وَلَقَدْ وَاسَيْتَهُ بِنَفْسِي فِي الْمَوَاطِنِ الَّتِي تَنْكُضُ فِيهَا الْأَبْطَالُ وَتَتَأَخَّرُ فِيهَا الْأَقْدَامُ».

2- Nahj al-Balāgha, Sermon 197.

Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) when tribulations like a dark night cast a shadow on the path of those seeking to walk on the right path. In such circumstances, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) passed the hardest exams.

First of all, after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was doing his duty. This was not because he did not know there was or might have been a gathering where the fate of the power and the state of the Islamic world would be determined. This was not an important issue to him. For him what was not important was the “self”. Immediately after the issue of the Caliphate was settled and the people swore allegiance to Abū Bakr and everything was over, ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) stepped down; not a sentence, not a word, not any statement which were indicative of the opposition of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) to the [then] government, were heard from him. Yes, on the early days after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) [he did so], the Imam (P.B.U.H.) struggled to be able to prove what he thought was right and should have been done. Then [when] he saw people swore allegiance, the issue was over and Abū Bakr became the Caliph, here the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) had been known as a man who although opposed, there was no harm, no danger, and no threat from him for this government in the Islamic history. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) during this period—which was not much, [indeed,] this period lasted a short time, perhaps a few months, I do not remember exactly—stated, “You have certainly known that I am the most rightful of all others for it.”^{1,2} You know this too. “By Allah, I shall keep quiet”^{3,4} this means he swear to Allah he shall do nothing and submit; “so

١- «لقد علمتم أنّي أحقّ الناس بها من غيري».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 74.

٣- «وَاللّٰهُ لَأُسَلِّمَنَّ».

4- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 74.



long as the affairs of Muslims remain intact”^{1,2}, as long as he feels the affairs of Muslims are carried out well and no one is oppressed; “and there is no oppression in it save on myself”^{3,4}, as long as people are not oppressed and there is no oppression in the society, [as long as] he is the only one who is oppressed in the society. As long as it is so, he shall have nothing to do with anyone, he shall not interrupt, he shall not object.⁵

After a short time, perhaps a few months afterward, some groups started apostasy; maybe there were some provocations too. Some Arab tribes felt that now there was not the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), there was not the Leader of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), it might be a good time to make troubles, problems, conflicts and thus start a fight, perhaps the hypocrites had incited them to. Finally “Radda” occurred i.e. the apostasy of some of the Muslims—the Radda Battles⁶ started⁷. When such things happened, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) saw there was no time to remain quiet and the [Islamic] government should be defended; in this regard, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) says, “I kept myself aloof.”^{8,9} I stayed away after the issue of Caliphate happened and Abū Bakr became the Caliph. This is the stance of secession; “till I found the heretics were trying to undermine

١- «ما سلمت أمور المسلمين».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 74.

٣- «ولم يكن فيها جور إلا على خاصة».

4- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 74.

5- Ibid.

٦- حروب الردة.

7- Wars of Apostasy or the Radda battles were a series of military campaigns launched by Abū Bakr against Arabian rebel tribes during 632 and 633 C.E. who renounced Islam after the demise of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Most of the tribes were defeated and reintegrated into the Caliphate. (Trans.)

٨- «فامسكت يدي».

9- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 62.

Islam.”^{1,2} I saw that some people were renouncing [Islam], they were trying to ruin Islam, here I took action straight away. And the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) took action actively; and the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was present in all important social issues.

The Imam himself (P.B.U.H.) referred to his presence in the twenty-five years of Caliphate of the first three Caliphs as vizierate. After people came to choose the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) for the Caliphate right after the murder of ‘Uthmān, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “I am better for you as a vizier than as emir.”^{3,4} This means he saw his twenty-five-year position, place, and status as vizierate. This means that in the course of affairs, he constantly worked and helped [in line with] the aims of the authorities and the Caliph who were at the helm of affairs. This is such a great sacrifice which makes one really confused as one thinks how generously disposed the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) in his affairs.

In all of these twenty-five years, he did not think of uprising, coup, conflict, gathering some people, taking power and preempting the government. These things come to mind. When the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) passed away, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was almost thirty or thirty-three years old. Even later when he was passing the years of his youth and physical strength, was spending his days of vitality, he had a good standing and approval among the masses, he was sagacious and knowledgeable, and the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) already had all the attractions that might exist in a human being. If he wanted to do something, he could certainly do it. In all of

١- «حَتَّى رَأَيْت رَاجِعَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ رَجَعَتْ بِرِيدِ مِحْوِ الْإِسْلَامِ».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 62.

٣- «وَإِنَّا لَكُمْ وَزِيرًا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ مِنِّي أَمِيرًا».

4- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 92.

these twenty-five years, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not take any action but working for the same general and common goals of the Islamic system on which some caliphs were governing; and nothing was heard of them. And there are great wonderful adventures which I do not like to go through talking about historical events.

The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was invited to the six-member council after the death of the second Caliph. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not grump but went there. He did not say he was not equal to the other members. He did not say that Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. ‘Awf, ‘Uthmān and him were not in the same rank. According to ‘Umar’s will, they formed a council consisting of six people to elect one person from among them as the next Caliph. Among these six people, ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) had a fair chance of gaining the Caliphate and the vote of ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. ‘Awf was decisive in the six-member council. In other words, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) had two votes: his and Zubayr’s; ‘Uthmān had also two votes: his and Ṭalḥa’s; ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. ‘Awf had two votes as well: his and Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ’s. Thus, the vote of ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. ‘Awf was decisive in the six-member council. If he pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), the Imam (P.B.U.H.) would become the Caliph. And if he pledged with ‘Uthmān, ‘Uthmān would become the next Caliph. At first, ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. ‘Awf turned to ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) and put to him the question whether the Imam (P.B.U.H.) pledged to follow the Book of Allah, the tradition of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the conducts (*sīra*) of the two Sheikhs—i.e. the previous Caliphs. [The Imam (P.B.U.H.)] replied, “Nay, I (will follow) the Book of Allah and the tradition of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). I have nothing to do with the conducts of the two Sheikhs. I will act according to my own judgment and have nothing to do with their judgment”. With the slightest negligence of what

the Imam (P.B.U.H.) considered right and proper, he was able to take the government and seize the power. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not even let such thought cross his mind and therefore, he lost the government and power. Here, too, he made sacrifice; here, too, he did not raise [the issue of] selfishness and trampled it. Such feeling may have never been aroused in the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

After twelve years of ‘Uthmān’s rule and at the end of his life, ‘Uthmān was much protested, those who opposed him accused ‘Uthmān of making many problems; they were from Egypt, Iraq, and Baṣra and elsewhere; at last, a large number of people gathered, surrounded the house of ‘Uthmān and threatened ‘Uthmān’s life. Well, here what would a person in the position of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) have done? At such a time, this great person, who considered himself entitled to the Caliphate and it had been about twenty years that he had been excluded from his own [inalienable] right as well as having strongly objected the manner of the then ruler, found that people had gathered around the ruler’s house and surrounded it. What would ordinary people, even the chosen and magnificent figures have done in such situations? They would have done what the others did. They would have done what Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, ‘Āyisha and all those who were involved in the incident of ‘Uthmān did. The murder of ‘Uthmān is one of the most important incidents of Islam and that who caused the murder of ‘Uthmān. When one looks at *Nahj al-Balāgha*, other precious Islamic works, and history, it becomes quite clear who killed ‘Uthmān and who caused his murder. The same people, who had based their activities later upon a false claim of having friendship with ‘Uthmān, stabbed him in the back at that time. They tried to induce people. Someone asked ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ, “Who killed ‘Uthmān?” He replied, “Such and such a person—he named one of the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.)



& H.H.)—made the sword, another person sharpened it and the other one poisoned it, and someone else put ‘Uthmān to the sword.” This is the truth.

In this incident, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) sincerely carried out that Divine and Islamic duty which he felt he was bound to perform. He sent Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.), the two precious gems and the reminiscent of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), to the house of ‘Uthmān in order to defend him. This is very obvious. The opponents had surrounded ‘Uthmān’s house and did not let water get into his house; the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) sent water and food to ‘Uthmān’s house. Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) repeatedly negotiated with those who were angry at ‘Uthmān and made his best effort to subside their anger; and when they killed ‘Uthmān, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) got angry at them.

Here, too, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) absolutely had no egocentrism, selfishness and self-centeredness that normally exist in all human beings. After ‘Uthmān was killed, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) could take advantage of the situation as a well-reputed person, an opportunist, and a savior and say, “O’ people! Now you are relieved; you got rid (of him)”. People would have definitely loved him as well, but nay. Even after the incident of ‘Uthmān, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not use the opportunity to take the government and seize the power. What a great spirit he has! “Leave me and seek someone else,”^{1,2} here the Imam (P.B.U.H.) means if you choose someone else for the government, I will be his counselor and stay by him. These are the statements which the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) uttered in those days. People did not accept it. They did not like to choose any-

١- «دعوني و التمسوا غيري».

one except the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.).

The Era of the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) Caliphate

All Islamic groups pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Until that day, there was no allegiance as general as the allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) except Shām which did not pledge to him. All Islamic groups and great companions of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) swore allegiance to the Imam (P.B.U.H.). Only a few people—less than ten—remained whom the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) brought into the mosque and asked one by one why they did not pledge allegiance including ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Umar and Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ. There were a few who did not swear allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) asked them about. Each of them made an excuse and said something; some of them swore allegiance to him, some—who were a few and not many—did not and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) let them go. But prominent figures such as Ṭalḥa, Zūbayr, so and so all pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). But before they pledged allegiance to him, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) addressed them as, “You should know that if I respond to you”^{1,2} this means now you are insisting on me to take over the government, “I would lead you”^{3,4} that if I respond to you positively, you should not assume that I would care about figures, personalities, the old bones and other famous and adorned people. Lest you assume that I would follow and imitate such and such, and I would pick their way as my own, not

١- «واعلموا اني ان اجبتكم».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 92.

٣- «ركبت بكم».

4- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 92.

at all. “You should know that if I respond to you I would lead you as I know.”^{1,2} Here the Imam (P.B.U.H.) means he would lead and administer the people the way he knows, recognizes, and finds about Islam. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) enumerated and explained his conditions for people and accepted the Caliphate. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) could have granted some concession for the sake of maintaining political expediencies, deferring some certain aspects of the case and such things in order to win hearts, but there, too, he insisted with complete certainty on the principles of Islam and Islamic values and this made all the enemies to line up against ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.); And the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) faced in a campaign with the manifestation of wealth, power, and hypocrisy, with legitimate, credible, and well-known figures in another campaign, and with sanctimonious and preachy people but ignorant of the truth and the spirit of Islam, the Islamic teachings, the position and dignity of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and those who resort to violence, brutality, and irritability.

Establishing Equality and the Islamic Values

The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) fought with three different groups including pledge-breakers (*Nākithīn*), deviators from the truth (*Qāsiṭīn*) and those who have left the faith (*Māriqīn*). Each of these campaigns illuminates the same spirit of trust in Allah, devotion as well as staying away from the self-centrism and selfishness in the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.); and finally he was martyred in the same way as it is stated about this infallible Imam (P.B.U.H.), “‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) was killed by his justice”. If the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) had not wanted to do justice, if he had wanted to defer

١- «و اعلموا أنّي ان اجبتكم ركبت بكم ما اعلم».

to somebody, if he had wanted to prefer his own dignity and position to the goodwill of the Islamic world, he would have been the most successful and powerful Caliph and would not have found any opponent. But the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) is the measure of wrong and right. That is for this very reason that whosoever follows, accepts and acts like the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) is right and whosoever does not accept him is wrong; that is why he has fulfilled the kernel of duty—without the slightest interference of selfishness, personal feelings and interests—and moved in the way he had chosen. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) has such a personality. For this reason, ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) is indeed the scale of righteousness. This is the life of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.): “And among the people is he who sells his soul seeking the pleasure of Allah.”^{1,2} It was not just at his martyrdom, it was not just at his death time that the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) gave his life in the way of Allah; [rather] he constantly gave his life in the way of Allah during his lifetime.³

In this period, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) proved that the Islamic principles and values, which emerged in the early era of Islam and the isolation of the then small Muslim community, was also applicable in the era of prosperity, spreading, competence, development and advancements of the Islamic community. It is the very important to pay attention to this very point. The Islamic assets, the Islamic justice, the human dignity, the spirit of *jihād*, the Islamic construction as well as the codes of ethics and Islamic values were sent down through Divine revelation at the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and were applied by him within the available limits in the then Muslim community. But what was the Islamic commu-

١- ﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ﴾.

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Baqara (2): 207.

3- Delivered on April 28th, 1989.

nity like in the era of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)? It was only a town (Medina) for up to ten years; a small town with several thousand people. And after they conquered Mecca and Ṭāif, it was a restricted area with very limited assets. Poverty was prevalent and their facilities were few. The Islamic values were established in such an environment.

From the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), twenty-five years passed. During these twenty-five years, the extent of the Islamic country had turned hundred-fold, not two-, three-, or ten-fold. The day the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) assumed the caliphate, a land from the Central Asia to North Africa—i.e. Egypt—was within the sovereign of Islamic State. Of the two superpowers neighboring the Islamic state in the beginning—i.e. Iran and Rome—one was totally annihilated, which was the government of Iran and its territory was under the rule of Islam. And major parts of the Roman territory—including Shām, Palestine, Mosul and other places—were under the jurisdiction of Islam. Such a wide area was under the jurisdiction of Islam so that the wealth was increased; there was no longer poverty, destitution, and scarcity of food; gold was widely common; money became abundant; and tremendous wealth was generated. In this regard, the Islamic country had become rich. Many enjoyed excessive well-being. If we omitted ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) from this period, perhaps history would have judged that the Islamic principles and values of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) were good, but only for the Medina of the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) era, i.e., the same era of the poverty and the smallness of the Islamic community. However, after the Muslim community had expanded and mingled with different civilizations; and a variety of Iranian and Roman cultures and civilizations brought to the lives of people and various nations came under the umbrella of the Islamic community, those principles would have been no longer sufficient and capable of

running the country. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) proved by his practices, lifestyle, and governance throughout these five years that the same glittering principles of the early Islamic era—i.e. monotheism, justice, fairness and equality, the equality among people—were also applicable at the time of a powerful Caliph as the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). This is what has been immortalized in the history. Although this approach had not been practiced after the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), he proved that if the Islamic ruling, the community managers and Muslim officials made their mind up and were determined and had a firm belief in, they could not only apply the same principles in the era of the expansion of the Islamic state and the emergence of new and various life circumstance but also give people the benefit... It is clear that social justice in a society of ten or fifteen thousand people of Medina was completely different from a society of tens of millions or hundreds of millions at the time of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) performed these tasks.

The Justice of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)

Here I address some examples of the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) actions—which are reflected in his eminence's statements; and indeed, there are thousands of other examples in his life. People came and insisted upon pledging allegiance to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) but he did not accept. The insistence of the people increased. Everyone—the elders, the youth, and the heads of the society as well as the Companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—said, “Nay, only ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) should be (the Caliph) and nobody can be other than him”. They came and took the Imam (P.B.U.H.) insistently [for pledging allegiance]. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “Let’s go to the mosque”. Then the Imam (P.B.U.H.) ascended the pulpit and delivered a sermon in

which he explained his views as: “The assets which have been captured unlawfully by the gentlefolk and gentlemen, wherever I find them, I will return them to the state treasury”. Some had managed during those years to seize the money belonging to the state treasury on their behalf. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) said “I will return all these, ‘even if I find that by such money women have been married’^{1,2} or ‘slave-maids have been purchased’^{3,4}, ‘I will take it back’^{5,6} to the state treasury. The people and the nobles should know that this will be my way.”

After a few days, the oppositions began. Of course, the poor and the oppressed class of the community wished such a way of governance but the powerful and those who were the real addressees of these words were obviously dissatisfied. They gathered, held a meeting and said, “What is ‘Alī intending to do?”. Walīd b. ‘Uqba—the same one who was the governor of Kūfa at the time of ‘Uthmān—stood up on their behalf and went to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and said to him, “O’ ‘Alī! There is a condition for our allegiance to you; ‘we pledge allegiance to you today if you leave for us what we had obtained of the property in the days of ‘Uthmān’”⁷. Which means our condition is to leave us the property that we have obtained and what we have gained before your Caliphate. After that came Walīd b. ‘Uqba, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr. Of course, the story of Ṭalḥa and Zubayr is different from Walīd b. ‘Uqba. Indeed, Walīd b. ‘Uqba was one of the newly converted Muslims; his family were against Islam and this revolution and had fought

١- «لَوْ وَجَدْتُهُ قَدْ تَزَوَّجَ بِهِ النِّسَاءَ».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 15.

٣- «مُلْكٌ بِهِ الْإِمَاءُ».

4- Ibid.

٥- لَرَدَدْتَهُ.

6- Ibid.

٧- «وَنَحْنُ نَبَايِعُكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيَّ أَنْ تَضَعَ عِنَّا مَا أَصْبَنَاهُ مِنَ الْمَالِ فِي أَيَّامِ عَثْمَانَ».

with Islam; after the conquer of Islam—at the end of the era of the Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—like other Umayyads, he converted to Islam as well. But Ṭalḥa and Zubayr had converted to Islam long before and were among the close companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Ṭalḥa and Zubayr—were among the then great elders of Islam and the survivors of the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—also came to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and reproached the Imam (P.B.U.H.) as, “Indeed, you have made our right in the distribution [of the state treasury] as the others”¹. That is you have treated us as equal with others in distributing assets of the state treasury. “And you have established equality between us and those who were not like us.”^{2,3} That is you have put us on the same footing with those who were not like us. What is this? Why don’t you recognize certain privileges? “Allah the Exalted has bestowed upon those who are not like us through our swords and spears.”^{4,5} That is these bounties were obtained by their swords; it was them who raised the Islam; it was them who have made efforts and endeavors; and now, they expected the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not equal them with those who were new to Islam, those who were the non-Arabs and those who were from the conquered countries.

I have not seen the answer of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) to Walīd b. ‘Uqba—it is not recorded in the history—but he responded to others. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) ascended the pulpit and responded them. On the issue of equality in the distribution of the state treasury, he said, “For this rule is not

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 32, p. 19.

٢- «و سويت بيننا وبين من لا يماثلنا».

3- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 32, p. 21.

٤- «من لا يماثلنا في ما أفاء الله تعالى بأسياقنا ورماحنا».

5- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 32, p. 22.

ruled as the first initiator”¹ that is I am not who founded this method and approach. “I have found that I and the Messenger of Allah—May Allah bless him and his household—have ruled so.”² That is you and I witnessed the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) treated in this way. I have not introduced a new way of my own but rather I am following the same way of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). I want to revive the same values and ideological and practical foundations of society in this period. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) enshrined them in the then society and paid the price as well. The price of enshrining those values in the society was the outbreak of three battles. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) withstood. It is obvious that he could see for himself the right of Caliphate. However, this did not happen after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).

He did nothing over twenty-five years for the thing that he recognized as his own right. He even calmed those who wanted to remonstrate [with those who usurped the Caliphate]. “Your girth is loose and you have put it on the wrong way...now leave this story of devastation.”^{3,4} The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) has such words. Regarding the issue [of Caliphate], the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) showed no reaction for twenty-five years. However, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) stood for an issue which seem less important—the issue of social justice, the revival of the prophetic principles and re-construction of the solid edifice of the Islam laid by the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—and faced three battles: the Battle of the Camel (the Battle of *Jamal*), the Battle of *Şiffin* and the Battle of *Nahrawān*. You see how much this issue was important in the Commander of the Faithful’s (P.B.U.H.) eyes. This is the greatest achievement of the

١- «فإن ذلك أمر لم أحكم فيه بادئ بدء».

٢- «قد وجدته أنا وأنتما رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله يحكم بذلك».

٣- «إنك لقلق الوضين ترسل في غير سدد...ودع عنك نهياً صريح في حجراته».

4- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 162.

Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). In this regard, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) has another saying. Let's get a little bit more familiar with the *Alawite* knowledge. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) says, "Fulfilling someone's right should not prevent you from serving him right [for doing something wrong]"^{1,2} This means if a person is a believer, has striven in the cause of Allah or made a great effort and has served in the front line and done a great job, it is incumbent upon you to respect his right. And if this very person encroaches on and violates someone's right, that incumbent right should not stop the managers and officials from bringing his encroachment to justice. So, distinguish these issues. If someone is a good person and endured a great deal for Islam and the country, his right is acceptable and reserved yet we are thankful for. But if he commits an offence, the observance of that right should not lead us to turn a blind eye to the violation committed by him. This is the logic of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.).

There was a poet named Najāshī, one of the poets and admirers of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), the one who had composed the best poems in the Battle of *Ṣiffīn* and incited people against Mu'āwīya, the one who was a fan and an advocate of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), the one who was very well-known in terms of his loyalty, [acceptance of the] *Wilāya* and precedents, drank wine during a day in Ramadan. When the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) learned about it, he said, "The punishment for wine drinking is clear. Bring him to give lashes." The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) gave him lashes in public. Eighty whips. His family and his tribe came to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and said, "O' Commander of the Faithful, you have disgraced us. This man

١- «لا تمنعتمكم رعاية الحق لأحد عن إقامة الحق عليه».

2- *Taṣnīf Ghurar al-Ḥikam wa Durar al-Kalim*, p. 69.

was among your companions and your friends—in the words of today’s politics—he was on your side. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “I did not do anything. A Muslim commits an offence and [as a result] one of the Allah’s punishments was imposed on him and I just carried out that punishment.” After being whipped by ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), Najāshī said, “As long as that is the case, I will join Mu‘āwīyya and compose my poems for him.” He left the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and joined the campaign of Mu‘āwīyya. But, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not say, “Najāshī has left us and this is a great unfortunate loss. We should try to keep him here.” Nay, he left the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and went away. Of course, it was better for him to stay. This is the logic and the approach of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). The Imam (P.B.U.H.) addressed the companions of Najāshī as, “Is he not more than a man of Muslims who violated a sanctity of Allah’s sanctities and thus we established punishment against him which was his atonement?”^{1,2} That is we gave him lashes and his sin was expiated.

A punishment became obligatory for a man from the tribe of Banī Asad—who was also one of the relatives of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Some of the devotees of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) who were the tribesmen of that person, thought it would be good to go to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and somehow tackle the problem. At first, they went to Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) in order to make him a mediator between them and his father. Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) said, “There is no need to mediate. Go to my father. My father, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), knows you.” Therefore, they went to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and said, “This is our problem and we beg for your help.” The Imam (P.B.U.H.)

١- «فَهَلْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ انْتَهَكَ حُرْمَةً مِنْ حَرَمِ اللَّهِ فَأَقَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَدًّا كَانَ كَقَفَارَتِهِ».

2- *Al-Hayāt*, Trans. Ahmad Aram, vol. 2, p. 714.

answered, "I have no objection. Whatsoever I can, I will do for you." They rejoiced and went out. On the way, they encountered Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) asked them, "What did you do?" They said, "Thanks Allah, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) assured us." The Imam (P.B.U.H.) asked, "What did the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) told you?" They said, "The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) told us he would do whatsoever he could." Imam Ḥasan Muḥtabā (P.B.U.H.) smiled and said, "So just go and do whatever you have to in case he [the man] is punished!" And after the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) administered punishment against the man, they came and said, "O' Commander of the Faithful! Why was the punishment imposed upon this guy?" The Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, "Punishment is not which I have ordered to, it is a Divine order; I said I would do whatsoever I could but punishment is not in my hands."¹ The Imam (P.B.U.H.) did so regardless of this fact that they were of friends and devotees of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Such was the life of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). There are many accounts of his food, clothes, livelihood and children. The narrator says, "Once, I went and saw Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) were sitting and eating food. Their meal was bread, vinegar and some vegetables. I said to them, 'Sir, you are emirs; you are of the state family – the children of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). There are many supplies in the market and "many in Raḥba"²—that is near Kūfa—such a plenty of goods is sold and people are buying yet the meal of you sirs is like this?' They turned to me and said, 'Do not be ignorant of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.).'³ That is you are unaware of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.); Go and see his life! The

1- *Da'āim al-Islam*, vol. 2, p. 443.

٢- «وفي الرحبة ما فيها».

3- *Al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 108.

Imam (P.B.U.H.) was so even with his family.

You all have heard the story of Zaynab the great; her borrowing from Abū Rāfi‘. And you have heard the story of ‘Aqīl, who came to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and asked for something: “A *ṣā‘* (about three kilograms) of wheat”¹. He wanted more amount of wheat. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) then picked up an overheated iron and brought it close to ‘Aqīl. Of course, he did not hit him; rather the Imam (P.B.U.H.) warned him and did not grant his request. ‘Abdullah b. Ja‘far—his nephew and his son in law; the husband of Zaynab—came to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and said, “O’ the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)! I am broke and have to sell the means of my life. Help me with something please.” The Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not agree and said, “Unless you tell your uncle to steal and help you with the people’s property.” The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) defined a ruling standard for a developed, great, civilized, and rich society as his era on the basis of what was at the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Everything had been evolved. By this manner, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) sought to prove that those principles could be revived even in such circumstances. This is the great work of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). The principle of moral, justice, the Islamic *Jihād*, the training of people as well as the principle of an efficient, competent and faithful administration—the life of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) is replete with events and incidents you have heard throughout the years in the form of stories, narrations and sayings of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)—are all signs of this fact; in one word, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) wanted to prove to the world that the application of Islamic principles is possible in any circumstance. This is the reality. The Islamic principles are not a style of the Commander of the Faith-

ful's (P.B.U.H.) clothing that if he wore an apron or shirt, today we should wear the same clothes. The Islamic principles are justice, monotheism, being in fairness to people and observing their rights, paying attention to the weak, standing against the anti-Islamic and anti-religion front, insisting on the pillars of righteousness and Islam and defending the truth. These concepts can be implemented in all eras.

Of course, today when we say this, we are talking about the summit. Who could even imagine being like the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)? Nay, no one can be like the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). When Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), who was the grandson of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and one of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), was told that he did so much worship, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) answered, "What is (the standing of) our worship compared to 'Alī's?" that is the devout Imam (P.B.U.H.) means he was not equivalent with 'Alī' (P.B.U.H.). There is also a long distance between the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the finest devotees and ascetics of our time. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) showed the pattern, summit and the direction of movement and selected a standard for; no matter where we could reach. The Islamic system is the system of justice and fairness as well as serving people, observing human rights and countering the injustice perpetrated by the strong against the weak. These are the important problems of mankind throughout history. The humanity has been always plagued with these problems and still suffers from this burden. Due to this bullying and tyranny, the nations are damaged and their lives become hard. Islam, the logic of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and the logic of the *'Alawite* government confront these things whether within the community when the strong seek to oppress the weak, or at the global and international level.¹

1- Delivered on November 5th, 2004.

The Authority, Innocence, and Triumph in the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) Life

In the personality, life and martyrdom of this great Imam (P.B.U.H.), there are three elements combined, which are apparently incompatible with each other. These three elements are: authority, innocence, and triumph.

“Authority” of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) means his ability in having an iron will, having a firm determination, leading the most difficult battlefields, directing minds and thoughts toward the highest Islamic and human concepts, training great personages—such as Mālik Ashtar, ‘Ammār b. ‘Abbās, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr and others—and establishing a [lasting] movement in human history. The symbol of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) authority was his supremacy in logic, thought and policy, governing and bravery. There is no trace of weakness in the character of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). At the same time, he is one of the most oppressed figures of history and innocence can be seen in all parts of his life. During his adolescence, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was oppressed. As a young man—after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—he was unjustly treated. During the age of the Caliphate and his adulthood, he was wronged. Even after his martyrdom, he was spoken ill of from the pulpits and made false accusations against him. His martyrdom also approved his innocence and being oppressed.

In all Islamic works, there are only two people who had been referred as “the vengeance of Allah” (*thār Allāh*)¹. In Persian, we do not have an accurate and proper equivalent for the Arabic term of “thār” [vengeance; avenge the blood of]. That is when someone from a family is murdered unjustly; the victim's family demands vengeance for his blood. This is the true

meaning of “thār” and the family has the right to avenge. That some have translated this term as “the blood of Allah” is a very deficient interpretation of “thār” and does not show the real meaning of this word. “Thār” means the right to vengeance. If someone is the “thār” of a family, his family has the right to take his vengeance. In the history of Islam, there have been the names of two people whose blood and vengeance belong to Allah. One of them is Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and the other is his father—Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.): “O’ the vengeance of Allah and the son of His vengeance”¹. The vengeance of his father—‘Alī (P.B.U.H.)—belongs to Allah as well.

The third element is the “triumph” of this honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.). His triumph means at the very first he won all the difficulties imposed on him during his lifetime. This means the fragile front of the enemy—which I will later explain about—could not bring ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) to his knees and all of them were defeated. After his martyrdom, his real status became more obvious day by day—that means it was far more obvious than his lifetime. Today if you look at the world—not just the world of Islam but the world at large, you will find many admirers who are not Muslims but have accepted ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) as one of the prominent figures of history! This clarifies the real status of that brilliant gem and so Allah the Exalted rewards him for what he suffered from injustice. It must be for all those unfairness, repression, pressure and heinous charges which he faced with patience that Allah the Almighty rewarded him; and the reward of him is that you find no one in the human history as brilliant and approved by the majority as the Imam (P.B.U.H.). Maybe today among the many books being written about Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), the most passionate are written by Christian authors! I just remember three Chris-

١- «يا ثار الله وابن ثاره».

tian authors had written complimentary yet passionate books about the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Such devotion was already in existence from the very first day; that is on the time right after his martyrdom when everyone spoke ill of that great Imam (P.B.U.H.) and propagandized him—especially those authorities related and affiliated to Umayyads and those whose hearts were full of the hatred toward the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) sword and justice; this matter was clear since that time. Here is an example:

The son of 'Abdullāh b. 'Urwah b. Zubayr spoke ill of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) in the presence of his father—'Abdullāh b. 'Urwah b. Zubayr. The family of Zubayr—except one of them named Muṣ'ab b. Zubayr—were generally against the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Muṣ'ab b. Zubayr was a brave and benevolent man and the same person who was involved in the incidents of Kūfa and Mukhtār, and later fought with 'Abdul Malik. He was also the husband of Lady Sakīna—the first son-in-law of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Apart from him, the rest of the family of Zubayr—from generations to generations—were opposed to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). When one reads history, he realizes all these. After hearing the slander, the father addressed his son with words which are not very interesting but have an important point and I have taken notes of. 'Abdullāh said to his son, "I swear to Allah, my son, people never established something except that religion demolished it and religion did not establish something that the world would be able to demolish."¹ The people cannot demolish any structure which was created by religion or the foundation was laid on religion despite whatsoever they do; in other words, it is a waste of time to try to damage the good name of 'Alī (P.B.U.H.)—whose deeds are laid

١- «والله ما بنى الناس شيئا قط إلا هدمه الدين ولا بنى الدين شيئا فاستطاعت الدنيا هدمه.»

on religion and faith. Then he added, “Have you not seen how the children of Marwān made public his flaws and disparaged him yet indeed they just took his fame to new heights.” That means just see how the children of Marwān have concentrated all their efforts on slandering and disparaging ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) on any occasion and from any pulpit; however, their slandering and disparaging are in a way that they not only are taking this great personage to new heights but also they are making him more well-known to the public. In other words, their slanders create an opposite effect in the minds of the people. On the contrary, the Umayyads’ situation is like, “And [you] see what they assigned their deceased to praise and then I swear to Allah that would be verily as if they have disclosed a corpse”¹. The Umayyad praised their predecessors to the skies but the more they praised them, the more they increased the hatred toward them. This was said probably about thirty years after the martyrdom of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). This means despite all the imposed oppressions, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) ended in victory either throughout his life or the history or even at the memory of humanity.

The story of the authority along with the innocence of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) which led up to this can be summarized as the following:

The Deviators From the Truth (*Qāsiṭīn*)

At the time of his rule—the less than five-year-old rule of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.)—three groups were lining up in front of him: deviators from the truth (*Qāsiṭīn*), pledge-breakers (*Nākithīn*) and those who have left the faith (*Māriqīn*). Both the Shī‘ites and the Sunnites have quoted this narration from the Imam (P.B.U.H.) saying, “I am ordered to fight with pledge-breakers (*Nākithīn*),

¹ «و ترى ما يندبون به موتاهم من المديح فوالله لكانما يكشفون به عن ال جيف».

deviators from the truth (*Qāsiṭīn*) and those who have left the faith (*Māriqīn*).^{1,2} That honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) had given these groups such names. *Qāsiṭīn* means oppressors. When the noun of “qisṭ”³ is conjugated in single form—“qasaṭa-yaqsiṭu”⁴, that is “jāra-yajūru”⁵, “zalama, yaẓlimu”⁶—means oppression. However, when it is conjugated in *thulāthī mazīd* at *bāb-i if‘āl*—“aqsaṭa-yaqsiṭu”—means justice and fairness. In this regard, if “qisṭ” is conjugated in *bāb-i if‘āl*, it means justice, but when it is conjugated as “qasaṭa-yaqsiṭu”, it carries a negative meaning and means oppression and cruelty. *Qāsiṭīn* is from this family. *Qāsiṭīn* means the oppressors. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) called them oppressors. But who were they? They were a group of people who apparently had accepted Islam for their own benefits, yet they basically had not accepted the *‘Alawīte* government. Whatsoever the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did for them were to no avail. Of course, this group had gathered around the Umayyad and Mu‘āwīya bin Abī Ṣufyān—who was the then governor and ruler of the Shām; their most prominent figures were the same Mu‘āwīya, Marwān b. Ḥakam and Walīd b. ‘Uqba. They were in one front and refused to deal and cope with ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). It is true that on the early days of ‘Alī’s (P.B.U.H.) government, Mughayra b. Shu‘ba and ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās and some others asked the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), “O’ ‘Alī! Keep them around for a while” but the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not accept. They took it as the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had no political insight; however, the subsequent events showed that they were totally wrong. Whatsoever the Commander of

١- «امرت ان اقاتل التاكثين والقاسطين والمارقين.»

2- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 36.

٣- قسَط.

٤- قَسَطَ يَقْسِطُ.

٥- جار يجور.

٦- ظلم يظلم.

the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did, Mu'āwīya did not cope with him. This mindset was not one that would approve a government like the *'Alawite* government even though the previous governments had tolerated some.

Since the day Mu'āwīya converted to Islam until the day when he sought to fight with the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), less than thirty years had passed. He and his associates had ruled in Shām for many years, they succeeded in becoming accepted into the society, they had found a position; it was not like those early days of Islam that if they said something, people would have told them as they were newly converted and their opinion was not that much of importance; indeed, they had found a place among people. Therefore, these were a group which mainly did not like the *'Alawite* government and wished to have a totally different government in their own hands; they did so later and the Islamic world tasted their rule as well. In other words, the same Mu'āwīya, who showed his goodness and was very kind toward some of the companions at the time of competing with the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), treated in an abrupt harsh manner and involved in violent confrontations during his reign which extended until the time of Yazīd and the incident of *Karbalā* and later to the time of Marwān, 'Abdul Malik, Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and Yūsuf b. 'Umar al-Thaqafī whom were only one of the fruits of such government. In other words, these governments which one should *shudder to mention their unspeakable crimes—just like the government of Ḥajjāj—are the same governments which* Mu'āwīya established and fought for with the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). It was clear from the beginning what they were seeking—namely a quite worldly government focused on the selfishness and their relatives; the same issues everyone saw during the Umayyad reign. Of course, I do not intend to enter into any doctrinal and theological discussion. These things I

mentioned are all recorded in history—not just in the history of the Shī'ites but the history of “Ibn al-Athīr”, “Ibn Qutayba” and so on—which I have their texts and are written down and available. These are certain things and have nothing to do with the intellectual differences between the Sunnites and the Shī'ites.

The Pledge-Breakers (*Nākithīn*)

The second group which fought with the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was *Nākithīn*. Here, *Nākithīn* means pledge-breakers. They pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) at first but broke their allegiance later. They were Muslims and unlike the first group, they were amongst the advocates of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) but the advocates who supported and accepted the government of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib until they were given an acceptable share of the government, until they were consulted, until they were given responsibility, until they were appointed as the governor, until no one had nothing to do with their property—their windfall gain—and asked them how they obtained the property. This group had only accepted the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) by one condition—this does not mean they had never accepted him—and the condition was that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had nothing to do with them and did not ask them how they obtained those properties, why they obtained them, why they were using them, why they possessed them; that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) promised not to talk about these things! Therefore most of them came and pledged allegiance to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) at first. Of course, some of them did not swear allegiance. Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ never pledged allegiance. There were also some other people who did not swear allegiance to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) too; but Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, the elders of the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and some others pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and accepted his Caliphate; however after three

or four months, they found that they could not deal with such a government because the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) government was a government in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not discriminate between friends and other people; in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not give himself superiority over people, in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not give his family superiority over others, in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not give those who have excelled in Islam—even though he himself had done a lot for Islam—superiority over others, in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not make an exception in implementing Divine laws. When they saw all these, they found that they could not deal with this person so they separated and the Battle of the Camel (the Battle of Jamal) broke out and that was indeed an intrigue. They even made the mother of the faithful, 'Āyisha, join them. Many were killed in this battle. However, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) won the battle and settled the matter. This was the second group with which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was occupied for a while.

Those Who Have Left the Faith (*Māriqīn*)

The third group was *Māriqīn*. *Māriq* means an apostate. For calling this group as *Māriq*, it is said that they ran away from the religion like an arrow flying from a bow! Imagine how an arrow flies away when you put it in a bow and draw the bow. This group ran away from the religion in the same manner. For sure, they were only adhered to the trappings of religion and talked about it. These were the *Khawārij*; a group which had based the basis of their deeds upon the deviant understandings and misconceptions – which are dangerous things. They had not learned the religion from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) who was the interpreter of the Holy Qur'an and a knowledgeable person; they learned it according to their own wrong tastes. However, the formation and organization of their group or cabal—as it is said in today's terminology—needed a wise policy.

This policy was formulated elsewhere. The important thing is that this cabal whose members recited a verse of the Qur'an if one had said something to them, whose members came in the middle of the congregational prayers of Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) and recited a verse of the Qur'an with a hint of irony about the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), whose members stood up and recited a verse of the Qur'an with a touch of irony about the Imam (P.B.U.H.) whenever he was delivering a sermon from the pulpit, whose members' creed was "There rule is only for Allah"¹—i.e. we do not accept your rule and we are people of Allah's rule, whose members had such manners were organized and established with the guidance and advice of the elders of *Qāsiṭīn* and figures of Shām—i.e. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ and Mu'āwīya! These people were associated with them. Ash'ath b. Qays, as the Qur'an refers to, was one of the impurities and a group of feeble-minded and unfortunate people followed in their footsteps. Therefore the third group, which the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) faced with and for sure defeated, was *Māriqīn*. In the Battle of *Nahrawān*, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) decisively routed this group yet they were living in the community and this finally led to the martyrdom of this great Imam (P.B.U.H.).

You should not confuse the meaning of *Khawārij*. Some have likened *Khawārij* to the sanctimonious but it is not true. Indeed, it is not the matter of being "sanctimonious" or "puritan". A puritan is sitting somewhere praying and supplicating. This does not mean *Khawārij*. In fact, *Khawārij* is an agent who is seeking a rebellion, causing a crisis, taking actions [against the Imam (P.B.U.H.)], seeking to fight with 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) and indeed, is fighting with the Imam (P.B.U.H.). Their basis was wrong; their fighting with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was wrong; the means were wrong, the goal was wrong. These were the three groups which

the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) faced with.

The Difference Between the Government of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the Government of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)

The major difference of the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) rule with the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was in this point that at the time of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), lines were clear: the line of belief and unbelief. Only the hypocrites were left out, yet the verses of the Holy Qur'an constantly warned people about the hypocrites living in the community, showed them, strengthened the faithful in face of them, and demoralized them. In other words, everything was clear in the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) Islamic system. The lines were identified: one was in favor of unbelief, oppression and ignorance while another person was in favor of faith, Islam, monotheism and spirituality. Of course, there were also different kinds of people; yet the lines were clear. At the time of Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.), the problem was that the lines were not clear and that was why the second group—i.e. *Nākihīn*—seemed vindicated and vulnerable figures. Anyone dealing with a person like Zubayr or Ṭalḥa would have hesitated. At the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), this Zubayr was one of the prominent personalities, the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) cousin and close to him. Even after the era of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), he was among those who strongly objected to the *Saqīfa* and supported the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Well, all is well that ends well! We beseech Allah to make our denouement happy. Sometimes, seeking worldly desires, various circumstances and worldly manifestations have such effects on and cause such changes in the personalities that sometimes one could hardly believe his eyes, let alone the public. So, it was really hard those days.

Indeed, those who were around the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), stood and fought for him had yielded great insight into the events. I have often quoted from the Imam (P.B.U.H.) saying, “And this banner will not be borne except by those who are the people of sight and endurance”^{1,2} First, it is necessary to have insight. It is quite obvious how the problems of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) were compounded by such conflicts or such distorted people who fought with and spoke ill of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) based on their wrong claims about Islam. In the early days of Islam, many false thoughts and ideas had been proposed but a verse of the Qur’an would have been revealed and explicitly rejected them whether in the time the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) inhabited in Mecca or in Medina. Look at Sūrat al-Baqara which was revealed in Medina. When one recites it, one finds that this sūra has mainly discussed various challenges and conflicts of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) with the hypocrites and the Jews in details. The Qur’an even has mentioned the ways in which the Jews of Medina used to subject the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to mental harassment: “Do not say *Ra’inā*”^{3,4,5} and so forth. Also in the Sūrat al-A’rāf, which was revealed in Mecca, the Holy Qur’an devoted a whole chapter on and fought with superstitions and fallacies. This matter of making unlawful and lawful the meats and those types of meats on which they had applied false prohibitions: “Say, ‘My Lord has only forbidden indecencies, the outward among them and the

١- «لا يحمل هذا العلم الا اهل البصر و الصبر».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, vol. 173.

3- The Jews in ridiculing the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) would say *Ra’inā* [meaning, ‘have regard for us’] with a change of accent turning it into another word which made it a term of reproach. (Trans.)

٤- «لا تقولوا راعنا».

5- *The Holy Qur’an*, Al-Baqara (2): 104.

inward...”^{1,2} This means these are prohibited not the ones you have prohibited for yourself as “Baḥīra”, “Sā’iba”, and such and such.³ The Qur’an explicitly fought with such thoughts but at the time of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), the same opponents used the Holy Qur’an and enjoyed the benefit of its verses for their own purposes. For this reason, the situation of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was more difficult. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) spent much of his short rule dealing with such difficulties and dilemmas.

On the contrary, the front of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) was indeed a very strong one with the people like ‘Ammār, Mālīk Ashtar, ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, Maytham al-Tammār and Ḥujr b. ‘Adī; they were all faithful and insightful personalities and played a main role in guiding the people’s thoughts. One of the most beautiful parts of the Commander of the Faithful’s (P.B.U.H.) era—of course, these are beautiful for the enormous efforts they made but at the same time these are bitter for the torments and tortures they suffered—is their move to Kūfa and Baṣra. When Ṭalḥa, Zubayr and some others rallied and seized Baṣra and moved toward Kūfa, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) sent Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and some of his companions to them. Their negotiations with the people, their talks in the mosque and their arguments are one of the exciting, beautiful and rich chapters of the history of early Islam. Therefore, you see that the major attacks of the enemies were against these personages. Most of the conspiracies were against Mālīk Ashtar; many of the conspiracies were led against ‘Ammār b. Yāsir; there were conspir-

١- ﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ﴾

2- *The Holy Qur’an*, Al-A’rāf (7): 33.

3- The pre-Islamic Arabs used these terms for individual camels and sheep, which were subject to such practices as the slitting of ears, the forbidding of their use for burden, their dedication to idols, and restriction of their flesh to males. The commentators give different descriptions of these primitive customs and their significance, reflecting probably their varying practice among pre-Islamic Arabs. (Trans.)

acies against Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr too. By any means, the enemies slandered and attempted to assassinate all those who had supported ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) from the very first day and demonstrated that their faiths were strong and firm, and enjoyed insight; and finally the enemies martyred most of these person-ages. ‘Ammār became a martyr in the war yet Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr was martyred by the intrigues of the people of Shām. Mālik Ashtar was martyred by their intrigues too. Some stayed alive but they were later martyred dramatically.

This is the life and rule of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). To sum up, it should be said that this government was a powerful one but at the same time oppressed and victorious. This means that he could bring the enemy to their knees in the days of his life; and after his heart-rending martyrdom, he turned into a blazing torch in the course of history. There is no doubt that the bitterness and hardships which the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) suffered was one of the most heart-rending and difficult tribulations in history.¹

1- Delivered on January 8th, 1999.

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The Spiritual Status of Lady Zahrā (P.B.U.H.)

The Patient Woman Put to Test

The blessings of Lady Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) are not confined to a small collection of virtues compared to the humanity's, which are not many. Now if you look at these with a rational and realistic view, [it becomes obvious that] humanity as a whole is indebted to Lady Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.)—and this is not an overstatement; this is a fact—as humanity is indebted more to Islam, is indebted more to the Holy Qur'an, is indebted more to the teachings of the prophets and the holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). It has always been so in the history and so is today. [Certainly], the light of Islam and the spirituality of Lady Fāṭima (P.B.U.H.) will become more pronounced and the humanity will touch it. What is our duty is to be worthy of belonging to that holy household (P.B.U.T.). Of course, belonging to the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.), affiliating ourselves to them and acknowledging their *Wilāya* are very difficult. As we recite in the written prayers that “we acknowledge to your friendship and kindness”¹; this brings an additional responsibility on our shoulders.

This great merit that Allah the Almighty had given glad tidings about to the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and said, “Indeed We have given you abundance”^{2,3}—which interpretation is Lady Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.)—is indeed a collection of all virtues which

١- «أَنَا أَصْبِحْنَا مَعْرُوفِينَ بِمَحَبَّتِكُمْ».

٢- «إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ».

3- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Kawthar (108:1).

every day pours down from the sky of prophetic religion on all humanity and every creature. Many have tried to deny it and sometimes conceal it, but they could not, “But Allah shall perfect His light though the faithless should be averse.”^{1,2}

We must get closer to this center of light, and the requirement of getting closer to the center of this light is being luminous. We should be illuminated not just with a mere love but with the deeds which the same love, same *Wilāya* and faith have dictated to us and demanded from us to. By practicing such deeds, we can belong and affiliate ourselves to the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.). It is never easy to become a person like Qanbar [served] at ‘Alī’s (P.B.U.H.) house. It is not easy to become a man like “Salmān [who] is one of us—Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.).”^{3,4} We—a community of the friends and Shī’as of the Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.)—hope those noble figures (P.B.U.T.) consider us as one of themselves and their followers.

“That humble person is one of us.”⁵ We like to be assessed so by the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) but this is not easy; this cannot be achieved only by assertion. This requires taking action, forgiving, sacrificing, and following their ethics.

See at what age this noble person that we pay heed to her virtues and merits—which are only a single drop of an ocean—could have all these virtues? At which period of her lifetime she showed such brilliance? In her short life; she was eighteen, twenty or twenty-five years old (there are different narrations about her birthday). All these virtues cannot be achieved in vain, “Allah Who created you had examined you before He cre-

١- «وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ».

2- *The Holy Qur’an*, Al-Şaff (61): 8.

٣- «سَلْمَانٌ مِنَّا أَهْلُ الْبَيْتِ».

4- *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 254.

5- Adopted from a poem of Ḥāfīz.

ated you (for this worldly life), and thus He found you successfully enduring in that trial.”^{1,2} Allah the Almighty examined Lady Zahrā (P.B.U.H.)—this chosen servant of Allah. The Divine system is an orderly one; what Allah gives is indeed bestowed for a reason. He saw the forgiveness, dedication, knowledge and sacrifice of this especial servant of Him done just for Divine purposes; therefore, He put her at the center of His blessings.³

I read once in a tradition that the brilliance of Lady Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) makes the Cherubim dazzle, “Her light [like the stars for the earth] shines for the angels of heaven.”^{4,5} She shines for them. How should we take benefit from this brilliance? By this brightest star, we should find the path to Allah and His obedience which is the right path and Lady Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) had passed it and so reached such a great position. If you see Allah has made her essence transcendental, it is because He knew that she could pass Divine exams successfully in the material world; ﷻ Allah Who created you had examined you before He created you (for this worldly life), and thus He found you successfully enduring in that trial. ﷻ⁶ This is the case. Albeit if Allah the Exalted had especial grace on that essence, it was because He was aware that how she would pass the Divine exam; otherwise, there were many who had good essences. But were all able to cope with [such responsibility]? This part of Lady Fāṭima Zahrā’s (P.B.U.H.) life is indeed what we need to save ourselves with. This tradition is mentioned in Shī’a resources that the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) once said to Fāṭima (P.B.U.H.)

١- «امتحنك الله الذي خلقك قبل ان يخلقك فوجدك لما امتحنك صابرة».

2- *Rawḍat al-Muttaqīn fi Sharḥ Man Lā Yaḥḍuruh al-Faqīh*, vol. 5, p. 343.

3- Delivered on December 26th, 1991.

٤- «زهر نورها للملائكة السماء».

5- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, p.173.

٦- «امتحنك الله الذي خلقك قبل ان يخلقك فوجدك لما امتحنك صابرة».

as, “O’ Fāṭima! Work for your soul [in the Hereafter because] I cannot give you anything from [what is belonged to] Allah”¹; that means O’ my beloved [daughter]! O’ my Fāṭima! I cannot make you needless before Allah. This means that you should be concerned about yourself; and from her childhood up to the end of her short life, she was concerned about herself.

Just see how that Lady (P.B.U.H.) lived! Before marriage when she was a little girl, she did such a good job for such great father that she was nicknamed “the mother of her father”². At that time, the Prophet of Mercy and Light (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the originator of modern world, the great leader and commander of that worldly revolution—the revolution which should remain forever—was raising the flag of Islam. There is no wonder that she is called “the mother of her father”³! Calling this her holiness (P.B.U.H.) with such a nickname is due to her helps, deeds, endeavors, and efforts. That Lady (P.B.U.H.), either at the time of living in Mecca or the Valley of Abū Ṭālib—with all the hardships or even at the time when her mother—Khadija (P.B.U.H.) passed away and left the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) alone, she stayed by her father and cared about him. The heart of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was broken in a short time by the death of Abū Ṭālib and Khadija. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) shortly lost these two [prominent] personages and felt extremely alone. Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) stood by her father in those days and wiped the dust of sorrow off the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) face with her small hands. “The mother of her father”⁴, as the comforter of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), was a nickname derived from those days.⁵

١- «يا فاطمة اعملي لنفسك، فإني لا أعني عنك من الله شيئاً».
٢- أُمُّ أَبِيهَا.

3- Ibid.

4- Ibid.

5- Delivered on November 24th, 1994.

Lady Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) was at the age of six or seven—there is differentiation due to different traditions on the date of her birthday—when the incident of the Valley of Abū Ṭālib happened. The period in the Valley of Abū Ṭālib was a difficult time at the early history of Islam. In other words, the call of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) [to Islam] had been just started, the call was made public, the Meccans gradually—especially the youth, especially the slaves—were converted to the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) religion and the tyrant elders [of Mecca]—such as Abū Lahab and Abū Jahl and some others—had no choice except to force the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and all the people around him to leave the city; and so did they. Most of them who were tens of families including the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), his relative and [even] Abū Ṭālib—even though Abū Ṭālib was one of the elders [of Mecca], the children, the old, the youth, all were forced to leave Mecca. They left Mecca, but where to go? Incidentally, his eminence Abū Ṭālib had a property in the notch of some mountains in a corner near Mecca—for example, a few kilometers from Mecca. It was called “the Valley of Abū Ṭālib”. Valley means an area of lower lands between two mountains, namely the notch of mountains, a ravine. We—people of Mashhad—call [colloquially] such place as “Bāzeh”¹ [a small open space]. Indeed, it is one of those exact and proper Persian words which villagers call “Bazeh”² in their local dialect but it is originally “Bāzeh”³. His eminence Abū Ṭālib had a “Bāzeh”⁴ or a valley. They decided to go there. Now you imagine! In Mecca, the days were warm and nights were extremely cold, this means the situation was quite intolerable. They lived for three years in these deserts. Allah knows how much they starved, how hard

۱- بازه.

۲- بزه.

۳- بازه.

4- Ibid.

it was, how much they suffered. One of the most difficult periods of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) life happened there. At that time, the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) responsibility was not only to lead a group but to vindicate his prophethood before those who were in distress.

You know when things are going well, all the people who have gathered around a leader are satisfied, they say, "Allah bless him, he has brought us to this good situation." When they encounter difficulties, all are highly skeptical saying, "He has led us [to this situation]; we did not want to get into this!" Certainly those who had a strong faith stood but in a long run the pressure of difficulties grew on the shoulders of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Meanwhile, in the era which had put extreme pressure on the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), his eminence Abū Ṭālib—who was the supporter and hope of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—and Khadija Kubrā—who was considered as the greatest spiritual help to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—passed away within a week! Very strange incident, this means the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was left all alone.

I am not sure if you ever have been the head of a teamwork and aware of the true meaning of its responsibility or not?! In such circumstances, one is really desperate. Consider the role of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) in such conditions. When one looks at the history, they should find these [historical] cases together in one place. Unfortunately, there is no material devoted specifically to such things.

Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) was like a mother, a consultant, a nurse for the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). It was on that time that Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) was called "the mother of her father"¹. This is related to that time, that means a girl of six or seven years was so. Of course, in Arabic countries and warm envi-

ronments, girls reach sooner their physical and mental prime, for example, as the nowadays growth of a girl of ten or twelve years old. She felt a sense of responsibility. Could this [Lady (P.B.U.H.)], as someone who had felt such a sense of responsibility and eagerness to the upcoming issues, be a role model for the youth? She used that great source of her vitality to clear the dust of grief and sorrow of the face of her father, who was about fifty years old and almost in an old age. Should not this [person] be a role model for the youth? This is very important.¹

Then in such a world, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) nurtured a daughter reached to the status that he kissed her hand! Kissing the hand of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) by the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), should not be perceived simply as an emotional feeling. This is very wrong and very inaccurate if one thinks that he kissed his daughter's (P.B.U.H.) hand just because she was his daughter and he loved her. Is it possible that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) with such dignity, justice, and wisdom and reliance on the Divine revelation and inspiration, bent over and kissed the hand of his daughter? Nay, this is another thing and it carries another meaning.

This indicates that when this young girl, this woman—who was between eighteen to twenty-five years of age (it is mentioned both eighteen years or twenty-five years of age for her)—passed away, she was at the height of human dignity and was a great personage. This is the attitude of Islam toward women.²

But her spiritual status is still far higher than her striving, revolutionary, and social position. Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) is in form of a human being and a woman, a young woman, but in a sense, she is a great truth, a bright light, a righteous servant of Allah and an outstanding and chosen human. She is the one

1- Delivered on April 27th, 1998.

2- Delivered on December 25th, 1991.

for whom the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) addressed the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) as, “O ‘Alī! You are the leader of my nation and their Caliph after me, and you are the Commander of the Faithful to heaven, as I see my daughter–Fāṭima comes on the Day of Resurrection [mounted] on a camel of light, [while] there are seventy thousand angels on her right, seventy thousand angels before her, seventy thousand angels on her left, and seventy thousand angels behind her; and she leads the faithful women of my nation to Paradise.”^{1,2} This means the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) would lead the believing men and Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) would lead the believing women to Divine Paradise on the Day of Judgment. She is the match and equal of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). [She is] the one whom whenever she stood at the altar to worship, thousands of angels of Allah addressed her, sent blessings upon her and told her the same thing they had told Saint Mary in the past; they said, “Indeed, Allah has chosen you and purified you and gives you superiority over the women of the world.”^{3,4} This is the spiritual status of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.).

A woman, at such a young age, reached such spiritual status that according to some traditions the angels spoke to her and presented the Divine truths to her. She was the “interlocutor”⁵, this meant someone whom angles spoke with and talked to. This spiritual status, vast arena and lofty peak have given her superiority over all the women of creation and the universe. Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) standing at the summit of this great

١- «يا علي أنت إمام امتي و خليفتي عليها بعدي، وأنت قائد المؤمنين إلى الجنة، وكأني أنظر إلى ابنتي فاطمة قد أقبلت يوم القيامة على نجيب من نور عن يمينها سبعون ألف ملك، و بين يديها سبعون ألف ملك، و عن يسارها سبعون ألف ملك، و خلفها سبعون ألف ملك، تقود مؤمنات امتي إلى الجنة».

2- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, p. 24.

٣- «يا فاطمة انّ الله اصطفاك و طهرک و اصطفاك على نساء العالمين».

4- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, p. 24.

height addresses all women of the world and invites them to take the same path.

The logic of those, who throughout history—both during ancient ignorance and the ignorance of the twentieth century—have tried to humiliate and disgrace women and to introduce them attached to worldly ornamentations and adornments as well as adhered to fashion, make-up, gold and ornaments, to show women are means and source of leisure in life and to make them basically take this way, is like snow or ice which is melted away and disappeared by the heat of the sun of Fāṭima Zahrā's (P.B.U.H.) spiritual status. Islam has introduced Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.)—this eminent Divine personage—as an exemplar and a role model for women. That simple life, striving, knowledge, eloquence, dedication, housework, motherhood, spousal manner and emigration as well as her all-around prominence—for which even great men had reverence for—this spiritual status, bowing down, prostrating, the alter of worship, supplication and the Scripture show that her Divine essence and brilliant spiritual status are analogous and equal to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H) and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). This means 'woman'. This is the role model of a woman that Islam is seeking for.¹

Her Political and Striving Life

There is a point in the life of Lady Zahrā (P.B.U.H) that should be noted. Of course, we do not seek to define her great spiritual status and certainly we are not able to understand and comprehend the spiritual status of Lady Fāṭima (P.B.U.H.). At the peak of the summit of human spirituality and the evolution of humanity, it is indeed only Allah the Almighty who can ful-

1- Delivered on January 16th, 1990.

ly appreciate such servants—as well as those who are equal to them. In this regard, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H), her great father (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and other Infallible Imams (P.B.U.T.) knew and could appreciate Fāṭima (P.B.U.H.) very well. People of that time and later and we, at this time, would not be able to understand fully that great brilliance and sparkle of spirituality in this eminent Lady (P.B.U.H.). Not everyone can see this spiritual shining light and in fact our weak and worldly near-sighted eyes cannot see that bright manifestation of humanity in these magnanimous personages [of Islam]. Therefore, we will not deal with the spiritual aspect of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.). Nevertheless, there is a point in the ordinary life of this great Lady (P.B.U.H.) and it is the combination of the life of a Muslim woman in her manners with her husband and children as well as doing her duties at home with the duties of a striving, brave and courageous person who knew no fatigue and tiredness in dealing with the important political events after the demise of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) when she went to the mosque, delivered a sermon, took a political stand, defended it and talked about; she was indeed a tireless, tolerant, and patient striver in every sense.

From the third perspective, she was a worshiper and performer of prayers at the very dark nights and the up-riser for Allah and the humble and submissive to the Lord. At the altar of prayers, this young lady worshipped Allah and intoned prayers just like the way the prophets (P.B.U.T.) and friends of Allah did in the past.

These three dimensions are jointly the bright spots in the life of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.). This lady did not separate these three perspectives. Some people assume those who are engaged in worship and prayers are only devotees, supplicants, and religious people but they cannot be political figures. Or some assume that those who are politicians—whether men or

women—and are working for Allah’s sake, if they are women, they cannot be a housewife doing their motherhood and housework duties and if they are men, they cannot be a family man and a breadwinner. They imagine these are incompatible with each other, whereas in Islam, these three things are not incompatible and against each other but they are very obliging in developing a human’s personality.¹

From political, social, and striving aspects, the character of Lady Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) is a distinctive and outstanding one in a way that all striving, revolutionary, prominent and political women can learn a lesson from her short and rich life. She was born in a revolutionary house and spent all her childhood in the arms of a father who was launching an unforgettable massive global campaign. She is that lady, who spent her childhood in the hardships of the campaign in Mecca, was taken to the Valley of Abū Ṭālib, suffered the hunger, hardship, fear and all kinds of adversity of the campaign in Mecca; and later when she migrated to Medina, she got married to a man who in all his life was striving for Allah’s sake; and in all nearly eleven years of married life of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) and the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), there was not a year nor half a year that this husband had not gone to the battlefield to strive for Allah’s sake and this great and devoted Lady (P.B.U.H.) had not fittingly fulfilled her duties toward this striving man, soldier, and permanent commander of the battlefields.

In this regard, although the life of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) was short and lasted only twenty years, this life is regarded as a vast ocean of strives, actions from the aspects of her striving, struggling, efforts, revolutionary actions, revolutionary patience, learning lessons and teaching them to this and that, delivering speeches and defending the prophethood and the Imam-

1- Delivered on December 13th, 1989.

ate and the Islamic government; and finally [such a life] was ended with her martyrdom. This is the striving life of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) which is enormous, wonderful and truly unique; and certainly it will stick as a bright and exceptional spot in humans' mind—both today and in the future.¹

Her Scholarly and Spiritual life

She is a prominent and distinguished scholar in the sphere of knowledge too. The sermon that Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) delivered in Medina Mosque after the demise of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is the same sermon that according to 'Allāma Majlisī, all the elders, rhetoricians, studious men and scholars should come together to interpret its phrases and words. It is very rich in terms of artistic beauty and is like the most beautiful and sublime words of *Nahj al-Balāgha*. Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) went to mosque, stood in front of people and delivered an impromptu speech! Maybe an hour, she spoke using the best and most beautiful phrases and the most cognitive and selective meanings.²

Mainly we—who usually deliver impromptu speeches, recognize how much these words are great. An eighteen, twenty or twenty-four year old girl—whose exact age is not clear because that noble Lady's (P.B.U.H.) birthday is not clear and there is disagreement over it—went to the mosque with those hardships and difficulties, stood in front of a great mass of people, delivered such a speech while wearing a *ḥijāb* that each of its words has remained in the history.

Arabs were known for having a good memory. Someone recited an ode of eighty lines in a poetry session. When the session was finished, dozens of people wrote exactly the same

1 - Delivered on January 16th, 1990.

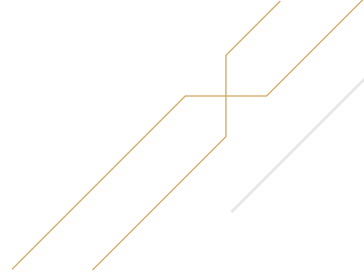
2 - Delivered on December 16th, 1992.



lines on paper. Most of the remained odes have been survived in the same way. Lyrics were recited in the clubs¹—i.e. social centers—and preserved. These sermons and traditions were often preserved in the same way. Some attended, wrote down, and kept the sentences in mind and thus the sermons have been survived up to these days. Idle talks do not remain in the history, not every word remains. So many words have been said, so many speeches have been delivered, so many issues have been addressed, so many poems have been composed but none of them have survived because no one pays attention to. Indeed, this [sermon] is what history has kept in its hearts and after fourteen hundred years, whosoever looks at it, they have felt reverence and humbleness toward it. In my opinion, this is an exemplar for a young girl.²

The life of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) in all its aspects is a life tied with action, effort, and the development and spiritual transcendence of a human being. Her young husband served constantly on the battlefronts in battlefields, but despite all these problems of life and the environment, Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) was a source of support for the people and Muslims who turned to her. She was the problem solving daughter of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and in such conditions, she led a great life with utmost honor; she brought up children like Zaynab, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.), had a husband like ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) and gained complete satisfaction of a father like the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)! At the time of conquests and the division of the spoils of war, the daughter of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) did not pay attention to a bit of formality, luxuries, worldly pleasures, and the things which the hearts of young girls and women beat for.

The worship of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) is a sample prayer.



Ḥasan Baṣrī—one of the well-known devotees and ascetics of the Islamic world, said about Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.), “The daughter of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) worshiped and stood at the altar of prayers to the extent that ‘her feet got swollen.’”^{1,2} The feet of that honorable Lady (P.B.U.H.) got swollen due to standing a long time at the altar of prayers! Imam Ḥasan Muṣṭafā (P.B.U.H.) narrated, “One night—a Friday night—my mother stood up to pray and she was worshipping until morning. ‘Until dawn broke.’³ My mother was worshiping, praying and supplicating from the dusk to the dawn.” Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.)—according to the tradition—added, “I heard she constantly prayed for the faithful men and women, she prayed for the people, she prayed for the basic issues of the Islamic world. When the morning came, I said, ‘O my mother!’^{4,5} ‘Why you have not prayed for yourself as you have prayed for others?’^{6,7} ‘You have not said a prayer for yourself! Dusk to dawn praying, and all for others!’ She said, ‘My son, [first for the] neighbors and then the household’^{8,9}, ‘First for others and then ourselves!’” This is that high spirit. Her striving in various fields is an outstanding one: in defending Islam, leadership, and *Wilāya*, in support of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), in taking care of the greatest commander of Islam—the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), her husband.

Once the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) said about Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.), “She never made me angry and never

١- «تورمت قدماها».

2- *Manāqib*, Ibn Shahr Āshūb, vol. 3, p. 341.

٣- «حتى انفجرت عمود الصبح».

٤- «يا أمّاه».

5- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, pp. 81-82.

٦- «لم لا تدعين لنفسك كما تدعين لغيرك».

7- *Ibid*, pp. 81-82.

٨- «يا بني، الجار ثم الدار».

9- *Ibid*, pp. 81-82.

disobeyed my order.”^{1,2} At home, Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) with such greatness and glory was a spouse and a wife as Islam orders.

That was her worship, her eloquence and rhetoric, her good sense and knowledge, her awareness and wisdom, her striving and *jihād*, her conduct as a daughter, her conduct as a wife, her conduct as a mother, her charity to the poor, that when the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) sent a poor old man to ‘Alī’s (P.B.U.H.) house saying, “Seek to receive your need from them”, Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) gave the skin—which Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) slept on and she used it as a mat for her children to sit on and had nothing at home except it—to the poor man and said, “Sell this and use the money!” This is the general character of Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.). This is an exemplar. This is an exemplar for Muslim women.

A Muslim woman should make efforts to acquire knowledge and wisdom; she should make efforts in the arena of ethical and spiritual self-education; she should be a pioneer in the arena of various kinds of striving and struggling; she should be indifferent to worldly wealth and worthless luxuries; she should be modest, pious, and virtuous in such a way that the impure looks are automatically diverted from her; she should provide emotional support for her husband and children; she should be a source of peace and comfort in her family; she should bring up healthy children—without complexes, good-spirited and psychologically healthy—with wise and gentle words in her kind and compassionate lap; and she should nurture [these] future men, women and personages of the society [very well]. [The role of] a mother is more valuable and constructive than [the role of] any other person. The greatest

scientists may build, for example, a highly sophisticated electronic tool or that they may build ballistic missiles but none of these matters as much as the one who raises a noble human being. And that very person is the mother. This is that true exemplar of a Muslim woman.¹



1 - Delivered on December 16th, 1992.



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The image features a central, ornate title card. The text is written in a highly decorative, calligraphic script. The words are arranged in four lines: 'One', 'Two Hundred', 'and Fifty-Year-', and 'Old Man'. The entire title is enclosed within a decorative, heart-shaped frame with intricate flourishes and floral motifs. The background of the page consists of a dense pattern of thin, parallel diagonal lines.

The Greatest Peace Treaty in the History

The Historical Circumstances Led to the Conciliation

The era of Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) and his conciliation with Mu'āwīya—the so-called peace treaty—was a fateful and unique event over the process of the Islamic movement in the early Islamic period. We have not seen a counterpart to this incident. Here, I give a brief explanation of this sentence and then I will address the main topic.

At first, the revolution of Islam—representing the Islamic thought and the trust entitled Islam which Allah the Exalted has sent to the world—was a movement and established in the framework of a striving movement and a huge revolutionary awakening. Once the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) declared this thought in Mecca, the enemies of monotheistic and Islamic thought united their ranks to stand against it and prevent it from advancing. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) resorted to organize this movement through mobilizing believing forces and led an extremely acumen, strong and progressive striving in Mecca which lasted thirteen years. This was the first era.

After thirteen years, this thought turned to a government and a political system—through the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) teachings, slogans, regulations as well as the sacrifice which had been made and all other factors—and change to the political system and the lifestyle of a nation, and that was when the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) emigrated to Medina, made it his base and established the Islamic government there. And so, Islam changed from a movement to a government. This was the sec-

ond era.

This process lasted over ten years of the life of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the period that followed the era of the four Caliphs, and then to the time of Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) and his caliphate, which lasted nearly six months, during which Islam emerged in the form of a government. Everything had a social order, i.e. there was a government, a military, and political, cultural and judicial affairs and the regulation of economic relations of the people—certainly Islam had the susceptibility to expand. Had it proceeded, it would have pervaded the entire globe. In other words, Islam has proved such ability.

In the time of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.), the opposing movement grew to the extent that it appeared as one of the obstacles. Of course, this opposing movement did not—naturally—emerge in the era of Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.), but it had been shaped during the years leading up to it. If one is willing to talk a little beyond the ideological aspects and just focus on historical evidences, perhaps he can claim that this movement did not appear to exist even in the Islamic period; rather, it was a continuation of what the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) experienced during his movement in Mecca, i.e. the first era. When the reigns of Caliphate at the time of Uthmān's Caliphate (which belonged to the Umayyads) fell into the hands of this family, Abū Sufyān—who had become blind at that time—sitting among his people, asked, "Who are the attendees?" He heard so and so and so. When he reassured all of the attendees were of his people and there was no stranger among them, he addressed them, saying, "Snatch it as young boys grab a ball."^{1,2} That means they should pass the caliphate like a ball to one another and do not let it get away from them. This incident is reported in both Sunni and

١- «تلقفوها تلقف الصبية للكرة»

Shi'ite chronicles. These are not ideological issues and we do not address them from an ideological point of view, nor am I in favor of discussing this matter from such a point of view except from a historical perspective.

Of course, at that time, Abū Sufyān was a Muslim, yet his conversion to Islam was after the conquest of Mecca, or when it was about to be conquered. He did not convert to Islam when it was weak and alienated; rather he reverted to Islam after it reached the peak of its power and strength. Truly, the opposing movement reached the peak of its power at the time of Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) and incarnated in form of Mu'āwīya b. Abī Sufyān and stood against Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.). This very person [i.e. Mu'āwīya] established the opposing movement, hampered the Islamic government—i.e. Islam in form of government, contrived problems and turned into a hindrance to the advancement of that movement of Islamic government.

We have stated repeatedly with respect to the conciliation of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) as it is also specified in the books that anyone (even the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)) in the same position of Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) and in such circumstances would have done what Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) did. It would never be right to say that one aspect of what Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) did is questionable. No, what the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did was in conformity with a logical inference and inviolable.

Who was the most revolutionary among all the Messenger of Allah's household (P.B.U.T.)? Who had surpassed all of them in leading a martyrdom-centered life? And who was the most zealous of them in maintaining religion and facing the enemy? He was Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (P.B.U.H.). This honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) participated in Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) conciliation. Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was not the only one to conciliate with Mu'āwīya; rather



both Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.) did it. However, Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) preceded Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). In other words, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was among the defenders and protectors of Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) conciliation. When one of the closed companions—of those ardent hotheads—in a private meeting started to complain to Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) about the conciliation, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) confronted him, “and Ḥusayn disparaged Ḥujr and he remained silent.”^{1,2}

There is no one to say, “If Imam Ḥusayn was in Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) position, this conciliation would not have taken place.” No, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was along with Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) when this conciliation with Mu'āwiya occurred. And undoubtedly, if Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) had not been there and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was totally alone in such conditions, this would still have been done and the conciliation would have been taking place.

The Need for a Peace Treaty and Conciliation (The Most Glorious and Victorious Conciliation of the History)

The conciliation had its own factors. Certainly, it was inevitable and could not be avoided. On those days, the idea of the martyrdom was not feasible. In this regard, the late Sheikh Rāḍī Āl-i Yāsīn (May Allah bless his soul) in his book entitled “The Peace Treaty of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.)” –which I translated in 1969 C.E., and was printed—demonstrates that it was not expedient for the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to be martyred on such a time. Not every killing is considered martyrdom and only being killed under certain circumstances means martyrdom. Those circumstances did not exist in that time and if Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was killed, he would not have been considered as a martyr. It was obvious on such circumstances if any one

١- «او غمز الحسين حُجراً».

2- *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, vol. 16, p. 15.

rose to make a pragmatic change and was killed, it would have been more likely he had committed suicide rather than being martyred.

We talked about different dimensions of the conciliation but the case is that after the conciliation of Imam Ḥasan Muḥtabā (P.B.U.H.) [with Mu‘āwīya], the matters were handled so intelligently and acumen that Islam and the Islamic movement did not switch to what had been created in the name of the [Islamic] caliphate—but in the sense of monarchy. This was what Imam Ḥasan Muḥtabā (P.B.U.H.) did. This honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) did such a thing that the authentic Islamic movement—which was started from Mecca, consolidated as the Islamic government and lasted until the Caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and his own era—moved in another way—not in form of a government rather in the form of a new movement. This is the third era of Islam. Once again, Islam became a movement. The authentic Islam, the anti-oppressive Islam, the uncompromising Islam, the Islam which was away from alterations, distortions, passions and desires and refused to turn into a plaything and remained as a movement. This means that the Islamic revolutionary thought, which had reached the amount of power and governance, had once again turned into a revolutionary Islamic ideology in the era of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.). Of course, the situation of this era was more complicated than the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) because those who shouted slogans were seemingly religious but covertly evil. This is the problem faced by the Imams of Guidance (P.B.U.T.). I have concluded through the whole narrations and the general life of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) that these honorable personages (P.B.U.T.)—since the peace treaty of Imam Muḥtabā (P.B.U.H.) until the Imamate of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.)—were in the process of renewal of this movement and its establishment in form of an *Alawite* Islamic government. There are narrations

in this regard. Perhaps, some may not notice this issue and see this from another perspective, but I think the Imams (P.B.U.T.) sought to turn this movement into a government and an authentic Islamic movement; and bring the same Islamic trend, which was away from contaminating and mingling with desires and passions, to power. However, this was a difficult job.

The Golden Aim of the Conciliation

The most important thing that the Islamic nation needed during the second era of movement—i.e. the caliphates of the Sufyanids¹, Marwanids², and ‘Abbasids—was to know the assets and originality of the authentic and Qur’anic Islam, find and recognize them among various scattered speeches so as not to make mistakes. It is not in vain that religions have so much emphasized on prudence and forethought. There is no wonder that the Holy Qur’an urges the reflection, prudence and contemplation of human beings on the most important religious subject—which means monotheism. However, monotheism is not limited to our saying that there is one God and not two. This is only one side of monotheism. In fact, monotheism is a sprawling sea in which the friends of Allah are immersed. Monotheism is like a vast ravine yet in such a vast arena, believers, Muslims and monotheists are asked to walk with contemplation, prudence and reflection. In fact, both reason and contemplation have the potential to move the human beings forward. Of course, in multiple stages, reason is fed with Divine revelation, knowledge and the inspiration from the teachings of the friends of Allah. Nevertheless, what moves forward is reason and without it, there is no progression.

What the Islamic nation needed over the centuries—when a certain group ruled in the name of the caliphate, that is until

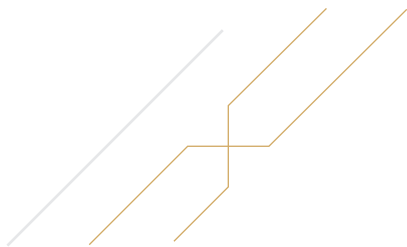
1- The descendants of Abū Sufyān.

2- Those of Marwān b. Ḥakam.

the seventh century during the period of the 'Abbasid caliphate; yet, after the collapse of the 'Abbasid caliphate, there were still governments here and there ruling on behalf of the Islamic caliphate such as the Mamluks in Egypt, the Ottoman Empire and etc.–was to use reason to assimilate whether the view of Islam, the Qur'an and certain narrations about the guardians are consistent with the reality or not. This is very important. ...During the caliphates of the Marwanids, Sufyanids and 'Abbasids, the Islamic values became devoid of their real contents in the way that in a little time nothing remained of them but the name and the content turned into the content of ignorance and evil.

The government that sought to make people wise, devoted, believer, free, virtuous, humble before Allah and arrogant in face of the arrogant [which the best exemplar was the same Islamic management system in the era of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)] turned into a regime which by a variety of deceptions made people the slaves of the whims and caprices of world and left them smarmy, corrupted and empty-handed. Unfortunately, the situation was so over the era of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphates.

The historians and chroniclers had written down so many things [about Mu'āwīya] that if we want to address them here, it will take a long time. This started at the time of Mu'āwīya. They made Mu'āwīya famous. In other terms, the historians and chroniclers wrote that he was a patient and tolerant man letting his opponents to say whatsoever they liked at his presence. Perhaps, this was true for a short time in the beginning of his caliphate. However, they had rarely described about his personality. Many of these historians and chroniclers did not indicate the way Mu'āwīya induced the individuals, the heads, the personalities and the figures to disavow what they believed and had faith in and to confront the truth. Many did not write



down such things. These are, of course, recorded in history, and certainly there were people who had written what we know at the present.

Those who were subject to these regimes were accustomed to not to say or do anything against the caliph's desire. What a community! What a man! And where are those Islamic and Divine will in the people to reform and remove evils and to establish a Divine society? Would such a thing be possible?!

Al-Jāhīz or Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī narrated that once Mu'āwīya went on a pilgrimage to Mecca on horse. One of the figures of the day was at his side. Mu'āwīya engaged in talking with him. A number of men were also following them. Mu'āwīya was proudly extolling on pre-Islamic glories and conferring honor upon his father, Abū Sufyān. A group of children were playing in the road with stones. In the meantime, a stone hit the forehead of the man accompanying Mu'āwīya and the blood copiously flowed down but he did not say a word and did not interrupt Mu'āwīya's discourse. He took patience while blood was dripping on his face and beard. While talking, Mu'āwīya turned to the man and saw the blood covered his face. Thus, Mu'āwīya said to him, "The blood is pouring from your forehead." The man replied, "Blood?! The blood is pouring from my forehead?! Where and when (this happened)?" He pretended he was so fascinated with Mu'āwīya's sayings that he did not feel the stone hit his forehead and wounded it and did not find the blood flew down his forehead. Mu'āwīya said, "You are a wonder, the stone hit your forehead and you did not feel it!" The man replied, "No, I did not feel it." Then he touched his forehead and added, "How strange, it is bleeding!?" Then he swore to Mu'āwīya and his sanctities: Until you have not told me, the sweetness of your words did not let me feel the flow of blood!" Mu'āwīya asked him, "How much is your share of the Treasury House?" The man answered, for

example, “Such and such amount.” Mu‘āwīya said, “They have wronged you greatly; it must be increased exponentially three-fold!” This culture was prevalent in Mu‘āwīya’s regime.

In that period, those who flattered the leaders and caliphs held the reigns of things. The affairs were not divided based on goodness and efficiency. Generally, the Arabs give deep interest in the origin and the lineage: From which family he was descended? Who were his forefathers? Truly, they were not even adhered to the origin and the lineage... At the time of ‘Abdul Mālik and some of his sons, someone named Yūsuf b. ‘Umar al-Thaqafī was installed as the ruler of Iraq for a long period. He was the governor and magistrate of Iraq for many years. He was such a jealous and unblessed person that many stories were narrated of. He was a small and short man. Whenever he gave a piece of cloth to a tailor to sew for him, he asked the tailor, “Does this piece of cloth fit me?” The tailor would look at the cloth and if, for example, he would say this piece of cloth was appropriate and maybe there would be more than what was needed for him, he would have taken back the cloth from the tailor and commanded to punish him! The tailors realized the case. For this reason, whenever he took the cloth to a tailor and asked him whether it fits him or not, he would respond, “No, it seems that it is not enough and we need a lot of effort in order to make it fit your [large] body.” Despite knowing the tailor was lying to him, he was pleased with what he said. He was such a fool! He is the man who killed Zayd b. ‘Ali in Kūfa. Such a person dominated over the lives, property and honor of the people for many years. He had neither a good origin or lineage nor knowledge or capability; rather only because he was closed to the center of power, he was appointed to this position. This is the evil result. This is one of the greatest scourges befalling a [political] system.

The Great Fruits of the Conciliation

This trend continued in this vein. Along this trend, the authentic Islamic and Qur'anic trend, which there was no appeasement with the ruling regime—that was incompatible with Islamic values—from its side, continued and its prominent touchstones were the Imams of Guidance (P.B.U.T.) and many of the Muslims who were loyal to them. Thanks to the presence of Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.), this valuable trend of Islamic movement preserved Islam. Without conciliation of Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.), the valuable revolutionary Islam would not have remained and would have ceased to exist because eventually Mu'āwīya would have prevailed. The situation was not in such a way that Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) could achieve a victory. All things have been going in the opposite direction of the predominance of Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.). Indeed, the dominance was going in favor of Mu'āwīya as the publicity was in his side. Mu'āwīya's personality in the Islamic world was not something they could remove the mask and show the real face.

Had it not been for the conciliation of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.), they would have perished the entire Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.) and no one would have survived to preserve the valuable authentic Islamic system. Everything would have been diminished. The name of Islam would have been eradicated and as a result, it would have not reached the movement of *Āshūrā*. If Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) insisted to continue the war against Mu'āwīya, the war would have ended to the martyrdom of the Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.). Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) would have been killed. The prominent companions, such as Ḥujr b. 'Adī, would also have been killed. Everyone would have been killed and there would have remained no one to benefit from the opportunities and preserve Islam in its valuable system, and this is a great debt being owed to Imam Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) for pre-

serving Islam.¹

Of course, conciliation was imposed and finally it happened. And it must be said that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was unwilling to it. And indeed, those conditions which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) made shook the foundation of Mu'āwīya's rule. This conciliation and the conditions of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) were all Divine schemes. "Then they plotted and Allah also devised."^{2,3} This means that if Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) had fought and been killed in the war—and there was a great possibility that he might have been murdered at the hands of his companions whom the spies of Mu'āwīya had bought off—Mu'āwīya would have claimed that he did not kill him rather his companions did so. Perhaps, he might have held mourning ceremonies too, and later, he would have wiped out all the companions of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). In other words, nothing would have remained on behalf of Shi'ism let alone a group that appeared in Kūfa after twenty years and invited Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Nothing would have been left of it. For this reason, Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) preserved Shi'ism, this means that he preserved the foundation until the government could be returned back to the Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.) after twenty or twenty-five years.⁴

The Objections to the Conciliation

After Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) conciliation with Mu'āwīya, some of the ignorant and the uninformed reproached the Imam (P.B.U.H.) in different ways. Sometimes they called him, "the means of humiliating the believers"^{5,6} and claimed that the

1- Delivered on April 11th, 1990.

٢- ﴿وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ﴾

3- *The Holy Qur'an*, Āl-i 'Imrān (3): 5.

4- Delivered on June 2nd, 2000.

٥- «مَذَلُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ»

6- *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 308.

Imam (P.B.U.H.) had humiliated all those ardent believers standing against Mu'āwīya and made them succumb to Mu'āwīya. In some cases, they used more respectful and polite phrases, but the content was the same. In face of these objections and reproaches, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) addressed them by this sentence (which might be more prominent among the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) sayings), "You do not know—maybe it is a trial for you and an enjoyment for a while."^{1,2} This Qur'anic statement means that the conciliation perhaps was a trial for them and a finite enjoyment for Mu'āwīya. This clearly demonstrates that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was waiting for the future, and the future could only be that the unjust government, which was not acceptable in Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) eyes, should step aside and the desired [just] government should come to power. For this, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was saying to them: You are not familiar with the philosophy of this matter. What do you know? Perhaps there might be an interest in this matter.

At the beginning of the conciliation, two Shi'ite prominent elders—Musayyab b. Najaba and Sulaymān b. Ṣurad—and a group of Muslims came to Imam Muḥtabā (P.B.U.H.). They said, "We have many forces from Khurāsān, Iraq, etc. and we put them under your command, and we are ready to pursue Mu'āwīya to the Levant". The Imam (P.B.U.H.) took them in private and talked few words with them. After they came out, they got quiet and left their forces. They did not even give a clear answer to their companions. Ṭāhā Ḥusayn claims that this meeting may in fact have laid the foundation stone for the Shi'ite strivings. In other terms, he wants to say that Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) met and consulted with them and it was at this meeting that they formed the great Shi'ite organization.

١- ﴿وَإِنْ أَدْرِي لَعَلَّهُ فِتْنَةٌ لَكُمْ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ﴾

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Anbīyā' (21): 111.

This is evident in the life of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and his words even though the ground was not ready for such uprising at that time because people were simply the dupes (of unscrupulous Mu‘āwīya) and the enemy’s financial capabilities and propaganda were many. The enemies used the methods which Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) could not use it, such as bestowing large amounts of money, and gathering all the corrupted, and wicked people around. Indeed, Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was adhered to Islamic values whereas Mu‘āwīya was not.¹

It is narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) saying, “[Allah has fixed] a time for this matter in (the year) seventy.”^{2,3} It was one of the Divine predeterminations that after thirty years after the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and ten years after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) the government would return back to the Prophet’s household (P.B.U.T.). But when this would be achieved? (It would be achieved) whenever people prepare the ground by their will and determination. Allah the Almighty has no favorites! The people did not fulfill the responsibility which was put on their shoulders. Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.) completed what was their responsibility, but the personalities—as ‘Abdullāh b. Ja‘far and ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās and others—did not fulfill their responsibilities. Even those who went later to *Karbalā* and fought along with Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) did not do what they should have done at the time of Muslim (ibn ‘Aqīl). They fell short of their responsibilities otherwise what happened to Muslim would have not happened. They should have finished the matter but they did not. This failure in fulfilling responsibilities led to the incident of *Karbalā*.

1- *Pāsdār-e Islām* (6).

3- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 368.

٢- «وَقَّتْ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ فِي السَّبْعِينَ»

Then the Imam (P.B.U.H.) adds, “So when Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was killed, the wrath of Allah intensified upon the people of the earth, therefore He delayed it to (the year) one hundred and forty.”^{1,2}

It was delayed for seven hundred years. These are the years the ‘Abbasids came to power... It is evident that Imam Ḥasan’s (P.B.U.H.) conciliation became the ground for this great work. Otherwise, the Imams (P.B.U.T.) would have not left the case. Is the issue of *Wilāya* and government a simple case?! It has been the basis and pivot of religion. But in the end, that was what happened.³

The Conciliation and the Modification of the Course of Caliphate

Much has been said about this conciliation but what I want to say is to deal with the issue of Imam Ḥasan’s (P.B.U.H.) conciliation from a new perspective because this issue marks an extremely sensitive historic passage making this incident more important than any political issue throughout the history of Islam. The history of Islam is full of different events. Those happened at the era of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and after his demise, at the era of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), at the era of the Imams (P.B.U.T.), at the era of the Umayyad and ‘Abbasid caliphs. The history of Islam is full of important incidents but there are a few events similar to Imam Ḥasan’s (P.B.U.H.) conciliation in terms of having a decisive impact on the entire Islamic history. Perhaps, there are one or more incidents in the history of Islam that have been persistent in the Islamic movement, the entire history of Islam and over the centuries.

١- «فَلَمَّا أَنْ قُتِلَ الْحُسَيْنَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ أَشْتَدَّ غَضَبُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَى أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ فَأَخَّرَهُ إِلَى أَرْبَعِينَ وَمِائَةً»

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 368.

3- Delivered on June 2nd, 2000.

This incident is very interesting in this respect.

In summary, this incident is the turning point of changing the Islamic caliphate to the monarchy. This sentence is very meaningful if we ponder on. caliphate is one type of government and monarchy is another. The differentiation between these two is not limited to one, two or five ways. The path of monarchy and the path of caliphate are completely separated and distinguished by the management and the ruling of the state and Islamic community. In this incident, the great train of Islamic history and Islamic life changed its track as it happens when you look at the trains changing tracks. At a critical point, a switchman switches the rails leading the train to change the track from a loop line to the main line. The train which was heading toward North changes the track to the South. Of course, this change does not happen in a single moment, but retrospect, when one looks back, he finds that it has happened. I look at this incident from this perspective.

The Struggle of Right and Wrong

There are seven key questions revolved around this topic:

First: After Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) conciliation, one trend was replaced with another one. In the words of the day, the power was handed over. What were the advantages and characteristics of these two trends? What were their features? This is the first issue.

Second: What kind of methods did the wrong trend, which took over the power, use in order to gain power and dominate on the society?

Third: What kind of methods did the right trend—which lost power i.e. Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) trend—use in order to resist against the wrong trend? What were the ways and means used by the Imam (P.B.U.H.)?

Fourth: There is an analysis of the defeat. Why did the right trend defeat in this incident? What is the analysis of this matter?

Fifth: How did the victors treat the defeated? This is one of the most erudite chapters of history.

Sixth: How did the defeated treat the victors? What kind of policies and strategies did they choose and what was the result?

Seventh: What was the consequence?

The Characteristics of the Movements of Right and Wrong

With respect to the characteristics of each trend, there is much that can be said. If we want to list them, it will take a long time. Therefore, I summarize it. The right trend, Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) trend, gave authenticity to religion. For them, religion was a doctrine. What is religion? It means religion should remain within people's faith and belief, and people keep clinging to religion both in faith and actions. Religion should rule over managing the community. This was a doctrine for them that the community should move according to the management, the authenticity and the rule of religion and there should be an Islamic system. Gaining power, governing, and holding the reins of power were in the second, third or fifth place. Other issues were not so much of importance. But the main issue was that this system and this community should be managed according to the rule of religion, and the people of this community should keep on their religion and their faith, and take hold and deepen this in their hearts. These were the characteristics of the right trend.

The basic principle of the second trend was to take over the reins of government at any cost. They wanted the government.

This was the ruling policy of the wrong trend. The case was to take over and keep the reins of government at any cost and by any means.

This is common among politicians in the world. For them, the [social] values and doctrines are not very important. If they want to maintain a doctrine, they would do it, and if they cannot, they just seek to keep power at their own hands. That is what is important to them. Such an end is very sensitive and important. It is possible that each of the two trends may practice the appearance of religion—as it was in the war between the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and Mu‘āwīya. Once a group of the Commander of the Faithful’s (P.B.U.H.) troops got hesitated in the battle of Şiffin—where Mu‘āwīya and the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) were fighting with each other. Among them were several of those who held suspicions and could not clarify it or they never referred to a person capable of doing so for them; hence, they resolved to disseminate their suspicion and gathered a group of people around themselves. Some of these people got suspicious and hesitant. They said, “Why are we fighting with each other? They perform prayers and so do we. They recite the Holy Qur’an and so do we. They mention the name of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and so do we.” They got hesitant. ‘Ammār b. Yāsir was the analyst and enlightener of those critical and doubtful issues which were neglected and ignored for a long time. This was the real status of ‘Ammār b. Yāsir—in whom I found an especial interest and attention—in the history of Islam. If we know Mālīk Ashtar by his sword and courage, we should know ‘Ammār b. Yāsir by his words, thoughts, true perspective and excellent enlightenment in the history of early Islam. I have rarely seen one of these hesitant cases happened at the era of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and ‘Ammār b. Yāsir had not been present there. This great man was outstanding.

When ‘Ammār b. Yāsir got informed that there was a group caught in suspicion, he went to them and presented some facts to them. Elaborating the issue was not apparently the matter of performing prayers, he added, “I swear to Allah I saw in another war these two banners were opposite to each other. This banner carried by the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) today had stood against the banner carried by Mu‘āwīya and it was in the battle of Badr. In the battle of Badr, these two banners—the banner of Banī Hāshim and the banner of the Umayyad—confronted each other. Under this banner, the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) were standing whereas Mu‘āwīya and his father were under the next one. The divergence between them was fundamental. One should not judge things by their appearance.” Therefore, ‘Ammār b. Yāsir removed suspicion from their minds.

Sometimes, the trend, for which the power is the main doctrine, may take account of practicing the Islamic rituals. This [practice] is not a reason and a standard rather, consideration should be given to the soles of the case and it should be diagnosed intelligently where each trend applies, this is the first thing.

The characteristics of each of the two trends, the trend seeking to gain power and the trend moving toward the values, the principles and the assets. Islamic structures and authentic Islamic ideas—i.e. Islamic values—are the basis of this trend. This means that we should believe in it and strive in its way. Therefore, they are basic proceeding for the assets and preserving authentic values. On the other side, there is a trend in pursuing power—no matter what happens, it seeks to take power in any manner or form. This is the first issue.

The Methods of the Trends of Right and Wrong in Action

As for the trend of wrong, what are the methods used by it? This is eye-catching. The wrong trend's methods generally are a combination of several things, namely Mu'awīya's plan was based on several parts in order to maintain power and deepen the authority, each of which had its style and approach depending on different time and place. One of these methods was putting his power on display, and in some places he heavily suppressed and harassed; the second was money, which is the most effective thing at the hands of evil people, and the other factor is propaganda, and the fourth is political actions—which means political methods and trade-offs. In summary, these were the tactics of Mu'awīya.

You see on some occasions the cruelty of Mu'awīya reached to the point that he murdered Ḥujr b. 'Adī who was of the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) even though it carried a heavy price for him. He also persecuted and killed Rushayd Hujarī. Even he appointed Ziyād b. Abīh, who was an unjust and jealous person seeking power and having bad morals, as the governor of Kūfa—the center of the Shi'ite thought and the thought of *Wilāya*—and let him do whatsoever he wished. The historians had written about Ziyād b. Abīh as, “[Allah, the Most Exalted, does not forget how] you annihilate people for mere suspicion and [how] you kill His friends only on account of accusations.”^{1,2} They would arrest, lock up and torture anyone under the slightest suspicion of belonging to or cooperating with the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) or the defeated trend. There was a great commotion in Kūfa and Iraq, which were the centers of Shi'ism and the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.). Mu'awīya put

his power on show in this way. On another occasion, you see an old woman from a tribe who insulted and chided Mu'āwīya that he did such and such, but he laughed, soothed her and did not tell her anything. 'Adī b. Ḥātim went to Mu'āwīya, while having lost his eyesight. Mu'āwīya addressed him, "O' 'Adī! 'Alī had been unjust to you. You lost your sons in war while his sons—Ḥasan and Ḥusayn—remained alive."¹ 'Adī cried and replied, "O' Mu'āwīya! I have been unjust to 'Alī. He is martyred while I am still alive."^{2,3}

Whenever one of the people associated with the Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.) was at Mu'āwīya's presence and heard the least insult to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), he would have frankly pounced on Mu'āwīya and his companions with courage and strength. Mu'āwīya might laugh and sooth the person or sometimes he shed tears saying, "Yes, you are right." Perhaps, this is unbelievable for you, but this is a fact, so it was the propaganda. The propaganda is one of the most poisonous and dangerous methods throughout history that the wrong trend abundantly benefited from it. However, the right trend never applies it as the wrong trend does because for taking the most benefit from propaganda on people's minds, there should be manipulation, lying and deception. The right trend is not of lying and deception. It is the wrong trend that did not care about anything. What is important for it is to reverse the truth completely. It takes advantage of all the means and so they did so.

What you read in different narrations that when the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was martyred in the altar of prayers, the people of the Levant got wondered what 'Alī

١- «يا عدوي إن علياً لم ينصفك، لأنه حفظ ولديه في حروبه وأخذ منك ولديك»

٢- «يا معاوية، أنا لم أنصف أمير المؤمنين حينما استشهد هو وأنا ما زلت حياً»

3- *Al-Darajāt al-Rafī'a*, p. 360.

(P.B.U.H.) was doing in the altar, saying that the altar is for those who pray! Some do not believe this, but this is a fact. Over the years, the rule of Mu'awīya, and before him—his older brother, Yazīd b. Abī Sufyān—had spread propaganda in the Levant, and cluttered mind to the extent that it was not possible for one to find the truth. This is what happened in the rule of Mu'awīya. The propaganda was led in favor of the Umayyads, Mu'awīya and it was against the Prophet's household (P.B.U.T). This is actually what happened in the Muslim world and remained so until about a hundred years after the emigration of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to Medina—it was perhaps forty or fifty years after the Caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) that he was still cursed on the pulpits. This cursing in the world of Islam was all led by Mu'awīya and this was his morals. Some later accused the Shi'ites and blamed them for cursing some of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) companions; this was indeed what they did, this was what Mu'awīya did. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)—'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who was “the best of people”^{1,2}, “the predecessor of the people in Islam”^{3,4} and the closest companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), was cursed and reviled for decades from atop the pulpits until 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Azīz became the caliph and forbade it, saying no one was entitled to do so. After 'Abdul Malik b. Marwān, his two sons, Walīd and Sulaymān, governed consecutively for a period of twelve or thirteen years, and then after them, 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Azīz reigned for one or two years and then 'Abdul Malik's two other sons—Yazīd and Hishām—sat on the throne. 'Umar

١- «أفضل القوم»

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 80—“'Alī (P.B.U.H.) was the best of people after the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)”

٣- «وأقدمهم إسلاماً»

4- *'Awālim al-'Ulūm wal-Ma'ārif*, vol. 11, p. 383—[The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) told to Fāṭima (P.B.U.H.),] “...I married you to someone who is the predecessor of the people in Islam, the most tolerant of the people, the most good-humored of the people and the most knowledgeable of people in Allah's eyes.”

b. ‘Abdul ‘Azīz stopped them. He did not allow anyone cursing the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and it was truly what they have been doing at the time. Yes, in the beginning, people wondered but they used to it little by little.

We read in history that there remained no Qur’an reciter, narrator and relator in the Muslim world unless Mu‘āwīya’s regime and his successors forced them to fabricate traditions, comment on the verses of the Qur’an and the likes, in disparaging of the Prophet’s household (P.B.U.T.) and in praise of their enemies. This well-known Samura b. Jundab—which the famous tradition of “There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm”^{1,2} is narrated him—was one of the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); however, the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was displeased with him because he had a palm tree in a house belonging to a family and would break into the house to watch over his tree while they were living there. The family—wife, kids, and elders—suddenly saw a person had entered the house without permission. The owner of the house complained to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) advised Samura to “Sell this palm tree to the owner of the house.” He replied, “I do not sell it. It is my tree and I want to watch over it.” The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) advised him, “Sell it to me.” Samura rejected it. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) advised Samura, “I give you a refund.” But he did not accept. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) told him, “I offer a tree in Paradise.” This means a promise of Heaven but he did not accept and said, “I do not want it. I just want my tree.” Once the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) found Samura’s insistence on having the tree, he commended the owner of the house to uproot the tree and throw it out. “There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm in Islam”³ This means

١- «لا ضرر ولا ضرار في الإسلام»

2- *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 5, p. 294.

٣- «فلا ضرر ولا ضرار في الإسلام»

we should not harm people under the pretext that this is our property. There is no such a thing in Islam. The famous tradition of “no harming”¹—which is one of the assets and the rules of our jurisprudence—is about this man. Samura b. Jundab remained alive up to the era of Mu‘āwīya. What a bad destiny he had. Mu‘āwīya was looking for the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) because the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) were prominent and stature. As a result, Mu‘āwīya was trying to gather them around himself. Mu‘āwīya brought him into his presence and said, “I would like you say this well-known verse, ‘Among the people is he whose talk about worldly life impresses you, and he holds Allah witness to what is in his heart, though he is the staunchest of enemies.’^{2,3} has been revealed about ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.)’”. Indeed, Mu‘āwīya sought to make this verse against the words of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) on disparaging the world in that overwhelming sermon of *Nahj al-Balāgha* because it had a significant impact. You have noticed that the words and speeches were in the utmost beauty.

Imagine one day, for example, someone is writing a book, a poem or an article on a topic in a very eloquent, magnificent and artistic language. It is natural that the subject would take the glory and the author of this artistic masterpiece would signify his status in the eyes of the people. Here we cannot actually compare the words of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) with any artistic masterpieces that we know. It is much more than this. It is a sign of beauty. These words of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) in *Nahj al-Balāgha* were all about Islamic values and teachings but Mu‘āwīya could not afford and accept because they signified the status of the Com-

١- «لا ضرر»

٢- «وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَصَامُ»

3- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Baqara (2): 204.

mander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) in the eyes of the people. With this aim, Mu'āwīya wanted to face these ascetic words disparaging the world which were quoted by the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Hence, he asked Samura b. Jundab to say that this verse was revealed about 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.). In other words, [he asked him to say] 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.)—who talked about the world in such a way that it made people admire him and swore to Allah—was indeed one of the worst enemies of Allah and Islam.

Mu'āwīya asked Samura, "Say this verse, 'And among the people is he who sells his soul seeking the pleasure of Allah,'^{1,2} refers to Ibn Muljam." This is one of the things that was very much needed by Mu'āwīya for his propaganda. He asked one of the companions of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) who had met the Prophet in person was fighting at his side—Samura b. Jundab was a soldier since his childhood and he took part in the battles although he was very young, (Samura was such a person)—to say this verse has been revealed about the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). Mu'āwīya suggested him but the conscience of Samura b. Jundab, even though he was a bad and wretched man, did not allow him and so he replied: Never. And Mu'āwīya commanded to those who were mediating this matter to tell Jundab, "Do not worry about money and you will be given fifty thousand dirhams." This amount was very much at that time. Fifty thousand shackles of silver means five thousand shackles of gold. In the accounts of that time, it was a great fortune. They told him Mu'āwīya would give you fifty thousand dirhams but he said, "No, I do not accept." Here. Some say that Samura b. Jundab was in fact manipulating and wanted to raise the price. It was not due to his conscience as he

١- ﴿وَمَنْ التَّائِبِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ﴾

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Baqara (2): 207.

was aware that Mu'āwīya needed it; and consequently, he was trying to bargain. Whether his conscience did not allow him or not, I do not know, and I do not judge it. When he did not accept the offer, they raised the price to one hundred thousand dirhams yet he did not accept. So they raised the price to three or five hundred thousand dirhams (I am not sure about the amount) still he did not accept it even though it was such a very large amount. It was an extraordinary wealth yet he did not accept.

Mu'āwīya said to the one who was mediating this matter, "This mad man does not know how much five hundred dirhams is. Bring five hundred thousand dirhams so that he sees how much it is. Then, I will see whether he accepts it or not." Thus, he ordered the one who was in charge the Treasury House to bring five hundred thousand dirhams there. As you know, at the time, silver dirhams—placed in the bags—were heavy and an enormous amount. The porters brought the bags and put them up until they reached the ceiling. They said to Samura, "These are five hundred thousand dirhams. Do you accept or not?" When Samura looked at the money and saw such a great wealth before himself, he accepted and interpreted this verse as Mu'āwīya wished and it remained so in the books. Although such nonsenses commingled with misconception were removed from the Islamic world, and later scholar excluded them yet their effects remained and affected on some. This is what was carried out by Mu'āwīya: propaganda. All these methods are Mu'āwīya's methods for gaining power.

Apart from this, the right trend did not sit idle against the wrong trend's attacks. They had also some methods, which can be shortened as: strong resistance and powerful movement. Some assume that Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) had not fought due to fear. No, it is not true. Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) had the intention of war and was indeed one of the brave Arabs. I have

seen in some of the books many of Imam Mujtabā's (P.B.U.H.) championships are mentioned in different cases and various events. However, the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not let Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.) fight in his battlefields lest they might fall in danger. Some said, "Why do you send Muḥammad b. Ḥanafiya to the battlefield, since he is also your son, yet you do not send Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.) to the battlefield?" He would reply, "I am afraid to cut off the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). These are the only persons that are left of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and I want to preserve them." Indeed, He felt the danger of the battlefield and wanted to preserve these two, not because of his [paternal] love, because he loved his other sons too, and he, himself, was the man of the wars, the battlefields and the risks. He was not of those being afraid of taking risks. However, they were the grand sons of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) did not want to put them in danger. Since these two honorable Imams (P.B.U.T.) were present in the battles of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), but they did not do many championships and consequently their names—Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.)—are not recorded among the brave. Despite this, Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was present at the Islamic wars against Iran. He also defended the house of 'Uthmān against the attackers and the rebels by the order of his father—the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). And likewise in many other important occasions Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was present. In the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) played an important and outstanding role. I have seen the name of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) had been mentioned a lot in the incidents of the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn—especially these two. However, the name of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) had been mentioned less. This means that the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—i.e. Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.)—had more presence in the battlefields

and the events than Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). He was a man of war, politics, eloquence and prudence. When one reads the debates of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) one's hair stands on end because of his being so strong and powerful. In the incident of conciliation and after it, such unequivocal and overwhelming words are quoted from this honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) that are more mind-boggling than those of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.). I have less often found such intensity and power in the words of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) against the enemies and perhaps it is because of this that Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) had not faced at close quarter with such close, insolence and malice enemies. Hitherto, there is no deficiency in what Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) did. Yet the conditions of the time were no longer viable. The Imam competently stood up to defend to the extent that it was possible—this was one of his methods. In some occasions, standing powerful would end up in loss. Changing the method and maneuver in the choice of methods promise an essential and necessary action.

The second is propagation. The role of propagation is of paramount importance for the right trend, yet it cannot employ any method or means which does not show the truth and reality. There are things that are desirable for the people and so the wrong trend always displays things as people desire; yet the right trend cannot do that because it shows the truth even if it is bitter. The Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) sometimes addresses his companions so angrily that one marvels at it! For us, who would like our ways to be like the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.), it is so marvelous in some cases. Mu'āwīya never used this method. He just curried favor with people and sought their support at any price. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) did not do this, not because he did not know how to do it but because it was opposite to his piety and principles. In this regard, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) says, "Had it not been for piety, I would

have been the shrewdest of Arabs.”^{1,2} This was really so. The provenance of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), his closeness to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and his great feats as well as his splendid mind and spirit approve that he was more intelligent than Mu‘āwīya and could do many things yet the truth did not let him to do so.

The other method is to preserve values. What is important for the right trend and makes it give more attention to its methods is to preserve values at any cost. In the end, it retreats to where it guards the survival of religion. One should also keep in mind that if the right trend saw that resilience may lead to the demise of the asset of religion, it would retreat and is not disgraced of such retreating. Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) says, “Death is better than perpetration of humiliating actions, while humiliation is better than entering the hellfire.”^{3,4} There are some conditions we see some people do anything, in order not to bear humiliation, even if it leads to the chastisement and Divine wrath. What is the [importance] of humiliation? The idea is to earn the pleasure of Allah. The idea is to perform duties even though you have to retreat from what you said, your policies, or a setback from your position. “All is what Allah wants and everything is what pleases Him” is a principle in the life of the Imams (P.B.U.T.)—such as in the life of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.). When the Imam (P.B.U.H.) found that he had to conciliate with Mu‘āwīya for necessities and the pressure of circumstance, although at the time he deployed soldiers, instigated the war, recruited the soldiers and sent letters and did all what was necessary for the war. Despite this, when he saw that he could not fight (due to the conditions), he accepted to conciliate with Mu‘āwīya. Even his closest companions turned their

١- «لولا التقى لكنت أدهى العرب»

2- *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 24.

٣- «الموت أولى من ركوب العار والعار أولى من دخول النار»

4- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 128.

backs on him... At the time the Imam (P.B.U.H.) consolidated with Mu'āwīya, many people rejoiced because they hated the war from the bottom of their hearts, but at the same time they might have scolded Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) for retreating from his position. Even his close companions (the personalities that I do not want to mention their names here), who were among famous companions, came to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and criticized him severely. But the infallible Imam (P.B.U.H.) retreated in order to maintain religion.

The Causes of the Defeat of the Right Trend

The next issue is to analyze the defeat of the right trend. Basically the reason for the defeat of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was the weakness of public awareness—as the main reason—and the blending of faith with material motives. On the issue of the weakness of public awareness, people were far from consciousness, and religious faith was mixed with material motives. Materialism had become already their asset. They shook their values for more than ten or twenty years before Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) conciliation. This occurred for all the values and assets. There was something of discrimination and other similar things which led Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) to not being able to resist.

On the other hand, the manner of the victors with the defeated was in the way that when they dominated on things (instead of murdering, capturing and prosecuting Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and his followers) they faintly respected and met the Imam reverentially. However, Mu'āwīya and his people decided to obliterate the Imam's personality and weaken it. They did not kill him but rather annihilated his personality. This was a key factor in their propaganda.

But how did the defeated treat the victors? Their strategy was to organize and establish a right trend amid the then in-

flammatory, dangerous, toxic circumstances to be the backbone for preserving Islam. At the time, they could not establish the correct Islamic thought in the community, they preserved a deep and authentic trend (instead of an unconsolidated and fragile trend—i.e. the mainstream) in order to maintain and ensure the preservation of Islamic authentic assets. This is what Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) did. He formed a small trend and organized it in the best way. This is the same trend of the companions and followers of the Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.); the trend of Shi'ism. They remained throughout the history of Islam, and in all eras of repression and harassment, they ensured the survival of Islam. If they had not been there, everything would have been changed. It was the trend of Imamate and the trend of the insight of Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.) which guaranteed the true Islam.

But the consequence, the group of the victorious, the conquerors and the powerful appeared as the convicted and overwhelmed, and the defeated appeared as the victorious and the conquerors in the mentality of the Muslim world. If we look today at the mentality in the Muslim world, it is somehow what was promoted by Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) not what was promoted by Mu'āwīya, Yazīd, 'Abdul Malik, Marwān and other Umayyad caliphs. Their mentality was completely defeated and did no longer exist in history. If we want to put a name on their mentality, we would say it was the mentality of Nawāṣīb—those who have hatred. Nawāṣīb were a sect that no longer exists in the Muslim world. Nawāṣīb were those who insulted the Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.) and did not accept their Islam. This was their mentality. If Mu'āwīya was supposed to be a conqueror and victor, such a trend should have been dominated today on the Islamic world; whereas it is not so and the intellectual trend of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥasan

(P.B.U.H.) has dominated the world even though there are differences in some branches and divisions, but it is the same trend of right [in the world]. Based on this, Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was the conqueror and his trend was victorious. This is a summary of the incident of Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) conciliation in terms of its impact on the Islamic history.¹

1- Delivered on April 22nd, 1989.

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

Threatening Dangers of Islam and Means of Resisting Them

Internal and External Plagues

The dangers that threaten Islam as a dear phenomenon, have been predicted by Allah before it came into existence and or from the time of its coming into being, and the means to deal with those dangers have also been taken into consideration and devised in Islam itself and in this collection itself. Like a healthy body, in which Allah Almighty has placed its defensive powers inside it, or like a properly-working machine, that the engineer and the manufacturer have provided spare parts for its maintenance in it. Islam is a phenomenon and like all phenomena, dangers threaten it and it needs a means to resist these dangers. Allah Almighty has put this means within Islam itself. But what are those dangers? There are two major dangers: One is the “external enemy” and the second one is “internal disintegration”.

The “outside enemy” means the one that targets from outside the borders, with a variety of weapons, the entity of a [ruling] system with its thoughts, ideological infrastructural system, laws, and everything. What does from the outside mean? Not from outside the country. From outside the system; even though it is inside the country. There are enemies who regard themselves as strangers from the system and are opposed to it. They are outside. They are aliens. They are working hard in order to destabilize a system and destroy it. With the sword, with fire arms, with the most modern materialistic weapons,

and through propaganda and money and whatever is at their disposal. This is one kind of enemy.

This second type of enemy and plague is the internal annihilation, meaning [the enemy] within the system; which does not involve the aliens, it involves the insiders. The insiders in a system may, due to fatigue, due to a mistake in understanding the correct path, due to being overcome by carnal feelings, and due to looking at the material attractions and overestimating them, suddenly become plagued from within. This type [of enemy] is, of course, more dangerous than the first one.

These two types of enemy—internal and external plagues—are present in every system, in every association, and in every phenomenon. Islam has found solutions for dealing with both of these plagues and calls for *jihād* (holy struggle). *Jihād* is not merely limited to [confront] the external enemy.

«جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ»

[Struggle against the disbelievers and the hypocrites.] The hypocrite puts himself within the system. So, one must struggle against all of them. *Jihād* is for the enemy who—out of faithlessness and enmity—wants to invade this system. Also, in order to deal with that internal disunion and inner disintegration, there are valuable ethical teachings that show the world to the human beings as it really is and make him realize that:

﴿اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَهَوٌّ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي
الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ﴾

[Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children], till the end of the

1- The Holy Qur'an, Sūrat al-Tawba (9): 73.

2- The Holy Qur'an, Sūrat al-Ḥadīd (57): 20.

verse. This means that even if these fineries, these manifestations and these worldly pleasures, are necessary for you, and even if you must benefit from them, even if your lives have become dependent upon them, and there is no shadow of a doubt of that, and you must provide them for yourself, but you should know that regarding them as absolute, and blindly going after them and leaving your goals to be forgotten is very dangerous.

Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) is the lion of the battle field against the enemy and when he spoke, one expected half of his speech to be about *jihād*, war, championship, and heroism; however when we look at the narrations and sermons of his *Nahj al-Balāgha*, we will see that most of his speeches and recommendations of his holiness are about asceticism, piety, morality, the rejection and belittlement of the world, and honoring the spiritual and sublime values of humanity.

The story of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) is a combination of these two sections. That is to say, where both fighting against the enemy and struggling against the inner self (*nafs*) were manifested in the highest level, was the incident of *Āshūrā*. Meaning that Allah Almighty knows that this incident will occur, and a sublime example must be provided and that sublime example be set as a role model. Like the champions of countries become popular in a particular field and this champion will become the encourager of others to follow his footsteps in that field of sport. Of course, this is a small example to approximate our minds. The incident of the *Āshūrā* is a great movement along with strenuous efforts on two fronts. Both fighting with the internal and external enemy, which is the corrupt system of the caliphate and those seeking worldly gains who were attached to this powerful system; that is, the power that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had employed to save human beings, they wanted it in order to move contrary to the path of Islam and the holy

Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); and also in the internal front which, in those days, society in general had already moved toward internal corruption.

The second point, in my opinion, is more important. Some point in time had elapsed; the period of hardships of the initial task had passed. Conquests had been accomplished, the spoils (of war) were obtained, and the range of the country became wider. Foreign enemies, here and there, had been conquered. Ample spoils were being circulated within the country. Some had become rich and some had been elevated to the aristocracy class; meaning that after Islam had eradicated, a new class of nobles arose in the Muslim world. Elements with the name of Islam, with positions and Islamic titles—the son of such and such companion, the son of the holy Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) friend, the son of certain relative of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—engaged in the Improper and inappropriate deeds. Some of their names have been recorded in history. Some have been found who had set the dowry of their daughter at one million dinars, one million mithqāls of pure gold, instead of the traditional woman's dowry (*mahr al-nisā*) which was 480 dirhams that was decided upon by the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) and Muslims in the early Islam. Who were they? The sons of nobles, for example, Muṣ'ab b. Zubair and the like.

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The incidents started less than one decade after the death of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Initially, those who first embraced Islam—ranging from the companions, followers and those who took part in wars during the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—enjoyed privileges, one of which was benefitting financially from the public treasury. It was stated that their equality with others is not right and one cannot consider them equal with

others! This was the first step. The movements that lead to deviation start thus from an insignificant point and then every step accelerates the next step. These deviations started from this same point until the middle of Uthmān's reign. During the reign of the third Caliph, the state of affairs became such that the prominent companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) were regarded as the greatest capitalists of their time! See what I mean! That is, these same high ranking companions whose names are famous—Ṭalḥa, Zubair, Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ and so on—these noble people, each of whom had a thick book of proud records in Badr and Ḥunayn, and Uḥud, were listed at the top of the capitalists of Islam. When one of them died and his gold was supposed to be divided among his inheritors; first, the gold was made into bars and then it was decided to break it into pieces with an axe, like fire wood that is chopped up with an axe! Gold is normally weighed with a mithqāl scale; you can imagine how much gold they had broken into pieces with an axe! These have been recorded in history and they are not issues that we can say the Shi'ites have written in their books. These are facts that everyone has attempted to record and preserve. The amount of dinars and dirhams that they left behind was legendary.

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When we say, “The corruption of a system from within” it means just this. That is, some individuals appear in a society who try to gradually spread and transmit their infectious moral disease—i.e., world-intoxication and lustfulness—which, unfortunately, is indeed fatal. In such a condition would someone be bold enough or have enough patience to oppose the Yazīd b. Mu'āwīya's system? Would such a thing happen? Who thought of fighting against this tyrannical and corrupt system in Yazīd's days? Within this context, Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) great upris-

ing was took place, in which he fought against the enemy as well as the comfort-seeking, corruptible, and deteriorating spirit of the ordinary Muslims. This is important.

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The Purpose of Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) Uprising

If you carefully consider this incidence, it could probably be said that the human being can count more than hundred lessons in the few months of the movement of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) from the day he left Medina and headed for Mecca until the day he arrived at *Karbalā* and was martyred. I would not say thousands of lessons, but it can be said that there are thousands of lessons. It is possible that every gesture of that noble Imam (P.B.U.H.) is a lesson; but that we are to say more than hundred lessons, meaning that if we want to put these works under scrutiny, it is possible to obtain one hundred titles and chapters from it, each of which is a lesson for a people, for a history and a nation, and can be used for upbringing, management of a society and closeness to Allah. It is for this reason that Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (may our souls be ransomed for him and the mention of his name) shines like a sun among the holy people of the world. Consider the Prophets, the saints, the Imams, the martyrs, and the righteous. If they are like moon and the stars, then this noble figure shines like the sun. Anyway, putting those hundred lessons that were mentioned aside, there is one main lesson in the movement and uprising of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) that I will try to explain to you; all of them are margins, and this is the core. Why did he rise up? This is a lesson. Some would say to Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), "You are revered in Medina and Mecca, and there are so many Shi'ite in Yemen. You must go and stay somewhere and have nothing to do with Yazīd; Yazīd won't have anything to do with you, either. All these disciples,

all these Shi'ites. Live life, worship your lord and propagate! Why do you rise up? What is going on? This is that major question. This is the main lesson. We are not saying that no one has said anything on this subject of investigation; yes, honestly, in this regard many have done work, put in a lot of effort, and said a lot. Now, this subject that we will also discuss in our opinion is a conclusion and a new outlook on this issue.

Some people like to say that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) wanted to overthrow the corrupt government of Yazīd and establish a government of his own. This was the purpose for Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) uprising. This is partially true; I am not saying it is wrong. If the aim of what has been said is that his holiness rose up to set up a government, which means that if you see that one cannot get a result, one says it is impossible, let's withdraw; this is wrong. Yes; someone who acts with the intention of forming a government will go forward as far as he sees that it is feasible. The moment he finds out that it is not possible, or that there no is logical feasibility, his duty is to withdraw. If the aim is to form a government, one is only permitted to go so far as he can. Where it impossible to go on, he must turn back. If that person who says the aim of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) for this uprising was the formation of a justified *Alawite* government, his intention is this, it is not true, because the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) movement in its entirety does not show this.

In contrast, it is said, "No sir, what is government?" His holiness knew that he could not set up a government; rather, he essentially came to be killed and to become martyred! For some time this subject was talk of the town and quite prevalent. Some have also expressed this with beautiful poetic phrasings. Even I have seen that some of our great scholars have also said so. This statement that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) essentially rose up to be martyred has not been something new. He said, "Because nothing could be achieved by staying, so let's accomplish

something by going and getting martyred! We do not see such words in Islamic documents as to throw yourself into death; we don't have such a thing. The martyrdom we know in the holy *shari'a* and we see indications of it in narrations and the verses from the Qur'an means that one is to pursue a holy goal that is obligatory or preferable, and in that path [one may] submit to being killed, too. This is that true martyrdom. But if a man essentially sets out merely to "get killed" or follow such a poetic interpretation that, "my blood will shake the legs of the oppressor and make him fall down". These are not the things that are related to that great incidence. In this there is also a part of the truth; but the goal of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) is not this. So, in sum, we cannot say that his holiness rose up in order to set up a government and that his goal was not the setting up a government, nor can we say the Imam (P.B.U.H.) rose up in order to be martyred. It is something else. It crossed my mind that those who said the goal was the "government" or the goal was "martyrdom" have mixed the result and the conclusion. These were not the goal. Imam Husayn (P.B.U.H.) had another goal. However, achieving that goal also demanded a move and this move had one of two results; governance or martyrdom. Of course, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had prepared himself for both. He had made preparations and was making preparations for governing and he had also made preparations and was making preparations for martyrdom. He was also becoming spiritually prepared for outcome of this one and that one. Either one was possible, it was right and it had no faults; however neither was the goal, rather there were two results. The goal is something else.

What is the goal? First I will explain that goal briefly in one sentence, then I will explain some of it. If we want to explain the goal of Imam Husayn (P.B.U.H.), we must say it in this way that, "The goal of that noble figure consisted of performing a

great obligation of religious obligations. That great obligation was not performed by anybody before Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.)—not even by the Prophet himself. Neither the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had performed this obligation, nor Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), nor Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.). It was an obligation that had an important status in the overall structure of the mental, axiological, and practical system of Islam. Despite the fact that this obligatory act is very important and very fundamental, until Imam Ḥusayn’s (P.B.U.H.) era this obligatory act was not practiced. I will explain why it was not practiced. It was obligatory for Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) to practice it so that it would be a lesson for all of history. It is as if the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) formed the government; the forming of a government became a lesson for all of history of Islam and only its decree was not mentioned or the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) fought in the way of Allah and this was a lesson for all the history of Muslims and for the history of humanity forever. This obligation must also have been accomplished by Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) for it be a practical lesson for Muslims and for the span of history.

Now why should Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) do this? Because the grounds for performing this obligatory task had come up during the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). If these grounds had not come up during the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), for example they would have come up during the time of Imam ‘Alī al-Naqī (P.B.U.H.) and he would have done the same thing, and would have been the victim of this great incidence and the great “sacrifice” (dhabīḥ) in the history of Islam. If it would have come up during the time of Imam Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) or Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.T.) they would have done the same thing. These grounds did not come up before the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) or after his period throughout the era of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) until the occultation.

Therefore, the goal includes performing this obligation,

which I will now explain what this obligation is. Naturally, at that time performing this obligatory task would have led to one of these two results, either its result would have been the forming of a government and taking power, and this would have been welcomed because Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was ready for that. If he could have gained power he would have secured this power, he would have run society like in the time of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). At the time performing this obligation will not have led to governance, rather it would have led to martyrdom, for which Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was ready. Allah created Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and the other noble Imams (P.B.U.T.) in such a way that they would be capable of carrying the heavy load of such a martyrdom that would ensue from this obligation; and they did endure it. Of course, the story of the great passions in *Karbalā* is another tremendous story. Now, I will give a short explanation of the matter.

When the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) or any other prophet comes, he would bring along with himself a collection of practical laws. The practical laws that he brings are for the individual person to correct himself, and some are social to develop and run the human world and set up human society. These are the collection of laws, which is termed as Islamic System. However, Islam was sent down to the holy heart of Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), He brought in prayer, fasting, the poor due (*zakāt*), charities, *Ḥajj*, practical laws for the family, personal relations, *jihād* in the way of Allah, formation of government, Islamic economy, relationship between the ruler and his people, and the duties of the people toward the government. Islam has introduced all these collections to humankind and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has stated all of them.

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَاللَّهِ مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ يُقَرِّبُكُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَيُبَاعِدُكُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ»

[O' people! I swear by Allah, there is nothing that gets you closer to the Paradise, and distance you from Hell except I have verily commanded you with it]. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has explained everything that can make a human being or a society attain happiness. Not only has he explained, rather he has practiced and implemented them.

Well, at the time of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) an Islamic government and an Islamic society were formed, Islamic economy was implemented, Islamic *jihād* was installed and alms were collected; a country with a system became Islamic. The engineer of this system and the conductor of this train on this line was the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the one who sits in his place. The line is clear and identified. The Muslim society and individual Muslims must move in this direction and on this line, so if such a movement is made, then human beings will attain perfection. Then mankind will be righteous and become pious and be like angels and oppression will vanish from society, evil, corruption, differences, poverty, and ignorance will vanish, and mankind will attain complete happiness and become perfect servant of Allah. Islam brought this system through the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and practiced it in the society of those days. Where? In a corner (of the world) called Medina then it spread to Mecca and several other towns. There remains a question and that is, "If this train, which the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has put on this rail, is removed by someone deliberately or accidentally; what is our duty? If the Islamic society deviates and if this deviation gets to a point that we

fear the total deviation of Islam and Islamic sciences, what is our duty?

We have two kinds of deviations: sometimes people become corrupt; most of the times this happens, but Islamic practical laws never vanish. However it is sometimes the people who become corrupt and governments also become corrupt, scholars and religious speakers also become corrupt. The religion will never become corrected by corrupt people. They distort the Qur'an and truths. They turn good into evil and the evil into good; they make what is prohibited lawful and they make what is lawful prohibited. A line that Islam has drawn, for example, in a certain direction is turned one hundred and eighty degrees in another direction. If society and the Islamic system is affected by such a thing what is our duty?

Of course the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had stated what our duty is. The Qur'an has also said,

﴿مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ﴾¹

[O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion, Allah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him.] There are many verses and numerous narrations and this very narration that I quote from Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) recited this narration from the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to the people. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, "Could the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) practice this command of Allah? No because this Divine command is only practicable when society has become corrupt. If society becomes corrupt, actions must be taken. Allah has a ruling for this. In a society in which deviations have reached a level that there is the danger of the deviation from the true Islam, Allah has a duty [for man to fulfil]. Allah does

1- The Holy Qur'an, Al-Mā'ida (5): 54.

not leave human beings without a duty in any matter.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has stated this duty. The Qur'an and *Hadith* have said this, but the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) cannot fulfill this duty. Why can't he? This duty can only be fulfilled when society has become deviated. Society, at the time of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.), has not become totally deviated as such. At the time of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.), when Mu'āwīya is the head of government, although many of the signs of this deviation had appeared, but it had not yet reached the extent that fear of overall conversion of Islam exists. Perhaps it may be said that during a certain period of time, such a situation did really occur, but at that time there was no opportunity to do this, the situation was not favorable; this ordinance that is part of the collection of Islamic ordinances, is not less important than the government itself; because government means the management of the society. If a society were to gradually deviate from its track, it were to become ruined and corrupt, and Allah's command were to change; if we do not have the ordinance for changing or reviving the status or according to today's phrasing, the revolution; if we did not have the ordinance for revolution, [then] of what good is this government? Thus, the importance of that ordinance that is concerned with the return of a deviant society to the main track is of no lesser importance than that of a government's ordinance. Perhaps it could be said that its importance is more than *jihād* against the infidels. Perhaps it could be said that its importance is more than the normal "commanding right and forbidding wrong" (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*) in a Muslim society. It could even be said that the importance of this command is more than the great Divine devotions and more than *Hajj*. Why? Because this decree is the warranty for the restoration of Islam after it is about to die, or it is dead and gone.

Emergence of the Uprising and Its Results

Preparing the Grounds for the Uprising

Well, who should carry out that ordinance? Who should fulfill this task? One of the successors of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), when it happens at a time that this deviation has been created. Of course, provided that the situation is favorable, because Allah Almighty has not tasked us with something that does not benefit us. If the situation is unfavorable, whatever he does is of no use nor is it effective. The situation has to be favorable. Of course, the favorability of a situation also has another meaning, not that we say because it is dangerous, then the situation is not favorable, this is not what is meant. The situation must be favorable means that the human being should know that the result of what he has done is associated to him; meaning that it will be the delivering of a message to the people, people will find out and will not continue to be mistaken. This is that duty that someone should have fulfilled. At the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) both that deviation was created and that opportunity was found.

Thus, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) should rise up, for this deviation has appeared. Because after Mu'āwīya someone has come to power who does not even respect the outward aspects of Islam. He drinks alcohol and commits offenses. He was clearly involved in harassment and did sexually deviated acts, speaks against the Qur'an, publicly recites poetry that was contrary to the Qur'an and denounces religion, and is publicly opposed to Islam. However, because his name was the leader of Muslims he does not want to do away with Islam. He is not a practitioner of Islam, nor is interested in and dedicated to it. Rather, with his deeds, he is like a rancid source of water that flows frequently and over flows its banks and fills all places, rancid water flows from him and will fill the whole of the Muslim society. A cor-

rupt ruler is like this; because the ruler lives at the peak and whatever over flows from him will not stay there, contrary to ordinary people; rather, it flows and it covers the whole peak. Every one of the ordinary people has his own place. Of course whoever is higher, whoever has a higher post in society, his corrupt and his harm is greater. The corruption of ordinary people may remain with them or affect a few people around them, but those who are on the top post, if he becomes corrupt his corruption will overflow and every place and if he is righteous, his righteousness will fill every place. Such a person, with that corruption has become caliph of Muslims after Mu'āwīya. The caliph of the holy Prophet! Is there a deviation higher than this?!

The grounds are also ready; the grounds are ready, what does this mean? It means danger? Yes! Of course there is danger. Is it possible for the one on top of power not to be dangerous for people who are opposing him? It is war, after all. You want to overthrow him from power and expect him to sit and look at you?! It is obvious that he will harm you back. So there is danger. That we say that the situation is favorable, it means that the atmosphere of the Muslim society is such that it is possible for the message of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) to reach the ears of the people at that time and throughout history. If Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) wanted to rise up during the time of Mu'āwīya his message would have been buried. This was due to the condition of the government during the time of Mu'āwīya. The policies were in such a way that people would not have been able to listen to the legitimacy of the truth. Therefore this very honorable person was an Imam during the ten year period of Mu'āwīya's reign. He was an Imam but he did not say anything, did nothing, and did not rise up, because the condition there was not favorable. Before that there was Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.). He did not rise up either, because the timing was not good. Not

that Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.) were not qualified for this task. There is no difference between Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.T.). There is no difference between Imam Ḥusayn and Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.T.). There is no difference between Imam Ḥusayn, Imam ‘Alī al-Naqī and Imam Ḥasan Askarī (P.B.U.T.). Of course, when this honorable man did this holy struggle, his status is higher than those who did not; but in terms of the position of Imamate they are the same. This happens for each one of these honorable men. Each one of them would have done the same and they would have attained that very position.

Well; Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) has also faced such deviation. So he must do that duty. The situation is also favorable. So there is no more excuse. Therefore, ‘Abdullāh b. Ja‘far, Muḥammad b. Ḥanafīya and ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās, they were not illiterate, all were religious scholars, they were mystics, scholars, and knowledgeable; when they were telling the Imam (P.B.U.H.), “Sir! It is dangerous, don’t go!” They wanted to say that when there is danger in the way of a Divine duty, that duty is suspended. They did not understand that this duty is not a duty that can be suspended out of danger. This duty always has danger with it. Is it possible that man can rise up against such a power so mighty in appearance and it would not be dangerous? Is such a thing possible? This duty always contains danger.

A small copy of the work that was achieved during the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), was also achieved during the time of our Imam–Khomeini. Albeit, at that time the outcome was martyrdom and at this time the outcome was the forming of an Islamic state, they are the same, they are no different. The goal of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and the goal of our great leader, Imam Khomeini, was one. This issue is the basis of Imam Ḥusayn’s (P.B.U.H.) knowledge, the doctrinal knowledge (*ma‘ārif*) of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) is a great portion of the Shi‘ite knowledge. This

is an important foundation and one of the foundations of Islam.

Therefore, the goal included bringing back the Muslim society to the right direction. At what time? When the path has changed and ignorance, suppression, autocracy, and treason of those who have made the Muslims go astray and have laid the foundation and created conditions for the deviation of Muslims. Of course, history has got different periods; sometimes conditions are favorable and sometimes are not. During the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) the conditions were favorable, the conditions of our time were also favorable. The Imam did the same; the goal was the same. However, when working toward this goal, one finds a path and wants to rise up against the government and the center of falsehood in order to bring back the Muslim system and Islamic society to its proper direction, then there is a time when this uprising will end up forming a government, and there is a time when this uprising does not end up so, it ends up in martyrdom; is it not obligatory in this case? Yes it is; it is obligatory even if one gets martyred. Is the uprising of no use if one attains martyrdom? Yes it is; there is no difference. This uprising and this movement are important in both cases, whether one attains martyrdom or manages to set up a government; however each one has got its kind of importance, and it must be done; one must move.

This is what Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) accomplished. However, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was the person to accomplish this move for the first time. Before him it had not been accomplished, because before him, during the time of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and Imam 'Alī (P.B.U.H.) this kind of deviation and grounds had not come into existence, or if there had been deviation in some cases, the grounds were not appropriate and expedient. During the time of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) both were present—deviation and the grounds. Concerning Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.)

movement this is the main issue.

Uprising, an Obligatory Task

So we can sum up this way; we can say that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) rose up to fulfil that great obligation which includes the rebuilding of the system and the Muslim society or revolt against the greatest deviations in the Muslim society. This is done through the uprising and through commanding right and forbidding wrong, but he himself is also a great example of commanding right and forbidding wrong. Of course this task sometimes ended in the forming of a government—Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was ready for this—and sometimes it resulted in martyrdom; for that he was also prepared. Why do we say this?

We get this from the words of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) himself. I have chosen a few words from the sayings of Abū ‘Abdillāh (P.B.U.H.). Of course, there are many more, all of which state the same thing. First in Medina, that night when Walīd, the governor of Medina, summoned Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) to his court and told him that Mu‘āwīya has died, and you must swear allegiance to Yazīd. The Imam told him, “Okay, leave it till the morning”;

«وَنَنْظُرُ وَتَنْظُرُونَ أَيُّنَا أَحَقُّ بِالْبَيْعَةِ وَالْخِلَافَةِ»

[And we shall see and you will be seeing which one of us deserved the vote of allegiance and the caliphate]. Let’s go and think about it. See whether I must be the caliph or Yazīd must be the caliph. The following day Marwān saw Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) in one of the alleys of Medina and said, “Abā ‘Abdillāh! Do you want to get yourself killed? Why won’t you swear allegiance to the caliph? Come, swear allegiance, and do not get yourself killed, do not bother yourself. In his answer the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said,

«إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ وَعَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ السَّلَامُ إِذْ قَدْ بُلِيَتْ الْأُمَّةُ بِرَاعٍ
مِثْلِ يَزِيدٍ»

[Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return, and goodbye to Islam, if the Islamic nation is examined through a ruler like Yazīd). Then one must say goodbye and farewell to Islam. When a governor like Yazīd attains a position, and Islam suffers from a ruler like Yazīd, the matter is not Yazīd. It is about anyone who is like Yazīd. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) wanted to say that, “Up to now whatever he had done was tolerable; but now the principles of religion and the Islamic system are at stake and it will be destroyed with the governance of a person like Yazīd.” We point to the fact that the danger of deviation is a serious threat. The matter includes the danger facing the Islam itself.

When leaving Medina and also when leaving Mecca, Abu ‘Abdillāh (P.B.U.H.) had some words with Muḥammad b. Ḥanafiya; it seems to me that this testament is related to when he wanted to leave Mecca, in the month of Dhul Ḥijja, when Muḥammad b. Ḥanafiya had also come to Mecca. He had some words with Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) wrote some words as a testament and gave it to his brother, Muḥammad b. Ḥanafiya. In that testament, after testifying to the oneness of Allah he goes on to say:

«أَنِّي لَمْ أَخْرُجْ أَشْرًا وَلَا بَطْرًا وَلَا مُفْسِدًا وَلَا ظَالِمًا»

[Verily, I did not revolt as an evildoer, a corrupted one, and an oppressor]; this means that some should not misinterpret and spread propaganda that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was also like those who rise up here and there just to rebel and hold power in their hands to show off, and enter the field of battle for plea-

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, pp. 325-326.

sure and oppression and corruption. This is not our mission;

«وَأِنَّمَا خَرَجْتُ لِطَلْبِ الْإِصْلَاحِ فِي أُمَّةِ جَدِّي»

[But I rose up to seek for reforms in the nation of my grandfather]. The tittle of this task is “reform”, I want to bring reform. This is the same obligation that had not been accomplished before Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). This is the same obligation that had not been accomplished before. This reform is through “revolting” and revolting means uprising. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) mentioned this in his testament, and it is virtually asserted to mean that, firstly, we want to revolt and this uprising of ours is also for reform; it is not so that we must take over the rule [*ḥukūma*], it is not so that we must certainly go and be martyred, no; we want to reform. Of course, reform is not a small task. Sometimes the conditions are such that one take over the rule and holds the reins of power in his own hands. Sometimes he cannot do this, it cannot be done and he gets martyred. Nevertheless, both are uprising for reform. Then, he says,

«أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَمُرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَسِيرَ بِسِيرَةِ جَدِّي.»

[I want to command right and forbid wrong and move along the path of my grandfather]. This reform, in another word, is an example of commanding right and forbidding wrong.

Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) wrote two letters in Mecca; one for the leaders of Baṣra and the other for the leaders of Kūfa. In the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) letter for the leaders of Baṣra it says:

«وَقَدْ بَعَثْتُ رَسُولِي إِلَيْكُمْ بِهَذَا الْكِتَابِ، وَأَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَإِلَى نَبِيِّهِ، فَإِنَّ السُّنَّةَ قَدْ أُمِيتَتْ، وَإِنَّ الْبِدْعَةَ قَدْ أُحْيِيَتْ فَإِنْ تُجِيبُوا دَعْوَتِي وَ

تُطِيعُوا أَمْرِي أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ الرَّشَادِ»

[I have sent my messenger with this letter to you, and I am calling you to the Book of Allah and his Prophet, verily the tradition (of the Prophet) has died, and innovation (forbidden) is revived, if you respond to my call and follow my command I will show you the path to righteousness]. I want to do away with heretical innovation (*bid'a*) and revive tradition (*sunna*); because they have killed tradition and they have revived heretical innovation. If you will follow me, the right path is with me; meaning that I want to accomplish that great duty which is the revival of Islam and the revival of the tradition of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the Islamic system. Then in the letter to the people of the Kūfa, he said:

«فَلَعَنَرِي مَا الْإِمَامُ إِلَّا الْعَامِلُ بِالْكِتَابِ، وَالْأَخِذُ بِالْقِسْطِ، وَالتَّائِرُ بِالْحَقِّ، وَ
الْحَائِسُ نَفْسَهُ عَلَى ذَاتِ اللَّهِ»¹

[By my soul, there is no Imam except that he rules with the Book and implements justice, follows the right religion, comports himself on that by Allah.] The Imam and guide and leader of the Islamic society cannot be someone who is corrupt, dissolute, a betrayer and far from Allah and his prophets. He must be someone who acts upon the Book of Allah. This means to act upon it in the society not to do it in a quiet room, just praying. Rather, he should revive acting upon the Book of Allah in the society, pursues justice and equality, and embed right and truth as law of the society;

«التَّائِرُ بِالْحَقِّ»

[Follower of the right religion]. That is, he would embed the

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 340.

2- *Ibid*, p. 334.

code of conduct, rules, and regulations as truth and set falsehood aside.

«الْحَائِسُ نَفْسَهُ عَنِ ذَاتِ اللَّهِ»

[Who comport himself on that by Allah], apparently the meaning of this sentence is that, for one to comport himself in the Divine straight path, to preserve it on any condition, and not become a captive of satanic (evil) and materialistic attractions. That's all. Therefore he defines the goal.

Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) left Mecca. Along the way at each of these stopovers, his holiness spoke with a different tone. In a stopover called “Baiḍa,” while Ḥurr b. Yazīd was with him, the Imam goes on and he goes along him, too. They reach this stopover and get off their animals. Perhaps before they rest or after a little rest, the Imam stood up and gave a speech to the soldiers of the enemy. This is what he said:

«إِيهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ قَالَ: مَنْ رَأَى سُلْطَانًا جَائِرًا مُسْتَجِلًّا لِحُرْمِ اللَّهِ نَاكِثًا لِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ مُخَالِفًا لِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ يَعْمَلُ فِي عِبَادِ اللَّهِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ لَمْ يُغَيِّرْ يَقُولٍ وَلَا فِعْلٍ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ مَدْخَلَهُ.»

[O people! The Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) said, “Whoever sees a ruler that is unjust, permitting the forbiddance of Allah, transgressing the covenant of Allah, opposing the tradition of the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), and has done evils and transgressions to the servant of Allah, without changing him with words or actions, then Allah will be right to put him where he deserves.”] That means, if someone sees that a ruler is reigning in a society, who oppresses and makes lawful what Allah has made unlawful, and makes unlawful what Allah has made lawful, puts Divine commands aside, does not follow them and does not force others to act upon them, meaning

that he acts with evil, enmity, and oppression among the people—that is a truly corrupt, oppressive, and unjust ruler, the perfect example of which was Yazīd—then;

«لَمْ يُغَيِّرْ بِقَوْلٍ وَلَا فِعْلٍ»

[does not change him with words or deeds],

«كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ مَدْخَلَهُ»

[Allah has the right to put him where he deserves]. On the Day of Judgment, Allah, the Omnipotent will afflict the one who chose to keep quiet without showing any difference or action with the same destination that He has afflicted the oppressor with. Meaning that they are going to be in the same line and in the same flank. The Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had already specified what must be done if the Islamic system becomes deviated; and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) also supports, relies on, and follows the same statement of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).

So what is our duty? Our duty became

«يُغَيِّرُ بِفِعْلٍ أَوْ قَوْلٍ»

[To change with words or actions]. If one is placed under the same conditions—of course, when the timing is favorable—it is obligatory to rise up and take action against this action wherever it will end up; either to be killed or to stay alive, or whether it is apparently successful or not. Every Muslim must rise up and take action against this condition. This is the obligation that the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has ordained. Then Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) said,

«وَإِنِّي أَحَقُّ بِهَذَا.»

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 382.

2- *Ibid.*

[And verily I am more entitled to this–uprising], I am more deserved from among the Muslims to rise up and take action because I am the son of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). If the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) has made this change–meaning this taking of action–obligatory for every Muslim, it is obvious that Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), the son of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the inheritor of the holy Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) knowledge and wisdom, is more obligatory more suitable to fulfill this task. (And that is why I took action); so the Imam states the reason for his uprising.

Four people joined Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) at a halting place (*manzil*) called ‘Udhayb where there is another statement from the Imam (P.B.U.H.), who said,

«أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرًا مَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِنَاءِ قَتْلِنَا أَمْ ظَفَرْنَا.»

[However, I swear by Allah that I am hopeful that whatever Allah intended for us, either it is a victory or martyrdom, is good for us]. This is an indication of that we said it makes no difference whether they were victorious or be killed. A duty is a duty. It must be fulfilled. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “My hope is that what Allah, the Omnipotent, has chosen for us is good, whether we are victorious or be killed; it makes no difference; we are only doing our duty. After entering the land of *Karbalā*, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said in his first sermon,

«وَقَدْ نَزَلَ بِنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مَا قَدْ تَرَوْنَ.»

[Verily what you see is what is descended from the command.] Then he said:

«أَلَا تَرَوْنَ إِلَى الْحَقِّ لَا يُعْمَلُ بِهِ وَإِلَى الْبَاطِلِ لَا يُتَنَاهَى عَنْهُ؟ لِيَرْغَبَ الْمُؤْمِنُ



فِي لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ حَقًّا حَقًّا ۞

[Do you not see the truth that is not practiced, and the false that is not prevented, the believer is rightful to eagerly desire to meet his Lord] till the end of his speech.

Then, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) revolted to do an obligatory act. This obligatory act is directed at every single individual Muslims throughout history. This obligatory act is that any time one sees that the social system of Islam is faced with essential corruption and it is feared that the practical laws of Islam will be totally changed, every Muslim must revolt. Of course, under proper conditions, and when it is certain that the uprising will be effective and fruitful. Staying alive, not being killed, not being persecuted are among the conditions. These are not among the conditions. Therefore, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) revolted and practically fulfilled this obligatory mission for it to be a lesson for all.

09/06/1994

Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) did something that the people's conscience awakened. Therefore, you see that after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) Islamic uprisings came into being one after the other. Of course, these uprisings were suppressed, but it is not important that a movement has been suppressed by the enemy. Of course, it is bitter but bitterer than that is that a society reaches a point that they are reluctant to show a reaction toward the enemy, and this is a great danger.

Pure Results of Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) Uprising

Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) did something in such a way that those who were farther away from the early period of Islam yet their will for fighting the system of oppression and corrup-

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 381.

tion that was found in all the periods of oppressive governments, was greater than the time of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.). All were suppressed. Beginning from the uprising of the people of Medina which is known as “Ḥarra”, until subsequent incidents; the incident of the “Tawwābīn” uprising and Mukhtār, until the periods of the Umayyad and ‘Abbasids, there were always uprisings within the nations. Who brought about all these uprisings? Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). If Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) had not revolted, could the spirit of lassitude and fears of responsibility have turned into the spirit of anti-oppression and accepting responsibility? Why do we say the spirit of accepting responsibility is dead? The reason is that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) left Medina, the center of the elders of Islam, for Mecca. The son of ‘Abbās, the son of Zubayr, the son of ‘Umar and the son of the early Caliphs of Islam all were gathered in Medina but none of them were ready to assist Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) in that bloody and historical uprising. Thus before the beginning of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.)’s uprising even those close to him were not ready to take action. But after Imam Ḥusayn’s (P.B.U.H.) uprising this spirit was awakened. This is the big lesson in the tragedy of Āshūrā that we must know along with the other lessons. That is the greatness of this event.

That,

«المَوْعُودُ بِشَهَادَتِهِ قَبْلَ اسْتِهْلَالِهِ وَوِلَادَتِهِ»

[His martyrdom was promised (determined) before his inception and birth], that even before the birth of that noble man,

«بِكْتَتِهِ السَّمَاءُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا»

[The heavens and the ones in it and the earth and the ones

living on it cried for him], [thus] it was for this reason that attention was drawn to Imam Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) in this tremendous mourning and his mourning was respected and honored and, as phrased in the supplication (*du‘ā*) or pilgrimage prayer (*zīyāra*), they cried for him. Therefore, you see today that Islam has been survived through Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), and you regard him as the reviver of Islam.

01/26/1993

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The Epic of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.)

Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) is a great woman. What does the greatness of this great woman come from in the eyes of the nations of the Muslim world? It cannot be said that it is because she is the daughter of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) or the sister of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī and Ḥasan b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.T.). Relationships can never create such greatness. All our Imams (P.B.U.T.) had daughters, mothers, and sisters, but where is one like Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.)? The value and greatness of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) is because of her great humanitarian and Islamic stance and movement. Her work, her decision, and her type of movement endued her this greatness. Whoever does such a thing, even if that person is not the daughter of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), can achieve greatness. Much of this greatness is firstly because she understood the situation; both the situation before Imam Ḥusayn’s (P.B.U.H.) leaving for *Karbalā* and the situation of the critical moments on the day of *Āshūrā*, as well as the situation of the fatal incidents after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.); and secondly, because she made a choice according to each situation. These choices are what made Zaynab (P.B.U.H.).

Before proceeding toward *Karbalā*, elites like Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn Ja‘far, and other prominent figures of early Islam, who claimed to be jurisprudent, brave, superior, and the sons of noble men, and so on were baffled and did not know what to do. But Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) was not baffled and knew that she must follow this path, and must not leave her Imam alone, and she didn’t. Not that she could not understand that this path is a difficult one. She felt this more than other people. She was a

woman, a woman who was separated from her husband and family for a mission and it was also for this reason that she took her young children along with herself. She felt how this incident would be. In those critical hours, when the strongest of human beings cannot understand what to do, she knew what to do and she supported her Imam and prepared him for martyrdom. After the martyrdom of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), the world became dark, the hearts and souls and the horizons in the world became dark. This great woman became a light and radiated everywhere. Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) reached a point that can only be reached by the most sublime human beings in the history of mankind—that is, the prophets (P.B.U.T.).

11/13/1991

Indeed, *Karbalā* was not *Karbalā* without Zaynab (P.B.U.H.); Without Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) that historical incident called *‘Āshūrā* would not have remained (in the memories of the people). The character of the daughter of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) is so evident and obvious in this incident, from its beginning to the end, that one feels as if she is a second Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) in a woman’s guise, in the guise of the daughter of Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). Apart from this, if Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) did not exist what would have happened after *‘Āshūrā*? Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) might also have been killed; Imam Ḥusayn’s (P.B.U.H.) message might not have reached any body. In the same period, which was also before the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) was like a truthful sympathizer, the person by means of her being, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) would not have felt alone, he would not have felt tired. Mankind witnesses such an obligation in Zaynab’s (P.B.U.H.) face and in Zaynab’s (P.B.U.H.) words and movement.

Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) felt anxious twice and told Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) about her anxiety. Once it was in one of the halting plac-

es, after the event of the news of the martyrdom of Muslim b. ‘Aqīl after the Imam (P.B.U.H.) came and gave an account of some things and different news was being received. After all, Ḥaḍrat Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) is of course a woman with effervescent feminine emotions, with delicate feelings of a woman; and the epitome of effervescent feelings as well. These were the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.); yet with the same firmness, with the same power, with the same bravery, with the same resistance in passion; the epitome of a clear, ebullient fountain of human subtlety, human compassion again from this household. The source of ebullient and humanity, merciful to mankind all are from this family which Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) can, in my opinion be an example of that person who stands against an opposing world, resisting a desert [full] of hungry wolves alone and his body does not shudder, and becomes moved by small things. For example, the time when that black Ethiopian slave fell down, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) came to this slave. Well, he is a black slave and is among the faithful; he is among the lovers of the Imam (P.B.U.H.). Perhaps he was Jawn, Abū Dhar’s servant, who, in terms of social status, the social culture of those days, does not have an honorable and excellent position, even though he does not have a very high status among the Muslims. This (person), when he was killed [the Imam (P.B.U.H.) came to his side]—well many were killed, were martyred alongside Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), nobles of Kūfa, elders, and scholars of Kūfa, like Ḥabīb b. Muẓāhir and Zuhayr b. Qain and others who were among the elders and renown figures of Kūfa; they fell down, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not show this move. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) addressed Muslim b. ‘Awsaja and said, “By the will of Allah you will get a reward from Him”—but regarding this black servant who does not have any body, does not have a child, no family is awaiting him, so that they can weep for him. Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), came and did the same with this servant

as he did with 'Alī Akbar. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) sat near his head and put this bloody head on his knees. But his heart did not calm down. All of a sudden everybody saw the Imam (P.B.U.H.) stoop down and put his face on the face of this black servant. This is how human compassion overflows! Therefore, Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) is a woman with overflowing compassion and feelings; then, she is not an ordinary woman. She is the sister of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), a sister who loves Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), and a sister who abandoned her husband, abandoned her family and came along with the Imam (P.B.U.H.). She did not come alone; she brought her sons, 'Awn and Muḥammad, along too. I presume that 'Abdullāh b. Ja'far did not even agree that his children come. I am not certain that 'Abdullāh agreed, but Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) brought them, just for them to be with her in the path of Allah so that if there were supposed to be any self-sacrifice, they would also be martyred.

Now, in one of the halting places along the way she felt that the situation was dangerous; she went to Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and said to him in one of the halting places along the way, "Brother! I feel endangered, I see the situation as being dangerous". She knows that the case is a case of martyrdom and captivity; yet and at the same time the agitation of these incidents place her under so much pressure that she goes to Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Here the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not tell her much. He said, "It is nothing, whatever Allah wills the same will happen." Something like this, «مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ كَانَ»¹ [What Allah has willed will be], that is, whatever Allah wants will happen. We see nothing else of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) telling Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) or of her asking him any question, or of her feeling any pressure in her soul that she has passed on to Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), except on the eve of *Āshūrā*.

1 - *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 3, p. 530.

The evening of *Āshūrā* is the very time when it could be said that Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) may have become restless from the intensity of grief. He—the narrator of this story is Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) who was ill-related, “I was asleep in the tent, my aunt Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) was beside me, too, and was taking care of me. In the tent next to mine, where my father, Abū ‘Abdillāh was sitting, and Jawn–Abū Dhar’s servant—was repairing the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) sword; he was preparing himself for the battle that was to take place the following day. He says, “All of a sudden, I saw my father began to croon and recited some poems the meaning of which is that the world has turned away and the human beings life will not last and death is closer;

«يَا دَهْرُ أَفَّ لَكَ مِنْ خَلِيلٍ كَمَ لَكَ بِالْإِشْرَاقِ وَالْأَصِيلِ»

[O’ mystery of time! Fie on your friendship; how many of our friends and supporters [of right] you have killed in the night and day!]

This shows that whoever is reciting this poem is sure that he is going to depart this world very soon and at an imminent hour. Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) says, “I have heard this poem, and I understand the message and the meaning of this poem. I understand that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) is informing of his own death, but I controlled myself. Suddenly I looked and saw my aunt Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) had become very upset, stood up, and went to her brother’s tent and said, ‘My dear brother! I see that you are talking of your own death. Until now we contented ourselves by being with you. When our father passed away we said our brothers are still around. When my brother Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) was martyred I said my brother, Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) is still alive. For so many years I contented myself by knowing that you are around, I relied on you, and today I see

that you also give news of your own death.”

Of course Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) has all the right to be upset. I think that the situation in which Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) found herself on that day was an exceptional one. We cannot compare the situation of any of the women or even that of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) with the situation of Zaynab (P.B.U.H.). Her situation, Zaynab’s (P.B.U.H.) situation, was difficult and unbearable. All of the men were martyred on the day of *Āshūrā*. On the evening of *Āshūrā* there was no other man in all of the tents except Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), who was sick; he lay there or perhaps he was in a coma. Now you see these tents and campsite that contains eighty, eighty-four women and children and are besieged by an ocean of enemies, see how much work they have to do. Some are thirsty, some are hungry, or it could be said that all are hungry, all are thirsty. All hearts are shaky and terrified, the corpses of the martyrs, all amputated, having fallen on the ground. Some of them are their brothers, some are their sons. Anyway, it is a very bitter and horrifying incident. One person must gather this crowd and that one person is Zaynab (P.B.U.H.).

It was not only that Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) had lost her brother, or her two children, or her other brothers or all these dear ones and the eighteen youths of the Banī Hāshim and loyal companions. That was also the case and perhaps its importance was not less than [the fact] that among all these enemies she had the heavy responsibility of handling, protecting, and managing of the defeated, scattered, and dispersed pavilion. She was even obliged to handle (the affairs of) Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). Therefore, only Allah knows what was happening to Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) in the few hours after this incidence occurred until the hour they moved out and left and it became clear what the enemy would do with them; Allah knows how it came to pass on Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) in those few hours of the dark and difficult night that they were among the enemy. Therefore,

it was Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) who during this period was continually moving about, running to this child and to that woman, to that bereaved mother, to that sister who had lost her brother and that small baby. She is continually moving among these individuals; she gathers them and comforts them. But at a certain point she becomes weary and speaks to her brother, she turns toward her martyred brother who was her only resort and refuge. In a *Ḥadīth*, it is narrated that Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) stood above the murdered, wounded, and chopped up corpse of her brother and from the bottom of her heart shouted:

«يا مُحَمَّداهِ صَلِّ عَلَيكَ مَلَائِكَةُ السَّمَاءِ»

[O' Muḥammad! The angels of Heaven send their blessings upon you];

«هَذَا الْحَسَيْنُ بِالْعَرَاءِ مُرْمَلٌ بِالدَّمَاءِ مَقْطَعِ الْأَعْضَاءِ»

[This is Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) covered with blood]. This killed person fallen on the ground covered with blood, is your Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.).

10/12/1984

It is said that on the day of *Āshūrā*, in the incident of *Karbalā* blood emerged victorious over the sword—which it really did—Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) was the cause of this victory; otherwise the blood (of the martyrs) would have been wasted in *Karbalā*. This military incident ended in the so-called defeat of the army of truth in the arena of *Āshūrā*; but what caused this so-called military defeat to become a decisive permanent victory included the disposition of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.); a role that Ḥaḍrat Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) assumed; this is the most important of all. This incidence shows that the female is not on the sideline of history, the female is involved in the circumstances that form the

1- *Al-Luḥūf*, Sayyid b. Ṭawūs, p. 133.

setting for important historical events.

The Qur'an also talks about these cases on different occasions. However, this is related to the recent history, not to the past nations; it is a live and tangible incident that one observes Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) appearing with stunning and radiant greatness. She does something that the enemy, that apparently has won this military campaign and that he seems to have eradicated his opponents and is leaning on the throne of victory at the seat of his power, becomes humiliated and crushed in the palace of his rule. She imprints the mark of everlasting shame on the enemy's forehead and turns his victory into defeat; this is the work of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.). Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) showed that she can turn womanly veils and chastity into a combative valor, into a great *jihād*.

What has been left behind of Zaynab Kubrā's (P.B.U.H.) statements and is available for us today shows the greatness of Zaynab Kubrā's (P.B.U.H.) movement. Zaynab Kubrā's (P.B.U.H.) unforgettable sermon in the bazaar of Kūfa is not a normal talk, it is not the usual remarks of a great personality; it is a great analysis of the conditions of the Muslim society of that period that have been stated with most beautiful words, with the deepest and richest concepts, under those conditions. See the strength of this personality, how strong this personality is.

Two days earlier, they had killed her brother, her Imam, her leader, and all these loved ones and youth and children, and others in a desert. They captured tens of people in this gathering; among whom are women and children. They brought them before the people, on camels of captivity. The people have come, they are watching them; some are cheering, some are crying. In such critical conditions, this great sun suddenly rises; she uses the same tone that her father, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) used when he mounted the *minbar* (pulpit) of the Ca-

liphate in front of the people. She spoke in the same manner and with the same kinds of words and the same elocution and eloquence and the same clearness and meaning:

«يا أَهْلَ الْكُوفَةِ، يا أَهْلَ الْعَدْرِ وَالْحَنْثَلِ»

[O' the people of Kūfa! O' the people of deceitfulness and disloyalty].

O' deceitful people, O' those who pretended, perhaps you, yourselves also believed that you are the followers of Islam and the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), but you failed this test like this; in sedition you showed you did not have insight:

«أَلَا وَهَلْ فِيكُمْ إِلَّا الصَّلِيفُ وَالتَّطِيفُ وَمَلَأُ الْإِمَاءَ، وَعَمَزُ الْأَعْدَاءُ؟»

[No one among you except the arrogant, the valueless, and the enticing wink of enemies].

Your behavior and your tongue were not one with your hearts. You became too proud of yourselves and thought that you have the faith. You thought that you are still revolutionary, you thought that you are the followers of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, whereas the fact of the matter was not so. You could not cope with the sedition and you could not save yourselves.

«فَمَا مَثَلُكُمْ كَالَّتِي نَقَضَتْ عَزْهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةِ أَنْكَانَا»

[Your example is like the one who would undo her yarn, breaking it up after (spinning it to) strength.]

You have become like the person who spins wool, turns it into thread and then breaks up the thread again and turns it back into wool or unspun cotton. By lacking discretion, by not recognizing the atmosphere, by not distinguishing the truth from falsehood, you have made your deeds and your past futile. Appearance is the appearance of having faith, a mouth

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 109.

full of claims of being a revolutionary; but inside, the inside is hollow, an inside without resistance to crosswinds. This is pathological.

With this strong speech, with these impressive words, especially under these difficult circumstances, she would speak like this. It was not that a number of listeners were sitting in front of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) listening to her, and she, too, like a preacher was giving a sermon. No, a group of the enemy, the enemy's lancers had surrounded her. A group of people with different conditions were present; that same group of people who handed Muslim b. 'Aqil over to Ibn Ziyād, that same group of people who had written letters to Imam Husayn (P.B.U.H.) and later breached their pact; that same group of people who hid in their homes on the day they were supposed to fight against Ibn Ziyād, they were the same people who were in the bazaar of Kūfa. A group of them were also people that showed weakness of spirit, now they also watch, they see the daughter of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.); they cry.

Ḥadrat Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) faced with that same group of discordant and unreliable people, but she spoke firmly like this. She is a woman of history; this woman is not a weakling. A woman cannot be considered to be a weakling. This essence of female piety introduces herself in difficult circumstances in this manner. It is this woman that is a role model; a role model for all the great men of the world and great women of the world. She pathologizes the Prophetic revolution and the *Alawite* revolution; she says that you people were not able to discern the truth in this sedition; you could not carry out your responsibility; the result was that the head of the dear child of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was placed on top of the spearhead. Here, the greatness of Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) can be understood.

The Movement of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) During Captivity

After *Āshūrā*, the condition among the Shi'ites and those who believed in the Imamate was a strange condition. The brutality of Umayyad mercenaries and what they did with the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), whether in *Karbalā* or in Kūfa and in Shām terrified all the people, who were interested in the path of the Imamate. Of course you know that the elite of the companions of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), were martyred in the event of *Āshūrā* and the event of *Tawwābīn* (the Penitents), but those who survived do not have enough daring and courage to allow them to speak their words of truth in front of the tyrannical powers like Yazīd and then Marwān. A group of believers but scattered, without an organization unity, frightened and, in fact, deterred from the path of the Imamate; this was the legacy that remained of that group of Shi'ites that was left for Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). Intense suffocation, very weak reinforcement forces, and Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) must take action to fight in order to preserve the pure and ideological and real Islamic movement and gather these scattered people and bring them close to the *Alawite* government meaning the Islamic government. Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) practiced for thirty-four years with such conditions. Here, I only recount some significant parts of the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) to you.

The first part of the honorable life of the fourth Imam (P.B.U.H.) is the part of his captivity. Of course, the fourth Imam (P.B.U.H.) has been taken captive twice and has been taken in shackles to Shām twice; the first time was from *Karbalā* and the second time from Medina during the era of 'Abdul Malik b. Marwān. At this time when the caravan of captives of Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) family was being taken to Shām from *Karbalā*, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was the personification of the Qur'an and Islam.

From the moment that the martyrs weltered in their blood, the epic of ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) began. Baby girls, small children, and helpless women gathered around Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) in that caravan where there were no men and Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) led all of them. He gathered them together and throughout the journey until they reached Shām, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) did not let this group of people who were associated with one another in belief to become doubtful and insecure. They entered Kūfa and ‘Ubaydullāh b. Ziyād had issued an order that all males of this family to be killed, he saw that there is one man present among the caravan of captives, he (Ibn Ziyād) asked, “Who are you?” He said, “I am ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn. He threatened to kill ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), this was the first indication of the manifestation of the Imamate and spiritual leadership:

«أَبِالْقَتْلِ تُهَدِّدُنِي»

[Are you threatening me with death?]

Are you threatening to murder me? Whilst our dignity is in martyrdom, we regard being killed in the way of Allah to be an honor, we are not afraid of death. ‘Ubaydullāh b. Ziyād’s government withdrew in the face of this courage.

In the tragedy of Shām, after they had kept Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and all the captives under chaotic and abnormal circumstances in an utterly enslaving condition for several consecutive days, then it occurred to Ibn Ziyād to take Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) with him to the mosque in order to weaken the Imam (P.B.U.H.) psychologically in front of the people and to do something lest the propaganda of those opposed to him and those who supported the Imam (P.B.U.H.), who were everywhere, would have an impact on his government’s situation. In that

assembly, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) turned to Yazīd and said, “If you allow me to climb onto these pieces of wood and speak to the people.” Yazīd did not think that this son of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), a young person who was a captive, was sick and as a rule, in this length of time situation, was weak psychologically, could be regarded as any danger for him, so he gave him permission to speak. Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) went up the *minbar* (pulpit) and explained the philosophy of the Imamate and the events of martyrdom and exposed the current situation of the evil Umayyad government in the center of this government. He did something that caused the people of Shām to rise up (against Yazīd) meaning that Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) is a great personality who was not afraid of ‘Ubaydullāh b. Ziyād, of the deceived people of Shām, in the Umayyad government, or of Yazīd’s agents and he spoke the truth and clarified (the situation for them). It was not the case that life was of any value to him.

12/05/1980

Like a great hero, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), while being captive and ill, creates an epic with his words and attitude in this period. You see that in this period the Imam (P.B.U.H.) is in a completely different situation from that of the main period of his life. In that main period of his life the establishment of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) work is founded on a moderate, calculated and slow-paced infrastructure; which occasionally requires him even to sit with ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān in one assembly and to act normally and moderately with him. But in this period you see the Imam (P.B.U.H.) like a roaring revolutionary who does not tolerate the least amount of talk and gives decisive, knockdown answers to his powerful enemies and in front of all those present.

In Kūfa, in front of ‘Ubaydullāh b. Ziyād—that savage blood

sucker from whose sword blood flows and is drunk with the wine of proud of killing the sons of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and is drunk with victory—the Imam (P.B.U.H.) speaks in such a manner that Ibn Zīyād orders them to “kill him” and had it not been for Zaynab’s (P.B.U.H.) action who threw herself on the floor and said, “I will not let you kill him” and they saw that they must kill a woman and on the other hand they must take them as captives to Shām; and if this did not happen it was very likely that they would have also committed the murder of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.).

In the bazaar of Kūfa, he speaks along with his aunt Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) and his sister Sakīna and instigates the people and discloses truths.

In Shām, whether in Yazīd’s assemblies or in the mosque in front of a great mass of people, he reveals the facts with the clearest explanation and these communications and these sermons ensured the rightfulness of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to the Caliphate, and exposes the crimes of the existing ruling regime which is a bitter and an unpleasant warning to those negligent and uninformed people.

At this point it is not appropriate to recount that sermon and reveal the depths thereof because this is an independent task. Whosoever wishes to interpret this sermon should study it word by word and do this with regard to these principles. This was the situation of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) during the epic-making period of captivity.

This question arises as to, “Why did Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), in his post-captivity period, found his establishment on leniency and flexibility in the period after captivity and wish to conceal things as a precautionary measure and put a cover of supplication and lenient tasks on the revolutionary and radical movement and, in the period of captivity, to take radical aggressive

and overt actions like that?”

The answer is that this period was an exceptional period. Here, besides being an Imam and having to lay the foundation for the future work for a Divine and Islamic government, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) is an eloquent tongue (for defending) the blood that were shed in *Āshūrā*. Here, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) in fact, is not himself; rather, he is the silent tongue of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) who must appear in the visage of this young revolutionary in Shām and in Kūfa. If Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) does not express those matters so harshly, openly, and explicitly, no grounds would really remain for future work because the grounds for his future work was the raging blood of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), as the grounds for all Shi‘ite uprisings throughout history, is the raging blood of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.). First, he must warn the people, then in light of this warning, be able to begin his systematic, profound, and long-term opposition. Thus, this warning is not possible except with a sharp and biting tongue.

The role of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) in this journey was the role of Zaynab (P.B.U.H.), that is, the herald of Imam Ḥusayn’s (P.B.U.H.) revolution. If the people knew that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) has been killed and why he has been killed and how he has been killed, the future of Islam, the future of call to Islam by the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) would be one kind and if they did not know, it would be another kind. Therefore, for awareness and the spreading of this recognition throughout the society, all investments must be put into use and do so wherever possible. Therefore Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) like, Sakīna, Fāṭima Ṣughrā, and like Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) herself, and like each and every one of the captives—everyone according to his or her capability is a herald and messenger. All these forces must come together so that they will be able to take the raging blood of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) that was shed in that foreign land, to

all large Islamic regions, meaning that they should begin from *Karbalā* and carry it to Medina. When Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) entered Medina, it was necessary for him to explain the facts to the enquiring and questioning tongues and eyes and faces of the people; and this is the first action. Therefore, this short period of Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) life is an exceptional one. The next period begins at a time when Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) gets on with his life in Medina as a respected citizen and begins his task from the house of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and his holy sanctuary. In order to clarify the program of the fourth Imam (P.B.U.H.), we need to explain the circumstances and the atmosphere and conditions of his era.¹



The Social
and Political
Conditions After
Tragedy
of
Karbala



Chapter Eight: Social and Political Conditions After the Tragedy of Karbala

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The Beginning of Shi'ite Movement

When the incident of *Āshūrā* occurred, a state of terror and fear rose among the Shi'ites and the supporters of Imams (P.B.U.T.) throughout the Islamic world as far as the news was spread, especially the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq, because it was felt that the Yazīd's government is prepared to strengthen his government to the point that he is prepared to kill Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (P.B.U.H.), who is the son of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), and was known throughout the Muslim world for the greatness of his reliability and sanctity, and this fear, whose effects were evident in Kūfa and Medina, after some time was completed with several other incidents—one of which is the incident of the Battle of *Ḥarra*—and a severe suffocation arose in the region of the influence of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), that is, in Ḥijāz (present-day Saudi Arabia), especially Medina and also Iraq, especially Kūfa. Relations became weak and those who were the supporters of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and those who were regarded as potential opponents of Umayyad caliphate were living in a state of weakness and doubt.

A tradition is related from Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) quoting that when Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was speaking about the Imams (P.B.U.T.) before him, he said,

«ارْتَدَّ النَّاسُ بَعْدَ الْحُسَيْنِ إِلَّا ثَلَاثَةً...»

[People reverted their religion after Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) except three (groups)]. People abandoned their religion after Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) save three, and in another narration it says five, and other traditions have been mentioned seven people.

In a tradition which is from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—whose narrator is Abū ‘Umar Mahdī—said, “I heard from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) who said,

«وما بِمَكَّةَ وَالْمَدِينَةَ عِشْرُونَ رَجُلًا يُحِبُّنَا»

[Our faithful Shi‘ite Muslims do not exceed twenty both in Mecca and Medina]. In Mecca and Medina those who love the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) do not exceed more than twenty people.

We quoted these two traditions for the sake of clarifying the matter of the general condition of the Muslim world in relation to the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and their followers meaning this suffocation that arose brought about such a state that the adherents of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) were dispersed, scattered, disappointed, and frightened but there was no possibility of a collective uprising. Of course, it is related in the same tradition by Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.),

«ثُمَّ إِنَّ النَّاسَ لَحِقُوا وَكَثُرُوا»

[Then the people joined them and multiplied.]

If we wish to explain the aforesaid issue a little further and in more detail, it will be that after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) some people were frightened; however there was not such much fear to lead to total destruction of the organization of the followers of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). The reason is the very thing that we see that even at that time when they brought the captives of *Karbalā* to Kūfa, a movement is witnessed that is indicative of a Shi‘ite organization.

Of course, when we talk about a “secret Shi‘ite organization”

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 143; *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, vol. 4, p. 104.

2- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 144.

it does not mean a complete cohesive organization that is common in today's world; rather, what we mean is an ideological relationship that binds people to one another and forces them to make sacrifices and provokes them to do covert actions and as a result they bring a collective group to mind. In those very days when the descendants of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) were in Kūfa, on one of those nights, a stone falls from the sky in the place where they were imprisoned. They picked up the stone and saw that a piece of paper is enclosed around it. On that piece of paper it was written, "The governor of Kūfa has sent someone to Yazīd, in Shām, to find out how to deal with your condition and fate. If until tomorrow night, for example, you hear the sound of *takbīr* (saying Allah is Great) know that you will be killed right here, and if you do not hear it, know that this situation will get better for you."¹

When we hear this story we clearly understand that a person from the friends and a member of this organization is present within Ibn Ziyād's ruling apparatus and he knows all issues and events and has access to the prison, and he also has information about what is going to happen to these prisoners and they can also send news to the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) by saying *takbīr* and with the intensity that things had been done such things could also be seen.

Another example is 'Abdullāh b. 'Afīf Azdī who is a blind man; in those early stages of the arrival of the captives to Kūfa he shows a reaction that leads to his martyrdom, and other individuals like these could be found, whether in Shām or in Kūfa, who expressed interest and devotion toward them when dealing with the captives, or they cried, or they blamed each other; and such incidents had also happened before in Yazīd's and Ibn Ziyād's assemblies.

1- This story has been quoted by Ibn Athīr in his history book—*Al-Kāmil*. (Author)

Therefore, although an intense fear had come about due to this course of events, it was not in such a way that it would completely disorganize the activities of the friends of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and cause them to become scattered and weak. However, after some time other incidents came about that increased this repression and hereby we can understand that the tradition,

«ارْتَدَّ النَّاسُ بَعْدَ الْحُسَيْنِ.»

[People will draw back from their religion after Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) is related to that period of incidents or after those incidents or related to the intervals in between the incidents.

Throughout this period of several years—before that important and crushing incident came about—Shi‘ites were organizing their affairs and restoring their previous cohesion. Here, Ṭabarī relates that,

«فَلَمَّ يَزَلِ الْقَوْمُ فِي جَمْعِ آلَةِ الْحَرْبِ وَالِإِسْتِعْدَادِ لِلْقِتَالِ.»

[But the people were still gathering weapons of war and were ready to fight.] That is, those people—meaning the Shi‘ites—were gathering weapons of war and were preparing themselves for war, and secretly inviting the people, both Shi‘ites and non-Shi‘ites, to seek revenge for the blood of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.), and people were responding positively to these calls in groups. Moreover this condition continued until Yazīd b. Mu‘āwīya died.

Therefore we see that even though pressure and suppressions were great, yet these movements were also taking place—as Ṭabarī has also related—and perhaps it is for this reason that the author of the book “Jihād al-Shi‘a”, despite being a

1- *Tārīkh Ṭabarī*, vol. 5, p. 558.

2- Samīrat Mukhtār al-Laithī.

non-Shi'ite author and does not have realistic views regarding Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), yet he found out a reality that he related it this way, "After the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), this group of Shi'ites became like one orderly organization whose beliefs and political ties bound them to one another and they also had their own communities and leaders as well as military forces. Moreover, the association of *Tawwābīn* (the Penitents) was the first manifestation of these organizations".

Thus we feel that even though this Shi'ite organization became weakened due to the incident of *Āshūrā*, the Shi'ite movements were engaged with their activities in face of this weakness so as to recover that organization to its initial status, until the Battle of *Ḥarra* took place. In my opinion the Battle of *Ḥarra* is a very tremendous turning point in the history of Shi'ism that dealt a big blow.

The Battle of *Ḥarra*

The Battle of *Ḥarra* occurred exactly in 63 A.H. In short, the Battle of *Ḥarra* is that in the 62 A.H. a young person with little experience from Banī Umayyad became governor of Medina. He thought that in order to gain the hearts of the Shi'ites of Medina, it would be fine to take some of them on a trip and invite them to meet with Yazīd and he did just so. He invited some of the Muslim leaders and some of the companions of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and elders of Medina—most of whom were devotees of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—to travel to Shām and become acquainted with Yazīd and to decrease the intensity of differences. They went to Shām and met with Yazīd and were his guest for a few days and were treated as guests. Then Yazīd gave each of them a large sum of money of fifty thousand dirhams or one hundred thousand dirhams, and they returned to Medina.

As soon as they returned to Medina they began to criticize

Yazīd, as they had seen the atrocities that the government of Yazīd had committed. The case turned out quite the contrary [to what had been expected]; rather than praising Yazīd, they informed people of Medina of his crimes and told them, “How can Yazīd be a caliph while he drinks wine, plays with dogs, and commits all sorts of debaucheries; we have deposed him of caliphate”. ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥanzāla¹ was one of the people of personality and honor in Medina who had risen up in advance and deposed Yazīd and called the people to himself.

This movement forced Yazīd to react, and as a result, he sent one of the old and decrepit commanders of the Umayyad named Muslim b. ‘Uqba along with some others to Medina to silence the people of Medina. Muslim b. ‘Uqba came to Medina and besieged the city for several days with the intentions of crushing the people’s resistance. Then he entered the city and killed and oppressed so many people and brought about so many catastrophes that it is regarded as one of the unprecedented examples in the history of Islam.

He exceeded his limits in killing and oppressing the people so much so that after that incident he was given the nickname of *musrif*² and became known as “Musrif b. ‘Uqba”. The incidents of the Battle of Ḥarra are many and I do not wish to explain all of the incidents. I just wish to mention that it became the greatest means of intimidating the friends and the followers of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), especially in Medina where some fled, some were killed, and a group of the good companions of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) like ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥanzāla and others were martyred and there was no one to take their places. This news

1- He is the same youth who joined the army of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) before the dawn of his wedding night and was martyred in the Battle of Uḥud and the angels bathed him and he became known as “Ḥanzāla, i.e. the one bathed by the angels”. (Author)

2- (*sa ra fā*) Squanderer, someone who spends wastefully or go to extremes in actions.

was spread all corners of the world and it became known that the government apparatus stood firmly against these movements and would not allow them to take any action.

Mukhtār and Muṣ'ab and the Movement of the Penitents

The next incidence that also caused the vanquishing and weakness of the Shi'ites was the incident of the martyrdom of Mukhtār in Kūfa and 'Abdul Malik b. Marwān's dominance over the entire Muslim world. After the death of Yazīd, of the caliphs who came [to power] one was Mu'āwiyat b. Yazīd who did not rule more than three months. After him came Marwān b. Ḥakam and he ruled for two years or less, and after him 'Abdul Malik became caliph and was one of the most skillful of Banī Umayyad. It is said about him:

«كَانَ عَبْدَ الْمَلِكِ أَشَدَّهُمْ شَكِيمَةً، وَأَمْضَاهُمْ عَزِيمَةً»

[‘Abdul Malik was the hardest snaffle among them and the most determined].

‘Abdul Malik was able to take the entire Muslim world into his fist and create a dominant rule coupled with intimidation and severe repression.

‘Abdul Malik's dominance over the government was based on the elimination of his competitors. Mukhtār, who was the epitome of Shi'ism, was killed by Muṣ'ab b. Zubayr before 'Abdul Malik came to power. But 'Abdul Malik wanted to put an end to the repercussions of Mukhtār's movement and other Shi'ite movements and he did this and indeed the Shi'ites in Iraq, especially Kūfa, which was one of the main centers for Shi'ism, became stagnant and were extinguished during that period.²

1- *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 7, p. 209, ('Abdul Malik was the toughest [Umayyad] caliph and the most determined of them).

2- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 8

Although in the year 64 and 65 A.H., the movement of *Tawwābīn* (the Penitents)—during which the martyrdom of *Tawwābīn* took place in the year 65 A.H.—breathed a fresh air into the stifled atmosphere of Iraq, but the martyrdom of them all, increased the atmosphere of intimidation and suppression in Kūfa and Iraq again. After the enemies of the Umayyad government—meaning Mukhtār and Muṣ'ab b. Zubayr—began to fight with one another and 'Abdullāh b. Zubayr, from Mecca, could not stand Mukhtār who was a supporter of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), and Mukhtār was killed by Muṣ'ab. Again this fear and dread increased and hopes decreased. And finally, 'Abdul Malik came to power; after a short period of time, the whole Muslim world, came under the full control of the Umayyad, and 'Abdul Malik ruled powerfully for twenty-one years.

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At any rate, these events began following the incident of *Āshūrā* and had repercussions such as the Battle of *Ḥarra* and the suppression of *Tawwābīn*¹ movement in Iraq and the martyrdom of Mukhtār, Ibrāhīm b. Mālik Ashtar Nakha'ī and

1- *Tawwābīn* movement was the first reaction of the incident of *Āshūrā* that started from Kūfa. After the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), some Shi'ites started to hold one another accountable and blaming each other because they did not respond to the call of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and did not rush to the war front to assist him and they saw that nothing will cleanse their sins other than revenging the blood of Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) from those who killed the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and enemies, so they came to Kūfa and assembled with five Shi'ite elders from Kūfa and held discussions. And as a result they appointed Sulaymān b. Ṣurad Khuzā'ī as their leader and they started an armed movement.

On Thursday night, 25 Rabī' al-Thānī, 65 A.H., they came to perform pilgrimage at the tomb of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and cried and lamented such that until now a day like that day has not been seen. Then they bid the tomb farewell and went to Shām and struggled and fought the army of the Umayyad and killed all of them.

An interesting point about *Tawwābīn* movement is that, despite the fact that they were in Kūfa, nevertheless they went to Shām and fought the regime to prove that Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) murderer was not one person or some people; rather, it was this regime who martyred the Imam (P.B.U.H.). (Author)

other Shi'ite elders; which, was suppressed after the liberation movements, whether in Medina or Kūfa—which were two main centers for Shi'ism—were suppressed and intense suffocation was created against the Shi'ites in the Muslim world and the followers of Imams (P.B.U.T.) remained in utter estrangement and loneliness after the martyrdom of these individuals.¹

The Period of the Intellectual Degradation

In addition to this intimidation another factor came into being and that was the intellectual degradation of the people throughout the Muslim world, which stemmed from the lack of regard for the religious teachings in a period of the last twenty years. In as much as the teaching of religion and the teaching of faith and the exegesis of the Qur'an and stating of facts became obsolete since the time of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) during the twenty-year period after 40 A.H. of the lunar calendar, the people had become wanton and hollow in terms of faith and belief tenets. When one puts the lives of the people of that period under a microscope, these issues become clear in different kinds of historical recounts and narrations. Of course, there were the scholars and reciters of the Holy Qur'an and traditionalists that we shall talk about, too. Yet the majority of the people were faced with a lack of faith, weakness, and a severe ideological disorder. Things had come to the point that some of the benefactors of the caliphate system even questioned Prophethood! It is written in books that Khālid b. 'Abdullāh Qasrī, who was one of the mean and base puppets of the Umayyad,

«كَانَ يَفْضِلُ الْخِلَافَةَ عَلَى النَّبُوَّةِ»

[He used to separate caliphate from the Prophethood], would say, "Caliphate is higher than Prophethood". The argu-

1- Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam), No. 8

ment that he presented was that he used to say,

«أَخْلَيْتَكَ فِي أَهْلِكَ أَحَقُّ إِلَيْكَ وَأَثَرٌ عِنْدَكَ أَمْ رَسُولِكَ؟»

[Is your caliph among your people your most loved one or is it your Prophet?] Place one person as your successor in your family, is this higher and closer to you or that person that you send to deliver a message? It is clear the person that you place in your home and is your caliph, he is closer to you. Then, Allah's caliph—who was not even called the vicegerent of the Messenger of Allah—is higher than Allah's Messenger.

This is what Khālīd b. 'Abdullāh Qasrī used to say and others would say the same. When I looked at the poems of the poets of the Umayyad period, I see that from the era of 'Abdul Malik the term "Caliph of Allah" has been repeated so much that one forgets that the caliph is also the caliph of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), too! This continued until the 'Abbāsīd period.

بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ هَبُوا طَالَ نَوْمُكُمْ إِنَّ الْخَلِيفَةَ يَعْقُوبُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ
ضَاعَتْ خَلَافَتُكُمْ يَا قَوْمَ فَالْتَمِسُوا خَلِيفَةَ اللَّهِ بَيْنَ الزَّقِّ وَالْعُودِ

[Banī Umayya your sleep has become prolonged, get up! Ya'qūb b. Dāwūd has become caliph; your position of caliphate has been wasted, go find the vicegerent of Allah from among wine and musical instruments.]²

Even the time when he wanted to dispraise the caliph, he would still call him the "Caliph of Allah"! And everywhere in the poems of the famous poets of that era like Jarīr and Farazdaq and Kathīr and others—there are hundreds of famous and great poets—when they speak in praise of the caliph, he is [ad-

1- *Al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 346.

2- *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'*, p. 3.

dressed as] the Caliph of Allah; the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is not the caliph, and this is one example. The people's beliefs, as such, had become weak even in relation to religious beliefs. People's morals had been severely damaged.

I found out a notion when reading the book *Al-Aqānī* by Abū al-Faraj, and it was that in the years around seventy, eighty, ninety, and one hundred, until nearly fifty, sixty years after that, the greatest singers, musicians, sybarites, and the hedonists of the Muslim world, were either from Medina or from Mecca! Whenever the caliph was in Shām and he missed *ghinā'*¹ and he wanted a singer or a musician to entertain him, he would send someone to Medina or Mecca to bring famous *mughannīs*² and minstrels³ to him. The morally evil and the most foul-mouthed⁴ poets were in Medina or Mecca. The Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) *mahbat*⁵ of Revelation and the birth place of Islam had become the center of prostitution and corruption. It is good for us to know these things about Mecca and Medina. Unfortunately in the works we have at hand, there is no information of such things and this is a reality that did exist. Let me state one example of the prevalence of corruption and prostitution.

In Mecca, there was a poet by the name of 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a among the poets who expressed everything openly and shamelessly; he was frank and foul-mouthed, and of course, he died at the height of power and poetic art. Now the stories of 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a himself and what they did in Medina, is a chapter replete with sad history of that time; where [it is said about] Mecca and circumambulation and stoning Satan:

1- (*gha na ya*): Singing, joviality.

2- (*gha na ya*): Singer, musician.

3- Singers.

4- The most foul-mouthed, most driveling.

5- (*ha ba ṭa*) Place of descent, alighting place.

«فَوَاللَّهِ مَا أُدْرِي وَإِنْ كُنْتُ دَارِيَا بِسَبْعِ رَمِيَتِ الْجَمْرِ أَمْ بِثَمَانِيَا»

Which we have read in the book “*Mughnī*”, is about these places, which belongs to these places. Whilst performing the ‘stoning of Satan’ he says:

«بَدَا لِي مِنْهَا مَعْصَمٌ حِينَما جَمَرْتُ وَكَفَّ خَضِيبَ زَيْنَتِ بَيْنَانِ»

Her wrist appeared during the stoning of Satan,
And her henna-tinged palm with decorated nails.

When this ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī’a died, the narrator quotes, “In Medina there was a public mourning and people were crying in the alleys of Medina. Everywhere I went I saw an assemblage of young people, men and women who were standing and lamenting the death of ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī’a. I saw a bondwoman who was going on an errand, for example there is a bucket in her hand and was fetching water. She was shedding copious tears and she cried and moaned and lamented because of the death of ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī’a, she reaches an assemblage of young people, they asked, ‘Why are you crying so much?’ She said, ‘Because this man has died, he is no longer among us’. One said, ‘Do not worry; there is another poet in Medina. Khālid b. Makhzūmī, who was once governor of Mecca for a while, whom the same scholars of Shām had appointed. Like ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī’a, he was also one of the poets who was foul-mouthed, slanderous, and expressed everything openly and shamelessly. He had written this poem, and he began to recite one of that poets’ poems. This bondwoman listened for a while—this poem, and its features, have been quoted in *al-Aghānī*—then she cleaned her tears and said,

1- [During the stoning of Satan] I was so startled by the beauty of her henna-tinged hands that I swear to Allah I do not know whether she threw (and struck the pillar with) seven stones or eight!

2- *Mughnī al-Labīb*, p. 20.

«الحمدُ الله الذي لم يخل حرمة»

[All praise belongs to Allah, that He did not leave His sanctuary [i.e. Ka'ba] empty], finally, if one went, one has taken his place. This was the ethical state of the people of Medina.”

You see many stories about the evening parties in Mecca and Medina; not only among the low class but among all kinds of people. A mendicant and miserable person like the well-known Ash'ab Ṭammā' [the greedy] who was a poet and clown, and the ordinary people in the streets and this very bondwoman and the likes of her, as well as the well-known sons of the nobles of Quraysh and even the Hashemite—whose names I will not mention, who were the well-known figures of the nobles of the Quraysh, either their women or their men—were among these same people that were drowned in corruption. During the rule of this same person from the Makhzūm tribe, 'Āyisha bint Ṭalḥa arrived and was circumambulating [the K'aba]. This man had a liking for her. The time for call to prayer (*adhān*) had come. That woman sent a message to him to tell them not to say the call for prayers until she was done with her circumambulation. That is he gave orders that they should not announce the afternoon call for prayer! They criticized this man, saying, “You say to delay all the people's prayer because of one person, one woman who is circumambulating [the K'aba]?!” He said, “By Allah, if her circumambulation would have been prolonged until tomorrow morning, I would have told them not to say the call for prayer! This was the situation of those days.

11/15/1986

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*





*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The Social and Political Conditions

Speaking of and writing about Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) *sīra* (life history) is very difficult because people's familiarity with this noble Imam (P.B.U.H.) is not very well-grounded. Most of the hagiographers and analysts assume that this honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) sat in a corner, performed prayers and had nothing to do with politics. Some historians and biographers have stated this explicitly and the perception of those who have not explicitly asserted so—of the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—is nothing but this as well. This can be found significantly in the titles given to and comments made about the Imam (P.B.U.H.) as: Some people dubbed this honorable person “ill” even though his illness only lasted a few days after the incident of *Āshūrā* and did not last long. It is obvious everyone may get sick some days of their lifetime and truly, the illness of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was made at Allah's discretion in order that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) not only could be exempt from the duty to defend and fight in the cause of Allah on that day but he could also carry the burden of trust and Imamate, and survive thirty-four or thirty-five years after his father, and pass the most difficult era of the Shi'ite Imamate. When you look at the story of the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), you would find various interesting events—like our other Imams' (P.B.U.T.)—yet if you gather all these, you would not be able to have Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) *sīra*. Literally, the *sīra* of anybody becomes clear if we know their general attitude and opinion and then look at the minor events of their lives. If we find those attitudes and opinions, those minor events

would find meaning as well; however, if they are not found or are misapprehended, those minor events become meaningless or frequently misunderstood. This is not exclusive to Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) or other Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) rather the principle applies in the lives of all.

As for Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) letter to Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri is an example of an event in the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life. This is a letter from someone who is related to the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) and was a well-known scholar in his time. In this regard, there can be some comments: This letter can be a part of a vast and wide fundamental struggle. This can be a simple forbidding wrong or it can be the protest of a person against another person just like many of protests which historically have happened between two or more personalities. Such an event cannot be understood on its own and apart from the rest of the events of that era. I insist on the issue that if we study minor events apart from the general positioning in the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life, the biography of Imam (P.B.U.H.) would not be understood; indeed, it is important to know his general positioning.

Our first discussion is about the general positioning of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) in life. I will address and explain this with some evidence from his words and life as well as a general impression of the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) lives.

In our opinion, right after the peace treaty of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) which was signed in 40 A.H. / 661 C.E., the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) did not accept to sit at home and just explain the Divine laws as they understood. Rather, from the very beginning of signing peace treaty, the plan of all the Imams (P.B.U.T.) was to make preparations in order to establish the Islamic rule of their choice in a manner that was intended and we can see this clearly in the life and sayings of Imam Mu-

jtabā (P.B.U.H.). From this perspective, what Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) did was very profound and fundamental. ... Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) lived ten years in the same conditions. In the meantime, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) gathered and trained some people who with their martyrdom and oppositional remarks stood against Mu'āwīya's regime and consequently weakened it.

After that, it came the turn of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). That honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) followed the same way in Medina, Mecca, or elsewhere until Mu'āwīya passed away and the incident of *Karbalā* happened. Although the incident of *Karbalā* was a very positive and fruitful uprising for the future of Islam, it put off the objective which Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) were seeking because it terrified people, led to the martyrdom of the closed companions of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and dominated the enemy [of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)] over the Islamic state (even though this would have normally happened). If the uprising of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) had not happened in this way, it is assumed that after him and in the near future there would have been the possibility of a movement which would have handed the government over to the Shi'ites. Of course, this does not mean that the uprising of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) should not have occurred but the conditions in which the uprising of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) happened were in a way that the uprising had to be done at that time and there is no doubt in this. However, if those conditions had not existed and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) had not been martyred, Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) intended future would have been more likely to take place in a little while.

... The Imams (P.B.U.T.) followed this line and goal and always sought to form an Islamic government. In fact, the responsibility of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) began from the very moment that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) got martyred in *Karbalā* and Imam

Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was taken captive while he was very sick. If up to that day it had been supposed that Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) were going to shape such future, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—from that time on—was assumed to rise for the matter and so did the Imams (P.B.U.T.) after that honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Therefore, we should look for this general goal and main policy of the whole life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). Moreover, we are well-aware that Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) sought to achieve the same goals which Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) were following.

Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) began his Imamate on ‘*Āshūrā* in 60 A.H. / 680 C.E. and was poisoned and martyred in 95 A.H. / 714 C.E. During this time, that honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) followed the same goal. Now with such insight, we pursue every detail of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) conducts, what steps he took, what tactics he used and what successes he achieved. All the statements of the Imam, all his deeds, all his supplications, all his invocations and psalms, which are gathered in *Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādīyya*, all of these should be interpreted according to the same general outline; and so the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) attitudes and position-takings during his Imamate were:

- 1- His position against ‘Ubaydullāh b. Ziyād and Yazīd which was very courageous and selfless.
- 2- His position against Muslim b. ‘Uqba who in the third year of the reign of Yazīd destroyed Medina by Yazīd’s command and plundered people’s property. In this situation, the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) position was very soft and gentle.
- 3- The Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) position in confronting with ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān—the strongest and intelligent Umayyad caliph—was sometimes severe and sometimes gentle.

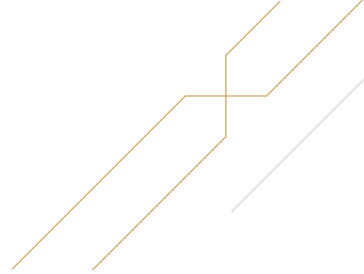
4- The Imam's (P.B.U.H.) confronting with 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Azīz.

5- The Imam's (P.B.U.H.) encounter with his companions and friends as well as his recommendations to his friends.

6- The Imam's (P.B.U.H.) encounter with the official scholars or those scholars who were dependent in the tyrant regime.

All these positions and encounters should be carefully examined. And in my opinion, paying attention to the general outline would reveal appropriate and clear meaning to all the details and the incidents. And if we look at the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) through this goal, we would find an honorable person who made his best endeavors to achieve this goal—which is to establish Divine rule on earth and actualize Islam. This honorable person benefited from the best means and enormously moved forward the Islamic nation which was sinking into segregation and fragmentation after the incident of 'Ashūrā. Like all of our Imams (P.B.U.T.), he completed a great mission and authentic responsibility (we will refer to it in detail later) and observed politics, courage, precision and meticulousness in deeds and actions; and like all the prophets and great men of history, he left this world, after thirty-five years of tireless striving and fulfilling his mission, holding his head high and entrusted his mission to the next Imam—i.e. Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.).

The handing on Imamate to Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) and the great mission of the establishment of Divine rule on earth are clearly addressed in the narrations. In a narration, it is mentioned that once Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) gathered his sons together, then pointed to Muḥammad b. 'Alī—i.e. Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.), and said, "Pick this chest, take this weapon; this is the trust



[put] in your hands,”¹ and when they opened the chest, there were the Holy Qur’an and the book.

Perhaps that weapon symbolizes the revolutionary leadership and that book is a symbol of Islamic thought and ideology; and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had given them to the next Imam, bade farewell to this world before Allah and the informed people, and left the world with comfort, calm conscience, and honor; this is the general picture of the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.).²

In the first era—that of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—the work begins with enormous difficulty. The incident of *Karbalā* violently shook the foundations of not only Shi’ism but also the totality of the world of Islam. Murder, persecution, torture, and oppression were not unprecedented matters, but slaying the grandson of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), taking the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) family captive, parading them through towns, putting the [holy] head of the beloved [son] of (Lady) Zahrā (P.B.U.H.) on a spear—there were still people who had seen the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) kissing those lips and the mouth—were events that stunned the world of Islam. No one could believe his eyes.

The following poem—attributed to Lady Zaynab (P.B.U.H.)—alludes to the same point: “O’ you who are part of my heart, I could not imagine the affairs would be decreed in this way”^{3,4} It is what all people think, too. Suddenly it was felt that there was a complete change in the course of actions. There was more severity than expected. Inconceivable things became conceivable and actualized. The whole world of Islam faced severe intimidation except for *Kūfa*—this being in the first place because of the Penitents, (*Tawwābīn*), and then because of Mukhtār.

١- «حمل هذا الصندوق وخذ هذا السلاح وهذه الأمانة بيدك»

2- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 6.

3- *Ibid*, vol. 45, p. 115.

٤- «ما توهمت يا شقيق فؤادي كان هذا مقدرًا مكتوبًا»

Besides, the horror that had filled Medina and other places as an aftermath of the [tragic] incident of *Karbalā* and was unprecedented in the world of Islam had overshadowed even Mecca, although ‘Abdullāh Zubayr had also staged a revolt.

The intellectual state, the moral decadence, and the political corruption are additional factors [characterizing the period in question]. Most eminent men were busy satisfying their worldly desires that the government agents had facilitated for them. A prominent figure—Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri, a once disciple of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—became attached to the [ruling] regime. Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) well-known letter to Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri—cited in *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl* and other sources—[indeed] addresses [the course of] history. It indicates the bonds binding the eminent personalities to the regime. There has been many a man like Muḥammad b. Shahāb.

The late Majlisi quotes Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd’s words—but in his *Bihār al-Anwār* he names Jābir (most probably he meant Jābir b. ‘Abdullāh) to have been the first one who quoted Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—as saying, “We do not know what to do with people. When we narrate the words of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) as we have heard them, they laugh.”^{1,2} He then mentions an event: “The Imam (P.B.U.H.) quoted a tradition for a group of people. Someone in the group mocked it, and did not accept it.” Then he adds Sa’d b. Musayyab and Zuhri were among the deviants. Here—I should say that—I do not accept his opinion concerning Sa’d b. Musayyab. There is evidence showing that he was a companion of Imam (Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)). But he is right with regard to Zuhri and others. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd then counts a great number of the eminent personalities of that period who had deviated from (following) the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.).

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 259

2- «ماندری کیف نضع بالناس! ان حدثناهم بما سمعنا من رسول الله ﷺ ضحكوا وان سكتنا لم يسمعنا»

... People's religion had to be put right; people's moralities had to be put right. People had to step out of this whirlpool of corruption. The spiritual orientation, the very core and principle spirit of religion, had to be revived in the society.

That is why you see "asceticism" in its full form in Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) life and words: "Surely, the sign of the ascetics is that they renounce the world ..."^{1,2} This is the manner by which a detailed lecture begins although it contains a reference to the aim (it will be following throughout). (Another similar wise saying is), "I would rather the food remaining in this bowl—this material world—be given to the people worthy of it. Paradise is the only price for your lives; so do not sell it for anything other than this."^{3,4} Most words of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) center on asceticism and (religious) knowledge but clad in supplications because, as we said before, the suffocation and unfavorable conditions of the time did not allow Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) to speak to the people openly and clearly. The (ruling) regime did not allow it, and people did not desire it either.

Basically, that society was incompetent and ruined, and would have to be reconstructed. This was how Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) life was spent—a 34-35 span from the year 61 A.H. / 681 C.E. through the year 95 A.H. / 714 C.E. "After the event of *Āshūrā*," Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) said, "people became apostates". He continued, "Later, people, i.e. Muslims joined and increased (in number)."^{5,6} and as we see it was really the case. In the time of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) the situation differed—and I will make a mention of it—due to the 35-year-long struggles of

1- Ibid, vol. 75, p. 128

٢- «ان علامة الزاهدين في الدنيا الراغبين عنها...»

3- Ibid, vol. 1, p. 144

٤- «ولا حريدع هذه اللماظة لأهلها يعني الدنيا، فليس لانفسكم تمن الالجنة فلا تبيعوها بغيرها»

٥- «ارتد الناس بعد الحسين، ثم ان الناس لحقوا و كثروا»

6- Ibid, vol. 46, p. 144

Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.).¹

Some people assume that if Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) sought to resist against the regime of Umayyad, he should have raised the flag of opposition or, for example, joined Mukhtār or Abdullah b. Ḥaṇḍala or even led them declaring armed resistance publicly. However, we understand by looking at the circumstances of Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) era that this thought is wrong with regard to the goal of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.).

If the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) and among them—Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—had done such public and negative moves, surly nothing of Shi'ism would have remained or no ground or opportunity would have been left for the continuation and growth of the school of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.), *Wilāya* and Imamate at the next era would all have been destroyed and perished. That is for this very reason that we see that Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) did not cooperate in the case of Mukhtār even though some narrations assert that there had been a secret link between them. However, undoubtedly, there could not have been any public link between the two, so it was said in some accounts that Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) disparaged Mukhtār, and such an issue seems normal in terms of dissimulation so that the enemy could not feel there had been any link between them. Surely if Mukhtār had emerged victorious, he would have handed over the government to the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.); but in case he had faced defeat while there was an apparent and public link between him and Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), the resentment² would have been definitively directed toward Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and the Shi'ites of Medina; and the Shi'ism would have been all uprooted. That is why there had been no overt link between Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and Mukhtār.

1-Delivered on July 19th, 1986

2- i.e. bitter indignation at having been treated unfairly. (Trans.)

It is mentioned in a narration when Muslim b. ‘Uqba entered Medina in the incident of *al-Ḥarra*¹, no one had doubts that the very first person falling victim to ‘Uqba’s retribution would have been ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.); nonetheless, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) acted so wisely and cautiously that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) could keep away such calamity from himself; and unsurprisingly, he remained the main pivot of Shi‘ism.

There are narrations in some books—including *Biḥār al-Anwār*—telling of the groveling humbleness of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) before Muslim b. ‘Uqba, but these narrations are absolutely false accounts for the following reasons:

First, these narrations are not based on any true chain of transmission.

Second, there are other narrations which rebut them in terms of content.

There are many narrations on the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) meeting with Muslim b. ‘Uqba, none of which are similar but we accept and logically admit some of those narrations which are more in line with the Imams’ (P.B.U.H.) manner and approach. If we admit them, other [false] narrations will be rejected and I have no doubt that those narrations are false.

Although we do not accept these narrations attributing such acts to the Imam (P.B.U.H.), there is no doubt that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had never been hostile toward Muslim b. ‘Uqba, because any hostile action would have led to the murder of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and would be a great loss for the uprising of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) which should be continued by Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). That is why the Imam (P.B.U.H.) survived and—as we read in the narration from Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.)—people

1- A battle occurred at *al-Ḥarra* on 26 August 683 C.E. between the armies of Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya and ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr. The people of Medina and several notable companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) were killed in the battle.

gradually joined and increased in number. It was under such difficult, adverse and unsustainable circumstances that Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) began his Imamate.

At that time, the regime of ‘Abdul Malik–governed during most of the Imamate of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) amounting to thirty-something years–monitored and kept an eye on the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and used some spies who reported the smallest details of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) life–even his domestic and private matters.

The Goals of the Movement of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)

After explaining the main layout of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) Imamate, we briefly refer to the goal and the approach adopted by the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) and then we review the details of the life of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) based on this approach.

There is no doubt that the ultimate goal of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was establishing an Islamic government, and as stated in the narration of Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.), Allah the Almighty had considered 70 A.H. / 690 C.E. for the establishment of an Islamic government yet the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) around 60 A.H. / 680 C.E. put it off to the year 147 A.H.–148 A.H. / 764 C.E.–765 C.E. This clearly indicates that the ultimate goal of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and other Imams (P.B.U.T.) has been to form an Islamic government. But how the Islamic government can be established in such circumstances? This requires several things:

- 1- Compiling, teaching and propagating the true Islamic school of thought**–which the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) are the real holders and should be the basis of the Islamic government. After such a long time that the Muslim community had been separated from true Islamic thought, how could one establish a government on the basis of authentic Islamic

thought while the intellectual ground had not become prepared among the people and the original rulings had not been written down?

Indeed, the greatest role played by Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was the compilation of the authentic Islamic thought which means monotheism, prophethood, [the true] spiritual status of humans and their relation with Allah, etc. The most important role played by *Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādīyya* is in this regard. If you consider this book in relation to the Islamic intellectual situation of the people of that era, you will see how much the gap is widened between the two. In such a time when the Muslims all over the Islamic world marched toward material life and sought pleasures, and everyone—ranging from someone like ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān who was the then caliph up to his advocate scholars (including Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri and surly I will talk about these scholars later)—pursued worldly desires and materialism, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) addressed people as, “Is there no free man who can leave this chewed morsel (of the world) to those who like it?”¹.

In this sentence, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) explains that the authentic Islamic thought means to target spiritualities, move toward spiritual and Islamic goals, and make humans connected with Allah through obligations. This is exactly opposite to the material trend of the people at that time. This was only an example which I mentioned here and Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) had done such great things for the sake of preserving the authentic Islamic thought, in the Muslim community. This incident was the beginning of the mission of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.).

2- Making people familiar with the rightfulness of those by whom the government must be established. How could the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) form a government at a time

١- «أولا حرّ يدع هذه اللماظة لأهلها؟»

when the propaganda against the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) had filled the Islamic world for decades, until the era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), and many false traditions from the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—which were contrary to the movement of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) and even in some cases included insulting and cursing the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)—had been made and promoted among people who did not have any information about the moral and true status of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)?

Therefore, one of the important goals and actions of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was to enlighten and acquaint people about the definition of the eligibility of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) as well as this issue that *Wilāya*, the Imamate and the government are their inalienable rights and they are the true successors of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). In addition to its ideological and intellectual importance, this matter has also a political nature which means a political movement against the ruling regime.

3- Establishing an organization that could be a cornerstone for future political moves. In such a torn society where people lived under repression, poverty as well as financial and moral pressure and harassment—and used to be alone, detached and disarray—even the Shi‘ites were posed in an atmosphere of terror and harassment to the point that their organizations were disbanded, how should Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) have begun his mission alone or with a small disorganized and unaligned group? In this aim, the next task of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was to renovate and restore the Shi‘ite organizations, which—in our opinion—existed in the days of the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) but were weakened and diminished after the incident of *Āshūrā*, *al-Ḥarra* and Mukhtār [’s uprising].

As a result, the mission of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was going on within the three basic themes:

First: To codify and compile Islamic thought, authentically and according to what Allah has revealed, after a long period of being distorted and consigned it to oblivion.

Second: To prove the eligibility of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) for the caliphate, *Wilāya* and Imamate.

Third: To find consistent organizations for the followers of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)—i.e. the Shi'ites.

These are the three basic themes which we should study and find out which one of them had been achieved in the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). In addition to these, there were also other marginal or implied actions including the movements or the statements made by the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his followers in order to break through such an awful oppressive atmosphere.

In numerous events, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) or his followers—of course when they were more organized—made statements the goal of which was to break the repression barriers and create some friendly and nice atmosphere. This is only one of the marginal actions for which I will give more examples later.

Another marginal action is the slightly testing in combat with the governing bodies or its subsidiaries, such as the incidents occurred between the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and 'Abdul Malik several times, or things took place between the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the delinquent and advocate scholars of 'Abdul Malik (such as Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri) as well as some of the skirmishes occurred between the followers of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the caliphs in order to breach such a tough atmosphere.

When one reviews moral narrations, advice, letters or other sayings which are quoted from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), or even the conflicts happened in the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) on the basis of what we have pointed out, he would find the proper

meanings; in other words, he would find that all those moves and statements are in line with the three above-mentioned themes and are all for establishing an Islamic government. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) certainly was not thinking of forming an Islamic government in his time because he knew that it would have been established in the era of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.).¹

These three actions would have prepared the ground to establish an Islamic government and an *Alawite* rule. As previously mentioned and emphasize it now, this point that Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) (unlike Imam Ṣādiq—P.B.U.H.) had no intention of changing the government and establishing an Islamic government in his time because it had been evident that the ground in the era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was not prepared for it. The injustice, oppression and ignorance were immense to the point that their removal was not possible during the thirty years [of his Imamate], yet Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was making every endeavor for the future. Through numerous clues, we find that Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) also did not intend to establish an Islamic government in his time. This means that from the year 61 A.H. / 681 C.E. to the year 95 A.H. / 714 C.E. (when Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was martyred) and from the year 95 A.H. / 714 C.E. to the year 114 A.H. / 732 C.E. (when Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) was martyred), none of them were thinking of forming an Islamic government. Therefore, they made any endeavor for future. As it was mentioned, Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) method was long-term plan.

Here, we intend to look at the words and sayings of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and extract from them what we mentioned before. When one seeks to analyze the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), his words and sayings are the best and authentic source for us to this end, just as our method is the same for all the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.).

1- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 8.

We—as noted earlier—consider the Infallibles’ (P.B.U.T.) sayings and narrations as the best source for understanding their lives; however, we understand these sayings and words appropriately in case we are familiar with the movements of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), their aims and ends of such strivings, endeavors and manners. If not, we may misunderstand the meanings of the words I say. And as we get familiar to them (which is indeed due to the Infallibles’ (P.B.U.H.) sayings), we will see how we can enjoy the benefit.

Before getting into the heart of discussion, we should mention a small point and it is that as the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was living in a severe repressive era and could not explain these concepts clearly and publicly, he benefitted from the method of preaching and supplicating. Supplicating is related to *Ṣaḥī-fat al-Sajjādīyya*—which we talk about later—and preaching is related to statements and narrations quoted from the Imam (P.B.U.H.). In the majority of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) statements or perhaps in all of them, the tone is the tone of preaching. While preaching, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had stated what I have referred to earlier and when you look at these statements, you would find a wise and highly skilled method which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had applied; and by such a method he could instill what he wanted into the people’s minds as he was preaching to them and this is truly one of the best forms of conveying and inculcating true ideologies and thoughts.

The Statements of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.): the Manifestations of Political Struggle

What we will examine here are the words of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) contained in the book of “Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl” where there are some subject matters in the materials quoted from the Imam (P.B.U.H.) which refer to the above-mentioned points.

Of them are the statements and sayings addressed to the general public and it is clear that the addressee is not one of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) friends, confidants and followers. In these statements and sayings, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) always refers to the Qur'anic verses because the general public did not perceive Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) as an imam and asked for the evidence of his words. For this reason, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) referred to the verses either directly or metaphorically. In this narration, there might be fifty or more verses of the Qur'an—used either directly or figuratively. However, in another narration since the faithful [the Shi'ites] are addressed, we find it totally different. As they knew Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and accepted his sayings and statements, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not refer to the verses. If you look at [this narration] from the first to the last word, you would find few Qur'anic verses.

In a detailed narration from “Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl” under the title of “the sermon delivered to the rest of his companions and his followers and reminded it to them every Friday”^{1,2}, we find that this sermon was for the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) companions, followers and friends to recite it every Friday in their gatherings or even individually. Here, the circle of addressees is a wide one which can be deduced from the evidences in this detailed narration. In this narration, firstly, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not use the words, “O' believers,”³ or “dear brothers,”⁴ and alike; rather he used “O' people,” which means it is a public discourse whereas in some other narrations, the discourse predominantly is addressed only to the faithful. Hence, this narration addresses the general public.

١- «موعظته لسائر أصحابه وشيعته وتذكيره إياهم كل يوم جمعة»

2- *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 249

٣- «أيها المؤمنون»

٤- «أيها الإخوة»

Secondly, there is no statement in this narration which indicates any explicit reprimand or rebuke of the ruling regime. It is only about articles of faith—which one should know—and reminding Islamic beliefs and teachings; and as I told you the tone of all these statements and sayings is preaching. In this regard, this narration also begins as; “O’ people, fear Allah and know that you will inevitably return to Him.”¹ Then the Imam (P.B.U.H.) addressed Islamic beliefs and sensitized the people to the fact that they had to understand Islam correctly. This shows that the people did not know the true Islam and indeed, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) sought to provide the people with the motivation to understand Islam and its teachings properly.

See, for example, how Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) used an interesting method where he says, “First of all, they will ask you about the Lord that you were worshipping.”² In this part, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) indicates one should fear of the moment they are left alone in their grave and the two angels—namely *Munkar* and *Nakīr*³—break in to their grave and ask firstly about the Lord whom they worship. In other words, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) tries to awaken the motivation of his addressees to know Allah and fully comprehend monotheism. They ask about “the Prophet whom was sent to you.”⁴ Here, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) clarifies the motive for comprehending the matter of prophethood. They inquire into “the religion that you were following”. And they ask about your book “that you were reciting (and taking as guide)...”⁵

Among these authentic ideologies and basic doctrines of

١- «أيها الناس، اتقوا الله واعلموا أنكم إليه راجعون...»

٢- «ألا وإن أول ما يسألناك عن ربك الذي كنت تعبد»

3- They are two angels in Islamic eschatology who test the faith of the dead in the grave. (Trans.)

٤- «وعن نبيك الذي أرسل إليك»

٥- «وعن دينك الذي كنت تدين به، وعن كتابك الذي كنت تتلوه...»

Islam, i.e. monotheism, prophethood, the Holy Qur'an and religion, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) demonstrates his fundamental point saying as, "and the imam to whom you were adhering loyally"¹. Here, he referred to the issue of the Imamate. For the Infallible (P.B.U.T.), the issue of the Imamate means the issue of the government as there is no difference between the government and the Imamate in the Imams' (P.B.U.T.) eyes. Although master and imam may carry different connotations, these two issues—*Wilāya* and the Imamate—are the same in the Infallibles' (P.B.U.T.) words and so mean the same. The word "imam" here means the one who is responsible for guiding and directing you in terms of religion as well as supervising your mundane life activities in terms of worldly affairs—i.e. the successor of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)...Imam (P.B.U.H.) means the leader of the community, that is, the one whom we learn our religious affairs from and our worldly affairs are administered by. Therefore, obeying him in terms of both religion and worldly affairs is compulsory for us... but you see in the world of Shi'ism how this case (the role of the Imam) was wrongly embedded [in the people's minds] over the centuries. In the past, people used to think that as there was someone who ruled over the society, managed daily affairs, declared war and made peace, did whatsoever he wished, imposed taxes, gave commands, there should have also been a person who modified and reformed their religion! The first one is regarded as governor and the second one is seen as imam at the time of the Infallibles and the [Islamic] jurist at the time of the Occultation [of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.)]. That is we imagined (the role of) imam at the time of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) as (the role of) a religious scholar at the time of the Occultation [of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.)] and this, of course, is a wrong perception.

The word “imam” means leader. Whenever Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) went to *Minā* or *ʿArafāt*, he addressed people saying: “O people, the Messenger of Allah was an imam.”¹ That is imam means the one who has the administration of both religious and worldly affairs of people in his hands. The Islamic society, during the reign of ʿAbdul Malik b. Marwān, in the era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), misunderstood the meaning of this word because the Imamate of the society, which means the administration of the affairs of people’s lives as well as the contraction and expansion of their lives—which represent a significant part of the Imamate—was robbed of its true holders and given to those who were not authorized. Such an inept person (i.e. ʿAbdul Malik b. Marwān) saw himself as imam and the people considered him so as well. This means people considered ʿAbdul Malik b. Marwān—as his father, Yazīd and those (sat on the throne) after ʿAbdul Malik—as an imam and had accepted him as the leader of their society and ruler of the people’s social system. This was firmly entrenched in the people’s mind.

So when Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) says you will be asked about the Imamate in the grave, he means you are asked if you choose a rightful imam. Is the one who rules and leads the society, in which you live, really an imam? Is he the one whom Allah is pleased with? Through these words, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) awakens people and makes them sensitive to this issue. In this way as a speech addressed to the public, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) revived and awakened in people’s mind the issue of Imamate, which the Umayyad regime was not inclined to be talked about. This was one of the quiet methods used by Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) in this area we will later on refer to more stringent ones, as well.

Based on these, we find that in public addresses, the Imams (P.B.U.T.) revive Islamic teachings, including those teachings that

١- «أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ كَانَ الْإِمَامَ»

the Imam particularly intends to impart, through preaching in order to make people recognize and learn the two following points which are mainly discussed in this sermon:

First: These statements addressed to the general public are neither didactic nor reminding or exhorting. In other terms, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not elucidate in details the issue of monotheism for people nor interpret the issue of Prophethood. Rather he reminded these issues and used the issue of prophethood to touch a chord with the people. Why? Because the society in which Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was living had not been too distant from the era of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and thus it was not deviated and distorted wholly from the Islamic beliefs. Also, there were a lot of people who had lived at the time of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the Caliphs and our great Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) such as the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.), Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.), and Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Socially, the situation had not yet reached the stage where the Muslim community fall into mistake and become distorted either on the issues of monotheism and prophethood or Resurrection and the Holy Qur'an. Of course, those issues gradually went out of their minds, and the material life led the people to the point that they disregarded the Islamic thought, belief, and tendency. The worldly and material issues in the society had put the people under such a pressure that they consigned morale and good deeds to oblivion and did not seek to know and understand about; there were only commonplace affairs when they learned anything. The people did not have the same perception, feeling, sensitivity and understanding of monotheism as the people's living at the era of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and shortly after him. These needed to be reminded so that the people could remember and understand them because indeed there was no distortion to be rectified.

This was not so in later eras, such as Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.).

On that time, a lot of lecturers and the so-called Islamic philosophers and thinkers had emerged who sat under various titles in the mosques, such as the Prophet's Mosque, and even Masjid al-Ḥarām or Shām Mosque, and taught deviant beliefs and thoughts. There were people such as "Ibn Abī al-'Ujā" teaching and reasoning the doctrines of atheism, i.e. the belief that Allah does not exist. That is why when you reflect on the sayings of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), you find monotheism, prophethood and the like are argumentatively expressed. Because there needed to express an argument to face with the opponents' arguments.¹ But this is not found in Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) words. The Imam did not seek to express the Islamic teachings argumentatively; rather, he referred to and reminded them to people. "They will ask from you about monotheism and prophethood in the grave." You see this is for the people to get motivated and look for what they had forgotten and to remember them.

In short, there is no sign of deviation and distortion from the Islamic thoughts and doctrines, even by the rulers, in the era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). However, there are some cases as the poem which Yazīd recited drunkenly when the prisoners of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) were brought in:

"Hāshim were [only] playing with the [matter of] government and,

That was not because of religion and [Divine] revelation."^{2,3}

However, we can say that this utterance was delivered under the influence of a drunkenness. Even people as 'Abdul Malik and Ḥajjāj did not dare to declare violation of the principles of

1- *Majmū'ah Rasā'il dar Sharḥ-i Aḥādīthī az Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 565 "Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) in response to Ibn Abī al-'Ujā—who was a damned heretic—gave reasons for the affirmation of Allah's existence by features of different creatures as getting old after being young and becoming weak after being strong and vice versa as well as being healthy after being sick and vice versa."

٢- «العبت هاشم بالملك فلا خير جاء ولا وحي نزل»

3- *Al-Luhūf 'alā Qatla al-Ṭufūf*. Fahrī, Trans, Al-Naṣ, p. 181.

monotheism or prophethood in public. ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān recited the Holy Qur’an to the extent that he was known as one of the then Qur’an reciters. But, once the news of his inauguration as the caliph reached him, he kissed [and closed] the Qur’an and said, “This is where you and I shall part.”^{1,2} That was the fact and he did not refer to the Qur’an afterward. Whenever Hajjāj b. Yūsuf, whose injustice and oppression you have heard about, (and certainly what you have heard is far less than what he really perpetrated), when delivering a speech from the pulpit, he used to enjoin people to piety. Hitherto, we see Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) focused his life on reviving the Islamic thoughts and reminding them to people in order to get their consideration out of the quagmire of the material incentives and passions and bring them back to Allah, religion, and the Qur’an.

Second: As I have referred to earlier, in this public statement, all of a sudden the Imam (P.B.U.H.) emphasized on the issue of the Imamate. This is like what we faced at the time of the Shah that amid talking about Islamic issues, one would have said, “O’ people! Think about Allah, monotheism, and prophecy and also the issue of government.” This is exactly how Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) referred to the issue of Imamate in his sermon. This word “government” was a forbidden word during the ex-regime’s era as well. If someone sought to say people should open their eyes to the government, it was not something that the government easily turned a blind eye to; however, if one said the same sentence through preaching and as the words of a devoted and pious man, it was more acceptable for the regime; in other words, it would not increase the sensitivities of the then government. This is the first type.³

١- «هذا فراقٌ بيني وبينك»

2- *The Holy Qur’an*, Al-Kahf (18): 78.

3- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 9.

Give Warning to Personages Against the World's Properties and Prosperities

The second type is consisted of the speeches addressed to an especial group. Although the identity [of the addressees] is not known, it is clear that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had addressed a group of those who had opposed and violated the ruling regime. And indeed, they were the followers of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and believers in the succession of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) [after the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)].

Fortunately, we find in the book “Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl” an example of this type of speeches given by Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) (because we do not find such example of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) sayings in other books and other resources despite the fact that there had been a lot of similar examples in the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) although most of them had been died out and forgotten under the impact of various incidents that took place in that era of repression, torture, persecution and killing of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) companions and only a few of them [sayings] have reached us).

The second type starts as follows, “May Allah guard you and us against the trickeries of the oppressors, the tyranny of the envious, and the violence of the despots.”¹ This statement shows that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the group have something in common and it means that they are all being threatened by the ruling authorities, and it is evident that the issue is associated with a specific group who are the followers of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.), friends, and companions. In this type, the speech is started with, “O’ believers”². Unlike the first type of speeches and statements which are started with “O’ people,”³

١- «كفانا الله وإياكم كيد الظالمين وبغي الحاسدين ويطش الجبارين»

٢- «يا أيها المؤمنون»

٣- «يا أيها الناس»

or “O’ son of Adam,”¹ this one starts with “O’ believers”². In other words, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) accredited and endorsed the faith of those who were addressed by this statement. Those were the true faithful who believed in the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) and the views of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.).

As the Imam (P.B.U.H.) began to speak, it became clear that his addressees are the faithful—i.e. the companions of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.): “O’ believers! Do not be misled by the tyrannical rulers and their fellows who are desiring only for the pleasures of this world, tending to it, and deceived by its attractions.”^{3,4}

The original meaning of these words is to protect these believers and prepare these groups for the future. It is clear that during those intense and unseen conflicts between the followers of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and the followers of the tyrants, the Imams’ (P.B.U.T.) followers have suffered the greatest deprivations... naturally those who strive suffer from some deficiencies in their daily lives while others live in the lap of luxury. Indeed, the biggest danger threatening the strivers is to show a great tendency toward such luxury [life] which would not be afforded except by abandoning the holy striving.

In this statement, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) mostly focuses on this point that the people should be warned of the common luxuries of such glittering, picturesque and deceptive worldly well-being which are being achieved only through getting closer to the tyrants. For this reason, you find similar connotation in this statement, and many other quoted narrations and short sayings of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) is

١- «إبن آدم»

٢- «يا أيها المؤمنون»

٣- «أيها المؤمنون لا يفتننكم الطواغيت وأتباعهم من أهل الرغبة في الدنيا، المائلون إليها المقتنون بها، المقبلون عليها»

4- *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 252.

warning the people of the world.

What does “warning of the world” mean? It means keeping people away from a trend gravitating people toward luxury in order to destroy their faith and granting them some concessions with the aim of reducing the strength of their striving; and truly this statement addresses the faithful. This cannot be found in the statements addressed to the general public. In public statements and speeches—as we said before—it is often said, “O’ people! Turn to Allah, reflect on the grave and the resurrection and prepare yourselves for tomorrow and so on.”

So what does the Imam (P.B.U.H.) mean by this second type of speeches and statements? What he means is to create a cadre. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) sought to make the necessary cadres of the faithful for the appropriate time so as to warn the believers against gravitating toward the axis of power and mendacious luxury. Furthermore, the Imam repeatedly mentions the ruling regime, unlike the first type of speeches and statements, and calls it devilish; as for example, he says, “The affairs which you come across every day and night from the darkness of the strife, and the new innovations, and the unjust traditions, and the commotions of the era, and the dignity of the Sultan, and the whisperings of Satan.”^{1,2}

Here, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) instantaneously mentions “the whisperings of Satan” after mentioning “the dignity of the Sultan”. In other terms, he wants to draw, frankly, the ruler of that time and puts it next to Satan! In the sequel, there is an interesting sentence (which I mention here due to its importance and reference to what was mentioned earlier), “[Because] all discourage the hearts from taking lessons from it, and boggle

١- «وإنّ الأمور الواردة عليكم في كلّ يوم وليلة من مظلمات الفتن وحوادث البدع وسنن الجور وبيئات الزمان وهيبة السلطان ووسوسة الشيطان»

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 15.

it from finding guidance and the recognition of the people of the truth.”^{1,2} These incidents happening in the days and nights of human life—in the era of repression—prevent the hearts from their intentions and the motivation required for striving and struggling.

Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) preached in the same former method which I have mentioned: lest the incidents of life make you forget and disregard your way. The Imam many a time mentions the sultan and tyrant ruler in his sayings. And in another saying, he says, “And beware of the company of the disobedient ones and the help of the unjust ones.” Here, he warns of establishing association with the disobedient ones. But who are the disobedient ones? The ones were attracted to the unjust regime of ‘Abdul Malik. [The Imam reminds:] “May it never occur to you [the Shi‘ites] to become their friends and help the tyrants!”

Now, imagine this personality of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and compare it with what image you have of him in your mind. Do you still see Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) as a reticent, oppressed and patient Imam who had nothing to do with life? No, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was indeed the one who gathered some of the faithful and his friends, his companions and his followers and warned them by this way of getting closer to the darkness and forgetting the striving, and prevented them from deviation from this path. In other words, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) motivated them and filled them with joy and happiness for the day they become influential in creating an Islamic government.

Among the things that I find very interesting and important in this part of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) sayings is where he refers to some of the incidents happened in the Infallibles’ (P.B.U.T.)

١- «التَّبَيُّطُ الْقُلُوبِ عَنْ تَنْهَيْهَا وَتَذَهْلِهَا عَنْ مَوْجُودِ الْهُدَى وَمَعْرِفَةِ أَهْلِ الْحَقِّ»

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 16.

lives. In this part, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) addresses the people, “Do you remember [or know] how much you were under the pressure by the unjust rulers?”—i.e. those pressures which during the reign of Mu‘āwīya, Yazīd, and Marwān were exerted on the followers of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) as well as the battle of *al-Ḥarra*, the incident of *Āshūrā*, the martyrdom of Ḥujr b. ‘Adī and Rushayd al-Ḥijrī and dozens of other important and well-known incidents which the followers of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had experienced and kept in their minds. By describing the old experiences and reminding these bitter incidents, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) urges people to remain steadfast in their striving. Now, consider this sentence, “By my life, you have matters from the past which were from days in which you were free from strife, pre-occupations, and engagements which have evidenced for you to avoid the misguided.”^{1,2}

This sentence means that you are experienced people and know very well what the people of tyranny and corruption—i.e. the tyrant rulers—would do if they dominate. Therefore, now you know that you should avoid, keep away from, and confront them.

In this speech, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) raises the issue of the Imamate explicitly. This means the issue of the caliphate, *Wilāya* on Muslims, the ruling over people and the administration of the Islamic government. Here, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) articulates the issue of Imamate openly while at that time he could not clarify this issue for the general public. Then he adds, “So give priority to the Commands of Allah and the obedience to the one whose obedience Allah has made obligatory.”³

١- «فقد لعمرى استدبرتم من الأمور الماضية في الأيام الحالية من الفتن المتراكمة والانهماك فيها ما تستدلون به على تجنب الغواية»

2- *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 253.

٣- «فقدّموا أمر الله وطاعته وطاعة من أوجب الله طاعته»

Here, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) not only specifies the philosophy and foundation of Imamate in the Shi'ite views but also it denotes the one who should be obeyed second to Allah. If the people of that time had thought on this matter, they could easily have found that the obedience to 'Abdul Malik was not obligatory as it is not reasonable to assume Allah makes obligatory the obedience of 'Abdul Malik. With all the oppression, injustice, corruption, and tyranny of 'Abdul Malik, it was apparent to the people that he could not be worthy of obedience. In order to prevent the possibility of any misconception arising in the mind of his addressees, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) adds, "Do not give priority to the commands, which come to you from being obedient to the tyrants about the attractions of the world as oppose to that of Allah but rather submit to Him and the Masters of the Command from among you."^{1,2} In this part of his saying, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) explicitly talks about the issue of Imamate.

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) both in this saying and in the former one focuses on the two key issues of the three issues that we have mentioned previously: one is the renewal of Islamic thought and beliefs of the people and the urge to make them learn and reconsider religion, and the other is the political dimension of "Guardianship" which means the issue of government and the leadership of the Islamic administration. In this way, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) familiarized the people of that time with these two issues and in fact he was promoting his intended administration—which means the *Alawite* and the Divine Islamic government.

There is another type of Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) sayings which is more important than the previous ones, in which the Imam

١- «ولا تقدّموا الأمور الواردة عليكم من طاعة الطواغيت وفتنة زهرة الدنيا بين يدي أمر الله وطاعته وطاعة أولي الأمر منكم»

2- *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 254.

(P.B.U.H.) openly calls people to form an Islamic organization. Of course, the invitation is addressed to those who follow the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). Otherwise, if it were addressed to the general public, it would have been disclosed and caused the Imam (P.B.U.H.) difficulty and turmoil. Thanks Allah, there is an example of this type of his words in “Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl”¹

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) began this way, “The sign of the ascetics—those abstinent from the worldly pleasures and the desirous for the Hereafter—is that they desert every mate and associate, and they abandon every friend that does not take their trend.”^{2,3} This is an open call to form a “Shi’ite organization”.

Here, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) teaches people to desert those who do not take their trend, who do not have the same motives, who are not after [establishing] the *‘Alawite* and the right government. Of course, they should communicate and socialize with them but this socialization should be like how Iranians before [1979] Revolution dealt with, for example, the neighborhood grocer whom everyone knew was related to SAVAK⁴ or an adjutant who kept an eye out for the people. The Imam teaches people that they should stay away from those who oppose them and are against the *‘Alawite* and the right government.⁵

1- Unfortunately, it should be notified that there is not any kind of reference to the content which we have referred to in all the headings relating to such words of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—and selected by the narrators. For the most part, these words had been categorized as asceticism. Of course, this is the real asceticism but that the prevailing understanding about asceticism cannot be inferred from these words and it should have been referred in the books that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) in these words was referring to political issues. (Author)

۲- «إِنَّ علامة الزاهدين في الدنيا الراغبين في الآخرة، تركهم كل خليط وخليط ورفضهم كل صاحب لا يريد ما يريدون»

3- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 128.

4- I.e. the secret police, domestic security and intelligence service established by Pahlavi dynasty.

5- In my opinion, we could find such statements both in the words of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and other Imams (P.B.U.T.). Of such statements, there are many examples in other Infallibles’ (P.B.U.T.) words. I have found some of them in the life of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), the life of Imam

Another type of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) words is the general sayings which do not have the particular aspect that I mentioned, such as Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) *Risālat al-Ḥuqūq* (Treatise on Rights)¹. It is a detailed letter attributed to Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) which had reached the size of a treatise. Here, treatise means letter and the "Treatise on Rights" is actually a letter written by the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to one of his companions reminding of the rights and duties of the individuals and people over each other. But indeed it is in size of a treatise which if one translates and publishes, it would be in size of a book—it might have been published up to now. In this treatise, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) refers to all the rights and duties which people have over each other in different [social] positions. He also states the right of Allah, your organs and physical faculties, your eye, your tongue, your hand and your ear over you as well as the right of both the governor of the Muslim community over you and your right over the governor of the Muslim community, your right over your friends, your neighbors, and your family. He mentions all of these types of rights that govern relations between individuals in the Islamic government. In this letter, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) gently—without mentioning the government, striving and the future [Islamic] administration—states the foundations of the affairs of the future [Islamic] administration so that once it was established either in the era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—which was a remote possibility—or in later times, people would be aware of and prepared for it. In other words, he familiarizes people with the Islam whose [true] government will be established in the future. This is another type of Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) eye-catching words.

Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) and at least the lives of the four following Imams (P.B.U.H.). Even the formation of an organization and an Islamic association could be traced back to the Commander of the Faithful's (P.B.U.H.) sayings which is very general and cannot be discussed here in details. (Author)

1- *Risālat al-Ḥuqūq*.

The other type is exactly what you find in *Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādīyya* and this book demands a very detailed discussion—it behooves to research on this noble book. *Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādīyya* includes a set of supplications in all the areas which one should heed and discern in a thoughtful and vigilant life. Most of its supplications are related to the human being's heartfelt and spiritual relations. This book is consisted of countless supplications, prayers, invocations and various spiritual and progressive aspirations. And within these supplications and invocations, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) provides the people with the motivation of [leading] an Islamic life.

One of the results that you can get from supplicating, and we have mentioned it over and over again, is the instilment of right and pure motives in the hearts. In this regard, when you recite, “O’ Allah, make good the outcomes of our affairs,”¹ this supplication revitalizes the remembrance of the outcomes of your affairs in your heart and prompts you to reflect on the consequence of your affairs. Sometimes the human being overlooks the consequences of their affairs. They live and do not pay attention to this fact that the consequences of what we do are very determinative, distinguished, and important. When you pray, it will awaken the need to improve the consequences of your affairs. But how you accomplish it is another matter. I just want to give an example about the role of supplications and prayers in providing right and proper motives. Indeed, a book like *Ṣaḥīfat al-Sajjādīyya* is full of noble praying motives for humans which if they pay heed to, this book is indeed sufficient for awakening a society and leading it to goodness. Furthermore, there are numerous short narrations quoted from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), of which I mentioned an example earlier, “Is there no free man who can leave this chewed morsel [of the

١- «اللَّهُمَّ اجعل عواقب أمورنا خيراً»

world] to those who like it?”¹ See how important this saying is. What is this chewed morsel? The same worldly ornaments, palaces, and luxuries as well as all those things which trapped the weak-willed hearts during the reign of ‘Abdul Malik. These are called the chewed morsel. All those people, who sought to serve ‘Abdul Malik or his servants and followed his trend, were indeed after this chewed morsel. Here, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) says, “O’ believers! Do not go after these chewed morsels so as not to appeal to ‘Abdul Malik”. Such revolutionary and striking words are numerous in the speeches of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) which we will discuss later, God willing. Among them, the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) poems are prominent. Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was a poet, composed poems and the theme of his poems was the same subject matter we will mention later, God willing.²

Of important sections of the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) is to see if the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had acted in a hostile manner toward the caliphate regime or not. In the previous sections, I briefly referred to this subject and here I will explain more:

The Tactic of the Beginning of the Imams’ (P.B.U.T.) Third Era of Movement

As far as I studied and remember, there was no sign of explicit and unequivocal aggression in the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) as what we see in the lives of some of the other Imams (P.B.U.T.), such as Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) during the reign of the Umayyad or Imam Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.). And the reason is quite obvious, because if such an extreme move had been made at the beginning of the movement of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) in the third era of the four leading eras coincided with the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), it would have impeded the great and

١- «أولا حرّ يدع هذه اللماظة لأهلها؟»

2- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 10.

important mission of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) from achieving its objective. At that time, the orchard of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), which Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) was responsible to care and water, was not strong. There were some saplings in this orchard which could not withstand severe hurricanes. As I mentioned at the beginning of this part, there was a small number of enthusiasts, Shi'ites and followers of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) around Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and it was not a good idea to put this small group—which was responsible for [forming] the main Shi'ite organization—at the risk of facing the enemy and exposing it to annihilation.

We can liken this era of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) to the early phase of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) call to Islam in Mecca i.e. those years which even the call was not public. Perhaps the era of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) can be likened to the second phase of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) call to Islam in Mecca when the call became public. And the subsequent eras can be likened to the subsequent phases of the call to Islam. That is why we see there was no direct confrontation at this era.

There is no doubt that if Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) had headed for this sharp remonstrance that we find in some words of Imam Ṣādiq, Imam Kāzīm, and Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.T.), 'Abdul Malik Marwān, who was at the height of his authority, would have easily dismantled the teachings of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) and as a result, they would have to start everything from the beginning. In fact, doing such thing was not rational and assertive. But in any case, signs or manifestations of remonstrating with the then regime can be seen among Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) words, which probably dated back to the last days of his noble life or the long duration of his Imamate.¹

1-I indicate here what we discussed in this chapter does not consider the Imam's dealing with Yazid and the Umayyad regime as we have discussed it fully in the previous booklets. (The author)

Those manifestations and signs of remonstrance appeared in many forms... One of the forms is stating the position of the Umayyad caliphs and their status in light of teachings regular religious instructions. There is a narration of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) saying, “The Umayyads let the people learn faith freely but they did not let them recognize blasphemy so that whenever the Umayyads led them to acts of blasphemy, they would not realize [what they were doing].”^{1,2} In other words, the Umayyads would allow scholars, the people of religion, and also the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), to talk about prayer, Hajj, *Zakāt*, fasting and worship as well as monotheism, prophethood, and Divine provisions. But they did not allow them discussing the concept of blasphemy, its manifestations, and examples in society and teaching them to the people. Because if they had taught these teachings of blasphemy, people undoubtedly would have found that the Umayyads were blasphemous, and what they were drawing the people’s attention to was indeed blasphemy. They would have found that ‘Abdul Malik and the rest of the caliphs of the Umayyads were the tyrants who stood against Allah and whosoever obeyed them would be indeed blasphemous as well. That is why they did not allow people to learn these concepts.

When we discuss about monotheism in the religion of Islam, an important part of our discourse is linked to understanding blasphemy and the blasphemous; what is an idol and who is an idolater?

The late ‘Allāma Majlisī (May Allah sanctify his soul) has a wonderful statement in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, volume 48, pages 96 to 97: “Indeed, the verses [of the Qur’an] on blasphemy are seemingly about idols but the real connotation refers to the caliphs

١- «إِنَّ بَنِي أُمَيَّةٍ أَطْلَقُوا لِلنَّاسِ تَعْلِيمَ الْإِيمَانِ وَلَمْ يَطْلُقُوا تَعْلِيمَ الشَّرْكِ حَتَّى إِذَا حَمَلُوهُمْ عَلَيْهِ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوهُ»

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 415

of injustice who have involved themselves with the Imams of Right [over the Islamic government and the sovereignty over Muslim community] and self-appointed themselves in the Imams' position."¹ In other words, associating anyone with the Imams of Right (P.B.U.T.) [in the Islamic government and the sovereignty over Muslim community] is like associating others with Allah because the Imams of Right (P.B.U.T.) are His representatives, they speak on behalf of Him, and because the caliphs of injustice have self-appointed themselves in the Imams' (P.B.U.T.) place and claim the Imamate, they have become like those idols and whosoever obeys them is indeed a polytheist.

Of course, *Allāma Majlisī* has an interesting explanation for this. After stating that all the verses of the Holy Qur'an are not specifically about the era of Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) rather they are valid and applicable in all the ages and times, he adds, "This applies to the folks who gave up the obedience of the Imams of Right (P.B.U.T.), and followed the imams of injustice because they have derogated from rational and narrative evidence and followed their passions, and deviated from the statutes [*naṣṣ*]."^{2,3} For example, they ignored that 'Abdul Malik could not be the ruler of the Muslims and their caliph. They ignored the obvious statutes and reasons mentioned in the narrations and followed their own passions. The people, who found life more tranquil and comfortable without remonstrating with the governor, went for this kind of life and followed the imams of injustice. In this regard, they were considered as blasphemous.

Hence, we see that if the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) sought to demonstrate the true meaning of polytheism, there would be always a

١- «إِنَّ آيَاتِ الشَّرْكِ ظَاهِرُهَا فِي الْأَصْنَامِ الظَّاهِرَةِ، وَبِاطِنُهَا فِي خُلَفَاءِ الْجُورِ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا مَعَ أُمَّةِ الْحَقِّ وَنَصَبُوا مَكَانَهُمْ»
 ٢- «فَهُوَ يَجْرِي فِي أَقْوَامٍ تَرَكَوا طَاعَةَ أُمَّةِ الْحَقِّ، وَاتَّبَعُوا أُمَّةَ الْجُورِ لِعَدْوِهِمْ عَنِ الْأَدَلَّةِ الْعَقْلِيَّةِ وَالنَّقْلِيَّةِ وَاتَّبَاعِهِمُ الْأَهْوَاءَ، وَعَدْوِهِمْ عَنِ النَّصُوصِ الْجَلِيَّةِ»

3- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 96.

confrontation with the ruling caliphate. This is apparent in the life and words of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.).

We would find another example of such confrontations in the correspondence between Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and ‘Abdul Malik—the tyrannical Umayyad caliph. Two examples of them are referred here:

1- Once ‘Abdul Malik wrote a letter to Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) blaming the Imam for getting married to his freed bondswoman. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) had a bondswoman whom he set free and then married to her. ‘Abdul Malik wrote a letter and blamed the Imam (P.B.U.H.) for it. Of course, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had done a humanitarian and Islamic act, for he set free a bondswoman and then gave her honor by choosing her as his wife. This was indeed very humanistic and interesting. However, the main aim of ‘Abdul Malik for writing this letter was to oppose the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and let the Imam (P.B.U.H.) know that he was also aware of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) family issues, and hence it was an implicit threat made against the Imam (P.B.U.H.). Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) replied him in a letter and started it as: There is nothing wrong with it as the nobles have done so, too. Also, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) did so. Thus, there is no blame on me, “There is no blame on a Muslim man but rather the vileness of ignorance is to be blamed.”¹ The Imam (P.B.U.H.) satirically and gently reminded ‘Abdul Malik of his ancestors (who were of disbelief and stubbornness) during the Age of Ignorance in Arabia. In other words, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) meant that ‘Abdul Malik was from a family of ignorance, pagan and the enemies of Allah and their blood flew in his veins; and if one was going to be embarrassed, it should have been for this very matter

not for being married to a Muslim woman.

Once ‘Abdul Malik received the letter, Sulaymān—his second son—was present there and when the letter was read, Sulaymān felt the disparaging of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) just like his father. Thus, he turned to his father, saying, “O’ the Commander of the Faithful! Do you see how ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) takes pride in himself? That is, in this letter he has implied that his forefathers have all been believers and your forefathers have all been unbelievers and polytheists” He sought to incite his father to show a severe reaction. However, ‘Abdul Malik was wiser than his son and he did know that he should not get involved in such matters. Thus ‘Abdul Malik addressed his son as, “Do not say anything, my son! It is the words of Banī Hāshim that like a hammer break the rock in pieces (i.e. they have a strong and good reasoning).”

2- Another correspondence that took place between Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and ‘Abdul Malik was once ‘Abdul Malik learned that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had the sword of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). This was very important for ‘Abdul Malik because it was a memento of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and a reason for ‘Abdul Malik to brag about. Moreover, it was a threat to the caliph as it would have brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to the attention of the people. For this very reason, he wrote to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) asking him to deliver the sword, and promised him to fulfill and grant whatsoever he wished!

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) refused his request. ‘Abdul Malik wrote another letter threatening to suspend the share of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) of Treasury House if the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not send the sword.¹ Thus the Imam (P.B.U.H.) replied, “But then, indeed Allah has assured the pious to save them from what they do not

1- At that time, people were all given a share of the Treasury House and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) like the others received his share as well. (Author)

like and provide them with sustenance from ways they are not aware of—‘Indeed Allah does not like any ingrate traitor.’¹ Now see which one of us meets this verse.’²

This tone was very harsh toward the caliph, since if this letter fell into the hands of any person, he would firstly know that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not consider himself traitor and ingrate. Secondly, no one would assume so about that great Imam (P.B.U.H.) who was indeed an honorable and decent man having grown up in the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). In other words, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) meant that the caliph was a traitor and ingrate! To such extent, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) rebuked ‘Abdul Malik in return for his threat.

These were only two examples of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) confrontation with the Umayyad regime.

3- If we want to add another example, we should have a look at the poems, which are either quoted from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) or quoted by the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) followers. These poems represent another kind of confrontation. Because if we even assume that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not confront the regime, his relatives and friends would confront it. Thus, this can be regarded as a confrontation of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.).

There are some poems of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) which are very satirical and revolutionary. The famous poem of al-Farazdaq is of this sort. Some historians and narrators have recounted the story of al-Farazdaq as summarized (in the following):

Before his caliphate, Hishām b. ‘Abdul Malik made a pilgrimage to Mecca. During circumambulating *Ka’ba*³, ‘Abdul

1- *The Holy Qur’an*, al-Ḥajj (22): 38

٢- «أَمَا بَعْدَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ ضَمِنَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ الْمَخْرَجَ مِنْ حَيْثُ يَكْرَهُونَ وَالرِّزْقَ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُونَ وَقَالَ جَلَّ ذِكْرُهُ ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَثُورٍ﴾ فَاَنْظُرْ أَيْنَا أَوْلَىٰ بِهَذِهِ الْآيَةِ»

3- Ṭawāf

Malik wanted to touch the Black Stone with the hand¹ (as it is recommended to touch or kiss the Black Stone² during circumambulating *Ka'ba*) but the huge crowd and the great congestion prevented him from reaching it; in spite of repeated attempts—even though he was the son of the caliph and surrounded by the escorts, guards, and huge retinues, he could not reach the Black Stone and people were passing around him indifferently. This man, who was brought up with opulence and wealth, was not the one going among people and kiss the stone. Hence, when he lost his hope for touching the Black Stone, he went to a height overlooking the Sacred Mosque³ and sat in a corner waiting for the departure of the people. His companions were also sitting around him. In the meantime, a very dignified and graceful man with a delicate and heavenly face shone like the sun among the pilgrims and went to the Black Stone. People stepped aside and opened the way for him to the Black Stone. The man went to the stone, kissed it, and turned back to circumambulating *Ka'ba*.

It was intolerable for Hishām b. 'Abdul Malik to see people not only paying no attention to him as the son of the caliph but also pushing him away by kicking and punching him! While a man appeared all of sudden and kissed the stone tranquilly. He asked angrily, "Who is this man?" His retinue knew 'Alī b. Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), but in order not to upset Hishām b. 'Abdul Malik, they did not say anything because they were well-aware of the existence of the hostility between the Umayyad and Banī Hāshim, considering it as a kind of insult to Hishām, they would rather not to say that this man whom people had so much love and respect for was the elder of the family whom Hishām deemed as his enemy. A poet named al-Farazdaq–

1 - Istilām

2 - Al-Ḥajar al-Aswad

3 - Masjid al-Ḥarām

who was fond of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)—was present there and felt their denial of ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Thus, he stepped forward, saying, “O’ Prince, would you let me introduce him to you?” Hishām said, “Go ahead.” Al-Farazdaq recited an ode which is still one of the most important odes of the poets of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.). This splendid tribute to ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) started with this couplet:

*This is the one whom [the land of] Baṭḥā¹ knows his steps
And [the one whom] the (sacred) house, the sanctuary, and
the area outside the sanctuary recognize.²*

[This means] if you do not know him, [I tell you] he is the one whom the land of Baṭḥā knows his steps, he is the one whom Zamzam [Well] and Ṣafā recognize. This is the [grand] son of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). This is the son of the best of the people. In such a splendid ode, al-Farazdaq praised the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and mentioned his characteristics. The words pierced the heart of Hishām like a sword. As a result, Hishām despised and expelled al-Farazdaq [from his court]. ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) sent al-Farazdaq money but he did not accept and said, “I have recited this ode for Allah and [so] I do not accept your money.”

There are many of such confrontations between the companions of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the regime. Of which an example is the confrontation of Yaḥyā b. Umm al-Ṭuwayl and the regime. Of course, this is not part the poems.

Yaḥyā b. Umm al-Ṭuwayl was one of the youth with extreme valor and courage and loyal to the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.). He always went to Kūfa, brought people together and shouted, “O’ people [i.e. those who were following the Uma-

1- It is the land where a part of Quraysh tribe lived before Islam. The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was brought up in this region and for the first time, Gabriel appeared to him there.

٢- «هذا الذي تعرف البطحاء وطأته والبيت يعرفه والحل والحرم»

yyads] I disbelieve you and would not accept you until you believe in Allah.”¹ One can imply from his saying that he considered [such] people as infidels and would call them polytheist.

Such manifestations of confrontation are remarkable in the life of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and his companions.²

The Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) Severe Confrontation With the Court Scholars

Regarding our discussion on the biography of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and his methods, we will discuss here the plans [developed by the Imam] preparing an appropriate ground for a great Islamic movement which would lead to the establishment of an *Alawite* and Islamic government:

In summary, the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) methods are summed up in three pivots depending on the addressees, such as, “amplifying and explaining” for some, “managing and organizing” for some other and “guiding and counseling” for another group. In other words, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), through what we have portrayed, is found to be a tolerant man who, within 30 or 35 continuous years, tried to make the inappropriate ground of the Muslim world move toward the conditions through which he or the next Imams (P.B.U.T.) could do the main and ultimate activities and efforts in an attempt to form a Muslim community and an Islamic government. If we deduct those thirty-five years of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) efforts from the life of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.), we would not find Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) in the situation that he could act frankly and openly in his dealings with the Umayyad and later the ‘Abbasid regimes.

Therefore, in order to establish and achieve an Islamic society, there must be an intellectual and mental ground. This is

١- «أيتها الناس، إني كافر بكم ولا أقبل بكم حتى تؤمنوا بالله»

2- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 12.

more important than anything else. This intellectual and mental ground in those circumstances existing in the Islamic world was what had to be prepared over the years. That is exactly why Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) underwent serious burdens and strenuous hardships.

Besides this, we find in the life of Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) some other activities which indicate the reality of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) progress in the said area. A substantial part of these endeavors is political and sometimes very difficult. Of which we can find an example in the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) dealings—with those great scholars and narrators who worked in favor of the ruling regime. Here, our discussion is about this. Perhaps, one of the most interesting topics on the lives of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) is the honorable Imams' (P.B.U.T.) dealing with a campaign of thought and culture (i.e. the scholars¹ and poets) in the Muslim community.

These were the people who not only led people's thought and mind to get accustomed to the situation the Umayyad and the 'Abbasid sought but also they made people submissive toward such a situation. Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) confrontations [with these scholars] were a fascinating and important part of his life as other Imams' (P.B.U.T.).

As we know, the unjust and oppressive caliphs saw no way to rule on the hearts of the people who believed Islam unless they could win the hearts of the people. It was not passed a long time since the advent of Islam and thus, the people's faith in Islam was still strong. The people would have not obeyed this oppressor if they had found that the pledge they made to such a person was not true and that the unjust should have not ruled as the successor of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).

1- When we say "scholars", we are referring to the religious scholars of the time as the narrators, the exegetes, the reciters of the Qur'an, the judges, and the ascetics. (Author)

Even if we do not accept this, at the very least, we should acknowledge that there were many in the community who bore the non-Islamic situation of the caliphate regime due to their heartfelt faith, because they were thinking such a situation was Islamic. To keep this, the unjust caliphs took advantage of the narrators and theologians as much as possible. In this regard, they stirred narrators and theologians to do in line with their interests and asked them to fabricate traditions and attributed them to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and his companions.

In this regard, we have cases which are very shocking. For example, I quote here a narration:

At the time of Mu'awīya, someone came across Ka'ab al-Aḥbār¹. Having a close ties with Mu'awīya and the authorities of Shām, Ka'ab al-Aḥbār asked this man, "Where are you from?"

- I am from Shām.
- Perhaps you are from the army, whereby the 70 thousand troops will enter Paradise without being brought to the account!
- Who are they?
- They are the people of Damascus.
- No, I am not from Damascus.
- So perhaps you are from the army Allah looks at twice every day!
- Who are they?

1- He was a prominent rabbi from Yemen who converted to Islam during the caliphate of 'Umar. There are many doubts in the traditions quoted from him, not only among the Shi'ites but also among the Sunnis, since he might have fabricated traditions and narrations due to his hostility toward Islam. Despite this fact, there are some Sunnis groups who accept his traditions. (the Author)

- The people of Palestine!

Perhaps if that person had said he was not from Palestine, Ka'ab al-Aḥbār would likely have quoted narrations for all the people of Aleppo, Tripoli and other cities in Shām so as to show him the people of Syria were the best and they were the people of Paradise! By faking these traditions and narrations, Ka'ab al-Aḥbār might have either sought to flatter Shām authorities in order to receive his share and grow his stature in their eyes or perhaps, due to his deeply rooted hostility toward Islam, he might have fabricated narrations and traditions so as to make it hard [for the people] to distinguish the sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).

In the books of hagiology, traditions and biographies of the narrators of traditions, many of such stories are mentioned. Including the story of a ruler who sent his son to school but the teacher hit him. When the son went back in tears to the ruler and told him what had happened, he became angry and said, “I will go and order a tradition being made against this teacher so that he never dare to do such things again.”

From this story, we find that fabricating traditions and narrations was easy for them to the degree that they made a tradition against a teacher or the town where the teacher lived just because of the tears of their child. Moreover, this situation had led to a mixed, forgery, and false mentality and culture of Islam in the Muslim world, and the source of such wrong mentality was the same narrators and scholars who were then in the service of the powerful and the high-ranking officials of the time. So, in such a situation, dealing with this group was very important and crucial.

Here, we refer to an example of such dealings in Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) life. This example is on how the Imam (P.B.U.H.)

dealt with Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri¹:

Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri was initially a disciple and companion of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). That is, he was among those who not only learned lessons from the Imam (P.B.U.H.) but also quoted some traditions from him; however, he gradually—due to his obstinacy—got close to the caliphate and served it as one of the scholars and narrators whom the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) stood against.

In order to understand this man better, we mention some of his sayings as follows:

One of these sayings is where he says, “We used to detest [writing down] science until the authorities commanded us to, so that none of the Muslims would be deprived of.”² It is understood from this narration that until the time, it was not customary among this group of narrators to write down whatsoever they knew about traditions and narrations. It also obviously indicates that Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri was in the service of authorities and they made him write whatsoever suited them.

Someone called Mu‘ammar says, “We thought we had quoted many traditions from Zuhri, until Walid was murdered. After his murder, we saw many books loaded on the back of beasts of burden and bringing out of the treasury house of Walid. We heard some say, ‘These are the knowledge of Zuhri!’”³ This means that Zuhri had written so many books and booklets—for Walid and by his command—that once they wanted to bring these stocks of books out of Walid’s treasury houses, they had to carry them on beasts of burden. What kind of narrations

1- He is sometimes addressed as Muḥammad b. Muslim Zuhri. In other words, his father name is mentioned either as Shahāb or Muslim which means that one is his father’s name and the other is his father’s title. (the Author)

٢- «كنا نكره كتابة العلم، حتى أكرهنا عليه السلطان فكرهنا أن نمنعه أحداً»

٣- «... فإذا بالفاتر قد حملت على الدواب من خزائنه ويُقال هذا من علم الزهري!»

and traditions did these books and booklets—written down by Walīd’s command—have? There is no doubt that he did not condemn Walīd; rather, he even confirmed Walīd’s actions and those who were like him.

There is another tradition quoted by Zuhri which is undoubtedly related to the period of his affiliation with the ruling regime. Ya’qūbī narrated in his chronicle, “Zuhri narrated from the Messenger of Allah—Peace be upon him and his household—saying, ‘Do not set out on a journey except to three mosques: the Sacred Mosque, the Medina Mosque¹ and the Farthest Mosque² and indeed the rock on which the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) put his foot [in the Farthest Mosque] would be like *Ka’ba*.’”^{3,4} The last part of this tradition comes to my attention that he deemed this stone as *Ka’ba* and gave it the same value and dignity!

This tradition dates back to the time when ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr was the governor of Mecca, and of course, the people who wanted to make a pilgrimage to Mecca had to enter Mecca—which was under the influence of ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr—and stayed there for some days. These days gave ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr a chance to propagandize against his enemies—especially ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān. On the other hand, as ‘Abdul Malik was aware of the significance of this matter, and in order to prevent people from going to Mecca, he deemed it best to fabricate a tradition in which the honor of Jerusalem was like the honor of Mecca and Medina. We know—in the Islamic custom and culture—there is no area in the world equivalent to the honor and standing of *Ka’ba* and there is no stone in the world com-

1- Al-Masjid an-Nabawī.

2- Al-Masjid al-Aqṣā.

3- «إِنَّ الزهري يحدثكم عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم أنه قال: لا تُشَدُّ الرحال إلا إلى ثلاثة مساجد: المسجد الحرام ومسجد المدينة والمسجد الأقصى وإنَّ الصخرة التي وضع رسول الله قدمه عليها تقوم مقام الكعبة»

4- *Tārīkh-i Ya’qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 261.

parable to the Black Stone. The main aim of fabricating such a tradition was to deter people from making a pilgrimage to *Ka'ba* and Medina—which were probably the center of propaganda against the regime of ‘Abdul Malik—and encourage them to go to Palestine because it was a part of Shām and under the influence of ‘Abdul Malik. To what extent was the impact of such a tradition on the hearts of the people and their deeds? It should be found out whether there was a time that the people went on pilgrimages to Jerusalem in order to visit the rock instead of Mecca or not?! If such a thing had happened, the real offender or criminal would have been Muḥammad b. Shahāb Zuhri who deflected the people’s minds [from real Islam] for the political purposes of ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān.

Once Muḥammad b. Shahāb became affiliated to the caliphate, nothing could stop him from fabricating traditions against Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) and the *‘Alawites* organization—including the two traditions I found in the book “*Ajwabat Masā’il Jār-Allāh*”¹—written by the late Mr. ‘Abdul Ḥusayn Sharaf ud-Din—in which Muḥammad b. Shahāb claims the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) was a fatalist² and attributes this saying to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) that the word “man” in the verse “But man is the most disputatious of creatures”^{3,4} refers to the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.)! Allah forbid! In another narration, Muḥammad b. Shahāb quotes that Hamza Sayyid al-Shuhadā drank wine. Fabricating these two traditions is done just to support the authoritarian—the political front of ‘Abdul Malik and the Umayyad—against the Imams of Guidance (P.B.U.T.) and thus to undermine the Prophet’s household (P.B.U.T.) and descendants—who were facing the Umayyads as

١- «أجوبة مسائل جاز الله»

2- I.e. the belief that there is nothing you can do to prevent events from happening.

٣- «وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا»

4- *The Holy Qur’an*, Al-Kahf (18): 54.

first-rate Muslims and show them as other commoners and negligent people in the application of the ordinances of religion!

Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) stood firm and tough against this person as seen in a letter addressed to Muḥammad b. Shahāb. Some people may wonder to what extent this letter could illustrate the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) stance but paying attention to the severe tone of the letter addressed to Muḥammad b. Shahāb shows that the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) stance is quite firm and rigid against him and the ruling regime, and it is not only confined to Muḥammad b. Shahāb as it fell into the hands of others and moved gradually through the tongues and remained through history (as we are speaking about it now after more than 1300 years). Paying attention to these things, we can realize how this letter made the artificial and demonic sanctity of such scholars dwindle away. Although this letter is addressed to Muḥammad b. Shahāb, other people like him are the addressees as well. Obviously, once this letter fell in the hands of Muslims, especially the then Shi'ites, these scholars lost their prestige and status in the people's eyes! Here, we quote some passages from this letter:

The letter starts as, "May Allah keep the temptation far from me and you, have mercy on you and keep you away from the hellfire."¹ In the second part of this sentence, only Muḥammad b. Shahāb is addressed. Because every human being is tempted, even Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.), but he never fell for while Muḥammad b. Shahāb was exposed to temptation and fell for. As for the hellfire, it would never approach the Imam (P.B.U.H.); therefore, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) attributes these to Muḥammad b. Shahāb. Starting the letter with such words is due to the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) dealing with him which was both hostile and humiliat-

ing. Then the Imam (P.B.U.H.) adds, "Because you are entangled in a state that you need mercy."¹ Notice who is the addressee in this sentence?

It was directed at someone whom everyone envied and who was a great scholar close to the ruling regime whereas the Imam (P.B.U.H.) called him weak and miserable: you are entangled in a state that you need mercy.

Afterward, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) refers to the blessings and responsibilities that Allah has given to Muḥammad b. Shahāb and then states, "Can you say before Allah how you expressed your gratitude toward Him for such bounties or not?" Then the Imam (P.B.U.H.) mentions a number of verses of the Qur'an and says, "Allah will never accept your excuses and consent to your shortcomings because He has asked the learned to explain the truth to the people, 'You shall explain it for the people and you shall not conceal it.'"^{2,3}

After this introduction, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) reproached Muḥammad b. Shahāb severely, saying, "Remember that the least of the truth you have concealed and the lightest burden that you carried is that you approached the tyrant and accepted [his invitation] whenever he invited you."⁴ This demonstrates the words which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) utters apparently relate to the regime and the caliphate. "You have received the things which were not yours, and have been close to the one [i.e. the tyrant caliph] who did not give the people what was due to them. When you were close to such a person, you have not prevented any wrong-doing."⁵ Here, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) indi-

١- «فقد أصبحت مجال ينبغي لمن عرفك بها أن يرحمك»

٢- «الْبَيِّنَةُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ»

3- *The Holy Qur'an*, Āl-i 'Imrān (3): 187.

٤- «واعلم أن أدنى ما كنت، وأخف ما احتملت، أن أدنت وحشة الظالم، وسهلت له طريق الغي بدونك منه حين دنوت، وإجابتك له حين دُعيت»

٥- «إنك أخذت ما ليس لك ممن أعطاك ودنوت ممن لم يرد على أحدٍ حقاً ولم ترد باطلاً حين أدناك»

cates Muḥammad b. Shahāb that he could not make an excuse by claiming that he got close to the caliph in order to vindicate the right and the wrong because he never did so. “You have taken for friends people who were against Allah.”¹

Another remarkable sentence of this letter is where the Imam (P.B.U.H.) states, “Is it not that their inviting you was to pave their ways to cruelties they committed? With your help they have done something that Muslims look at the true learned men with suspicion and doubt; and you caused the ignorant follow them.”² Then he adds, “[Even] their strongest friends and their most powerful companions could not justify their wrongdoings as effectively as you did.”^{3,4}

In this vehement, highly-worded, and eloquent letter, Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) exposed this current of intellectual authority and scientific leadership which facilitated the political authority and social leadership. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) also made those who had willingness to conciliate with the regime doubtful and prompted them to ask questions which had been raised in the then Muslim community and will remain in history forever.

I consider this one of the important sections of Imam Sajjād’s (P.B.U.H.) life, and I feel the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did not content himself with a scientific and educational movement among a limited group; rather, he began a political movement to such extent, as well.⁵

This is a brief biography of Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.). And here, of course, I refer to this point as well: Although Imam Sajjād

١- «وأحببت من حادّ الله»

٢- «أوليس بدعائه إتيك، حين دعاك، جعلوك قطباً أداروا بك رضى مظالمهم، وجسراً يعبرون عليه إلى بلاياهم، وسلماً إلى ضلالتهم داعياً إلى غيهم سالكاً سبيلهم، يدخلون بك الشك على العلماء ويقتادون بك قلوب الجهال إليهم؟»

٣- «فلم يبلغ أخصّ وزرائهم ولا أقوى أعوانهم إلا دون ما بلغت من إصلاح فسادهم»

4- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 132.

5- *Pāsdār-e Islām (Guardian of Islam)*, No. 11.

(P.B.U.H.) during his Imamate, which lasted more than 34 years, did not involve in an overt confrontation with the ruling regime, the dissemination of the Imamate, training and educating a great number of loyal and sincere followers and propagating the invitation of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) were of his greatest achievements. These were actually what made the Umayyad resent the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and subject him to an ordeal, and at least once they took him in handcuffs and shackles from Medina to *Shām*.

There is no certainty that there were fetters around the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) neck while he was taken to *Shām* after the incident of *Karbalā*; however, this truly happened in this case. In other words, they mounted the Imam (P.B.U.H.) over a camel in Medina and took him to *Shām* in handcuffs and shackles. In many other cases, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was also tortured and tormented by the opponents. Lastly, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was poisoned and martyred by the agents of the caliphate in the year 95 A.H. / 714 C.E. during the reign of Walīd b. 'Abdul Malik.¹



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The Intellectual and Organizational Construction Period

The period of the life of the fifth Imam, Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.), is quite the logical continuation of the period of Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) life. Now, a group has gathered and the Shi'ites, once again, feel their existence and character. The Shi'ites' invitation, which had remained halted for a few years due to the tragedy of *Karbalā* and the bloody events after that—like the events of *Harra* and *Tawwābīn* (the Penitents)—and the caliphs' stringencies and it was not provided except behind the very thick covering, has now taken root in many regions of Islamic countries especially in Iraq, Hījāz and Khurāsān, and has attracted an extensive stratum toward itself and has even turned out to be a more limited circle in the form of an intellectual and practical bond which can be interpreted as a "Party Organization". That day when Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) said, "In all of Hījāz, our friends and enthusiasts, do not amount to twenty persons"¹ has passed and now when Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) enters Masjid al-Nabī in Medina, a dense crowd from Khurāsān and other areas surround him and ask about jurisprudential issues. People like Ṭāwūs al-Yamānī, Qatādah b. Dī'āmah, Abū Ḥanīfah and others who are among the famous jurists and, of course, are considered not to be oriented toward Shi'ism or Imamate, had heard about the reputation of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) vast knowledge and had come to him to benefit from this knowledge or had turned to him for argumentation and debate. A poet like Kumait Asadī, makes people acquainted

1- *Sharḥ al-Nahj al-Balāgh*, vol. 4, p. 104 and *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 143.

with his most important artistic work which are odes named “Hāshimiyāt” which passes from one hand to another and from one tongue to another and familiarizes the people with the right of the household of Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the grace of their knowledge and spiritual values, with his eloquent tongue and overflowing art. On the other hand, the Marwanid caliphs felt safe and satisfied from this stance that after the twenty-year period of ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān’s (d. 86 A.H.) authority and crashing all the heads of those who were claimant [of caliphate] and extinguishing all of flames of opposition, and since they did not appreciate the value of the easily achieved position of caliphate like their ancestors did, and also due to the amusements that are usually a necessary part of that dignity and eminence, they did not pay much attention to Shi’ism, and as a result, to some extent, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his companions were safe from their harassment.

In short, conditions have changed in numerous senses in favor of the Imamate and Shi’ism. Thus, naturally, it can be concluded that during his Imamate, Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) had made advances and took the Shi’ites’ efforts and endeavors one phase further toward its last step; and this is just what makes up the characteristics of the period of Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) Imamate.¹

There is a lot to say about Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.), but I note two things from the life of his holiness. One includes his holiness’ struggle against the distortion of the Islamic teachings and Islamic practical law; this was something that was always accomplished in a more detailed and more comprehensive and wider way in Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) era than before his holiness’ time. What does this mean, “struggle against distortion”? The meaning of “struggle against distortion” is that the holy reli-

1- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 32-32.

gion of Islam with its teachings and practical laws that it has and with the Qur'anic verses it has decreed some characteristics and conditions not only for the Islamic society but for human world and human life, [in such a way] that if the people know those teachings and adhere to them, they would not tolerate some thing in a society that is [characterized as] Islamic. For example, they would not tolerate the governance of oppressors, or the governance of those engaged in debaucheries and vices, or the governance of the irreligious. Naturally, they would not tolerate discrimination and the unjust division of wealth in society and much of the corruption that exists in Islamic societies; this is not consistent with Islamic practical law and the Islamic system.

Some of the sultans and rulers who came to power as the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) caliph-like the Umayyad and the Marwanid-were in no way deserving of that position to govern over the Islamic society and with all kinds of depravity, oppression, corruption, discrimination, and ignorance, and to sum it up, with various kinds of deviations that existed during their reigns. If the Islamic practical laws and Qur'anic verses were supposed to be explained for people as they are, there would be no possibility for them to continue their governorship, rule, and seizure of power; this is why they began distorting the verses of the Qur'an. Now, they were also doing this distortion in several ways. One of these ways was that they would deceive and buy some of the jurisprudents and scholars and narrators of traditions and reciters of the Holy Qur'an and justified figures and kept them with themselves, they would either give them money or frighten them. They would force some of them through greed and some of them through fear to promote the very thing that was of interest to them among the people. So, if you look at the history of the first couple of centuries of Islam, you will see a strange sight; you will see so many holy figures,

famous with piety and knowledge, who were in the service of cruel rulers and statesmen, and fed the people some weird practical laws in the name of Islam. Now see for example, what kind of ruling is this that a scholar says such a thing as Allah Almighty and the Holy Qur'an have told us, "follow the 'holder of authority (*ulu al-amr*)'", this 'holder of authority (*ulu al-amr*)' is anyone who can become dominant over the people by any means possible; this is the 'holder of authority (*ulu al-amr*)'. Even though with deceitfulness, trickery, sword, force, bullying, and highway robbery, and this way finally to be able to rule over the people. This becomes the so-called *ulu al-amr*.

Well, this is so absurd and incorrect that if it is not connected to Islam and one source of faith and belief of the people, does not become acceptable to anyone. But they came, linked to Islam and said many things of this kind on these topics that are quite plentiful in the first couple of centuries of the history of Islam. The Caliphs would have these famous figures accompany them, and would take them alongside themselves to Mecca and Medina, presented them to the people in public assemblies and would pose them, and made them the instruments for the approval of their own status. One way of distorting the religion was that these types of individuals who were pedants, pseudo-jurists, pseudo-saints, and pseudo-ascetic were in the service of the caliphs, who in turn would have them feed people anything that they wished them to believe in the name of religion. Some of these [beliefs] are still extant in books and unfortunately many Muslims still believe in them.

One way of distortion was that, when the Caliphs themselves seated on the throne of power and felt that the people are obligated to accept and obey whatever they say; they would set forth a word, a thought, a basis for discussion in the name of Islam in this same manner and made it the popular culture and they would repeat it over and over and it would pass from

mouth to mouth over and over, until it became the mentality of the people. For instance, some of the commanders of ‘Abdul Malik’s apparatus such as Ḥajjāj and other people like them believed that or pretended that the caliphate is superior over prophethood; now these people were not satisfied with this that ‘Abdul Malik b. Marwān and the offspring of ‘Abdul Malik and those depraved and debauchers to be the successors of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)—which was a title high above their level and a garment too large and unfit for them—and they had usurped this title, but they would not have been satisfied with this, they wanted to claim that caliphate is superior to prophethood. Such distortions had occurred in religion, and the main factor in the continuance of the rule of the Umayyads and the ‘Abbasids and the main obstacle for legitimate Islamic government was this same wrong culture that dominated the minds of the people.

Now, the Imams (P.B.U.T.) want to set up the true Islamic government; they want to establish an *‘Alawite* system. What must they do? The first thing to do is to change the people’s mentality; to take away from the people the so-called Islamic culture that was against the Islamic culture that had infiltrated the minds of the people and to replace it with a good and accurate culture and with the true Qur’an and the real Monotheism. This is the very cultural struggle. Then, the cultural struggle does not mean only sitting and saying some things from Islamic practical laws without a revolutionary and fighting orientation. Rather, a cultural struggle is to endeavor to change the mentality of the people, to pave the way for a Divine rule, and close the way for tyrannical and satanic rule; and Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) began this task. *Bāqir al-‘Ilm al-Awwalīn* [first one who splits knowledge open] is meant to be this; as his holiness was the cleaver of the Qur’anic truths and Islamic sciences. He virtually explained the Holy Qur’an to the people.

So it was for this reason that when anyone sensed the breath of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.), although he was not affiliated to anyone, was not a devotee, and was not under the patronage of another one, this would certainly change his view about the state of rule of the time. Accordingly, many of the people who were from among the middle class in Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) time were converted to the school of thought of the holy Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household, to the Imamate's school of thought; to the very thing that is called Shi'ism in our current convention today. This is what Shi'ism means, that is following the school of thought of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household in order to establish the real rule of Islam, for the real sublimation of the word of the Qur'an and to clarify and implement Qur'anic doctrines among the people. Whoever Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) would make a relationship with and tell him things, his mentality would change and he would change. This was Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) first task, which was a very important and fundamental task and this was the bulk of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) duty.

Secret Organizations

There is another task in the life of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.), namely, organization. What exactly does this mean? This means that this doctrinal knowledge (*ma'ārif*), this very culture change and cultural struggle sometimes is thrown by a human being among the people just like that; well, it is like a seed that human beings pour into a land haphazardly. One of them will grow green, another one will die, one of them will be destroyed, one will dry up after growing green, one will be trampled upon after growing green, will be destroyed; this method of sprinkling seeds is not very fruitful. Sometimes, otherwise, that expert gardener, that skillful and wise farmer, in addition to dispersing seeds, he maintains them; how does he maintain it? The way to do this is that he should appoint some individu-

als throughout the Islamic world in order to resolve and raise the problems of those who are influenced by this propagation and superior teachings; attain more knowledge, so as not to be influenced by the enemy's suggestions, not to make mistakes and maintain their continuity with each other; in short, to creating a sufficient guarantee for the germination of these healthy seeds in a ready and fertile land.

One of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) undertakings was this: to nurture those who were his pupils and to elevate his friends, to pay them exclusive attention—his holiness' especial pupils—then connect them to each other, to send them all over the Islamic world as a pole, a pillar, and assign them as his proxy and his deputy who would pursue his holiness' tasks and undertake the responsibility for continuing his holiness' propagation and teachings. This was the covert organizing which had been started before Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) time, but at the time of his holiness became more momentous and, of course, it reached its peak at the time of Imam Ṣādiq and Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.T.); this was also another undertaking that was very dangerous.

Thus, in narrations, you see that some of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) companions are known as the "Companions of Secret (*Aṣḥāb al-Sirr*)" like Jābir b. Yazīd Ju'fī. Jābir Ju'fī was considered to be one of the "Companions of Secret", a confidant. Who are the confidants? They are the very individuals who are present in regions and areas of the Muslim world and who are responsible for guiding and helping and leading and, in brief, gratifying the mental of the people who have the potentiality of and are interested in Islam. Likewise, whenever the ruling authorities found them, they would put these types of individuals under the harshest pressures.

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In a short study, the nineteen years of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) Imamate—from the year 95 to 114 A.H.—can be summarized as follows: his father—Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.)—appoints him as the leader of the Shi'ites and his successor in the final moments of his life and certifies this position for him in the presence of his other sons and relatives. Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) shows him a chest that, in the language of narrations, was filled with knowledge¹ or contained the weapon of the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and says: "O' Muḥammad! Carry this chest to your home". Then addressing others, he says: "There is nothing of dirhams or dinars in this chest; rather, it is filled with knowledge²". And apparently, in this way and with this language, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) introduces the theoretic and intellectual—knowledge—and the revolutionary command—the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) weapon—to those present.

From the earliest moments, the comprehensive and broad efforts of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his righteous companions in the dissemination of a purposeful and a table-turning invitation of Shi'ism takes on a novel initiative. The expanse of the domain of this invitation is such that, in addition to the Shi'ite inhabited regions such as Medina and Kūfa and new regions, especially areas of the Muslim country that are far from the center of Umayyad rule were being added to the territories of Shi'ite thinking; and in this regard *Khurāsān* can be named more eminently than all other places where we can observe the influence of Shi'ite propagation in that land in the numerous narrations.³

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 229.

2- *Ibid.*

3- Including, the narration of Abi Ḥamza Thumālī:

«حتى اقبل ابو جعفر عليه السلام و حوله اهل خراسان و غيرهم يستلونونه عن مناسك الحج»

Even, when I went to see Abū Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), while he was surrounded by the people of Khurāsān and other regions, who were asking him about the rites of the Ḥajj pilgrimage. (*Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 357.) And a narration that quotes the event of admonitory and

What prompts the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his companions, throughout this energy consuming effort, to a dynamic movement and constantly reminds them of their Divine duty, is the miserable social and mental reality. They see people before them, who, due to corruptive and destructive training and education on the one hand become more deprived and more and more drowned in the events of the general corruption of society and little by little it reaches a point where the general public, like leaders and officials, do not even listen to the life-saving inviting calls of Imamate, either:

«ان دعونا هم لم يستجيبوا لنا»

[If we invite them, they will not accept our invitation]. On the other hand, during these deviational trend, whose everything, even learning, discussion, jurisprudence, theology, narration, and interpretation are in line with the desires and the demands of the Umayyad tyrants, there is no other window of hope open to them and if Shi'ism, too, does not make an effort to invite and guide them, the path of guidance will be completely closed to them:

«وان تركناهم لم يهتدوا بغيرنا»

[If we leave them, then they will never be guided by any other means]

Based on a deep understanding of the current reality of social chaos, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) discloses his hostile stance toward those intellectual and cultural powers, that is the mercenary poets and scholars—who are the creators of the unhealthy intellectual climate of the society—and by whipping his lash of con-

striking dialogue of one of scholars of Khurāsān with ‘Umar b. ‘Azīz. (See: *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 336.) (Author).

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 288.

2- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 253.

demnation on their heads, if not to provoke a wave of admonition and awareness in their sleeping consciences, he prompts a wave of admonition and consciousness in the mind and heart of their ignorant followers. With a protesting tone, the Imam tells the poet Kathīr, “Have you praised ‘Abdul Malik?! And he cunningly and naively tried to mend his sin and replied, “I did not address him as the leader of guidance; rather, I called him a “lion”, a “sun”, a “river”, a “dragon” and a “mountain”; and [what I meant here was that] a “lion” is a dog, the “sun” is a solid object, the “river” is an inanimate body, the “dragon” is a mephitic insect, and the “mountain” means a hard stone. Then, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) gives a meaningful smile for this poor excuse and vindication and then Kumayt—this revolutionary and purposeful poet—stands up and composes one of his Hāshimīte odes¹ and leaves a keepsake of comparison between these two kinds of art in the minds of the audience and all those who had heard about this event.² ‘Ikrima, the famous pupil of Ibn ‘Abbās who enjoys great credibility and prestige among the people, goes to see the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and is so impressed by the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) dignity, spirituality, and spiritual and scholarly personality that he involuntary embraces the Imam (P.B.U.H.), and he says with amazement, “I have sat with great men such as Ibn ‘Abbās, yet I have never experienced such a feeling in their presence. In response the Imam (P.B.U.H.) says:

«ويلك يا عبيد اهل الشام انك بين يدي بيوت اذن الله ان ترفع ويذكر
فيها اسمه»

1- The ode that begins with this stanza:

من لقلب متيم مستهام
غير ما صبوة ولا احلام
[Anyone who has an honest heart which did not become polluted from dreams and wines]
And reaches this stanza which is profound, striking and full of wisdom:

ساسة لا كمن رعية الناس
سواء ورعية الانعام
[They are leaders but they do not guide us like others who think we are animals.]

2- *Manāqib, Ibn Shahrāshūb*, vol. 4, p. 207.

[Woe unto thee, O' humble slave of the Syrians! You are now facing the homes which have attained sublimity and have by Allah's leave become the center of the remembrance of Allah.]¹

At every appropriate opportunity, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) provokes the feelings and sentiments of the negligent people, brings dead and stagnant blood to a boil and stimulates their benumbed hearts, intending to make them ready for radical and revolutionary orientation, by showing a corner of the bitter and afflicting life of Shi'ites and explaining the pressures and the severity of the actions taken by the powers that ruled over the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his companions.

He addresses a man who asked his holiness, "How did you get up in the morning, O' son of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.)!" as follows, "Hasn't the time come to understand how we are and how we get up in the morning?! Our story is the story of Children of Israel in the Pharaonic society who would kill their men (sons) and capture their women (daughters) alive! Know that they—meaning the Umayyads—kill our men (sons) and capture our women (daughters) alive." And after this compelling and provocative statement, he brings up the main issue—namely the priority of the Shi'ite claim and the rule of the household of the holy Prophet, "The Arabs thought that they are superior to non-Arabs; because Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is an Arab and the non-Arabs submit to this thought. The Quraysh thought that they are superior to other Arab tribes, because the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is from the tribe of the Quraysh and they submitted to this. If they are truthful about this claim, then we are superior to the other tribes of the Quraysh; because we are the sons and the family of Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and no one is a partner with us in this respect." This man,

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 258.

who seemed to have become quite excited, says: By Allah, We love your family.” And the Imam (P.B.U.H.), who has brought this man forth to the brink of complete intellectual, spiritual, and practical consistency—guardianship—also utters his last informative and awakening statement to him, “Then prepare yourself for a calamity. By Allah! Calamity is closer to us Shi‘ites, than the flood is to the hillside; and calamity comes first to us and then to you just as the comfort of security comes to us first and then it comes to you.”

In a more limited and more assured circle, one of the other features is the ties that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) enjoys with the Shi‘ites. In these communications, we see the Imam (P.B.U.H.) as a human being who is in a living body, a mastermind with respect to the members and limbs, and a beating heart in the task of nourishing the organs and bodies.

The signs about the Imam’s communications with this assembly, for which there is information available, on the one hand is a display of the clarity in the field of intellectual teachings, and on the other hand it shows the continuity and calculated associations between them and the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Fuḍail b. Yasār¹, one of the Imam’s closest confidential companions, accompanied the Imam to the Hajj pilgrimage. The Imam looks at the pilgrims who are circumambulating the *Ka’ba* and says, “During the age of ignorance (*jāhiliyya*) they would circumambulate the *Ka’ba* in this fashion! The Divine order is to migrate toward us and confess their continuity and affectation to us and help us. The Holy Qur’an—quoting Abraham who says, “O’ Allah! Make the hearts of the people eager toward them.” In his first visit with the Imam (P.B.U.H.), he recommends Jābir Ju’fī not to tell anyone that he is from

1- The explanation of Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) praise for Fuḍail see *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, vol. 97, pp. 345-343. (Author)

Kūfa, and pretend to be from Medina. In this way, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) teaches this beginner pupil, who apparently seems to have great potential for bearing the secrets of the Imamate and Shi'ism, learns the lesson of secrecy and concealment and it is this same talented student, who is later introduced as the Imam's confidant and winds up to this in his dealing with the caliphate system.

Nu'mān b. Bashīr says: I accompanied Jābir on the journey to Hajj. He entered the presence of Abū Ja'far–Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.)–in Medina and said goodbye to his holiness on the last day and left him quite happily. We set out for Kūfa. In one of the caravansaries along the way someone met up with us–Nu'mān narrates some signs of that person and his short dialogue with Jābir–and gave a letter to Jābir. Jābir kissed the letter; put it over his eyes, and then he opened it and read it. I saw that the more he read it he became more and more worried. He finished the letter, wrapped it up and we continued our way and reached Kūfa; but I did not find Jābir happy. The day after arriving in Kūfa, in respect for Jābir, I rushed to see him. Suddenly I was faced with amazing scene. I saw that Jābir was riding a stick horse like children and was wearing a necklace of the ankle bone¹ of a lamb hanging from his neck and he was reciting meaningless and nonsensical poems, he came out of the house; he glanced at me and said nothing. I did not say anything either, but I wept involuntarily when I saw this situation. Children surrounded him and me, and he set out carefree and walked until he reached Raḥba² and children were chasing him everywhere. People were telling each other that Jābir b. Yazīd has gone mad. A few days had not yet passed when the letter of the caliph–Hishām b. 'Abdul Malik–had reached the governor

1- The joint of a bone.

2- Entrance Gate of Kūfa Mosque.

of Kūfa, in which he had written, “Investigate and find out who this man called Jābir b. Yazīd Ju‘fī is; arrest him and behead him and send his head to me”. The ruler asked border dwellers about Jābir. They replied, “May Allah save our governor! He is a man who had a lot of virtues and knowledge of narrations; he went to perform Hajj this year and became insane and at the moment he is riding a stick horse and is playing with children at Raḥba”. Nu‘mān says, “To make sure for himself the governor went to see Jābir himself and saw that Jābir was riding on a stick horse and was busy playing”. Then the governor said, “Thank Allah that I am exempt from murdering Jābir.”¹

This is an example of how the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had a relationship with his close companions, representing the existence of association and a calculated and organizational relationship; and it is also an example of the position of the government toward these companions. It is clear that the agents of the caliphate—who thought of safeguarding, empowering, and stabilizing their own status more than anything else—did not remain totally uninformed of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) relationships with his close companions and their group activities and more or less heard about this subject and tried to uncover and deal with it.² Gradually an invasive visage arises in the life of his holiness and also in the general climate of Shi‘ism and promises the beginning of another chapter in the history of the lives of the Shi‘ite Imams (P.B.U.T.).

Although there is no explicit statement about Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) aggressive and relatively severe activities in Islamic historical texts or in the books containing narrations etc.—and

1- *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, vol. 2, pp. 330-329 and *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, pp. 283-282. (Author)

2- Other than the incident about Jābir and other numerous incidents similar to that narration, ‘Abdullāh b. Mu‘āwiyah Ja‘farī who also quotes the event of Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) receiving a threatening letter from the ruler of Medina explicitly confirms this reality. (See: *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 246.) (Author)

of course, this itself is due to several causes and factors, the most important of which is the strangulation that is dominant over that atmosphere and the necessity of *taqīyyah* (prudential concealment) for the companions contemporary to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) who were the only sources informed about the events of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) political life—however one can always discover the depth of any person's action always from the calculated reactions of a cautious enemy. If a powerful and resourceful system like that of Hishām b. 'Abdul Malik, whom the historians consider to be the most powerful Umayyad caliph, faced Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) or anyone else with harsh faces, it is undoubtedly resulted from the fact that he sees a threat in his method and action for himself and thus his existence becomes intolerable for him. There can be no doubt that if Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) was preoccupied only with a scholarly life—not with intellectual and organizational construction—the caliph or the heads of the regime of the caliphate would not have found it in their interest nor to their advantage firstly, to provoke the Imam (P.B.U.H.) against themselves with a harsh opposition—just as we will soon witness; such as the uprising of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (martyr of *Fakh*)¹—secondly, they infuriated a group of friends and those who believed in the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—who were not few in number—toward themselves and made them dissatisfied with their system, with the strictness and severity that they employed. In short, one can deduce the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) rather severe and serious action from the relatively severe reaction of the regime of the Caliphate in the latter part of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) life.

1- Ḥusayn b. 'Alī—Ḥusayn Fakh—is the son of 'Alī b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan b. Ḥasan Mujtabā (P.B.U.H.) and his mother, Zainab, was the daughter of 'Abdullāh b. Ḥasan, who rose up in the era of Mūsā b. al-Hādī, the nephew of Manṣūr. And Fakh is the name of a well, about six km from Mecca.

Summoning Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) to Shām

Amongst the most important events, and more famous than the rest at the latter part of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life, is the incident of his holiness' arresting and summoning to Shām, the capital of the Umayyad caliphate. To understand about the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) position toward the caliphate, the Umayyad caliph orders them to arrest Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.)—and according to some narrations, also his young son, Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) and his father's supporter and helper—and send them to Shām. They bring the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Shām and to the caliph's palace. Hishām has previously dictated the necessary orders to those in attendance in the main part of the meeting and those on the side lines for the time when they come together face to face with the Imam (P.B.U.H.). It is resolved that first the caliph himself and then those present in this meeting—who are all dignitaries and heads of state—to inundate the Imam (P.B.U.H.) with accusations and reproaches. He pursues two objectives with this action: First, to undermine the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) spirit with harsh words and insults and to prepare the grounds for anything that seems expedient. Secondly, to condemn the enemy during the meeting which takes place between the most superior leaders of the two hostile fronts and thereby disarm all the members of his front by spreading the news of this condemnation—that is executable with the blessing of the ever-ready loud-speakers of the caliph, such as the personal preachers, agents, and spies of the caliph.

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) enters the session and contrary to the usual custom, according to which every newcomer should greet the caliph by addressing him with the especial title of "Commander of the Faithful", turns toward those present and with a gesture of his hands, he addresses them and says *Al-Salāmu 'Alaykum* (Peace Be Upon You), and then he sits down

without waiting for permission to do so. It was from this very behavior that the flames of hatred and envy were ignited in Hishām's heart and he begins his planning. "You-offspring of 'Alī-have always broken the unity of the Muslims, and by inviting others toward yourselves, you have cast breaches and discord among them, and out of stupidity and ignorance have imagined yourselves to be leaders and Imams." He says a little more of this nonsense and then becomes silent. After him, each of his lackeys and pensioners says something to that effect and each one of them brings a charge against the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and reproaches him in their own language.

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) has remained silent and calm during this whole time. When all of them become quiet, his holiness gets up and stands and turns toward those present, after praising of Allah and sending salutations to the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), he throws, in short but shocking sentences, the bewilderment and aimlessness of that scattered group into their teeth; he beats their incontinence and being instrumental to their actions like a lash on their heads and faces; he clarifies his status and the glorious past of his ancestors which is in accordance with the highest Islamic standards-guidance-and, finally, brings up the well-ending of his path which is consistent to the traditions of Allah in history, and makes their unstable spirit even more unstable:

«أيها الناس! اين تذهبون؟ و اين يراد بكم؟ بنا هدى الله اولكم و بنا
يختتم آخركم، فان لم يكن لكم ملك معجل فان لنا ملكا مؤجلا و ليس
بعد ملكنا ملك، لا تا اهل العاقبة يقول الله عزوجل: والعاقبة للمتقين»

1- When the Imam (P.B.U.H.) addresses them with "O' People", he addresses a group of most superior government officials who are sitting round the caliph in a meeting with this sensitivity and glory and are prepared to defend him; meaning that, he was actually negating all kinds of values of that tyrannical society, he separates the general public from the big powers, and gives them an especial personality; a principled and profound campaign in the guise of a simple statement. (Author)

“O’ people! Where do you go?! What fate do they have in mind for you? It was through us that Allah has guided your predecessors, and it will also be by our hands that the final stamp on your actions, if your government is temporary today, our government will be everlasting and after our government, no one else will have any government. We are the people of salvation, as Allah has said, “Salvation belongs to the pious ones.”¹

There was so much influence and attractiveness in this short but profound statement—which included demanding of justice, command, promising, threatening, proving, and rejection all in one place—that if it is publicized and reaches the ears of the people, it may make every listener believe in the legitimacy of the speaker. In order to respond to this statement, it as much requires to be able to speak eloquent words and know how to speak as it needs self-confidence and assurance; and all these things did not exist in the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) addresses. So, no option remained other than violence and force.

Hishām gives the order to throw the Imam (P.B.U.H.) into prison; this means that he practically confesses to his weak spirit and the shortcomings of his logic. In prison, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) devotes his time to explaining and elaborating realities, and also influences his fellow inmates in such a way that there was no one from among the inmates left who had not accepted his words from the bottom of their hearts and had not become attached to him. The officers report these circumstances to Hishām. This issue was utterly intolerable for an apparatus that had kept Shām far from *Alawite* propagation for decades. Hishām gives the order to release the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his entourage from prison. There is no other place more suitable than Medina for them; a city in which they used to live, of course, with all of the same surveillances and restric-

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 264.

tions, and even more. And, if necessary, landing the last blow, and quietly getting rid of his opponent in his bed and in his home, and avoiding taking the blame for the accusation of the sin of “murdering an Imam”. Thus, with Hishām’s command, they are mounted upon rapid horses—that will cover the whole distance without stopping—and rush toward Medina. He has previously given them instructions that nobody has the right to do any transaction with this disfavored caravan in the cities along the way and sell bread and water to them.¹ They travel in this condition for three days and nights and their reserves of water and bread become depleted.

Now, they have reached the city of Medina. The citizens of the city shut the gates and refused to sell provisions to them

1- According to some narrations, the people of the cities en route were given the impression that Muḥammad b. ‘Alī and Ja‘far b. Muḥammad have become Christian and apostate. (*Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 306.)

Similar cases to this incident can be seen in the liberation movement of India and in the mid decades of the 19th century: Mawlānā, who has come to be considered as one of the famous and reliable religious scholars of India and one of the first leaders of the Islamic movement of the Muslims of India—the pioneer of the liberation front of the Subcontinent—was introduced by a group of clergymen opposed to this struggle as a “Wahhabi”. They did not need any excuse for this accusation; all that was needed was that these beloved, famous, and struggling figures and personality should be stripped of their validity and reliability in the minds of these uninformed and unconscious crowds and to this end, the accusation of their believing in Wahabism was suitable. The doctrinal and practical destruction of the Wahhabi sect in Hijāz, which was in itself another tune of the inharmonious trumpet of the newly-founded colonialism of those days, created a wave of anger and hatred throughout all Muslim regions, and the accusation of belief in Wahhabism, in any place, could topple the most popular figures in the minds of these people. The general public did not exactly know and could not find out what Wahhabism is, where it is from, what it says, what it wants to do and if it is possible for these devoted scholars who have spent their life struggling against English colonization to be Wahhabi—namely, a stooge of England? The only thing they knew was that Wahhabism is an incorrect and misleading belief and just now they would hear that these struggling scholars are Wahhabi and this was enough. (Rf.: “Muslims in the Liberation Movement of India (Sub-Continent), printed in Asia) and when I compare this incident of calling Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.T.) to Shām and the accusation of their being Christian, it coincides to the incident of hundred and so years ago held in India and when I look at the situations and circumstances of our own era and space, with so regrettable shock I remember these verses in the Arabic: “الناس كالناس والايام واحد” People are always the same and the times are always the same, (Author)

as per the command that they were given. The Imam's (P.B.U.H.) companions begin to complain of hunger and thirst. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) himself went up a high hill from which the city can be seen, and rebuked the people of this city with a loud and clear voice, saying: "O' people of the city of tyrants! I am the provision of Allah, about whom Allah has said, 'What remains of Allah's provision is better for you, should you be faithful'"¹ Suddenly a timely consciousness and courage offsets the plot. A man of that city alerts his deceived and unsuspecting fellow citizens and they are reminded that this is the same dread that Prophet Shu'aib (P.B.U.H.) warned the heterodoxies of his period of, and made them understand that at this very moment they were facing his predecessors; and today they curse their predecessors for not ignoring that message. Yes! History has repeated itself; now there is the same message, the same messenger and the same audiences. This timely speech is settled in the hearts of the people. They open the gates of the city and, despite the plots of the caliphate apparatus, accept the enemy of that caliphate.²

The last part of this historical narration—which, on the one hand, can be indicative of the political situation and repression and also widespread depreciation of that time, in several ways, and on the other hand, the clarifier of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) especial position toward the Umayyad's governing apparatus—is as follows: "When the news of Medina reaches Hishām, before anything else, he gave these orders, 'Punish that rude man who has dared to speak against the plan of the leaders of caliphate regime and release the people from a great neglect, for this betrayal.' And upon receiving the caliph's order they executed him."

1- Sūrat al-Hūd (11): 86:

﴿بَقِيَّتُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

2- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 264, cited from al-Kāfi.

In spite of all this, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) avoids fighting with the dominant power in an acute arena and a face to face war; he would not take up the sword and advises those who are going to take on weapons hastily and unwisely pressing the hilts of their swords, then invokes them to be more perspicuous and tactful, and does not speak unless the necessity of a fundamental action does not require it. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) does not give permission to rise up—revolt—to his brother, Zaid, who is under the overwhelming fermentation (*ghalayān*)¹ of his sentiments and is losing control and is becoming impatient. In normal communications of life and in relation to untested elements, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) relies the most on cultural and intellectual activities; a task that is, nevertheless, both an ideological infrastructure and a political *taqīyyah* (prudential concealment). However—as it was made known in previous, short explanations—this wise tactic would never cause the Imam (P.B.U.H.) not to state the general direction of movement of the Imamate to the close companions and the true Shi‘ites who have adhered to his path and to bring the great aspirations to life in the hearts of the Shi‘ites—which is the very same establishment of an Islamic government and an *‘Alawite* rule through an inevitable struggle—even in appropriate times not to stimulate feelings as needed in this path.

The giving of glad tidings of an ideal future which is not very far away is just one of Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) promising methods and, in the meantime, an indication of the fact that his holiness knew exactly what his position in Shi‘ites’ movement was and in which stage it was. [As it is narrated] “We were with his holiness, Abū Ja‘far and the house was full of people. An old man came in, greeted [those present] and said, ‘O’ son of the Prophet! I swear to Allah that I love you and those who

1- (*qa la wa*) boiling, roaring.

love you, and I swear to Allah that this friendship is not out of greed for the ornaments of life. Your enemy is my enemy and I am estranged from him and I hate him and this resentment and hostility are not because of the blood that has been spilled between us. I swear to Allah that I accept your commands and prohibitions and I am looking forward to your being victorious. Do you have any hope in me now? May I be your ransom? The Imam (P.B.U.H.) called him forward and seated him down near himself and said, 'O' old man! Somebody asked my father, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, exactly the same question. My father told him, "If you die in this state, you will meet the holy Prophet [P.B.U.H. & H.H.], 'Alī, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, and 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, then your heart will rest in peace, your spirit will prosper, you will be happy, and you will be at peace and successful alongside the honorable scribes of Allah; and if you remain alive, you will see the day when you will be given good news and in those days, you will be with us and you will have the highest position alongside us.'" When the old man was leaving that house, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) looked at him and said, 'Whoever wants to see a man from among the people of Paradise, look at this man.'"

Political Circumstances at the Time of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) Martyrdom

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) sometimes goes even furthermore; he specifies the year of victory and fulfills the Shi'ites' old wish. Abū Ḥamza Thumālī says, "I heard Abū Ja'far saying, 'Allah has ascertained 70 years for this task—the establishment of the Shi'ite government.' When Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was killed, Allah became angry with the people on earth; then He delayed it for one hundred and forty years. We said this time for you—close friends—and you disclosed it and you gave away this secret.

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, pp. 361 and 362.

After that, Allah did not ascertain any respite and timing for us; and Allah eliminates whatever He wishes and establishes whatever He wishes. Abū Ḥamza says, ‘I narrated this statement to ‘Abī ‘Abd Allāh and he said, “Yes! It was that way”’¹

Statements of this kind made the establishment of the Islamic system and *‘Alawite* rule which was like a pleasant dream in that environment of lethal repression and pressure, cast the only promising rays of hope and momentum of the hearts of the oppressed Shi‘ites, in the form of an inevitable future and thus rendered it as an inevitable and inviolable future and in this way added to their power and submission in traversing distances which laid before them.

The nineteen years of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) period of leadership passed like a straight, connected, and distinct line in this condition; nineteen years in which there is both instructive ideology and individual constructiveness; both tactics of struggle, and organization of groups and the creation of organizations; both the preservation and continuation of political orientation; both *taqīyyah* and the ever increasing and more determined inflaming of hope. In brief, nineteen years of struggle and passing over impassible hurdles through strenuous efforts. And finally, when this short and blessed life comes to an end, when the sworn enemies of the *‘Alawite* movement imagined that with the departure of this instigator of the movement they will be able to breathe a bit easier and will get rid of the Shi‘ites’ propagation campaign, that they will be able to deal with their countless inconveniences and difficulties within the country and the borders, then the hot and burning ashes of this ignited center brings down the last fatal strike on the base of the Umayyad regime. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) had spent a lifetime in disclosures and explanations, and now continues to carry out

1- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 368.

this endeavor after his death, too. With his own life he had informed the people; with his own death he also continued this effort. He sent a new lesson and a new message to his companions and the crowds of uninformed people who were thirsty to understand and contemplate. This message, just like his general plan, is calm and deep. He benefits his friends and the needy supporters; however, it does not disturb the sleep of the enemy. These are examples of Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) *taqīyyah* and a statement of his general behavior and performance in that specific period of time.

Those who later recorded the history of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life, have overlooked (*taghāful*)¹ or ignored this great endeavor, which is mentioned in a short narration. Can it be said that they did not see it? Let us be brief. The fact of the matter is that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) orders his son Ja'far b. Muḥammad to spend a part of his property—eight hundred dinars—during a ten-year period for mourning and weeping for him. The place of mourning is the desert of Minā and its time is the time of Hajj pilgrimage². That is all. The time of Hajj is the meeting time for the brothers who live in remote regions. Thousands of “individuals” have the opportunity to “gather” together and try to be and get together. These sympathizers who do not speak the same language call Allah in one language and observe the miracle of gathering of the nations under one flag. If there is a message that must be sent throughout the Islamic world, there is no opportunity more appropriate than this. Then, the Hajj rituals are performed on several continuous days and in several places, which one of these days and which one of these plac-

1- (*gha fā la*) to be negligent, to feign negligence.

2- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, pp. 215 and 220:

«عن أبي عبد الله قال: قال لي أبي: يا جعفر اوقف لي من مالي كذا وكذا لتوادب تنديني عشر سنين بمي أيام مني»
 [Abū Ja'far narrated, “My Father said to me: O' Ja'far! Just dedicate from my wealth some part to perform the mourning service for me for ten years at Minā on the Mīna specific days.]
 (Author)

es is more appropriate? Mecca is a city and the people in a city are both scattered and busy. In addition, all in that city are busy performing the Hajj pilgrimage; the *ṭawāf* (circumambulation around the *Ka'ba* seven times), *Sa'y* (walking hastily between *Ṣafā* and *Marwa*), prayer.... *Mash'ar* is a place where people stay overnight, with few opportunities and without facilities. In *Minā*, people stay for a short time. *ʿArafāt* is a place of stop, even though it is for a day, but the time is very short; only one day, with a morning when pilgrims are tired from travelling and ready to set out in the afternoon. *Minā* is the most appropriate of all; the pilgrims stay there for three days and they have a chance there more than any other place to become acquainted with others, to have dialogue and to sympathize with each other. Who is it that can tolerate going to Mecca and returning there at night? It is a suitable place for staying and visiting every group, circle, and gathering. Everyone naturally goes to the mourning assembly which is held annually for three days. Little by little the people from around the world have become acquainted with it. For years a group of people of Medina—the center of Islam and the base of great companions, jurisprudents, and narrators—have been arranging this assembly here and during these days. Whom for? For one of the most outstanding figures of the Muslim world, that is, for Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn; a great man from among the descendants of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the leading figure among the jurisprudents and narrators; the master of all those well-known in jurisprudence and narrations. Why do people come from everywhere to this place and talk about everything in the world in this place? Why do they talk at all? Wasn't his death natural? Who has killed or poisoned him? And why? What has he been doing or saying? Did he have any claims? Would he invite [people to Islam]? Was he a threat to the caliph? And tens of such questions. Tens of questions and ambi-

guities and following that, tens of questions and investigations and then a flood of answers from those who have arranged this mourning service; and also from the well-informed ones that have been scattered here and there among the dense and shadowy crowds. Those who have hurried down here from Medina or Kūfa and have principally come for answering these same questions. They came here, of course, in this unique opportunity, to explain and clarify issues for the people who have gathered here from all quarters of the Islamic world; and also, of course, to see and meet their own friends and brothers; to give news or to receive an order; and in brief, to invite Shi'ites from thousands of channels of the greatest world propagational network of the day; and this is the successful plan of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.)—the plan of postmodern holy struggle—and this is the fruitful and blessed existence of one whose life and death were both for and in the way of Allah;

«وَجَعَلَهُ مُبَارَكًا أَيَّمَا كُنُوسِ السَّلَامِ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ

وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا.»¹

[“His existence is blessing wherever he is. Peace and Greeting be on the day when he is born and when he dies and when he will be resurrected.”]²

1- An Adaption from Sūrat al-Maryam [Mary] (19): 15 and 31: “He has made me blessed, wherever I may be (31); ... Peace be to him, the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he is raised alive! (15)”

2- *Pishvāy-e Šādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 33-54.



Last
Years
Umayyad
of the
Government
and the Inmate of
Imam Sahib

*The
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) passed away at the age of fifty seven and during the reign of one of the most powerful Umayyad caliphs–Hishām b ‘Abdul Malik. The chaotic situation, problems, and numerous preoccupations of the Umayyads across the vast Islamic country did not prevent Hishām from carrying out his conspiracy and malevolence against the then heart of the Shi’ite organizations–Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.). By Hishām b. ‘Abdul Malik’s order, his mercenaries poisoned the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the tyrant and oppressing caliph of Umayyad completed the joy and the ecstasy of his conquests in western and eastern borders of the Islamic land with the murder of his biggest and most dangerous enemy within the country.

The Umayyad regime in the last years of the life of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) and in the early years of the Imamate of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was living through one of its most adventurous days: Major military campaigns were launched in the north-eastern border–Turkistan and Khurāsān, the northern border–Asia Minor and Azerbaijan, and the western border–Africa, Andalusia and Europe–on the one hand and numerous rebellions broke out in the Arabic-speaking Iraq, Khurāsān, and North Africa which were generally and most often led by the dissident and oppressed locals or sometimes instigated by the encouragement of the Mongol commanders of the Umayyads¹. On the other hand, the poor and distressed national situation throughout Islamic country and especially in

1- And the historians have attributed all of them, without exception, to the Khawārij, which in turn represents the hallmark of the caliphate for these riots and uprisings that are often or at least sometimes truth-seeking.

Iraq—the residence of the Umayyads' greatest fеоffees¹ and the place of fertile and blessed lands which were mostly reserved for the caliph or his officials—as well as the legendary misappropriations of public treasury by Hishām and his powerful governor in Iraq—Khālid b. 'Abdullāh Qasrī²—and finally facing famine and plague in different places such as Khurāsān, Iraq, and Shām had given critical situation to the vast Islamic country under the control of Umayyad regime and one of the prominent rulers of the time. In addition to all, the most loss of the Islamic world should be added: the spiritual, intellectual, and psychological loss.

In the distraught and grief-stricken atmosphere of the Islamic country where poverty, war, and disease like a thunderbolt emanated from the authoritarianism and dictatorship of the Umayyad rulers hit the pitiable people and burned everything, growing the seedlings of virtue, morality, and spirituality was impossible. The religious figures, judges, scholars, and commentators, who should have been a haven of peace and tranquility for the poor and the oppressed, not only did not resolve their problems but they would often treacherously add to the problems of the people even more than the political figures. The renowned and prominent figures in jurisprudence, theology, tradition, and Sufism such as Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Qatādat b. D'āmi, Muḥammad b. Shahāb-e Zuhri, Ibn Bishr, Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir, Ibn Abī Laīlī and dozens like them were in fact

1- Vassals [supervisors] of the king's real estates in different regions.

2- Khālid b. 'Abdullāh Qasrī was accused of earning an annual revenue around thirteen million Dinars. Hishām once wrote to him: "Do not let anyone sell the grain until the grain of the commander of the faithful is sold out!" Khālid bin 'Abdullāh, who did not agree with the caliph, stated in a sermon, "People think it is me who raises the rates. May Allah curse the one who raises the rates." (He sought to say that it was done by the caliph). The wife of Hishām had a dress the threads of which were of woven of gold and precious stones were beaded on it. It was so heavy that one could barely walk under the weight. The assessors were never able to determine the price. And he, himself, had a rug over 50 × 100 cubits made of silk and gold. (Ibn Athīr, vol. 5, p. 220; *Bayn al-Khafā' val-Khūlafā'*, pp. 26 & 56)

the puppets of the caliphate or pawns in the hands of governors and rulers.

It is regrettable to say that a survey on the lives of these legitimate and respectable personalities portrays them as having burning evil desires such as seeking power, ambitions, and pleasure-seeking or visualizes them as being coward and miserable people indulged in wealth or a bunch of hypocritical and stupid ascetics or a group of pretentious scholars entertained with bloody theological and ideological debates¹.

The Qur'an and *Ḥadīth* which should have watered and fertilized the seedling of knowledge and good characteristics became a tool in the hands of the then authorities or an occupation for the fruitless lives of such criminal and thugs.

It was in such a toxic, suffocating, and dark atmosphere and difficult and calamitous time that Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) assumed the Divine responsibility [i.e. Imamate]. And indeed how essential and vital was "Imamate", with that progressive concept that we are familiar with in the Shi'ite culture! We already saw that, for the bewildered, deceived, oppressed, and misapprehended people in such a dark and disastrous time, Imamate is the source of two vital movements: the true Islamic thinking and the just monotheistic system; and an Imam undertakes these two tasks: firstly, to explain, verify, and interpret the [Islamic] school of thought—which involves struggling against distortions and the ignorant and biased efforts—and then, to lay and prepare the ground for establishing a true, fair,

1- This is only one of the thousands examples of their disgraceful, treacherous, and foolish stance, and just a little indicating much: Ḥasan Baṣrī did not allow the struggle with Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf—that resurgent, bloodthirsty, and assaultive heretic—and opposed with this and said, "My verdict on this is not to oppose with him! That [is because] if he is the punishment that Allah has imposed on you, you will not have the power to avert the punishment of Allah with the sword, and if he is the calamity which is descended on you, be patient until Allah judges about it. Indeed, He is the best judge!" (*Ṭabaqāt-i Ibn Sa'd*, vol. 1, p. 119; quoted from Naẓariyat al-Imāma Maḥmūd Subḥī, p. 23) (Author)

and monotheistic [ruling] system; and to make it sustainable if such a government exists. Now, in such social chaos, Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) assumed the Imamate and undertook the two tasks. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) faced with these tasks at once. Which task should he have tackled first?

It was true that political work had enormous difficulties and it was not something that the Umayyad Hishām, despite all his concerns and preoccupations, closed his eyes on and excused the Imam (P.B.U.H.) for. However, intellectual work—i.e. struggling with distortion—was indeed what would cut the lifeline of the caliphate—the government which was wholly based on the distorted religion.¹ So they—neither Hishām nor the common scholars, who move with every effort along the general and common mainstream of a deviated and corrupted society—would have excused the Imam (P.B.U.H.) for this, either.

On the other hand, the situation was all set to expand the Shi'ite revolutionary thinking. There were war, poverty, and despotism; the three causal factors leading up to a revolution as well as the strenuous efforts of the former Imam (P.B.U.H.) which somehow had prepared near and even distant regions for.

The general strategy of Imamate is to start a monotheistic and *Alawite* revolution in a sphere where a considerable group of people are aware of the Imamate ideology, accept it and wait eagerly for its actualization as another significant group who have joined the resolute striving organization. The logical ne-

1- This point deserves some attention and precision that despite all the deviant manners and objectivity of the society from the true Islamic thought, the religious belief in people and even many of the leaders' minds was in a way that it still played a critical role in their deeds and lives. It was through this common belief—which was unfortunately the belief made in the name of Islam and not the belief in true Islam—that the caliphate was able to maintain its disgraceful life. An example of this commitment to the belief which worked very well for the heads of the then society was the issue of “allegiance”. So many people kept the allegiance they had with the [Umayyad] caliph and did not disobey him, regardless of all the wrongdoings he committed overtly, only because they had respect for the allegiance and considered breaking it as forbidden. (Author)

cessity of such general policy is to send a widespread invitation to the entire Islamic world in order to create a sphere for the dissemination of Shi'ite thoughts in all dimensions and another invitation to prepare the talented and devoted members of "the secret Shi'ite organization".

The difficulty and hardship of the true invitation of Imamate lie in this very point. It is an inclusive conductive invitation which seeks to keep power away from any kind of bullying, aggressiveness and infringement of the freedom of the people as well as to observe basic principles of Islam and for this very reason it inevitably needs to rely on the common sense and understanding of the people and should continue its development toward [fulfilling] their natural needs and demands. However, those struggles and campaigns, which seemingly are started with doctrinal and ideological creeds but in practice, they—like all those in power—only seek to exhibit their political strength and power and close their eyes on their moral values and codes of ethics—are free from such hardships and difficulties. And this is the secret behind the longevity of the movement of Imamate and the secret of the advancements of parallel movements—such as the 'Abbasids'—and the relative failure of such movements. We will discuss this issue by relying on the historical records and by [giving] more explanation in future.

The favorable and excellent conditions and the preliminaries which the former Imam had created and prepared made Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) the embodiment of the same true hope which the Shi'ites have been awaiting for many years; the same "Upriser" who will fulfill the struggles and strivings of his predecessors and will kindle the fire of the Shi'ite revolution around the entire Islamic world. Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) references and sometimes assertions have been effective in raising the seedlings of this wish.

Jābir b. Yazīd says, “Someone asked Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) about the upriser after him; the Imam tapped ‘Abī ‘Abd Allāh (P.B.U.H.) on the shoulder and said, ‘By Allah, this [man] is the upriser of the household of Muḥammad (P.B.U.T.)’”^{1,2}

The Biography of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), in an Aura of Uncertainty

Here it is necessary to refer to one of the most unfortunate things that the researcher of Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) life is faced with; and it is that the biography of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), especially in the early years of his Imamate, which coincided with the end of Umayyad rule, cloaked in an aura of uncertainty. Such eventful and hectic life whose conflicts and vicissitudes can be found through hundreds of historical narratives, has never been reflected in a regular and continuous format neither in history nor in the speeches of the scholars and biographers; and also the time and most of the features of its events have not been determined. The researcher should find out the time, place, and the characteristics of the incident by relying on evidences, considering the then common movements and comparing any narrative with the information obtained from other sources about the mentioned persons or events. Perhaps, one of the reasons for such vagueness and ambiguity—especially in the organizational activities of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and his companions—should be sought in the nature of these things.

Normally, the hidden and organizational effort—in case it is associated with the true principles of secrecy—should always remain secret. That day, it was secret and so it would remain secret afterwards and indeed the secrecy and denial of its holder would not let the non-confidential lay hand on it. Whenever

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 47, p. 131.

2- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 54-61.



it does come to fruition; and its directors and agents are able to seize power, they themselves will reveal all the minutes of their efforts and strivings. That is why today many of intricacies and even private orders and secret contacts of the heads of 'Abbasids with their followers and those of their organization at the time of 'Abbasids' invitation (for allegiance) are recorded in the history and all are aware of.

Undoubtedly, if the *'Alawites'* movement had come to fruition and the power and government were handed over to the Shi'ite Imams (P.B.U.T.) or their chosen people, today we would have been informed of all the sealed secrets of the *'Alawite* invitation (for the allegiance) and its widespread and highly secret organization.

Another reason should be sought in the nature of historiography and historians. A convicted and oppressed group even if their name had been written into the official history and memory of them had been recorded, undoubtedly that would have been done as the unjust ruling class had asked, narrated, and pretended.

For the official historian, apart from the heart-rending words about the convicts, which required major effort to gather from here and there to be recorded with great fear, there were a lot of words and news of the rulers, which could be received effortlessly and without concern as well as be paid for while making no risk!

Now, we bring this stark reality along with another reality. All major chronicles, which are considered the reference of many subsequent researches and reports and were written five hundred years after Imam Şādiq (P.B.U.H.), are laced with the 'Abbasids because as we know the 'Abbasid dynasty continued until the mid-seventh century and all the well-known old chronicles were written during this diehard reign and dynasty.

Regarding this issue, the result is predictable. No one expects a historian of the 'Abbasid era to gather confidential and factual information on the life of Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) or any other Shi'ite Imams (P.B.U.T.) and recorded them in his book. This is the secret of many of the distortions and ambiguities in the life of Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.).

The only way we can get familiar with the general line of Imam Šādiq's (P.B.U.H.) life is to find the most important events of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life among the ambiguities. In this regard, we should delineate the main lines of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) biography with the help of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) general principles of thought and manner which we are aware of and then, wait for the historical and circumstantial scattered evidences and reasons as well as the evidences other than history in order to determine the characteristics of Imam Šādiq's (P.B.U.H.) life span¹.

1- *Pishvāy-e Šādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 65-68.



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

When Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) died, circumstances changed in favor of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) due to the multi-fold activities that Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) themselves had done. I will disclose Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.T.) plan in two words for you, which, at that time, was of course, among the secrets; the very secrets that you have heard it was said for example Jābir b. Yazīd Ju'fī was one of those entrusted with secrets, and that may Allah's curse be on anyone who spread out our secret, and so on; those secrets that, if any person had spread them out, Allah's curse would be upon that person. Those are the same secrets that I would like to disclose, which, however there is now no problem to disclose today; rather it is imperative that people know what the Imam (P.B.U.H.) wanted to do—Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) plan was that after Imam Bāqir's (P.B.U.H.) demise he would get everything organized and launch an overt uprising and overturn the Umayyad ruler—that used to change government every day—and was indicative of the utmost weakness of the Umayyad system and the goal was to bring in forces to Medina from Khurāsān, Rey, Iṣfahān, Iraq, Ḥijāz, Egypt, Morocco and all the Muslim regions and all of these regions that were fairly widespread in all these regions of Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) party network—meaning Shī'ites—forces come from everywhere to Medina and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) would deploy a military division to Shām and overthrow the ruler of Shām and he himself raise the flag of the Caliphate and come to Medina and establish the government of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). This was Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) plan.

Therefore, when they were in the presence of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) and spoke in the last days of his life and he was asked,

“Who is the Upriser (*Qā'im*) of Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household?” The Imam (P.B.U.H.) glimpses at Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) and says: “Apparently, I see that this (Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.)) is the Upriser of Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household.” Of course, you know that the Upriser of Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household is a common name not a specific name; it is not the name of the Imam of the Time (P.B.U.H.), Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) is the final Upriser of Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household, but all of those who rose up from Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household [Ahl al-Bayt] (P.B.U.T.) over time—whether they were victorious or not—are the Uprisers of Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household and the narrations that state that when our Upriser does rise up, he will do such and such works, he will create such welfare and prosperity, he will spread such and such a justice; at that time it was not meant to be Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.). What was meant was one from among Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household who is supposed to establish the government of right and justice; when he rises up, he will do these things and it was also right. It was Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) that was supposed to be the Upriser of Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household of that time. It was under such circumstances that Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate.

Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was a man of struggle; a man of science and knowledge and a man of organization. But you have all heard about him being a man of science and knowledge; Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) study circles and the educational arena that this honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) had created was unparalleled, both before and after his life time, in the history of the Shi'ite Imams' (P.B.U.T.) life. All the truthful words of Islam and the main concepts of the Qur'ān that had been distorted during a century or so by spiteful, corrupt, or ignorant people were all stated in a proper manner by Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) and this caused the enemy to feel threatened by him. But you have heard less about

him being a man of struggle. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was engaged in an extensive and continual struggle; a struggle for seizing the government and power and for creating an Islamic and *ʿAlawite* state. That is to say, Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was paving the way to eradicate the Umayyads and replace them by bringing to power an *ʿAlawite* government, which is the true Islamic government. This is clear for someone who pays attention to and studies the life of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.).

But many have never heard of the third dimension, the man of organization. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) had created a colossal organization of those who believed in him and the supporters of the movement of *ʿAlawite* government throughout the Muslim world from the farthest reaches of Khurāsān and Transoxiana to North Africa. What exactly does the organization mean? It means when Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) wishes what the people should know, he tells it to his representatives, who are stationed throughout the Muslim world, to let the people know it. That is they collect funds and the budget from all over the Muslim world in order to manage the massive political struggle of ʿAlī's household (P.B.U.T.). That is his lawyers and representatives should be present in all cities so that Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) followers may refer to them and ask the Imam (P.B.U.H.) about their religious as well as political duties. Like a religious duty, a political duty is binding. The one whose obedience is obligatory and who is the guardian of affairs, whose religious and Islamic judgments (*fatwā*) such as prayer, legal alms (*zakāt*), fasting, and the other obligations is the same with his political judgments and political orders in the field of *jihād*, diplomatic relationships, the interior relations of the country and all issues; the obedience of all of them is obligatory. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) had created such a colossal organization and he struggled with the Umayyad's system through this organization and with the assistance of those who were a

member in it. Of course, the life story of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) is very important and instructive; he struggled with the Umayyads for ten years and another long period with the 'Abbasids. While his victory over the Umayyads had become assured and imminent, the 'Abbasids turned out to be an obstructive and opportunist element, who took over the front line and after that Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was forced to struggle both against the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids.

There are some narrations by the famous historian Ṭabarī relating that this noble Imam (P.B.U.H.) fought against the Umayyads in the first ten years of his Imamate. During this period, the struggle of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was open, meaning there were no secrecy, no prudential concealment (*taqīyya*), or reservation. The reason for this was that the Umayyad caliphs were so busy that they no longer had a chance to seek out Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) and the Shi'ites and to show aggression toward them. ... So Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) did not need to practice secrecy. ... On the day of *Arafah* Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) would go stand among this massive crowd of people—Where had they all come from? From all parts of the Muslim world; from Africa, from the Middle East, from Ḥijāz, from Iraq, from Iran of those days (Persia), from Khurāsān, from Afghanistan of those days, from Eastern Turkistan—there were pilgrims from everywhere. If you blow up a bomb here, you have blown up it in the entire Islamic world; if you speak one word, it is as though you have spoken it through a worldwide advertising network. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) would come among this crowd and explicitly and officially announced that, “O’ people! The rightful ruler is no one other than Ja’far b. Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.) and not Abi Ja’far Manṣūr”. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) would also state his reason, and it was not a verbal and rational reasoning that the people of those days did not have the patience to hear, as clearly there was no one in this group to listen to this kind

of reasoning; but the Imam (P.B.U.H.) mentioned another kind of reasoning, because in order to convince the people Manşūr ‘Abbāsī and others had pretended that they were the successors of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and they had also forged for themselves a lineage and would claim that they were the offspring of ‘Abbās. They had two lineages and would use one at a time.

One of them was that they would say, “We are the offspring of ‘Abbās, the paternal uncle of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and after the Prophet’s demise, the Caliphate belonged to the Hashemite and ‘Abbās, the holy Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) uncle, was the oldest amongst the Hashemite and so-called the most matured of them all. So, the Caliphate after the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) belonged to ‘Abbās and after him it would belong to us as we are the offspring of ‘Abbās. This was one claim. They used to speak about another lineage, as well; they used to say that they were the offspring of ‘Alī ‘Abbāsī, ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās. They were right, they were either the grandsons of ‘Alī ‘Abbāsī or the sons of ‘Alī ‘Abbāsī; and he was the disciple of Muḥammad Ḥanafīyeh, who was the son of Amīr al-Mu’minīn, Imam ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) and he was the son-in-law of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). After the holy Prophet, (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the Caliphate was passed on to ‘Alī, it was passed from ‘Alī on to Muḥammad Ḥanafīyeh—not Ḥassan and Ḥusayn—and it was passed from Muḥammad Ḥanafīyeh on to the son of ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās—who was their grandfather—and it was passed from ‘Abdullāh to them, so they [claimed that they] were the caliphs.

They made a lineage like this and this was convincing enough for the minds of the people of those days; as their level of thinking was low. Thus, while the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was standing among that large crowd, he would state the true lineage of the Imamate;

«ايها الناس ان رسول الله كان الامام»

[O People! Indeed, the holy Prophet of Allah was Imam.]

The holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) himself was Imam, meaning that he was the guide and leader of society.

«ثم من بعده علي بن ابي طالب»

[Then after him is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.]

That is the very Shi'ite logic; then Ḥasan, then Ḥusayn, then 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, then Muḥammad b. 'Alī and then I am the Imam. He would introduce himself as the Imam and this required a lot of courage. This was not a normal statement, it was not a simple statement; this was indeed the greatest announcement of opposition; and Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) used to do this during the Umayyad period of rule, during the latter part of the Umayyad period of rule. Not during the 'Abbasid period of rule, all affairs were accomplished through the use of *taqīyyah*, and concealment; the reason for this was that the 'Abbasids would utter the slogans of 'Alī's household (P.B.U.T.) and their statements; their features were like 'Alī's household (P.B.U.T.) but their actions were like those of the Umayyads.

During the period of the Umayyad rule, the struggle was like that; during the period of the 'Abbasids rule—which was longer—the struggle was carried out more secretly and the 'Abbasids were involved in a deviated movement that used one opportunity, impeding the revolution, meaning that they deviated the revolution that Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was in the process of creating and this is an ever existing danger for all revolutions. Sometimes that revolution's rightful strategy, which is congruous with the basic criteria and standards of a revolution, will be substituted with a false, deviated, vicious, and vain strategy of rightful slogans; this is why man must be alert and observant. The people of that time were not observant; until

years later, perhaps until thirty years later or twenty years later, the people living in remote areas—after the ‘Abbasids had come to power—imagined that this was the result of their struggles that they have done for ‘Alī’s household (P.B.U.T.) and they imagined that the government of ‘Alī’s household (P.B.U.T.) was truly this, not knowing that these rulers were usurpers.

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Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) went through two phases in this period; one from the year 148 A.H. until Maṣṣūr’s caliphate. This is one period; which is a period of tranquility and prosperity. The one that became well-known due to the dispute between the Umayyads and the ‘Abbasids, which is known to have provided an opportunity for the Imams (P.B.U.T.), pertains to this period. In Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) time no such thing existed. In Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) time the Umayyads were in power and Hishām b. ‘Abdul Malik was also the greatest personality of the Umayyads.

He was a man of the Umayyads and the greatest personality of the Umayyads after ‘Abdul Malik. Therefore, in Imam Bāqir’s time, there were not any differences between anyone and there was no one that could cause an opportunity for the Imams (P.B.U.T.) to make use of. This was the case in Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) time; and as such it was a time, during which slowly but surely the Umayyads invitation began and coincided with the zenith of the uprising of ‘Alawite Shi‘ite’s invitation throughout the Muslim world.

... When Maṣṣūr came to power, of course, the situation became difficult, and the lifestyle of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) shifted back to the period of the life of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.); repression became dominant, like the very time that the Imam was exiled; he was repeatedly exiled to Ḥīra, Rumayla, and [numerous] other places. Maṣṣūr called the Imam to his presence several

times. One time he said:

«قتلنى الله ان لم اقتلك»

[May Allah kill me if I don't kill you!] Once he sent an order to the ruler of Medina:

«أن احرق على جعفر بن محمد داره»

[Burn the house of Ja'far b. Muḥammad]. So the Imam (P.B.U.H.) came in the middle of the flames of the fire and demonstrated a strange display, saying,

«أنا ابن اعراق الثرى»

[I am the son of the beating veins of the earth.], which, well, this demonstration suppressed those opponents even more, and these clashes between Manṣūr and Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) were very severe. He repeatedly threatened the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Of course, some reports have mentioned that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) humiliated himself before Manṣūr are not true. I checked the reports myself, and found them baseless, mostly traced to Rabī' Ḥājiḅ, who was definitely an evil-doer, and a close associate of Manṣūr's. Some naive people have even called him a Shi'ite! Can anyone believe it? I studied Rabī' b. Yūnus' biography and discovered that he was [absolutely] loyal to 'Abbasids' organization, indeed a servant of theirs, and Manṣūr's confidant, who did him many services. If it had not been for Rabī', others—his uncles—would have seized the caliphate when Manṣūr died. He, therefore, faked a will nominating Manṣūr's

1- *Al-Ihtijāj 'Alā Ahl al-Lijāḅ*, Ṭabarsī, vol. 1, p. 163; "Allah kill me if I don't kill you".

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 478; Manṣūr Dawaniqī sent a man to his governor, Ḥusayn b. Zaid, who was in charge of the governorships of Mecca and Medina, with the message to burn the house of Ja'far b. Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.). They burned the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) home, when the fire reached the door and rooms, Imam Sadiq (P.B.U.H.) put his foot on the fire and was walking on the fire while saying: "I am the son of the beating veins of the earth, I am the son of Abraham, the Friend of Allah".

son—Mahdī—the caliph. So Mahdī became the caliph. Besides, there was Faḍl b. Rabī, the son of this [same] Rabī b. Yūnus. It is thus evident that Rabī b. Yūnus’ family were fully devoted to Banī ‘Abbās and had no sincerity toward the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.). He faked things to convince people that such a personage as the Imam (P.B.U.H.) ought to humiliate himself before the caliph so that others would realize their own duty. Anyway, the clash between Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) and Manṣūr was so serious that it ended in Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) martyrdom in the year 148 A.H.

The important and outstanding features of Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) life as far as it is related to the especial viewpoint of our discussion are as follows:

- 1- Explaining and Propagating the Issue of the Imamate.
- 2- Propagating and Explaining Religious Practical Laws according to Shi‘ite Jurisprudence and also the Interpretation of the Qur‘ān Based on Shi‘ite Perspective.
- 3- The Existence of secret Politico-Ideological Organizations.¹

Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) Invitation to the Imamate

At this time we will return to the main topic; that is that like the other Shi‘ite Imams (P.B.U.T.), Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), the outstanding stanza of his invitation is comprised of the topic of the “Imamate”. To prove this historical reality, the most conclusive piece of evidence is the abundant narrations that have narrated with total clarity and definitiveness the claim of the Imamate to have been upheld by Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.).

As I will explain, the Imam (P.B.U.H.), while disseminating

1- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, p. 67.

and propagating this issue, was viewing himself in a phase of that struggle that he should directly and explicitly repudiate the rulers of the time and introduce himself as genuinely rightful of *Wilāya* (guardianship) and the Imamate; and as a rule this action would only occur when all the previous steps of the struggle had been carried out successfully; the political and social awareness emerged in a wide stratum; potential preparedness was felt everywhere; the ideological grounds had been created in a notable gathering; the necessity for a true government and justice had been proven for a large multitude of people and finally the leader had made a firm decision for the ultimate struggle. Without all these, proposing the name of a certain person as the rightful Imam and guardian of the affairs of society would have been a hasty and useless action.

Another point that should be considered is that, in some cases, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) does not content himself with proving the Imamate for himself; but along with mentioning his own name he recalls the names of the other rightful Imams (P.B.U.T.) and his ancestors prior to him, and in fact he propounds the succession of the Imamate of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) as connected and inseparable. Given the fact that the Shi'ite thinking has condemned all the former unjust statesmen and considered them to be "cruel and oppressive rulers"; this action can refer to the continuity of *jihād* (holy struggle) of the Shi'ites of this time to that of the passed times as well. In fact, with this statement, Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) considers his Imamate to be an inevitable result that is derived from the Imamate of his predecessors and brings it out of its unprecedented, rootless, and baseless state and connects his line of hereditary succession through a trustable and indubitable channel to the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Now look at some examples of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) method of invitation:

The most interesting narration I have seen on this matter

is a narration by ‘Amr b. Abī al-Miqdām, which depicts an amazing spectacle. The 9th of Dhul Ḥijja is the day of ‘Arafah. A stupendous gathering of people assembled in ‘Arafāt in order to perform the especial rites of that day and the inherent representatives of the people throughout Muslim inhabited regions, from the farthest bonds of Khurāsān to the coast of the Mediterranean, are gathered. Here, one single timely word can do the work of the most extensive communication network at that time. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) has taken himself to this gathering and has a message. [The narrator says,] “I saw the Imam (P.B.U.H.) standing among the people and delivered his message three times as loudly as possible, with a voice that must resonate everywhere and in all ears and be spread throughout the Muslim world by means of the listeners. He turned his face to another direction delivered that same message three times. Once again, he turned toward another direction and uttered that same statement three times and again shouted the same message. Thus, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) repeated his speech twelve times. This message was uttered with these phrases:

«ايها الناس! ان رسول الله كان الامام و ثم كان علي بن ابي طالب ثم الحسن
ثم الحسين ثم علي بن الحسين ثم محمد بن علي، ثم...»

“O’ People! The holy Prophet of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) was the leader (Imam), after him ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is the Imam, then Ḥasan, then Ḥusayn, then ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn, then Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, then...”

There is another tradition narrated by Abī al-Ṣabbāḥ Kunānī, in which Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) describes himself and the other Shi‘ite Imams (P.B.U.T.) in this way: “We are the ones whom Allah made people’s obedience to us necessary. Both

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 47, p. 45.

the spoils of war (*anfāl*)¹ and premium property (*ṣafwa al-māl*) are ours.” Premium property is choice property which the arrogant tyrants have allocated to themselves and had deprived those deserving this property from attaining it and when this confiscated property comes out of the clutches of the defeated oppressors through the victory of Muslim warriors, it is not, like other booties, divided until it is placed in the hands of one person and give him a fake grandeur and false pride; rather, it is entrusted to the Muslim ruler and he uses them to the general interests of Muslims. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) introduces himself as the person in charge of the premium properties and also the spoils of war—which is also related to the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—and with this statement he clearly indicates that today it is him who is the present ruler of the Muslim society and all this must reach him and be at his disposal and be used or distributed as he deems it right.

In another narration, he mentions the names of the former Imams (P.B.U.T.) one by one and gives testimony of their Imamate and that obeying their commands is obligatory and when he gets to his own name, he keeps silent. Those who are listening know very well that after Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) the heritage of science and government is in Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) control. In this way, he also propounds his right to rule and also expresses² his relations and connections to his eminent ancestor,³ ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, with an argumentation-like tone. One can find abundant narrations like this in chapters of the book “Argument (*Al-Hujjat*)” by *al-Kāfī* and also in volume 47 of *Biḥār al-Anwār* that explicitly or allegorically speaks of the claim to the Imamate and of the invitation to it.

1- The booty that is placed at the disposal of the Islamic government without wars.

2- Ancestors, forefathers.

3- *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 186.

Another decisive document is the evidence which alludes to the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) comprehensive propagating network throughout Muslim countries and makes the existence of such a network indisputable. This evidence is so abundant and well-reasoned⁴ that even if there had not been one explicit tradition, it would not have been discredited. The researcher on the biographies of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) that had not been compiled, asks himself: "Didn't the Shi'ite Imams (P.B.U.T.) have preachers⁵ and missionaries in different regions of the Muslim country to preach about their Imamate and take a pledge of obedience and support from the people at the end of the Umayyad period? In this case, then how are the signs of this organizational connectedness justified; the signs that can be so clearly seen in the financial and intellectual relationships between the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and the Shi'ites? How are these funds and properties from all over the world carried to Medina? How are so many questions about religious issues raised? How can such a widespread invitation to Shi'ism be accomplished? How can this unique popularity and respect for 'Alī's household (P.B.U.T.) be spread in the important parts of the Muslim country? How can this host of transmitters of traditions and narrators from Khurāsān, Sīstān, Kūfa, Baṣra, Yemen and Egypt gather around the Imam (P.B.U.H.)? Which powerful hand had created all of these? Can one consider this to be a coincidence or are these spontaneous events to be a factor involved in these proportionate and co-related events?

Despite all this adverse propaganda that was, without exception, being spread by those who propagated to the benefit of the regime of Umayyad Caliphate and even the name of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) was referred to as the most condemned fig-

4- (*da la la*): due to a verifiable reason.

5- (*da 'a wa*) dā'ī.

ure of Islam on the pulpits (*minbars*) and during sermons, was it possible that without the existence of a strong propagation network 'Alī's household (P.B.U.T.) to be so popular and charismatic that people would rush to merely see and benefit from them and offer their friendship and bond to them from the farthest and unfamiliar parts of country and to traverse long distances and come in to Ḥijāz and Medina to learn the science of religion—which, according to Shi'ite belief is like politics and governance—from them, and on several occasions, impatiently resort to military action, and the narrators put it, demand them to upset and revolt? If the Shi'ites' armaments were used only to prove the Imams' (P.B.U.T.) knowledge and the piety, then what could their appeal for military action mean?

It may be asked that if such a widespread and efficient propagation network did exist, why is there no mention of it in history and no incident is explicitly reported about it? The answer, as it was pointed out earlier is, in short, because the reason for this anonymity should be sought in the obsessive adherence of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) companions to the reputable and progressive principle of *taqīyyah* that prevented any alien from penetrating in the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) administration, and the failure of the Shi'ite's *jihād* in that stage from coming to power, which in turn is caused by several factors. If the 'Abbasids would not have come to power either, undoubtedly their covert efforts and activities and their bitter sweet memories that they had experienced from their propagation activities would have remained in hearts and no one would have heard of them and they would not have been recorded in history.¹

When we talk about *taqīyyah*, you may say that *taqīyyah* belonged to a time when a dominant government was in power and we were hiding ourselves and did not say anything due

1 - *Pishvāy-e Šādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 74-80.

to fear. No, at that time fear was not the issue of *taqīyyah*:

«التقية ترس المؤمن»

[*Taqīyyah* is the shield of the believer.] Where do they use the shield? The shield is used in the battle field and when conflict comes into play. Therefore, there is *taqīyyah* in the field of battle, since it functions as fear, amulet, trench, and the shield.

At that time it was also like this. When we verbally denied Islam when our life was in danger, it meant that we delivered the blow on the body of the malevolent enemy; but in such a way that he could not see the sword or the hand that was holding the sword nor the sensing the raising and bringing it down; rather he only felt its pain. This was *taqīyyah*. Those who practiced *taqīyyah* when in danger of their life in those days practiced it the same way. For example they would write down communiqués secretly and out of sight of the enemy, in hiding places, with thousands of considerations and cares, that when the communiqués were distributed, they would completely ruin the reputation of the government. This practice was like the blow of a sword that, when it rises, it comes down on the back and skull of the enemy. Therefore, we did *taqīyyah*, meaning that we would not allow the enemy to understand what we are doing. *Taqīyyah*, was the shield and the one who practiced *taqīyyah*, would hide his self behind the shield. This is the meaning of *taqīyyah*. Nowadays it means the same thing.

12/02/1989

Propagation and the Expression of Religious Laws According to Shi'ite Jurisprudence

This is a clear line in the life of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.); in a

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 72, p. 394.

more distinctive and more explicit form what can be seen in the lives of the other Imams (P.B.U.T.), to the extent that Shi'ite jurisprudence has been named "Ja'fari Jurisprudence" and to the extent that all those who have ignored the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) political activities are collaborators on these words that Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) had the largest—or one of the vastest—theological and jurisprudential seminaries of his time. At the same time, according to most researchers something that has remained concealed about the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life is the political and objective concept of this action and now we will deal with it.

Initially it should be known that, in Islam, the caliphate differs with all other systems of government in that it is not just a political organization; rather, it is a politico-religious leadership. The name and title of "Caliph" for the Muslim ruler indicates this same reality that he is more than a political leader; he is the successor of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) is the one who brings a religion and is an instructor of morals and, of course, at same time, he is the ruler and political leader. Thus, in Islam, apart from politics, the caliph is responsible for the people's religious affairs and their religious leader, as well.

This indisputable fact caused the future authorities, after the first line of Muslim Caliphs, who had very little knowledge about religious affairs or were completely deprived of religious knowledge, to seek compensation for this deficiency from religious figures who would provide it to them and with the cooperation of jurists and commentators and scholars and those mercenary specialists in traditions to make this system a mixture of religion and politics again.

Another benefit that the existence of jurisprudential elements had in the government apparatus was that they could easily change and transform the practical laws of religion as

required by matters in accordance with the whims and commands of the oppressive and despotic authorities and put it in a disguise of deduction and reasoning—which is not recognizable for ordinary people—and transform Allah’s judgment for their gods¹.

Writers of books and historians of previous centuries have mentioned frightening examples of fabricated traditions and interpretations according to a judgment in which the hand of political powers is often evident. This task which had the form of a narration and tradition in the early times—until the latter part of first century A.H.—had also found the form of *fatwa* (religious decree) also; and so there were many jurists in the latter part of the Umayyad period and the beginning of the ‘Abbasid period who, by using innovative methods such as analogy and juristic preference (*istiḥsān*)², issued Islamic practical laws according to their own opinion—which, were in fact mainly the views of the powerful rulers. This was done concerning the interpretation (or exegesis) of the Qur’ān. Interpretation of the Qur’ān according to the interpreter’s judg-

1- Great kings.

2- Porsaman web site: The word “*istiḥsān*” (juristic preference) is taken from the term “*ḥasana*”, which literally means “seeing something as being good”, “counting something as being good”, “knowing something to be good” and it also means “seeking something good with the intention of following it”, and technically it means “deviation from a matter in cases similar to them”, “whatever the *mujtahid* (cleric) judges to be good according to his own intellect”, “whatever suddenly pops into one’s head” and Thus, juristic preference (*istiḥsān*) has had a link with *qiyās* (analogy), *qā’ida istiṣlāḥ* (the principle of taking the public opinion into account) and *maṣāliḥ-i mursala* (consideration of public interest), and the above mentioned “deviation” is also based on analogy. The reason for the Shi’ite jurists’ opposition to this approach to the principle of taking the public opinion into account is that the above mentioned attitude keeps free the hands of the *Muftī* (a Muslim legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious matters) in the ascribing of a rule according to Divine law by relying on his own taste has left free, in such a way that whatever he considers to be good will be obligatory (*wājib*) and what he considers to be bad will be forbidden (*ḥarām*); without being committed to having any kind of affinity to the reason and wording. This is while Shi’ite jurists without documentary evidence from the legislator have not imparted any ruling to him without any argument and the process of legislation in their view point is completely systematic.

ment and viewpoint was one of those actions that could easily transform Allah's ordinance in the opinion of the people and convince them to believe in whatever the interpreter—who in turn mostly wanted what the ruler had wanted.

It was in this way that, from the earliest Islamic periods jurisprudence, traditions, and interpretation were divided into two general trends: One was the trend that was dependent on the usurper system of governments that, in many cases, would sacrifice the interests of those systems and distort the commandments of Allah for an insignificant price; and the other was a pure and trustworthy system that made no interest preferential to the interest of explaining the true practical laws of Allah and in each step it inevitably confronted the ruling system and its hiring system of ruling and jurisprudence; and from that day, in most cases, it had an illegal and unofficial form.

With this knowledge, it can be clearly understood that Ja'fari Jurisprudence, contrary to the official jurisprudence of the jurist of the time of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), was not just a simple discrepancy of religious belief; rather, at the same time, it carried with it two protesting themes. First and more important: The first and the more important theme is the proof of the ruling system's lack of religious awareness and its inability to manage the intellectual affairs of the people—that is, actually, its incompetence to hold the office of the caliphate—and the other theme is the clarification of the cases of distortion in the official jurisprudence, which originates from that which is in the interest of jurists in the expression of jurisprudential laws and their circumspection and the domineering and the will of the ruling powers. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) practically stood up in challenge against that government by increasing facilities for acquiring knowledge and expressing Islamic jurisprudence and doctrines and interpreting the Qur'ān in a man-

ner other than the manner of the scholars that were affiliated with the government. In this way, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) vilified all religious organizations and official expertise which were considered to be one important side of caliphs' rule, would charge them with a fault and, from its religious dimension, had rendered the government apparatus empty-handed.

There is no definitive and clear document available as to what extent the Umayyad's government apparatus had paid attention to the concept of Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) challenging establishment of knowledge and jurisprudence; however, it is strongly supposed that at the time of 'Abbasids and especially Maṣṣūr, who possessed great intelligence and shrewdness, and because before his (tenure as) caliphate he had spent his entire life in an environment of struggle against the Umayyads and he had knowledge about the precise points concerning the 'Alawite struggles and fighters, and the heads of the caliphate apparatus would pay especial attention to the effective role of this struggle.

Maṣṣūr's unlimited threatens, pressures, and intransigencies toward the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) educational and jurisprudential activities that have been mentioned in many historical narrations were just some that had been due to this attention and feeling; as well as his vehement emphasis and insistence about bringing the famous jurists of Ḥijāz and Iraq together in his governmental headquarters—which again, is the theme of several historical narratives—came from this same feeling of necessity.

In the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) talks and teachings to his companions and those close to him, it can be clearly seen that benefitting from the factor of "the caliph's lack of knowledge" as a reason as to why, according to Islam, they do not have right to rule; that is, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) has explicitly brought up the same

challenging themes that his lectures on jurisprudence and the Qurʾān had also included.

In a hadith by the Imam (P.B.U.H.) it has been reported that:

«نحن قوم فرض الله طاعتنا وانتم تاتمون بمن لا يعذر الناس بجهالتهم»

[We are the ones who Allah has made obligatory their obedience, whereas you obey those people that will not be excused by Allah for their ignorance]; and this is while you are obeying those that because of their ignorance people will not be excused before Allah. That is, as a result of their leaders and authorities' ignorance, the people who have become misguided and have taken a path other than the path of Allah, cannot resort to the excuse in the presence of Allah that we did not take the wrong path based on our own diagnosis; rather, it was our rulers and leaders who, due to their ignorance, have drawn us toward this path because obeying such leaders is a misdeed in itself; so, he cannot justify future misdeeds.² This concept that the political leadership in a revolutionary society of Islam is the same revolutionary leadership and is necessarily on the same path with the intellectual and ideological leadership, has existed openly in the teachings of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) before and after Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), as well. In a narration, Imam ʿAlī b. Mūsā (P.B.U.H.), quotes His Holy grandfather Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) who likens the “weapon” in the line of ancestry of the Imamate to the “arc of the covenant” among the people of the past of the Children of Israel (Banī Isrāʾīl): “Among us the weapon is like the arc of the covenant among the Children of

1- *Al-Kāfi*, vol 1, p. 186.

2- The Qurʾān has repeated this theme in several places and in various phrasings; it has spoken of the contentiousness and the followed and the followers of a deviated path, and of the complaints of the followers that say: “These misguided leaders have made us lose our way ... and finally, this is mentioned as well that such an excuse is accepted from no one and that a similar fate awaits both groups. See: Sūrat al-Baqara (The Cow): 167, Shuʿarā (The Poets): -91 102, Saba (Sheba): 91 and al-Nisāʾ (Women): 97. (Author)

Israel, which everyone holds, the Prophethood—and in a narration, the governance—would belong to him. Among us, everyone who has the weapon, leadership and authority belongs to him.”—Attention should be paid to the symbolic form and the profound concept of this phrasing;—the narrator then asks:

«أفيكون السلاح مزايلا للعلم»

[Can the weapon be with someone in whom there is no knowledge of religion?]

Meaning that: Is it possible that a weapon be with someone who does not have ideological knowledge of religion?¹ In reply the Imam (P.B.U.H.) answered: No!² That is, the governance of a society and revolutionary leadership of the Muslim nation is in the hands of the one who has both the weapon and knowledge combined.

So, on the one hand, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) considers the provision of the Imamate to be the knowledge of religion and a correct understanding of the Qurʾān, on the other hand by spreading the scientific domain and gathering a large group of eager people and instructing them with an especial method that is in contradiction with the normal routine of jurisprudence and tradition and interpretation and, in general, contradictory to the popular theology of the scholars, specialists in traditions and interpreters who are dependent on the caliphate’s apparatus, (the Imam (P.B.U.H.)) practically proves his own theology and the lack of theology of the caliphate’s apparatus with all its dependent and famous scholars, and thereby, gives a new dimension to his struggle through a continuous, profound, and calm challenge.

1- This meaning for the word of “muzayilan” is understood from the great expert of Narration, ‘Allāma Majlisi in the book of “*Mirʾāt al-‘Uqūl* (Mirror of Intellects.)” (Author)

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 238.

As it was pointed out before, prior to attaining power, the first ‘Abbasid rulers, who had themselves spent years in the environment of *‘Alawite’s* struggles and alongside the followers and companions of ‘Alī’s household (P.B.U.T.) and knew many of their secrets and had insight of their tactics, and understood the challenging role of this lesson and discussion and tradition and interpretation before their Umayyad predecessors. Apparently, that is why Maṅṣūr ‘Abbāsī, during the wicked clashes with Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), had prohibited the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from sitting among the people and teaching them about religion for a long period of time, and had forbidden the people from visiting the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and asking him questions; to the extent that according to Mufaḍḍal b. ‘Umar—the illustrious and well-known Shi‘ite figure—whenever an issue concerning marriage, divorce, and so forth rose for someone, he could not easily get the answer from his holiness.^{1,2}

The Existence of Secret Politico-Ideological Organizations

Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), with the extensive help of his father and grandfather—meaning Imam Sajjād and Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.T.), especially toward the end of Imam Bāqir’s (P.B.U.H.) life—and then himself with the help of this effort was able to train a number of Muslims who were believers and learned, genuine, revolutionary, and devoted ready to take risks throughout the Muslim world. Yet these were not ordinary people; these were not ordinary people—not that they were from privileged classes, no; they were the very businessmen and merchants and servants and so on and so forth, but in terms of a spiritual status they did not resemble ordinary people at all. They

1- Ibn-i Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib*, vol. 4, p. 238.

2- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 88-95.

were people whose lives were summarized in their goals and in their schools (of thought) and they were everywhere. What is surprising is that Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) companions were everywhere; not presuming that they were only in Medina, no; more of them were in Kūfa than in Medina. There were people even in Shām itself. These are that enormous organizational network of Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.). [It was] The *ʿAlawite* party, the Shi'ite party; this is what I meant when I said that the organizational network is the very Shi'ism. However this is one of the unknown chapters of Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) life. This is among the matters that I stress and insist upon; an enormous organizational network, a complete party that was administered by Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) throughout the Muslim world; this was a strong point.

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A network that was responsible for significant and effective activities concerning the issue of leadership in many remote areas of the Muslim nation, especially in Arab Iraq and Khurāsān; however this is just one side of the issue and an insignificant part of it. The subject of secret organizations in the scene of Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) political life as well as the other Imams (P.B.U.T.) is an example of the most important and the most exciting, and at the same time, the most unknown and the most obscure chapters of this very eventful biography.

As we said earlier, one cannot and need not expect unequivocal documentation in order to prove the existence of such an organization. One must not expect that one of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) or one of his close companions to have openly admitted to the existence of a Shi'ite politico-intellectual organization; this is not something that one can admit to. The reasonable expectation is that if the enemy had also discovered the existence of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) secret organization one day

and asked him or one of his companions anything about it, he completely would have denied the existence of such a thing and thought it to be a suspicion or call it an accusation. This is the perpetual property of a secret task. Of course, one cannot expect the investigator of the history of the life of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) to accept the existence of such an organization without any convincing evidence and proof. One should be in search of the conjunctions, evidences, and interior aspects of apparently simple events which, although do not attract the opinion of the common viewer, but with deliberation and reflection, they would denote many of these secret courses of events. If, with such a viewpoint, a close look throughout the two and a half centuries of the lives of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) is taken into consideration, the existence of a secret organization at the service of and under the command of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) will be almost [accepted as] indisputable.¹

1- *Pishvāy-e Šādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 96-97.



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

The image features a central, ornate title card with a decorative border. The text is written in a highly stylized, calligraphic script. The background consists of a dense pattern of thin, parallel diagonal lines. The title card itself is a complex, symmetrical shape with intricate flourishes and floral motifs. The text is arranged in four lines, with the first line being 'One', the second 'Two Hundred', the third 'and Fifty-Year-', and the fourth 'Old Man'. The overall aesthetic is classic and elegant, typical of early 20th-century book design.

The Secret Organization and Its Role

What does “organization” mean? It is obvious that it did not mean a well-organized party with its modern concept—namely a complex made up of organized staff and regional and municipal headquarters and so on and so forth—and it cannot mean so. “Organization” meant a group of people who did a variety of tasks and duties in connection with a center and a beating heart and a commanding mastermind with a common goal, and also had had a type of close and kinship-like relation among themselves.

At the time of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.)—that is during a twenty-five-year interval between *Saqīfa* and the Caliphate—this population were those very noble classes of the companions (of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)) were the ones who, despite the self-righteous protests and general popularity of the caliphate’s apparatus, believed that governance is the right of the most superior and the most devoted Muslim—that is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.)—and those who had not forgotten the Prophet’s (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) stipulation for ‘Alī’s (P.B.U.H.) succession and in the first few days after (the event of) *Saqīfa* also explicitly announced their opinion of their objection to the winners of the Caliphate and also their allegiance to the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Later on, as well, although according to a great interest that had forced the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to be silent and even to cooperate with the early Caliphs, they were put in a normal and ordinary course of a Muslim society, yet they had never disregarded their authentic resolve and opinion and assessment, and always remained the followers of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.); and it was for

this reason that they rightly received the name of “the Shi‘ites of ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.)” and it was due to this intellectual and practical orientation that they became well known. Famous and honorific figures such as Salmān, Abū Dhar (al-Ghafārī), Ubayy b. Ka‘b, Miqdād, ‘Ammār, Ḥudhayfa and ... are among the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) followers.

Historical evidence confirms that this group would constantly spread Shi‘ite Thought—that is the belief in the necessity of adhering to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) as the intellectual leader and political guide—along with the pragmatic and wise methods among the people and would gradually increase their number, something that was considered to be an obligatory prelude to the formation of the *‘Alawite* government.

After Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (P.B.U.H.) came to power in 35 A.H., the only people who had acknowledged Shi‘ite criteria in the field of governance and the Imamate and had accepted the Imam (P.B.U.H.) on the basis of those criteria with strong faith were the very same Shi‘ite group—namely those who had been directly or indirectly educated by the Imam (P.B.U.H.) during the past twenty or so years. Others—that is the majority of people—although they lived in the realm of the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) leadership and were actually taking steps in the direction of Shi‘a thought, yet they did not enjoy (the fruits of) the intellectual and spiritual attachment that would make them join the group of Shi‘ite organization.

It is due to this dualism among the proponents of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) that the very different encounters of Muslims of those days with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) are justified and interpreted; that is, such figures as ‘Ammār, Mālik Ashtar, Ḥujr b. ‘Udayy, Sahl b. Ḥunaif and Qais b. Sa‘d and others like Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī, Ziyād b. Abīh and Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqās.

One must accept the fact that if indeed the first steps for es-

establishing a Shi'ite organization were taken during this meeting, the plan and its context had been forecast and predicted a long time before that in a speech from Imam 'Ali b. Abi Tālib (P.B.U.H.) (while) speaking to his close companions.

After the incidence of Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) peace (treaty), it was the spreading of Shi'ite thought and organizing this joint group and relatives which, now, due to the cruel domination of the Umayyad sultan and the pressure that was exerted upon it, that it could enjoy greater mobility and dynamism¹. Thus it is always such that strangulation and pressure instead of being an agent of failure in the cohesive forces under pressure, it causes them to be the more coherent, sterner, and more widespread.

Gathering of genuine and reliable Shi'ite forces, protecting them from the harm of relentless anti-Shi'ite conspiracies of the Umayyad apparatus, the expanse of genuine Islamic thought in a limited, but deep circle, the recruiting of potential forces and adding them to the Shi'ite group, waiting for a suitable opportunity, and finally, uprising and timely and duly measures that obliterated the ignorant Umayyad system, and, again, replacing it with the Islamic and *Alawite* regime; this was Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) strategy and the final reason that made the acceptance of peace for that Imam (P.B.U.H.) inevitable.

Apparently, it was for this reason that after the incidence of peace, when a group of Shi'ites that were led by Musayyab b. Najaba and Sulaymān b. Ṣurad Khuzā'ī went to Medina—where the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had just returned back to from Kūfa and again had made that city his intellectual and political base—and went to visit his holiness and recommended the restructuring of the military forces and the seizure of Kūfa and they raised the subject of the attack of the Syrian army. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) selected these two persons from among the group and

1- Activity.

summoned them to his presence and convinced them about the incorrectness of this plan with statements that are by no means known as of their quality and quantity, and when they returned to their friends and co-travelers and made it clear in a brief and secret statement that the issue of military uprising is ruled out and that they must return to Kūfa and go about their business.

It is with regards to these indications that Ṭāhā Ḥusayn—a contemporary vigilant Arab historian—believed that the first corner stone of the Shiʿite political organization was laid on that very day and in that very assembly when these two famous Shiʿite figures visited and negotiated with Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.).

“When you have lost me, most probably you will see things that you will hope for death: injustice, enmity, monopolization (or exclusion), taking Allah’s Divine right lightly and being afraid of one’s life; when that happens, you must protect yourselves collectively by means of a Divine relationship with Allah and not to become scattered. Engage in resistance and prayer—remembrance of Allah—and *taqīyyah* and know that Allah dislikes¹ constant changing of colors of His servants. Don’t trespass truth and the people of truth; because whosoever chooses another one instead of us, (he/she) will lose this world and depart (from) it (as) a sinner.”²

This statement, which is openly descriptive of the most important irregularities of the Umayyad period and a command for setting up organization and coordination, is to be regarded as among the most interesting documents relating to the

1- (*ba gha ḍa*): being hated or disliked.

2- *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, A’lamī Publication, p. 82: Amīr al-M’minīn, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) said: «قال أمير المؤمنين علي بن ابي طالب: ... لو قد فقدتوني لرأيتم بعدي أشياء يمتنى أحدكم الموت مما يرى من الجور و العُدوان و الأثرة و الاستخفاف بحق الله و الحُوف على نفسه فإذا كان ذلك فاعتصموا بحبل الله جميعاً و لا تفرقوا و عليكم بالصبر و الصلوة و التقية و اعلّموا أنّ الله عزّوجلّ يُعِض من عباده القلّون لا تؤولوا عن الحقّ و أهله فإنّ من استبدل بنا هلك و فاتته الدنيا و خرّج منها أثماً»



Shi'ite party; and it is this very plan that finds a practical and concrete form in this meeting with Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and two of the most elite Shi'ites.

Undoubtedly, not all of the followers and Shi'ites were aware of this very clever plan. The mystery of these objections and protests that were targeted at the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from the friends, was this very issue; but an answer that is allegedly repeated heard about this theme from the Imam (P.B.U.H.) as to, "For all we know, perhaps this is a test for you and a perishable¹ gain—for your enemy," had a hidden allusion to the same policy and strategy.

During Mu'āwīya's 20 years of tyrannical governance, with a painful account that historians have provided about how he propagated against the *Alawites* in all regions of the country—to the point that cursing Amīr al-Mu'minīn had become a common and prevalent tradition—and without Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) visible and significant activities being obvious, was the existence of such continuity and a integrity and an organization alone that allowed for the possibility of growth of the Shi'ite thought and the increase of the number of the Shi'ite population throughout Ḥijāz and Iraq.

Twenty years after the incidence of the peace treaty we look at intellectual realm of these regions. In Kūfa, Shi'ite dignitaries are the most celebrated and the most famous respectable figures. In Mecca and Medina and even some remote areas, Shi'ites, as well, are connected to each other like the rings of a chain and are informed about one another. When, after several years, one of the Shi'ite leaders—Ḥujr b. 'Udayy—was murdered, despite the severe strangulation, an outcry of protest rose up in several areas of the country, and a famous figure died

1-To some extent and in some ways this situation is comparable to the current context of communities which are managed under the leadership and governance of parties. (Author)

from severe grief in Khurāsān, after the angry protest.¹ After Mu'āwīya's death, thousands of people wrote a letter to Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) and invited him to Kūfa to rise up. After the martyrdom of the Imam (P.B.U.H.), tens of thousands of people joined the group who wanted to get revenge and, in the event of the Penitents (*Tawwābīn*) or along the militia of Mukhtār and Ibrāhīm b. Mālik, revolted against the Umayyad government.

The reviewer of Islamic history asks himself: Is the circulation of Shi'ite thinking and tendencies to this extent, would be possible and reasonable except under the patronage of one calculated organization from a group of united Shi'ites—namely from the very organization that Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) had guessed its birth immediately after the peace of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.)? No doubt the answer is negative. The calculated propagation of the dominant Umayyad apparatus that was managed by hundreds of judges, reciters, orators and governors, other than another calculated propaganda that was managed from a joined group and one direction and, of course, hidden, could not have replied and even in some cases neutralized them.

Close the time of Mu'āwīya's death, this organized activity became greater and its setting was more accelerated; to the point that the governor of Medina wrote to Mu'āwīya, "Now then, 'Umar b. 'Uthmān—the respective agent—reported that some of the men of Iraq and some of the leading people of Ḥijāz have relationships with Ḥusayn and it is suspected that he intends to rise up. I have done an investigation about this and have been informed that He-Ḥusayn—intends to raise the flag of opposition. Write your opinion and command [to me]."²

1- *Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) Peace*, written by Shaykh Rāḍī Āl-i Yāsīn, translated by Ayatollah Sayyid 'Alī Khamenei.

2- Ḥusayn's Revolution, p. 118; cited from *A'yān al-Shī'a and Al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl*.

After the event of *Karbalā* and the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) martyrdom, the organized activities of the Shi'ites in Iraq had become more orderly and more mobilized; and this was the effect that it had created on the Kūfan Shi'ites' psychological condition—of which many of them were taken by surprise due to the blow of caliphate apparatus and were unable to reach the scene of the Battle on *Āshūrā*—and the burning of regret and pain, gave them color and luster.

Ṭabarī, the famous historian of the century¹, writes: “That group—the Shi'ites—were continuously busy collecting weapons, and making preparations for war, and the secret invitation of people—whether Shi'ite or non-Shi'ite—to revenge the blood of Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.). Thus group after group answered their invitation and joined them and it went on like this until Yazīd b. Mu'āwīya died.”²

The author of “*Jihād al-Shī'a*” (Struggle of the Shi'ites) correctly comments that, “After the martyrdom of Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), the Shi'ite population was like a composed and organized gathering whose political ties and religious beliefs gave them integrity and had appeared as a gathering of leaders and military forces, and the group of Penitents (*Tawwābīn*) was the first existing example of its kind.”³

As it can be understood from the study of historical events and also from the viewpoints of these historians, in the incidents of Mu'āwīya's era as well as events after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), the only initiatives and the designing and leadership of these events were related to the Shi'ites and in their hands; otherwise, there were many ordinary people that by humanitarian motives or for dissatisfaction of the

1- 3rd century A.H.

2- Ṭabarī, vol. 7; cited from *Jihād al-Shī'a*, p. 28.

3- *Jihād al-Shī'a*, p. 27.

Umayyad rule apparatus or other motives and causes, practically joined the Shi'ites as their companions and participated alongside them in the fields of battle or in actions, which were of Shi'ite tone. Therefore it should not be imagined that all those who participated in the various adventures of that part of history and had an active or common role in it were among the Shi'ites, namely they were in the Imams' (P.B.U.T.) orderly and calculated organization.

Keeping the explanation given above in mind, a point that I want to stress is that until the period in question—namely, after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.)—the name and term “Shi'ite”, like in the days of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (P.B.U.H.) was applied only to those who had a strong and specific relationship, in thinking and practice, with the righteous Imam (P.B.U.H.). It was this same group who had created the consistent Shi'ite organization after Imam Ḥasan's (P.B.U.H.) peace and by the order of his holiness. It was these same people who, with their own successive and deep preaching, brought others within the boundaries of that organization and attracted more people who were not similar to them in thinking and ideology to the undertakings of the Shi'ites. There is no doubt, the narration that we quoted from Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) at the beginning of this discourse—that limited the number of Shi'ites to three or five persons—refers to those belonging to this category; that is, the Shi'ites and perseverant followers of the Imams (P.B.U.T.); those who had a conscientious role and decisive part in the movement and the course of the dynamic evolution of the *Alawite* and Hashemite revolution.

Due to Imam Ṣādiq's (P.B.U.H.) clandestine and apparently calm efforts, this group recovered and attracted and spread its potential elements, and as Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) said in a narration that was just mentioned, the ordinary people joined it and increased in number. It was this very group, during the eras of

Imam Sajjād, Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.T.), whose dubious movements made the chiefs of Caliphate regime fearful and sometimes incited them to show violent reactions.

To sum up, in Shi'ite culture and also in non-Shi'ite concepts and understanding in the early centuries of Islam and during the time of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) the name "Shi'ite" did not apply to anyone who only had the love of members of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) household or only believed in their legitimacy and the truth of their invitation—although he had not participated in areas of activity and a movement whose center and axis was the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—but apart from these, being a Shi'ite had a fundamental and indisputable condition and that included "intellectual and practical cohesion with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and participation in the activities which were done with the Imam's initiative and leadership in order to restore the usurped rights and to establish the *Alawite* and Islamic system on various intellectual, political, and possibly military levels." This cohesion is the same as what is called *Wilāya* (guardianship) in the Shi'ite culture. In fact, "Shi'ite" was a name for the party of the Imamate; a party which was involved in some specific activities with the leadership of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and like all opposing parties and organizations in the age of strangulation, lived in concealment and *taqīyyah*. This is an abstract and detailed summary of the lives of the Imams (P.B.U.T.), particularly Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.). As I said previously, this is not something that one can expect to wait for explicit arguments to prove it; because one should never wait for a tableau above the door of a hidden house upon which is written: "This is a hidden house". Although one cannot take its existence as granted without indispensable evidence. So, it is worthwhile to undertake searching for the evidence and testimonies.¹

1- *Pishvāy-e Ṣādiq (The Righteous Leader)*, pp. 97-107.

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



The Period of the Imamate of Abī al-Ḥasan, Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.)

This 35-year time period—from 148 to 183 A.H.—namely the period of the Imamate of Abī al-Ḥasan, Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) is one of the most important and significant time periods of the lifetime of the Imams (P.B.U.T.). Two of the most powerful ‘Abbasid sultans—Maṣṣūr and Hārūn—and two of the most tyrannical of these—Mahdī and Hādī—who ruled in that period. Many of these revolts and uprisings and riots in Khurāsān, in African regions, on the Island of Mūṣil, in Deylamān, in Jurjān (Gurgān), in Shām, in Nuṣaybīn, in Egypt, in Azerbaijan, in Armenia, and in other regions and places were repressed and thus became compliant (*munqād*), and new conquests and booties and abundant wealth in the area of the south and the west and the north of the vast Islamic dominion had increased the power and the solidarity of the ‘Abbasid throne.

The intellectual and doctrinal movements of this period reached its climax and some of them were born and this mental atmosphere was filled with conflicts and an armament was at the hands of the powerful and a calamity in the Islamic and political awareness of the people and made the field constrained and complicated for the standard bearers of genuine Islamic teachings and the owners of *‘Alawite* invitation.

Poetry and art, jurisprudence and tradition, and even asceticism and piety entered into the service of the lords of power and became the complementary tools to wealth and power. In this period, it was no longer like the last days of the Umayyad period, nor the same as the first ten years after ‘Abbasid period

or like the period after the death of Hārūn, in each of which the dominant government of the time was threatened in a way; a serious threat did not shake the caliphate apparatus and did not make the caliph heedless of the circumstances of the Prophet's household's (P.B.U.T.) deep and continued invitations.

The only thing that could give the struggle and the intellectual and political movement of the holy Prophet's household (P.B.U.T.) and their loyal companions the opportunity to grow and continue was the tireless struggle of these honorable Imams (P.B.U.T.) and resorting to the Divine method of *taqīyyah* (prudential concealment). It is in this way that the amazing and horrific holy struggle of Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) became evident.

I must say that when the researchers of the history of Islam undertook the inquiry and explanation of the life of Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), they did not allocate a merited share of attention and intelligence that should be allocated to the great and unparalleled event of the "long term imprisonment" of this magnanimous Imam and as a result they have remained heedless of the momentous struggle of this honorable Imam.

In the biography of that high-ranking Imam, talking about the various incidents unrelated with one another and an emphasis on the scientific and spiritual and sacred position of that progeny of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and an account of the circumstances of his family, companions, students, scholarly and theological debates, and so on, would remain imperfect and unfinished without regard to the continuous line of struggle that has also taken up all thirty-five-year long Imamate of this honorable man. It is the description and explanation of this line that connects all the components of this gracious life to one another and provides a clear and perfect and directive picture which has a meaning in every phenomenon, incident,

and movement.

Why does Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) say to Mufaḍḍal, “Tell only those who are completely trustworthy about the matter of this young man’s Imamate?” And instead of speaking frankly, why does he use allusion to tell ‘Abdul Raḥmān, “The armor befits his body?” And why does he introduce him to close companions like Ṣafwān Jammāl with a hint and a sign? And finally, why does he mention the name of his son in his last will and testament as successor after four other people, the first of whom is Maṣṣūr ‘Abbāsī and then the governor of Medina and then two women; so that after the death of this Imam, a group of Shi‘ite leaders do not know that their successor is this twenty-year old youth? Why in a conversation with Hārūn, who address him saying:

«خليفةتان يجيء اليهما الخراج»¹

[There are two caliphs in a country and people pay tax to both of them], he opens his mouth with softness and denial; but firstly, in an address to the pious and persuasively-speaking man named Ḥasan b. ‘Abdullāh he begins to speak about the knowledge of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and then introduces himself as the Imam of “obligatory obedience”, meaning the holder of a position that the ‘Abbasid caliph of that day had the authority to hold?

Why does he order ‘Alī b. Yaqtīn, who has a high ranking post in Hārūn’s government and is one of the devotees of the Imam, to do practice *taqīyyah*; whilst he reproaches Ṣafwān Jammāl for serving that very caliphate apparatus and enjoins him to cut off his relationship with the caliph? How and by what means does he create all those ties and relations in the vast territory of Islam, among friends and his companions and

1- *Al-Ihtijāj ‘Alā Ahl Al-Lijāh*, vol. 2, p. 389

builds a network that extends to China?

Why did Maṣṣūr, Hādī, Maḥdī, and Hārūn, each at a stage of their own eras of rule, resolved to murder, imprison, and exile him? And why, as is known from some narrations, did the Imam (P.B.U.H.) spend a part of his thirty-five-year period [of Imamate] in suffocation and in the villages of Shām or appear in districts of Tabaristan and why was he pursued by the caliph of the time and enjoin his companions that if the caliph asked you about me, tell him you did not know me and do not know where I was?

Why does Hārūn pay the utmost homage to that Imam on a trip to Hajj but orders his incarceration and exile on another trip and why does that Imam—during the early days of Hārūn’s caliphate where he adopts the method of gentleness and forgiveness and had released the *‘Alawites* from prisons—give a description of *Fadak* [the oasis of *Fadak* was part of the bounty given to Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), who gave it as a gift to his daughter, Fāṭima] that complies to all the vast Islamic countries; to the extent that the caliph using allusion says to that Imam, “So, stand up and sit in my place”? And why is the gentle behavior of this very caliph, after a few years, becomes so cruel that he casts that Imam (P.B.U.H.) into a strict prison and then after many years of incarceration he finds tolerating him even as a prisoner so difficult that he outrageously poisons and martyrs him?

These and hundreds of other conspicuous and meaningful and yet apparently unrelated and sometimes contradictory incidents in the life of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) will be interpreted and become relevant when we observe that continuous sequence that continued from the beginning of the Imamate of that honorable man until the moment of his martyrdom. This sequence is the line of the *jihād* (holy war) and struggle of the

Imams (P.B.U.T.) that had continued throughout the 250-year period in various forms whose goals were, first, to explain the pure Islam, the correct interpretation of the Qurʾān and presenting a clear picture of Islamic knowledge and secondly, to explain the issue of Imamate and political sovereignty in an Islamic society, and thirdly, to endeavor and attempt to establish that society and to realize the goals of the holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and all the prophets (P.B.U.T.), that is to implement equity and justice and obliterate [those taken as] the partners of Allah from the scene of government and to entrust the reins of government to representatives of Allah and His righteous servants.

Imam Mūsā b. Jaʿfar (P.B.U.H.) had also devoted all his life to this *jihād*; lessons and teaching and jurisprudence and narration and *taqīyyah* and his pedagogy were for this purpose. Of course, his era had its own characteristics; so, his *jihād* also had some especial features in proportion to the time; exactly like the other eight Imams (P.B.U.T.), from Imam Sajjād (P.B.U.H.) to Imam Ḥasan ʿAskarī (P.B.U.H.) and each one or some of them, had his or their own especial features in their time, and as a consequence, they had their especial features in their own *jihād*, and on the whole their life formed the fourth period of the 250-year life which is also divided into some phases.

18/10/1989

The Tireless Endeavour and Appealing to *Taqīyyah*

The life of Mūsā b. Jaʿfar is a surprising and strange one. First, in the private life of Mūsā b. Jaʿfar; the matter was clear for those close to the Imam (P.B.U.H.). There was no one from among those close to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) or the elite companions of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) that did not know what Mūsā b. Jaʿfar was making an effort for and Mūsā b. Jaʿfar himself showed this to

others in his statements and allusions and the allegorical actions that he would take. Even in his place of residence, that special room where Mūsā b. Ja'far would sit in was such that the narrator—who was one of his intimate companions—said, “I went in; I saw that there were three things in Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) room; a rough piece of clothing, a piece of clothing that was far from an ordinary affluent normal state. That is in our modern interpretation it could be understood and it could be said that it is a war uniform. Mūsā b. Ja'far had placed this war uniform there, he was not wearing it; it was a symbolic thing. Then

«وسيفٌ مُعلَّقٌ»

[And a suspended sword] He has hung up a sword; he has suspended it from the ceiling or from the wall;

«والمصحف»¹

[And a sacred volume] and a “Holy Qur'ān”. See what a symbolic thing and what a beautiful thing it is, in the Imam's private room to which nobody has access except the intimate companions of that Imam, where signs of a man of war and a man of doctrine can be observed. There is a sword that shows that the goal is *jihād*. There is a rough piece of clothing that shows that it is a means of a tough, military, and revolutionary life; and there is a Qur'ān that shows that the goal is this; we want to achieve a Qur'ānic life through these means and we also endure these hardships, but the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) enemies also guessed this.

Firstly, the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), that is the Imamate of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), started in the most difficult of periods. No period, in my opinion, after Imam Sajjād's (P.B.U.H.) period,

1 - *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 100.

was more difficult than that of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.). Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate in the year 148 A.H. after the demise of his father Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.). The year 148 A.H. the conditions are such that the ‘Abbasids became disengaged after early conflicts; i.e., after the internal disputes and wars among the ‘Abbasids themselves during their early caliphate. The major insurgents who threatened their caliphate were people like Banī al-Ḥasan–Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh Ḥasan, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abdullāh b. Ḥasan, and the rest of the descendants of Imam Ḥasan (P.B.U.H.) who were all among the rebels against the ‘Abbasids—were all thoroughly defeated and suppressed. The ‘Abbasids killed a large number of the leaders and rebels who were put in a repository and storage that was opened after Manṣūr ‘Abbāsī’s death, where it turned out that he had killed a large number of personalities and individuals and had put their corpses in a place where their skeletons were obviously seen. Manṣūr had killed so many of the Banī Ḥasan and the Hashemites, from among his relatives and of those who were among his close associates, prominent, and well-known people that it formed a warehouse of skeletons. When he was disengaged from all these, it was Imam Ṣādiq’s (P.B.U.H.) turn. Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.) was poisoned with a trick. No dust existed in the atmosphere of ‘Abbasids’ political life anymore. In such circumstances, where Manṣūr lived in full power and at the height of his apparent rule, time came for the caliphate of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) who was a young person and with all that vigilance to the extent that those who wanted to find out to whom they must refer to now after the demise of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), they could barely find the way and find Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.); and Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) recommended them to be careful; [because] “if they knew that you have heard something from me and that you have been taught by me and were in contact with me, you would be killed.” It was under such

circumstances that Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate and began the struggle.

Now, if you ask, well, when Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) attained the Imamate, how did he start the struggle, what did he do, whom did he gather, what places did he go to, what events took place for Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) in those 35 years; unfortunately, this humble person does not have a clear answer and this is the very thing that is one of our worries that we do not find anything when we research into life in early Islam. No one has any information about an orderly and systemized life of this thirty-five-year period. That I say that no book has been written, nor has any research work been done yet as it should be done, is for this very reason. There are some scattered things from which one can understand much from them all in sum.

One is that during this thirty-five-year period of Imam Mūsā b. Ja‘far’s (P.B.U.H.) Imamate, four caliphs came to power (in their caliphate). One (of them) is Maṣṣūr ‘Abbāsī who ruled for the first 10 years of Mūsā b. Ja‘far’s (P.B.U.H.) Imamate. Then, there is his son Maḥdī who ruled (as a caliph) for ten years. Then there is Maḥdī’s son, Hādī ‘Abbāsī who also ruled (as a caliph) for one year; after him there is Hārūn al-Rashīd who ruled (as a caliph); and for thirteen years of Hārūn’s rule (in the position of caliphate), Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) was engaged in inviting (people to Islam) and propagating the Imamate. Each of these four caliphs placed a burden and inflicted pressure on Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.).

Maṣṣūr invited the Imam (P.B.U.H.), that is, he exiled him or forcefully summoned him, to Baghdad. Of course, what I have mentioned is just some of those incidents. When a person looks at the life of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.), he finds that these incidents are great in number. One of these instances is that he brought Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) from Medina to Baghdad. In

Baghdad, he kept the Imam (P.B.U.H.) under surveillance and put pressure on him for some time. According to what can be implied from the narrations, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) has been put in manifold limitations. This is one time, how long did it take? It is not known for sure. One other time was apparently in the very era of Manṣūr's caliphate when they brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to a place in Iraq called "Abjar", where the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was exiled for some time. The narrator says, "I met with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) at that place; concerning these incidents, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said this and did this". In Mahdī 'Abbāsī's time, they brought his holiness from Medina to Baghdad at least once. The narrator says, "I was travelling on a route that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was traveling, they were taking the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Baghdad for "the first time"—it is implied from this phrase that they had taken him (to Baghdad) several times, which I think it is likely that they had taken the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Baghdad two or three times in Mahdī's era. He says, "I met with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and expressed (my) regret, I expressed (my) discomfort. He said, 'No, do not be discomfoted, I will return from this journey safe and sound, and they cannot harm me during this journey.'" This was Mahdī 'Abbāsī's era.

In Hādī 'Abbāsī's era, they wanted to bring the Imam (P.B.U.H.) back again with the intention to kill him, when one of the jurisprudents around Hādī 'Abbāsī became upset, and felt sorry that they are placing the son of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) under pressure in this way, he interceded, Hādī 'Abbāsī renounced the idea. In Hārūn's era, they also brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to Baghdad and for a long time on several occasions, which I think it likely that, in Hārūn's era also, they had separated the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from Medina more than once, but it is certain that it was once that they brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and imprisoned him in various places; and one of them, for example, was in Baghdad in various prisons, then in Sindī b.

Shāhak's prison where they martyred the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

You see that during these thirty-five, thirty-four years when Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was engaged in propagating the Imamate and performing his duties and with his struggles, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was brought (to Baghdad) several times. In addition to these, the caliphs of the time plotted against Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) several times with the intention to kill him. In the beginning, when Mahdī 'Abbāsī, the son of Manšūr, became caliph, he told his vizier or *hājib* (chamberlain), Rabī' that he must make arrangements to kill Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). He felt that the main danger is from Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). As I said, in the early days or at the beginning of his caliphate, Hādī 'Abbāsī decided to murder the Imam (P.B.U.H.). He even wrote a poem, saying, "That time has passed when we were tolerant about the Hashemite; I am now bound and determined not to leave anyone of you remain [alive] and Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) will be the first of you that I will destroy." After him, Hārūn al-Rashīd wanted to do the same and he did so; he committed this horrible crime. See what an eventful life this is, the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.).

In addition to these, there are some very subtle and unclear points in the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was definitely living in a period of secrecy, an underground life that was not known where it was. At that time, the caliph of the time summoned some individuals, inquired from them if they had seen Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), or if they had known where he was. And they answered, "No, they didn't". Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) even said to one of those individuals—as it is narrated—that "They will summon you, they will ask you about me as to where you saw Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). Deny it completely. Say I did not see him." That is exactly what happened; they imprisoned him; they took him in order to ask him where Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was.

You see the life of a person is such, whose life is this? A person who just talks about [religious] issues and discusses Islamic doctrinal knowledge, who does not have anything to do with the government, and does not get involved in political struggles, such a person does not get under such pressures. In a narration I even saw that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was on the run and hiding in the villages of Shām,

«دَخَلَ مُوسَى بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ بَعْضَ قُرَى الشَّامِ هَارِباً مُتَنَكِّراً فَوَقَعَ فِي غَارٍ»

(Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) entered some villages of Shām, and while he was escaping and hiding he ran into a cave), which is in a tradition; it is narrated that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) had not been in Medina at all for some time, he was in villages of Shām while being prosecuted by the ruler's apparatus and was being spied on by their spies. He was wandering from this village to that, from that village to this, in disguise and unidentified. In the meantime, he reaches a cave and enters that cave and there he meets a Christian man. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) debates with him. Even in that very moment he does not overlook his Divine obligation which is to explain the truth; he talks to that Christian and converts him to Islam and he becomes a Muslim.

Jihād of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and His Struggle and Resistance Against Hārūn

This adventurous life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) is such a life, that you see how passionate and exciting of a life this was. As we look today, we imagine that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was an oppressed, quiet, and submissive man in Medina, whom the officers went to arrest him and brought him to Baghdad or to Kūfa in a certain place or Baṣra and imprisoned him, then they poisoned him and he departed this world; that's all. This was

1- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 105.

not the case. The case was a long struggle, an organizational struggle, a struggle consisting of many individuals. In all the Islamic horizons, Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) had people who were fond of him. While his paternal cousin, Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) undutiful nephew, who was among those individuals dependent upon the ruling apparatus, would talk to Hārūn about Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), his interpretation was as follows:

«خَلِيفَتَانِ يَجِيءُ إِلَيْهِمَا الْحَرَجُ»

(Two caliphs to whom the tributes are brought.) He said: "Hārūn! Do not think that it is only you who is caliph on the Earth in the Islamic society and people pay you tributes, pay you taxes; there are two caliphs, one is you and one is Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). People pay you taxes, they give you money; they also pay taxes to Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) and give him money; and this was a reality. He said this out of his maliciousness, he wanted to criticize, but this was a reality. There were people from all over Islamic regions who had connections with Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), the thing is that these connections were not at a level that Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) could attempt an overt movement of armed fighting.

This was the condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) life; and as for Hārūn al-Rashīd, when it came to Hārūn al-Rashīd's turn, it was a time that although the Muslim community did not have anyone who oppressed the caliphate's apparatus and he was busy ruling almost effortlessly and worry-free, however the condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) life and spread of the seventh Imam's (P.B.U.H.) propagation was such that its resolving was not so easy for them, either. But Hārūn was a caliph astute in politics and very perspicacious. One of the things that Hārūn did was that he went to Mecca in person, as Ṭabarī, the famous historian, with some possibility or with certainty or likelihood says, Hārūn al-Rashīd set out with the intention

of going on this trip to perform the Hajj pilgrimage; however, his intention was secretly to go to Medina, to see Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) from up close to see what kind of a person he was. Hārūn wanted to know what kind of personality he had that he was so much talked about, had so many friends, and many of his friends were even in Baghdad? Should one be afraid of him or not? Hārūn did go and had several meetings with Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), which were among those extremely important and sensitive meetings. One of them was in Masjid al-Ḥarām in which Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) apparently encountered Hārūn anonymously and bitter talks were exchanged between them and Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) shattered the dignity of caliph in the presence of the audience. Here, he did not recognize Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.).

After he comes to Medina, he has several meetings with Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) that are important meetings. I will mention this much for those who like to study, who like to do research and are interested in these issues to go and work. These are the conjectures; they should go look for it and find it. Among other things that he does now in these meetings, Hārūn al-Rashīd would do all those things that must be done in order to take possession of an opposing human being and a true struggler. Threatening, bribery, deception, he did all of these things.

12/04/1985

In the beginning when he assumed the caliphate and came to Medina, as you have heard, Hārūn praised Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) and showed him respect and you know Ma'mūn's famous story where he relates that, "We went [to see Hārūn], the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was riding a mule and entered the district where Hārūn was sitting and when he wanted to get off the mule, Hārūn swore the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to go to the place where he had

set up his camp on his mount (riding and not getting off), and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) came on his mount.” Then Hārūn showed him respect and praised him, and told him this and that. Then when he left, he (Hārūn) ordered us to ‘take his [mount’s] stirrup’. Of course, what is interesting is that in this very narration he says that Ma’mūn says, “Hārūn, my father, used to give a prize of five thousand or ten thousand dinars to everyone, but he would give Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) a prize of only two hundred dinars. Whereas when he asked the Imam (P.B.U.H.) how he was, he said he had many children, he had many problems, and his financial situation was not good.” Now, in this humble person’s opinion, Mūsā b. Ja’far’s (P.B.U.H.) words to Hārūn is quite interesting, too. That is they are very familiar and understandable for us as to how it can be that a man can disclose to someone like Hārūn that his situation was not good and it was hard to live on and such things. In no way does this mean begging and humility. If a person has done so he knows how this is.

I know that during the period of the tyrannical regime and the period of repression many of you have naturally done many of these things and this is entirely understandable. Anyway, after the Imam (P.B.U.H.) says these things, which calls for Hārūn to say, “Well, very well, so, for example, these five thousand dinars are yours.” But he just gives him two hundred dinars. He says, “After I asked my father, why did you do so? He said, ‘If I gave this money, it would mean that he would mobilize the armed forces of Khurāsān, he would cause two thousand to rise against me.’” This was Hārūn’s impression and he had figured out it right. Now, some people imagine that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was backbiting; no, the truth of the matter was merely that the time when Mūsā b. Ja’far (P.B.U.H.) was struggling against Hārūn, if indeed there was money in (the treasury of) the government apparatus there would have been many people who were ready and willing to use a sword alongside Mūsā b.

Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) and we have seen such an example among those other than the Imams (P.B.U.T.), in case that if the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had risen up, people like Ḥusayn b. 'Alī—the Martyr of Fakh—was before Hārūn in the time of Mūsā al-Hādī and more and more others. It was very clear that their action is an indication of how many people the Imams (P.B.U.T.) could have gathered round them, and Hārūn had rightly understood.

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One of the things that he talks to Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) about is that he says, “You Hashemite, 'Alī's household, were deprived of *Fadak*, they took *Fadak* away from you, now I want to give *Fadak* back to you; say where *Fadak* is and what the boundaries of *Fadak* are so that I can return it to you.” Well, it is clear that this is a deception that he says he wants to return *Fadak*, [he is pretending] as a person who wants to return the right of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to them and build up a reputation for himself. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) says, “Very well, now that you want to give *Fadak* back to me, I will specify the boundaries of *Fadak* for you.” They agree to specify the boundaries of *Fadak*. The boundaries that Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) ascertained for *Fadak* encompassed all the Muslim countries of that day; this is what *Fadak* means. That is, [addressing Hārūn, he says] you imagine that our dispute of that day was over a garden, that it was over a few palm trees, this is simple-minded. Our problem that day was not several palm trees or the garden of *Fadak*, either; the problem was the Caliphate of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), the problem of Islamic government. However, that day what was thought it would completely deprive us of this right, was taking back *Fadak*. So we would insist upon the matter of the garden of *Fadak*. Today that thing that you have usurped before our very eyes, which does not have any value, is not the garden of *Fadak*. What you

have usurped is an Islamic society, an Islamic country. Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) mentions the fourfold boundaries and says, "This is *Fadak*, hurry up now, if you want to give it [back], give it. That is Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) explicitly raises the matter of claiming sovereignty and Caliphate.

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«خُذْ فَدَاكَ حَتَّى أَرُدَّهَا إِلَيْكَ»

[Tell me the extent of *Fadak* I will return it back to you.]

Delineate it; specify it, until I give *Fadak* back to you. At first, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) refuses, then He says,

«لَا أَخْذُهَا إِلَّا بِحُدُودِهَا»

[I won't take it except with its boundaries.]

If you give it back with its original boundaries, I will take it. Then he (Hārūn) says, "Very well, specify its boundaries. It is very interesting that at that time the Imam (P.B.U.H.) specifies a boundary for *Fadak*, its boundary is this:

«أَمَّا الْحُدُّ الْأَوَّلُ فَعَدَنٌ»

[One boundary is Aden.] Now they are sitting, for example, in Medina or Baghdad and they are talking to each other. One bound is Aden, the farthest end of the Arabian Peninsula.

«فَتَغَيَّرَ وَجْهَ الرَّشِيدِ»

[Then the color of Rashīd's face changed.]

«وَقَالَ تَيْهًا»

[And Hārūn said, "O!"] Hārūn said: "How strange!"

«وَقَالَ وَالْحُدُّ الثَّانِي سَمَرْقَنْدٌ»

[Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, "The second boundary of *Fadak* is Sa-

marqand.”] Samarqand is the second boundary of *Fadak*.

«فاربَدَّ وجهه»

[Hārūn's face became dark.]

«والحدّ الثالث افريقيا»

[The third boundary is Africa] The third boundary is Tunisia.

«فاسودَّ وجهه»

[His face became black.] Hārūn al-Rashīd's face turned black.

«وقال هيه»

[He said, “Heh heh!”] “How strange! What are you saying?”

«قال والرابع سيف البحر مما يلي الجزر أرمينيا»

[He said, “The fourth boundary is the islands and shores and Armenia.”] He (the Imam (P.B.U.H.)) said, “The fourth boundary is the margins of the seas and islands, like Armīniyya (modern Armenia) or such and such a place, that farthest end like the Mediterranean Sea and those places.

«فقال الرشيد لم يبق شيء»

[Al-Rashīd said, “Then nothing remains for us”.]

«فتحوّل إلى مجلسي»

[“Stand up and sit on my place”.]

«قال موسى بن جعفر عليه السلام»

«قد أعلمتك أنّي إن حدّتها لم تردّها»

[Mūsā b. Jāfar (P.B.U.H.) said, “Indeed, I knew before that if

I limit it, I would not be reimbursed.”] “I said that if I limit it, you will not return it.”

«فعد ذلك عزم على قتله»¹

[So at that time he was determined to kill him.”] When they got to this point, Hārūn became determined to kill Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.).

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Martyrdom of Imam Kāzīm (P.B.U.H.)

Upon his entrance to the shrine of the Prophet in Medina at the time when Hārūn al-Rashīd wanted to pretend and show his kinship with the Prophet (P.B.U.H & H.H.) in front of the Muslims who were watching the Caliph’s pilgrimage on this journey, he goes near the shrine when he wants to send his salutations to the grave of the Prophet (P.B.U.H & H.H.), he says:

«السلام عليك يا بن العم»

[Peace be upon you, O cousin!]

He does not say:

«يارسول الله»

[O Messenger of Allah;]

O cousin, Peace Be Upon You, meaning that I am the cousin of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H & H.H.). Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) immediately comes and stands in front of the shrine and He says:

«السلام عليك يا أبتاه»

[Peace Be Upon You, O Father,] meaning that if the Prophet

1- *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 48, p. 144.



(P.B.U.H & H.H.) is your cousin, he is my father. He just discredits that manner of hypocrisy in that same assembly.

The people who were around Hārūn al-Rashīd also felt that Mūsā b. Ja‘far’s (P.B.U.H.) existence was the greatest danger for the Caliphate apparatus. A man from among the friends of the ruling state and the monarchy was standing there, saw that a person came, riding on a donkey, without formalities, without being mounted on an expensive horse that indicated that he was among the aristocrats; when he got near, the people opened the way; apparently it was in this very trip to Medina, I suppose, and he entered, [that man] asked who was this man that when he came the people showed humbleness and respect to him and those around the caliph opened the way so that he could enter. They said, “He is Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.)”. As soon as they said it is Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.), he (that man) said, “Woe unto the foolishness of this nation, meaning the ‘Abbasids, who show such respect to someone who wants them dead and will overthrow their government?” They knew that the danger of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (P.B.U.H.) to the Caliphate apparatus is the danger of a great leader who has vast knowledge, has piety and servitude and moral soundness that all those who know him, see these characteristics in him. He has a lot of friends and adherents throughout the Muslim world; he is so brave that he has no fear or apprehension of any power that stands against him. Therefore, he speaks and expresses his opinion so recklessly against the superficial grandeur of Hārūn’s monarchy.

Such a combative personality, a warrior for the faith (*mu-jāhid*), one who is connected to and trusting in Allah, who has friends throughout the Muslim world and has plans to implement an Islamic ruling system. This is the greatest danger for Hārūn’s government. Therefore, Hārūn decided to remove this danger out of his way. Of course, he was a man of politics; he did not do this all at once. At first, he was willing to do this

indirectly. Then he saw that he had better imprison Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), perhaps he could make a deal with him while he was in prison, he could give him privileges, force him into acceptance submission to him by putting him under pressure. Therefore he ordered to arrest Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) in Medina, albeit in a way that it would not hurt the feelings of the people of Medina and thus they would not find out what happened to Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). Therefore they prepared two mounts and camel litters, one of them was sent to Iraq and one to Shām so that people would not find out where they had taken Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). They brought Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) to the center of the Caliphate in Baghdad, imprisoned him there and this imprisonment lasted a long time. Of course, it is possibly not certain that they had freed the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from prison once and arrested him again; what is certain is that the last time they arrested the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was with the intention of arresting the Imam (P.B.U.H.) in order to murder him in prison and that is what they did.

Inside prison, of course, Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) personality is like the same personality of a luminescent torch that illuminates everything around him. You see this is the truth, this is the movement of the Islamic thought and a holy war that relies on the Qur'ān; it will never stop even in the most difficult conditions. ... And this is what exactly Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) did, and there are numerous stories and narrations in this regard. One of the most interesting of these is that the famous Sindī b. Shāhak who, as you know, was a very strong and harsh prison guard and one of the 'Abbasid devotees and one of those loyal to the monarchy and caliphate apparatus of that day and was Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) prison guard who had imprisoned Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) in a very intolerable basement in his house. Sindī b. Shāhak's family would sometimes look into the prison through an opening. The living condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far

(P.B.U.H.) affected them and the seed of love and affection for the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.) was sown in the hearts of Sindī b. Shāhak's family. One of Sindī b. Shāhak's children, named Kashājim, is one of the great and distinguished dignitaries of Shi'ism. Perhaps one or two generations after Sindī b. Shāhak, one of children is Kashājim who is one of the greatest literati, poets, and distinguished figures of Shi'ism of his time, which has been mentioned by everyone. His name is Kashājim al-Sindī who is one of Sindī b. Shāhak's sons.

This is the condition of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) life, which he passed in prison in such a way. Of course they (officials) came inside the prison several times and threatened the Imam (P.B.U.H.), they tried to bribe him, they wanted to make the Imam (P.B.U.H.) happy and contented, but that great person resisted and it was that same resistance that has safeguarded the Qur'an and Islam until today. Know that our Imams' (P.B.U.T.) endurance against the course of corruption made us able today to find the true Islam; today, generations of Muslims and generations of human beings can find something called Islam, something called the Qur'an, something called the traditions (Sunnah) of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) in books, both in Shi'ite and Sunnite books. If it was not for the Imams (P.B.U.T.) uncompromising, struggle-seeking movement during these 250 years, know that those who wrote to receive wages and spoke to receive wages in the Umayyad and 'Abbasid eras would progressively change and uproot Islam so much that nothing would have remained of Islam after a couple of centuries. Either there would remain no Qur'an or a distorted Qur'an would remain. It was these prideful flags, these illuminating torches and these towering minarets that stood in the history of Islam and radiated the rays of Islam so much that the distorters and those who wished to invert the truth in a darkened sphere could not achieve that darkness. The disciples of the Imams

(P.B.U.T.) belonged to all the sects of Islam they were not exclusive to Shi'ism; there were many of those who did not believe in the ideal of Shi'ism, that is the Shi'ite Imamate; there were many people who were the disciples of the Imams (P.B.U.T.), they would learn the Qur'an, interpretation, the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) narrations and traditions from the Imams (P.B.U.T.). It was these resistances which safeguarded Islam to this day.

They eventually poisoned Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) in prison. One of the most poignant instances of the history of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) is the very martyrdom of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.). Of course, even there [in prison] they wanted to pretend. In the last days, Sindī b. Shāhak brought some of the heads, outstanding personalities, and dignitaries that were in Baghdad to see the Imam (P.B.U.H.). He said, "See, his living condition is fine; he does not have any problems." There the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, "Yes, but also know that they have poisoned me." And they poisoned the Imam (P.B.U.H.) with a few dates and under the heavy load of shackles and chains that they had locked around his neck, hands, and feet. In prison, the spirit of this noble, oppressed, and beloved Imam (P.B.U.H.) joined the Supreme Em-pyrean and was martyred. Of course, they were still afraid; they were also afraid of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) corpse and they were also afraid of Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) grave. So when they brought Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) corpse out of the prison, they chanted slogans that meant that this was someone who had risen up against the government apparatus; they said these things to overshadow Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) personality. The atmosphere of Baghdad was so untrustworthy that one of elements of the government itself, Sulaymān b. Ja'far—that is, Sulaymān b. Ja'far b. Manšūr 'Abbāsī, Hārūn's cousin, who was one of the 'Abbasid aristocrats—saw that the situation was in such a way that it would possibly make trouble for them; so, he undertook another role and brought Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) corpse,

and shrouded it with an expensive and precious shroud. Then they took the Imam (P.B.U.H.) with respect to the graveyard of the Quraysh, which is known today as Kāẓimain (Two Kāẓims) located near Baghdad, and buried him there. In this way, the life of Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.), which was thoroughly a holy war and struggle, came to an end here.

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*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*

Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) and Vice-gerency

After having been jailed in Hārūn al-Rashīd's prison for a long time, Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (P.B.U.H.) was poisoned and died martyr. Total suppression ruled over the extensive domain of the Abbasids' realm. In that oppressive atmosphere, when Hārūn al-Rashīd had his blood-thirsty sword in hand, our infallible Imam's (P.B.U.H.) greatest ingenuity was to protect the sprouting Shi'ism against the vicissitudes of the time, to prevent the friends of his dear father from dispersion and despair and to keep safe his (own) life, which was the pivot and (truly) the spirit of the Shi'ite population, through a wonderful precautionary dissimulation.

Throughout the period when the most powerful Abbasid caliphs were in power and when (the ruling) regime was fully and firmly established, he (P.B.U.H.) continued the campaign of the Imamate (against tyranny). But history has not been able to give us a clear picture of the ten-year period in the eighth Imam's (P.B.U.H.) life at the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd and after him, that is, during the five year civil war between Khurāsān and Baghdad.

But through reflection it can be understood that the eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.) carried on the same long-running campaign and followed the same direction and aim that the Ahl al-Bayt (P.B.U.T.) had perpetuated throughout the years after *Āshūrā*.

In 198 after Hijra, when Ma'mūn finished the struggle for power against (his brother) Amīn and took in his hand the full control over the then uncontested (office of) caliphate, one of his plans was to put an end to the problem of the *Ālawite*

and to the campaigns that Shi'ites ran. He had, before his eyes, all experience of his predecessors that showed (him) the day-to-day increase in the power, extent and depth of the ('Alawī) movement (on the one hand) and the weakness of the rulers in uprooting, stopping or even controlling it (on the other). He noted that Hārūn's majesty and splendor had not been able to stop the Shi'ites' uprisings and political, military, propaganda and intellectual campaigns, even by imprisoning and poisoning the seventh Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Besides, Ma'mūn, who did not enjoy the same (degree of) might as his father and his predecessors did, had (already) sensed that the Abbasid rule was being threatened by serious problems subsequent to the civil war among (the members of) the Abbasid family. No doubt, it was necessary for him to take the *'Alawite* movement more seriously. He might have given the situation a more (apparently) realistic consideration when he evaluated the danger posed by the Shi'ites.

Probably, the fifteen-year period between the seventh Imam's (P.B.U.H.) martyrdom and the day (Ma'mūn came to power)—and in particular the five-year civil war—provided the Shi'ites with a particular opportunity to prepare themselves more to raise the banner of the *'Alawite* rule. This was a danger Ma'mūn had cunningly guessed, and made preparations to confront it. Following this assessment and realization the Imam (P.B.U.H.), who lived at Medina, was invited to Khurāsān, where he was offered to succeed Ma'mūn. This was a singular or unique occurrence throughout the course of the Imamate, because the eighth Imam, 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.), was exposed to a great trial and a hidden political campaign on which the fate of the Shi'ites depended, i.e. success or defeat.

The fully-equipped competitor, Ma'mūn, who had the capacity to take the initiative, stepped into the arena. He was ex-

tremely clever, considerably tactful, and uniquely intelligent. If he had succeeded to carry out what he had planned, he would have certainly attained the goal which no other Umayyads and Abbasid caliph had reached in spite of the efforts they had been making from the time Imam ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.) was martyred in the 40th year after Hijra, i.e. he would have succeeded in uprooting the sprouting tree of Shi‘ism and obliterating the opposing current, which was a constant source of irritation for the oppressive rulers.

However, through a divinely scheme, the eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.) overcame Ma‘mūn and totally defeated him in the political campaign that Ma‘mūn himself had launched. Thus, Shi‘ism was not weakened, nor was it uprooted. Rather, it experienced one of the most blissful years in its history—the year 201 after Hijra—when Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) was named successor to Ma‘mūn. Now, a fresh vitality was visible in the *‘Alawite* campaign—all this came from the eighth infallible Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) divinely scheme and his wise manner of action in this difficult test.

In order to illuminate this extraordinary event, we will briefly explain Ma‘mūn’s plot and the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) scheme.

Ma‘mūn aimed at several targets, **the first** and the most important of which was to reduce the Shi‘ites’ acute revolutionary campaigns to peaceful and safe political activities. The Shi‘ites, however, continued their unending and untiring struggles secretly. The Shi‘ites’ battles, which disrupted the caliphal organization to the point that is beyond description, had in it two characteristics: “the state of being oppressed” and “holiness”.

These are the two elements the Shi‘ites depended on in their attempt to spread into the hearts and minds of their addressees the Shi‘ite thought, which is the interpretation and explanation of Islam as the Imams of the household of the Prophet

(P.B.U.T.) viewed it. Thus, they would make people be inclined to or believe in this ideology. In this way, there was a day-to-day expansion of the scope of Shi'ism within the world of Islam. These two elements—"the oppressed" and "holy states,"—supported by Shi'ite thought, organized in various localities the armed uprisings and rebellious attempts against the caliphate rulers.

Ma'mūn had the desire to remove the veil that kept the combatants in hiding, causing the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to leave the field of revolutionary campaign and step into the arena of politics. In this way, he thought he would (be able to) reduce to nothingness the efficiency of the Shi'ite movement that had already gained momentum in hiding, and would pluck out of the hand of 'Alawīs the two penetrating peculiarities. Consequently the group whose leader was the preeminent personage in the caliphal organization and the vice-gerent to the despotic king and could exercise control over the country's affairs would be considered neither oppressed nor that much holy. This plan could place the Shi'ite ideology on the same level as other dogmas that had some advocates in the society, converting it into a non-opposing force even if it attracted the common people, especially the weak and posed questions (in their minds).

The second goal was disproving the claim of the Shi'ites, who had asserted that the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates had been (established) through usurpation, and legitimizing these caliphates. Ma'mūn could thus cunningly prove to the Shi'ites that their claim in considering the dominant caliphates unlawful and illegal was baseless—even though in Shi'ism this was an article of faith—and came from weakness and inferiority complexes. If successions to previous caliphs' governments were illegal and tyrannical, (one might conclude that) Ma'mūn's was like them, but now that Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) has joined the office and agreed to succeed Ma'mūn, he (P.B.U.H.)

was assumed to have acknowledged Ma'mūn's (rules), and the other caliphs' as lawful, and this would disprove the Shi'ites' assertions. Ma'mūn would thus have Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) recognize Ma'mūn as well as his predecessors' governments as legitimate. Besides, he would smash one of the basic beliefs in Shi'ism: that the previous governments were cruel.

A further assertion of Shi'ism that would (sequentially) have been invalidated was the belief that the Imams (P.B.U.T.) were paragons of asceticism and piety, who disregarded the worldly matters. This would imply that Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) was detached from materialism (merely) so long as he had no access to it. Now that he has the doors of the worldly felicity open before him, he hurriedly moves toward it, enjoying it as others do!

As the third goal Ma'mūn would have the Imam (P.B.U.H.), the permanent focus of opposition and campaign and all other *Alawite* rebels and warriors under the surveillance of his own organization. This was the opportunity no other Umayyad or Abbasid rulers before Ma'mūn had ever had the chance to enjoy.

The fourth goal was to have the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—the hope of the people, the authority who answered their questions and (heard) their complaints—blockaded by the government agents, and aloof from the populace; this would in time diminish his popularity and would be a cause for the people's esteem and love to fade away.

The fifth goal was that Ma'mūn would acquire spiritual prestige for appointing a son of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and holy personage as his heir and depriving his brothers and sons of this position. The mingling of men of piety with those who seek the material world always lowers the former in prestige and raises the latter in esteem.

The sixth and final goal was that Ma'mūn thought that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) might be rendered to a person who would justify the deeds of the caliphal system (of rule). Had the Imam (P.B.U.H.), who was extensively knowledgeable, pious, and the uniquely respected son of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), justified the procedures of the caliphate organization, nobody could have voiced an opposition, nor could the regime's prestige have been hurt. This would serve (as) a retaining wall hiding all errors and indecencies of the caliphate organization.

Evidently, Ma'mūn's plot was so complex that no one else could lead it through; so even those closest to him were unaware of its scope and dimensions. Certain historical reports indicate that even Faḍl b. Sahl, the man in charge of two offices (i.e. military and civil) was unaware of its real dimensions. To safeguard his aims, Ma'mūn faked stories. Ma'mūn's scheme was exceptionally deep and well-planned. However, Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) presence turned Ma'mūn's best-laid and ingenious plan ineffective—making it look like a child's toy. In spite of all the trouble he had taken and heavy investment he had made, Ma'mūn gained nothing. His plan of action met with a counter plan: he had targeted the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) prestige and claim, but he himself suffered the outcome. Soon he had to nullify his past plans and follow his predecessors' manners against the Imams (P.B.U.H.)—that is, “murdering” him. In spite of his desire and endeavor to look a saintly and wise caliph, he was finally dumped into the same landfill in which the past caliphs had fallen: corruption, indecencies, debauchery, frivolity, tyranny, and arrogance. That he was a hypocrite could be seen from scores of examples during the fifteen-year period after the issue of choosing himself an heir. He employed Yahya b. Aktham, a debauched, evil-doer, and irresponsible supreme judge, took Ibrāhīm b. Mahdī, the singer, as his boon companion, and held frivolous and lewd gatherings at his court in Baghdad.

Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) Plans in Confrontation With Ma'mūn

Now Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) wise plans are dealt with as follows:

First: When the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was summoned to leave Medina for Khurāsān, he repeatedly told everyone that he (P.B.U.H.) was unhappy, in such a way that they became certain about Ma'mūn's ill-intention in sending him away from his hometown, Medina. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) expressed his suspicion of Ma'mūn in any possible way: the way he made farewell to the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) shrine and to his family, the way he (P.B.U.H.) left Medina, the farewell circumambulation at Ka'bah, the words he (P.B.U.H.) expressed openly, the language of praying he resorted to and the tears he (P.B.U.H.) shed, all indicated to all people that it was a trip from which he would not return—it was a trip of death. Those who were to be satisfied with Ma'mūn and (even) those who were to be dissatisfied with the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) decision for having accepted the offer—this being Ma'mūn's expectation—were (con the contrary) filled with the hatred of Ma'mūn, who was separating them from their beloved Imam and was so cruelly taking him to a place to murder him.

Second: At Merv, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was offered to be the heir after Ma'mūn, but he vigorously refused it until Ma'mūn explicitly threatened to kill him. The officials who had no knowledge of Ma'mūn's subtle plan incompetently spread the news of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) rejecting the offers to be the heir to the caliph. In a gathering of a group of the administrators of government affairs, Faḍl b. Sahl said, "I have never seen the caliphat position more disparaged than this. The Commander of the Faithful offers 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) the office, and the latter rejects it."

Whenever the occasion allowed, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) himself told various people that the position had been imposed on him. He repeatedly said, "My life was threatened, so I accepted to be the heir." These words spread among people as the strangest political piece of news does. It was natural for such words to spread throughout the horizons of Islam making present and future generations aware that in the time when Ma'mūn started a many-year-long war against his (elder) brother Amīn, killed him and thousands of others, angrily paraded his brother's head in various towns merely because he had been deposed from the office of being the heir to the Caliph, there appears 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.), who looks down on (the rank of) being the heir (to the Caliph), and does not accept it, unless his life is threatened.

The outcome of the unspoken contrast between Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) and Ma'mūn, the Abbasid caliph, was quite different from what Ma'mūn had anticipated.

Third: 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) accepted to be the heir on the condition that he would not meddle with any of the state affairs: neither in matters concerning war and peace, nor in appointing and dismissing (administrators), nor in changing the existing government affairs. Assuming the conditions acceptable for the start and hoping that later on he would be able to persuade the Imam (P.B.U.H.) step into the arena of the caliphate activities, Ma'mūn accepted all of them. It was clear that these conditions, if satisfied, would frustrate most of Ma'mūn's plans. The Imam (P.B.U.H.), although a nominal successor to the Caliph, was able to enjoy all advantages of the caliphate organization. Yet, he (P.B.U.H.) put an opposing face on—neither commanding, nor prohibiting; neither appointing nor dismissing; neither accepting a responsibility nor defending the regime, nor justifying governmental acts. It is evident that when someone so voluntarily resigns from all his responsibilities in the government,

he cannot be earnestly supporting the rule. The issue of succession having ended, Ma'mūn, who was fully aware of this flaw, deceitfully strove to get the Imam (P.B.U.H.) involved in administrative affairs, in spite of his past promise not to. He meant to make the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) non-violent campaign ineffective—a plan that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) thoughtfully neutralized each time Ma'mūn attempted it. Mu'ammr b. Khallād has quoted the eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.), who said that Ma'mūn said, "If possible, in regard to the areas in trouble, write something to those who obey you." The Imam (P.B.U.H.) refused, and reminded him of the previous conditions to the effect that he would definitely not get involved in the state affairs. Another important and interesting example is the festival prayer for the leading of which Ma'mūn invited the Imam (P.B.U.H.), giving the pretext that: "I intend for the people's heart to be assured and to know your merits." The Imam (P.B.U.H.) refused. After Ma'mūn's repeated insistence, however, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) agreed on the condition that he (P.B.U.H.) would perform it as the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) had performed it. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) derived such benefit from the occasion that Ma'mūn was filled with remorse for his insistence, and (therefore) had to have the Imam (P.B.U.H.) return while he was still along the way. This was a shock to his hypocrite appearance (he had tried to hide).

Fourth: The main advantage that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) took from this event exceeded all others in importance. By accepting to be the heir, he (P.B.U.H.) made a move unprecedented throughout the life of the Imams (P.B.U.H.): he (P.B.U.H.) made the Shi'ites' claim to Imamate public throughout the Islamic realm, removed the heavy veil from religious dissimulation, *taqīyyah*, and communicated the message of Shi'ism to all Muslims. The (office of the) caliphate, a great pulpit, was now made available to the Imam (P.B.U.H.). He (P.B.U.H.) made use of the facilities that were customarily available only to the caliphs and their imme-

diate relatives, and openly announced to all people the words that, for a hundred and fifty years, were secretly told only to those who had been singled out. The following indicate the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) great success in this respect:

- The assembly formed in the presence of Ma'mūn, and scholars in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) offered irrefutable proofs concerning the issue of the Imamate:
- "Jāmi' al-Sharāyi," in which he outlined for Faḍl b. Sahl all doctrinal and jurisprudential points.
- The well-known Imamate *Ḥadīth*, which he expressed to 'Abdul 'Azīz b. Muslim.
- Plenty of odes on the occasion of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) designation as the heir, some of which such as Di'bil al-Khuzā'īs and Abū Nuwās' have been rated as prominent, indicating the degree of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) success.

When the news that 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) was designated the heir reached Medina and, possibly, other Islamic realms, the orators openly began mentioning the merits of Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.), who had been cursed (by the enemies) for seventy years, and whose merits no one dared to speak of.

The incident filled the hearts of their lovers with hope; the ignorant and the indifferent people were attracted to them, and their sworn enemies began to feel weak and defeated.

The transmitters of Shi'ite *Ḥadīths* openly revealed in their seminars the knowledge that they had previously been unable to mention except in their private gatherings.

Fifth: Whereas Ma'mūn preferred to have the Imam (P.B.U.H.) detached from people—a separation that might finally end in spiritual separation of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from people—the

Imam (P.B.U.H.) maintained the link with people whenever he (P.B.U.H.) found a chance to. Although Ma'mūn had planned the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) route in such a manner that on his way from Medina to Merv he would not be able to pass through the towns known for their attachment to the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)—Kūfa and Qum, for instance—the Imam (P.B.U.H.) made use of every opportunity to establish a fresh contact with people whenever he could.

In Ahwāz he (P.B.U.H.) showed the signs of the Imamate; in Bašra he (P.B.U.H.) exposed himself to the previously unkind hearts; in Nayshābūr he (P.B.U.H.) left the lasting heritage—the *Ḥadīth* of Silsilat ul-Dhahab, and many other signs and miracles, too. On this long trip he (P.B.U.H.) took advantage of every opportunity to guide people. Even in Merv, the focal point of the caliphal organization, he (P.B.U.H.) split the barriers the regime had created to stop people from meeting the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Sixth: Not only were the leaders of Shi'ism not encouraged by the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to remain quiet and come to terms (with the regime), but evidence shows that the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) new condition gave them further assurance. The rebels who had to spend most of their difficult lives in mountainous areas and distant villages were, as a result of the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) support, respected by the government administrators and settled in various towns. Those who had not conformed (to the ruling system) and had harshly opposed all the caliphs and their retinue, be it the viziers or the commanders, were always chased after by the government organizations, and for years had to flee from one town to another, could now meet their beloved Imam (P.B.U.H.), as did Di'bil, who visited the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and composed the most eloquent ode, which was a claim of (the Shi'ites') prophetic movement against the Umayyads and the Abbasids' organizations. In a short time, this poem was recited

throughout the Islamic realm so that it was sung (even) by the head of robbers on his way back from the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) visit. We will again take a look at the general circumstances of the hidden battlefield Ma'mūn had prearranged and in which he had the Imam (P.B.U.H.) participate.

Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) Martyrdom

A year after the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was declared the heir (to the caliph), the situation was as follows: In the script he issued (when investing his) vicegerent, and in other addresses, Ma'mūn praised the Imam (P.B.U.H.) for his outstanding virtues, piety, and high degree of knowledge. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) was now well-known to people—to those who had merely heard his name, and to those who have been spiteful of him—as a praiseworthy personage deserving the succession, and senior to Caliph in age, knowledge, piety and family link with the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).

Although he brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) (closer) to the office, Ma'mūn did not succeed either in making his Shi'ite opponents optimistic or in stopping them from speaking ill against the caliph and the caliphate (organization). 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) was now a source of faith and confidence to people. In Medina, Mecca and other major Islamic towns no one accused the Imam (P.B.U.H.) of being greedy for this world and for (material) ranks. On the contrary, the external magnificence enhanced his spiritual glory. After decades (of silence), panegyrists began praising the merits of his oppressed and infallible ancestors. In short, Ma'mūn did not gain anything in this big gamble; he lost a lot instead, and other losses were impending.

Here, Ma'mūn, feeling that he was defeated, decided to compensate for his glaring mistake. After all the investment he had made, he felt that, to confront the irreconcilable enemies of

the caliphate organization—the Imams (P.B.U.T.) from the House of the Prophet (P.B.U.T.)—, he had to resort to what his cruel and evil-doing predecessors always had resorted to: murdering of the Imam (P.B.U.H.), which was not a simple task, considering the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) prominent rank.

Evidence shows that Ma’mūn took preparatory steps prior to murdering the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

Most probably, rumors got about in Merv that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) had regarded all people as his slaves. This could not have spread but through Ma’mūn’s agents. When Abā Ṣalt informed the Imam (P.B.U.H.) of the rumor, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) said, “O’ Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth! Thou art the witness; neither I nor my forefathers have ever said such a thing. This is one of the cruelties inflicted on us.”

The formation of assemblies of disputation—to which was invited any one of those expected to be able to overcome the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—was an example of Ma’mūn’s hopeless attempts. After the Imam (P.B.U.H.) defeated the disputants from various religions and sects and when the news of his knowledge and indisputable proofs spread everywhere, Ma’mūn decided to call all theologians to the assembly to debate with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) (hoping) that at least one of them might probably convince the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

The more the debates continued, the clearer the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) high degree of knowledge became, and the more frustrated Ma’mūn became in his plan. Reports say that a couple of times he attempted to have the Imam (P.B.U.H.) killed by his servants and agents; and once he had the Imam (P.B.U.H.) jailed in Sarakhs. But all these generated confidence about the Imam’s (P.B.U.H.) spiritual rank, and made Ma’mūn more hopeless, more at a loss and more furious. He finally decided to poison the Imam (P.B.U.H.) with his own hands, without the help of anyone

else. It was in the month of Şafar, in the year 203 after Hijra, about two years after the Imam's (P.B.U.H.) migration from Medina to Khurāsān, about a year and a few months after the charter of heirdom had been issued in the name of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) that Ma'mūn committed, with his own hand, the foul murder that will never be forgotten– the murder of the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

08/09/1984



*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.) & Establishing Freedom

Like the other Infallible Imams of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.) is a role model, a mentor, and an example for us to follow. The short life of this praiseworthy servant of Allah ended in *jihād* against blasphemy and revolt. He was appointed as the leader of the Muslim nation in adolescence, and in these short yet intensive years he fought with the enemies of Allah in such a way that at the age of twenty-five, which is a young age, his presence had become intolerable to the enemies of Allah and they martyred him with poison. Like our other Imams (P.B.U.T.), each of which added a page to the proud history of Islam, this noble Imam (P.B.U.H.) played an important part in the implementation of a comprehensive *jihād* of Islam in deed and taught us a big lesson. That big lesson is that when we are faced with hypocritical and insincere powers, we must endeavor to rouse people's awareness against powers. If the enemy unequivocally and explicitly shows his enmity, and if the enemy is not pretentious and insincere his task will be easier and it is easy to deal with him. But when an enemy like Ma'mūn 'Abbāsī, makes his face seem holy and a supporter of Islam, it is difficult for people to truly know him. Our age and in all ages of history, the powerful have always tried to use the stratagem of hypocrisy and trickery whenever they could not deal with the people face to face. But Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.), put every effort into removing this mask of fabrication and hypocrisy from Ma'mūn's face and they succeeded.

10/10/1980

This noble man is an exemplar and a paradigm of resistance. He is a noble human being who was able to confront and expose the deceitful and hypocritical power of his time - Abbasid caliphate, Ma'mūn - in that short period of his life. He never retreated one step, endured all the difficult conditions, and fought using all possible methods of combat. He was the first person to openly establish free discussion and matters related to freedom in the presence of Ma'mūn the Abbasid, with scholars, preachers, and guiders. He talked about the most accurate issues and proved his priority and rightfulness of his words. Free discussion is our Islamic heritage, free discussion was common in the time of the guided Imams and it was implemented in an orderly manner during Imam Jawād's (P.B.U.H.) time, by that noble Imam in such an orderly form.

05/15/1981

Imam Hādī and Imam 'Askarī's (P.B.U.T.) Fight With Authoritarianism

In the fight between Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) and those caliphs ruling during his time; the one who became outwardly and inwardly victorious was Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.). During the Imamate of that noble Imam (P.B.U.H.) six caliphs came one after the other and then went to Hell. The last of those caliphs was Mu'taz who martyred that noble Imam (P.B.U.H.) and he himself died shortly after. These caliphs usually died a humiliating death, one was killed by his son, another by his nephew, and the Abbasids was eradicated in the same manner, contrary to the Shi'ites.

During the time of Imam Hādī and Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.T.), and under those severe hardships, the Shi'ites were able to thrive and become stronger day by day.

Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) was forty-two years old, twenty years of which he lived in Sāmīrrā. He had a farm there and he worked

and lived in that city. Sāmīrrā, was in fact like a garrison and was built by Muṭaṣīm so as the Turkish retainers who had been brought from Turkistān, Samarqand, and from the region of Mongolia and Eastern Asia to be kept in Sāmīrrā and not to be confused with our own Turks—that is, the Turks of Azerbaijan and other places. Having been newly converted to Islam, this group did not know the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and the believers and did not know anything about Islam. For this reason they used to make trouble for the people and had some disagreement with the Arabs—the people of Baghdad. In the city of Sāmīrrā, a considerable number of Shiʿite dignitaries in the time of Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) gathered together and Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) was able to guide these recently converted Muslims and it was through these people that he was able to spread the message of the Imamate throughout the Muslim world—by way of correspondence and so on. This small number of Shiʿites was able to spread the message of Islam in Qum, Khurāsān, Rey, Medina, Yemen, and other faraway places and all regions of the world and were able to increase the number of people who believed in this school of thought day by day. Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) was able to do all these under the shining, sharpened, and blood shedding swords of the same six caliphs, and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) did all this in spite of them. There is a famous narration about the death of Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.), from whose sentences it can be understood that a considerable number of Shiʿite in the city of Sāmīrrā were brought together in such a way that even the caliphate system did not know them, because if they had come to be known, the caliph would have killed them. However, since these few had created a very strong network so the caliphate was not able to have access to them.

One day of *jihād* of these noble men—the Imams (P.B.U.T.)—had the impact of so many years. One day of their blessed lives had an effect on society like a community working for years.

These noble men preserved the religion of Islam this way; otherwise, it would have turned into a religion whose chief was a person like Mutawakkil, Mu'taz, Mu'tasim or Ma'mun and whose scholars were people like Yahya b. Aktham, even though they were scholars in the caliph's government, they were themselves infamously ranked as number one overt evil-doers and impious; must not stay; they should have been done away with during the very same days, everything would have been over. This struggle and effort of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) not only preserved Shi'ism, but also the Qur'an, Islam, and religious science. That is the nature of pure and sincere servants and friends of Allah. If Islam did not have persevering human beings who were always ready to strive, it could not have revived after one thousand and two hundred or three hundred years and the Islamic awakening could not have happened; it could have slowly been annihilated. If Islam did not have the people to institutionalize this tremendous thought in human history mindset and in the history of Islam after the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), it must have been annihilated; it would have ended and nothing of it would remain at all. Even if it would have remained, nothing of doctrinal knowledge (*ma'arif*) would have remained; like Christianity and Judaism of which nowadays almost nothing of its original *ma'arif* has remained. For the Qur'an to remain intact, for the traditions of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) to survive and all the practical laws and *ma'arif* to survive and Islamic knowledge to prove itself after a thousand years at the top of human knowledge was not a natural task. It was an unnatural task accomplished through struggle. Of course, in the way of this endeavor there were physical assault, imprisonment, and being killed, which were considered by these great men as nothing.

There is a narration about Imam Hādī's (P.B.U.H.) childhood stating that, when Mu'tasim in the year 218 A.H. brought

Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.) from Medina to Baghdad two years before his martyrdom, Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.), who was six years old at that time, stayed in Medina with his family. After Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.) was brought to Baghdad, Mu‘taṣim asked about his family, and when he heard that the eldest son of Imam Jawād–‘Alī b. Muḥammad–(P.B.U.H.) was six years old he (Mu‘taṣim) said, “He is very dangerous and we must think of how to deal with him.” Mu‘taṣim delegated someone to go from Baghdad to Medina to find someone who was an enemy of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) and put Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) in his custody to act as a teacher of Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) and teach him how to become the enemy of his own family and to bring him up according to the perspectives of caliphate. This person came from Baghdad to Medina and found one of the scholars of Medina known as al-Junaidī, who was among the toughest proponents and the most formidable enemies of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.)—in those days there was scholars like this in Medina—and said to him, “I have an assignment to make you the teacher and trainer of this child so that you do not allow anyone to associate with him and to bring him up the way we want. The name of this person—Al-Junaidī—is recorded in history. Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.)—as I said—was also six years old at that time and the command was the command of the government. Who could oppose it?”

After some time one of the members of the caliphate saw Al-Junaidī and asked him about the child who was in his custody. Al-Junaidī said, “Child? Is this a child? When I explain a problem to him about morals, he explains many chapters about morals from which I benefit. Where did these [Imams (P.B.U.T.)] study?! At times when he wants to enter the room, I would say, ‘Recite one chapter from the Holy Qur’ān then enter’—wanting to pester him. He asks me, ‘Which chapter should I recite?’ Then I say, ‘A big chapter like Āl-i ‘Imrān.’ He recites

it and explains the difficult parts of it to me. They are scholars, memorizers of the Qur'an and scholars of the interpretation and exegesis of the Qur'an; Child?!" The relationship of this child—who is apparently a child but actually a Friend of Allah,

﴿وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا﴾

[And we gave him the judgment while still a child], continued with this instructor and the instructor became one of the sincere Shi'as of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T):

”شد غلامی که آب جو آرد آب جوی آمد و غلام بُرد.“

He became a servant to bring water from the stream
The water of the stream came and took the servant.

Victory was with them in all fields and they were never defeated at any point. Di'bil, who was against all the Abbasid caliphs and had brought them to their knees, left behind recorded documents of their cruelty in history for each of them. He has a few couplets of poetry about Mu'tasim in which he said we had read in books that Abbasids included seven caliphs and now they are saying that there are eight caliphs. Where is eighth one? He is like the Companions of the Cave. Their eighth one was their dog! Then he says: "What a difference there is between you and that dog? That dog did not have any sins before Allah and you are sinful from head to toe."

04/20/2004

They brought the Imam (P.B.U.H.) from Medina to Sāmīr-rā in order to keep him under their closest supervision but they found out that it is of no use. If you take notice of the

1- The Holy Qur'an, 12 :19.

2- Gulistān-i Sa'dī, Chapter 3.

conditions of these three Imams (P.B.U.T.) in *Manāqib*¹ and other sources you will realize that during the time of these great Imams (P.B.U.T.) the Shi'ite communication network was more extensive than those of the time of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) and Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.). From around the world letters and money were sent and also commands were received (from the Imams (P.B.U.T.)) even though they were under restrictions. Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) came to be loved by the people in Sāmīrrā. All of them respected him and there was no humiliation from these people. At the time of the deaths of Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) and also Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.H.) the whole city became mournful. It was here that the rulers became aware that there is a mystery, they must uncover and resolve it. The rulers realized the notion of "sacredness". Mutawakkil drew the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to a wine drinking assembly so that the news would spread around that 'Alī b. Muḥammad was Mutawakkil's guest, the setting was arranged for wine drinking and debauchery in this assembly! You see what impact this news would have had.

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) looked at the event with the insight of a combative person and withstood this conspiracy. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) went to Mutawakkil's palace and turned this wine drinking assembly into spiritual assembly. Meaning that by telling truths and reciting condemning poems, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) defeated Mutawakkil in such a way that at the end of his talk Mutawakkil stood up, brought ghāliyah² to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and saw him off with respect. The Imam (P.B.U.H.) told him, "You imagine that death will not clutch on you as you are sitting here?" He went on to tell him of the stages of death until the point when the worms that would attack Mutawakkil. His holiness totally changed the atmosphere of that assembly and

1- *Manāqib-i Abīṭālib*. vol. 4, pp. 447 -337.

2- Fragrance, consisting of musk and amber.

left the court. In a battle whose initiator was the ill-tempered and powerful caliph and on the other side was a defenseless youth, who appeared to be weaker, initiated a psychological battle; a battle in which swords and arrows were of no use. If we were in his place we would have not been able to do this. It is the Imam (P.B.U.H.) who can analyze the situation and speak in such a way that he will not anger the caliph. It was possible, for example, that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) could have stood up and thrown all the cups containing alcoholic drinks onto the floor. This was not a good reaction and no good result would have come out of it; however, the Imam (P.B.U.H.) rather acted in a different manner, and this dimension of the matter is very important.

We must pay attention to this point in the lives of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) that these noble men were always struggling; a struggle whose spirit was political because the person in power also claimed to be religious and would observe the external aspects of religion. He sometimes accepted the views of the Imam (P.B.U.H.) about religion. For example, you have heard about the matters concerning Ma'mūn—in which he explicitly accepted the views of the Imam (P.B.U.H.). That is, sometimes, they did not refuse to accept a jurisprudential opinion, too. What caused this struggle and confrontation with the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) was that the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) considered themselves to be “Imams”. They would say, “We are Imams”. To begin with, this was the biggest struggle against the rulers, because whoever had become a ruler and considered himself to be the Imam and leader would see the proofs and evidence that were required for an Imam was present in this Imam but not in himself (i.e. the ruler) and the existence of the Imam was dangerous for the government; because they were a claimant to it. The rulers fought with this spirit of struggle and the Imams (P.B.U.T.) also stood as firmly as a moun-

tain. It is obvious that in this struggle, the knowledge, the jurisprudential rulings, the morals, and the attitudes the Imams promoted had their own status. The training of more and more students and the relationship with the Shi'ite increased day by day. These were the factors that maintained the Shi'ism. You take an ideology into consideration that has turned against that government for two hundred and fifty years. Nothing must have remained of it. It must have been completely destroyed; but you see what is happening in the world today and what achievements the Shi'ite have made.

This point can be clearly noticed in the poems that are recited about Imam Ṣādiq, Imam Hādī, and Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.T.). They were struggling and it was because of these struggles that they lost their lives. This is a way that continues toward a specified goal. Sometimes someone withdraws, someone goes on this path; but the goal is one. These noble men (P.B.U.T.) were more successful than Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) who laid the foundation, because after the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.), no one remained:

«ارْتَدَّ النَّاسُ بَعْدَ الْحُسَيْنِ إِلَّا ثَلَاثَةً.»

[No one remained in their religion except three.] But when you look at the time of Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.), all the Muslim world was under the domination (*qabḍa*)¹ of the Imam (P.B.U.H.). Even the Abbasid caliphate was stupefied. They didn't know what to do, they welcomed Shi'ite.

One of the Abbasid caliphates wrote a letter and commanded to mention the name of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) during the sermons and said that the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) have been in the right. This letter has been recorded in history. They have written that the court

1- (*qa ba ḍa*): To grip, to have In possession, with dominance.

minister hastened to the caliph and said, “What are you doing?!” He didn’t have the guts to say that the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) were not in the right but he rather said, “At this very moment some have revolted in the mountains of Ṭabaristān and other places with the slogans of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.). If this word is spread around then an army could be formed and turn against you. The caliph found out that he was telling the truth, he said, “Do not circulate the letter.” That meant that they were afraid of losing their rule. Even if they happened to believe in them, the love for rule and the world would have prevented them from becoming true believers.

09/21/2001

Expanding the Shi‘ite Organizations Throughout the World

That these noble men were alienated for a long time is really true; far from Medina and far from families and also far from their familiar environment. Besides this, there is another point about these three Imams (P.B.U.T.)—from Imam Jawād up to Imam ‘Askarī (P.B.U.T.)—and that is that as we get closer to the end of the era of Imam ‘Askarī (P.B.U.H.), this alienation increases. The extent of influence and broadness of the circle of Shi‘ites during the time of these three Imams (P.B.U.T.) may have been ten times more than that of Imam Ṣādiq and Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.T.); and this is strange. Perhaps the reason why they put them under such pressure and restriction was for this reason. After Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) moved toward Iran and Khurāsān, one of the things that happened was this very incident. Perhaps this incident had even existed in the calculation of the eighth Imam (P.B.U.H.). Before that the Shi‘ites were sporadic, everywhere but without links to one another, hopeless, without a

vision of the future and without any hope. The ruling domination of the caliphs was present everywhere, too; and its inner core was Hārūn with his Pharaonic power. When the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was heading toward Khurāsān and crossing this route, he appeared as a personality before the eyes of the people who was full of knowledge, greatness, inspiring, honesty, and radiance. People had never seen a person like him. Before that, how many of the Shi‘ites had been able to move from Khurāsān and go to Medina to see Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.)? But everywhere along this long route, people were able to see the Imam (P.B.U.H.) in person. How strange it was; it was as if they were looking at the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). It was that awe and spiritual greatness, that dignity, that morality, that faith, that brightness, and that extensive knowledge [of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) in him] that whatever you asked and whatever you wanted to know he had [the answer] with him; something that people had never seen—it raised a tumult.

The Imam (P.B.U.H.) arrived in Khurāsān and Merv. Merv was the capital, which is situated in modern Turkmenistan. A couple of years later the Imam (P.B.U.H.) was martyred and people were bereaved. Both the arrival of the Imam (P.B.U.H.)—which was a disclosure of the things that people had never seen or heard of before—and the martyrdom of that noble man—that created a heart-rending bereavement—in fact put all the places of these regions at the disposal of the Shi‘ites; not that everybody became a Shi‘ite, but all became the friends of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.). Everywhere in these places, the Shi‘ites ready to work. You see the “Ash‘arites” suddenly appeared in Qum. Why did they come? Yet, the Ash‘arites are Arabs. They set out to come Qum and began to propagate Islamic traditions and thought there and made it their base. In

the city of Rey, also, people like Kulaynī¹ appeared. Initially, someone like Kulaynī would have not emerged in a city; the city must be of a Shi'ite atmosphere. It must have had people who were believers and be able to nurture a young person with these qualities who later became a person like Kulaynī. You see Sheikh Ṣadūq (May Allah be pleased with him)² who went to Hirāt and Khurāsān and other places and compiled narrations for the Shi'ites; this is very important. What were Shi'ite narrators doing in Khurāsān? What were Shi'ite narrators doing in Samarqand? Who is in Samarqand? Sheikh 'Ayāshī Samarqandī³. 'Ayāshī Samarqandī was in the same city of Samarqand where it has been said:

«في داره التي كانت مرتعا للشيعة وأهل العلم»

[His home was the place where the Shi'ites and scholars gathered.] This is [recorded] in the statements of Sheikh Kashshī⁴. Sheikh Kashshī himself was from Samarqand. Therefore Imam Riḍā's (P.B.U.H.) movement and then, the wrongfully martyrdom of this noble figure did something that the setting fell into the hands of the Imams (P.B.U.T.), who started to make benefit from. Correspondences and visitations did not take place in a normal way. All were going on under a veil of se-

1- Abu Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, known as "Kulaynī" the author of the valuable book *Uṣūl Kāfi*, lived in the second half of the third century and the first half of the fourth century A.H. and died in the month of Sha'bān in the year 329 A.H.

2- Abu Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī b Bābiwayh Qumī known as "Sheikh Ṣadūq", is among the Shi'ite scholars and jurists of the fourth century who was born in 306 A.H. in the city of Qum, Iran. His valuable book—*Man lā Yaḥdarahu al-Faqīh*, which is the second book from among the four books of Shi'ites is also among his works. This eminent jurist died in the year 381 in the city of Rey.

3- Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd 'Ayāshī Samarqandī is among the popular Shi'ite scholars and commentators who lived in late third century and early fourth century.

4- Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Azīz known as "Sheikh Kashshī" and his title was "Abū 'Umar". He was among the luminary figures in the middle of the first half of the fourth century and was among the well-known scholars of religion and traditions and was one of the Shi'ite narrators of *Hadīth*.

crecy; however, if it was done overtly, they would have been arrested and their arms and legs cut off. For example, given the restrictions that Mutawakkil showed and his prevention of people from going to *Karbalā*, could he have allowed them to easily bring up the people's problems to the Imam (P.B.U.H.), then let them take the answers back to the people, to collect funds and bring them to the Imam (P.B.U.H.), then get a receipt and give it back to the people? These represent massive propaganda and didactic network of these three great Imams (P.B.U.T.).

After Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) until the time of the martyrdom of Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.H.) such incident as this had happened. Imam Hādī and Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.T.) were able to organize all these relations throughout the whole Muslim world in the very town of Sāmīrrā that was in reality a base—not a big town as such, it was a newly created capital which «سُرَّ مَنْ رَأَى» [lit. pleases whoever sees it, i.e. Sāmīrrā]. Dignitaries, elites, and the state officials were gathered in that town and it was filled with enough ordinary people who were seeking ways to cover their daily needs. When we look at the dimensions of the lives of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) we understand what they were doing. Therefore, they were not only answering questions about prayer and fasting or ritual cleanness or impurity. They would be put in the position of the “Imam”—with its own Islamic meaning—and speak to the people. In my opinion this dimension is considerable, together with these [the above mentioned] dimensions. You have seen that they were bringing Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) from Medina to Sāmīrrā and he was martyred—in his youthful years—at the age of forty-two; or Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.H.) who was martyred at the age of twenty-eight. These are all signs of the great movement of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) and the Shi'ites and the companions of these noble men throughout history. Although the caliphs' system, was a police system that was aggressive; yet the Imams (P.B.U.T.) made such outstanding achievements. What

I mean is, alongside alienation [living in exile], this dignity and greatness should also be noticed.

05/10/2003

At no period of time were Shi'ite relations and the organizational expansion of the Shi'ites throughout the Muslim world Islamic world like the eras of Imam Jawād, Imam Hādī, and Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.T.). The presence of Lawyers and representatives and these stories that are narrated from Imam Hādī and 'Askarī (P.B.U.T.)—as, for instance, someone brought money to the Imam (P.B.U.H.) and the Imam (P.B.U.H.) designated what should be done with it—indicates this meaning. That is, in spite of the condemnation of these two noble men [Imam Hādī and Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.T.)] in Sāmīrrā as well as—somehow—of Imam Jawād and Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.T.), the relationship with the people grew as well. This relationship also existed before Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.). However, the coming of the Imam to Khurāsān had a great impact on this matter.

08/9/2005

Throughout these two hundred and fifty years of Imamate—that is, from the day the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) passed away until the demise of Imam 'Askarī (P.B.U.H.)—our Imams (P.B.U.T.) suffered a lot; they were killed, they were oppressed and it behooves us to cry for them; their innocence has drawn hearts and emotions toward them; however, these innocent ones were able to overcome; they overcame both at certain length of time as well as collectively and over time.

08/21/2005



[Chapter Seventeen: Imam Mahdi] (May Allah hasten his advent)

*One
Two Hundred
and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



The Goal of the Two-Hundred Fifty-Year-Old Man's Movement

Shi'ism and the Belief of Mahdaviism

The principle of Mahdaviism is the consensus of all Muslims. Other religions in their own beliefs have also a messiah concept for a redeemer at the end of the world; they have understood a part of this matter; indeed, they have no acknowledgement of the main part of this issue which is recognizing the savior. Despite this fact, the Shi'ite knows the savior by the name, the signs, the characteristics and the date of birth.¹

One outstanding characteristic of our Shi'a beliefs is that this denomination has transformed this aspiration and this abstract concept into a concrete reality. In fact, when the Shi'a are waiting for the arrival of the promised savior-Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) and are not lost in their fantasies, they are searching for a reality. He is alive and lives among the people. He sees people. He can feel their sufferings. Those who are lucky enough and have the capacity sometimes meet him without recognizing him. He is alive. He lives among us with his parents. He has a name. This is what characterizes our Shi'a beliefs.

And the followers of other faiths who do not believe in this reality have never been able to provide any logical reasons to reject this belief. There are several obvious and strong reasons, also accepted by Sunni Muslims, which are a testimony to the existence of this exalted servant of Allah. All these reasons provide evidence that Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacri-

1- Delivered on September 20th, 2005.

ficed for his sake) is living among us—and we are all aware of his characteristics. This is what has been cited in many non-Shi'a sources as well.

The birth date of the pure-hearted son of Imam Ḥasan al-'Askarī (P.B.U.H.) is known to everyone. His miracles and those who are connected with him are also known to us. Allah the Almighty has granted a long life to him. These are the characteristics of the Imam of the Age (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) whom all the nations of the world, all ethnic groups, and people from all faiths and races are impatiently waiting for at all times. These are the beliefs of Shi'a Muslims about this important issue.¹

There are some points on the concept of Mahdaviism which I will outline briefly here. One point is the existence of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) which is the continuation of the prophetic missions and Divine invitations from the beginning of history until today; that means there is a connected and related sequence in the human history—as we recite in the Nudba supplication—from the “One dwelled in your Paradise”²—i.e. Adam—until “ended the matter with”³—the Seal of the Prophets (P.B.U.T.)—and then from the matter of His Holiness' succession and the holy household (P.B.U.T.) up to the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.). This means those great prophetic missions and the Divine invitation by the prophets have never been stopped at any point. Indeed, human beings have always needed a prophet, Divine invitation and Divine callers and this need has continued until today and with the passage of time, the human beings have got closer to the teachings of the prophets (P.B.U.T.).

1 - Delivered on August 18th, 2008.

۲- «فیعض اسکنته جنتک».

۳- «الی ان انتهى الامر».

Today with the advancement of thought, civilization and knowledge, the human society has understood many of the teachings of prophets (P.B.U.T.)—which tens of centuries ago, humans were not being able to understand. This matter of justice, freedom and human dignity—which are common in the world today—is the words of the prophets (P.B.U.T.). That day, the general public and public opinion could not understand these concepts. However, a succession of the prophets (P.B.U.T.) and propagation of the prophets' (P.B.U.T.) invitation institutionalized these thoughts generation after generation within the minds, the nature as well as the hearts of the people. That sequence of those Divine callers has never been stopped and the existence of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) is certainly the continuation of this sequence, as we recite in the Ziyāra of Āl-i Yāsīn, "Peace be upon you, O' the caller of and place of manifestation of His signs."¹ This means that you can find the embodiment of the same invitation of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, all the prophets (P.B.U.T.) and the Divine reformers as well as the invitation of the Seal of the Prophets (P.B.U.T.) in the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake). This honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.) is the heir to all of them, holds their invitation and flag, and calls the world to the same teachings which the prophets (P.B.U.T.) have presented to the humanity over the time. This is an important point.

The Real Concept of Waiting for the Reappearance of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.)

The next point on the concept of Mahdaviism is the waiting for the reappearance of Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake). The concept of waiting for His Holiness' return has a very broad and wide meaning. A waiting which is an ultimate relief; this means that if the human beings

١- «السلام عليك يا داعي الله و رباني آياته».

see the juggernauts and tyrants of the world have plundered, looted and abused human rights, they should not assume that this will be the fate of the world; they should not imagine that eventually there is no choice and one has to accept them as they are. Nay, they should know that this is a temporary situation—“Falsehood has a [fixed] circuit”^{1,2}—and it is what that belongs to the universe and the nature of the universe which is the establishment of the rule of justice, and he will surely come. The waiting for a relief and deliverance—at the end of the era which we are currently in and the human beings are suffering from oppression and persecution—is an example of waiting for the reappearance of Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) but this has other instances too. When we are said to wait for a relief, this does not only mean an ultimate relief rather this means that any Gordian knots can be untied. *Faraj* means this; *Faraj* means a relief. By waiting, a Muslim person learns of *Faraj* and finds that there is no huge road block in human life that one cannot drive through it; that he should not sit around and do nothing for; nay, in the ends of human life, the sun of *Faraj* will rise to face with all these cruel and oppressive movements. Thus far, this type of *Faraj* is desired and expected in all the existing road blocks of the human life. There is a lesson of hope for all humans; this is giving the factual lesson of waiting to all human beings. That is why waiting for *Faraj* is considered the best of actions; it seems that waiting is an action and not inaction. We should not assume wrongly that waiting simply means that one should sit around and wait for something to happen. Waiting is an action—it is a preparation. It is indeed strengthening of the motives in the hearts and within. It is having the sense of vitality and dynamism in all fields. This is, in fact, the interpretation of this Qur’anic verse, “And We

١- «اللباطل جولة».

2- Ghurar al-Ḥikam wa Durar al-Kalim, p. 71.

desired to show favor to those who were abased in the land, and to make them imams, and to make them the heirs,”^{1,2} or “The earth indeed belongs to, and He gives its inheritance to whomever He wishes of His servants, and the outcome will be in favor of the God-wary.”^{3,4} This means the nations and peoples should never lose hope of relief.

The day when the Iranian nation rose up, they had a hope so as to rise up. Today that hope is fulfilled; they have taken great result from that uprising and still they are hopeful for the future and are looking forward with hope and joy. This is the ray of hope that leads the young people to motivation, momentum and vitality; and keeps them away from dejection and depression; and promotes a dynamic spirit in the community. This is the result of waiting for *Faraj*.

So, we should not just wait for the final *Faraj* rather we should wait for *Faraj* in all aspects of the individual and social life. Do not let despair rule your heart, wait for *Faraj* and know that it will be achieved, providing your waiting is real and leads to action, effort, motive and momentum.⁵

Today we are waiting for a savior. This means that we are waiting for a strong and powerful savior to bring justice to the world and put an end to all the oppression and tyranny which are currently prevalent in the life of humans. We are waiting for that savior to put an end to these states of oppression and tyranny and bring justice to the life of humans. This is a permanent need for a living and conscious person. It is a need for those who have not limited themselves to their personal lives

١- «و نريد ان نمن على الذين استضعفوا في الارض ونجعلهم ائمة و نجعلهم الوارثين».

2- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-Qaṣaṣ (28):5

٣- «ان الارض لله يورثها من يشاء من عباده و العاقبة للمتقين».

4- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-A'rāf (7):128.

5- Delivered on September 20th, 2005.

only. All humans with a broad perspective on the general life of humans would naturally be waiting for that day. This is the true meaning of waiting [for the savior]. Waiting for Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) means that we should not accept or be satisfied with the current situation in our lives, and we should make efforts toward living an ideal life. And it is evident that such an ideal situation can only be created by Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake). We should prepare ourselves to fight like a soldier for such a situation.

Waiting for the arrival of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) does not mean that we should remain idle and not make any efforts to improve. Simply waiting for the arrival of the Imam of the Age (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) is not what we should do. What does waiting for the savior mean? It means waiting for the strong, powerful and Divine hand of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) to put an end to the domination of the oppressive powers with the help of humans, to bring justice to the world, to raise the flag of monotheism, and to lead humans to worshipping Allah. We should get prepared for this. The formation of the Islamic Republic prepared the ground for this great and historic movement. Everything that is done to achieve justice in the world takes us one step forward toward reaching this lofty goal. This is the meaning of waiting for Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.). Waiting means that we should move and not remain idle. Waiting does not mean that we should leave things to others and wait for something to happen. Waiting means that we should move and get prepared for the arrival of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.). We should be individually and socially prepared. Taking this great step and being able to prepare the right atmosphere for the arrival of Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) were the blessings from Allah the Almighty granted to our nation. This is the meaning of waiting for Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.).¹

1 - Delivered on August 18th, 2008.



The Features of Mahdavi Community

The “Mahdvi community” [i.e. the community which Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) is going to establish] is the same community which all the prophets (P.B.U.T.) were sent to ensure it. This means that all the prophets (P.B.U.T.) were the forerunners of that ideal human community which will be finally established by the Imam of Time—the Promised Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) in this world. Just like constructing a tall building that one levels the ground and pulls out the weeds, the other one digs and excavates it for the foundation. Then, someone else comes and lays the foundation of the building. Another man builds the walls and hitherto, one after another—the authorities and high officials come so as to construct this lofty palace, this soaring foundation, gradually over the time. From the beginning of human history, the Divine prophets (P.B.U.T.), one after another, came to take the community and humanity one step closer to that ideal society and ultimate goal. All the prophets (P.B.U.T.) were successful. Even one of the messengers of Allah (P.B.U.T.) did not fail in this way and path. It was the burden put on the shoulders of these high-ranking officials. Each of them took this burden one step closer to the destination and the end. They made every endeavor. They did whatever they could. When their lives came to an end, this burden was handed over to another one and he took this burden some steps closer to the destination. The Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.), the inheritor of all the prophets (P.B.U.T.), will definitely come and take the last step for establishing that Divine community. I want to talk about some of the attributes of such community. Of course, if you look at the Islamic books and skim through main Islamic texts, all of the attributes of such community are obtained. The attributes of such community are mentioned in the supplication of *Nudba*—which you

should recite on Fridays—God willing—and surly you recite it. As it says, “Where is the one ennobling the saints and humiliating the enemies?”¹ For example, that community is the community where the friends of Allah are dear and the enemies of Allah are humiliated and disgraced; that means the values and standards of such community are so. “Where is the one expected to restore to life the Book and its provisions?”² That community is the community where the Divine provisions are practiced; that means all the provisions that Allah and Islam have determined are observed in the community of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.). When the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) reappears, he will establish a community which will have the following features in the abstract that I will address and you—dear brothers and sisters—pay attention to the verses and recommended supplications whenever you recite them and open your mind on this matter. Indeed, only reciting *Nudba* supplication is not sufficient but learning and understanding it are also required.

The Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) will establish his community on these few bases. Firstly, [it will be established on the base of] destroying and eradicating the roots of oppression and tyranny. That means there should not be oppression and tyranny in the community which is going to be established at the time of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake)—not just in Iran or Muslim communities but in the whole world. In such community, there will not be any economic oppression or political oppression and tyranny nor cultural oppression or any wrongdoing. The exploitation, class divisions, discrimination, inequality, violence, thuggery and bullying should be eradicated from the entire

١- «أَيَّنْ مُعِزُّ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ وَ مُذِلُّ الْأَعْدَاءِ».

٢- «أَيَّنِ الْمَوْمَلُ لِإِحْتِيَاءِ الْكِتَابِ وَ حُدُودِهِ».

world. This is the first feature.

Secondly, of the features of the community which the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) will establish is to raise the level of human thought: both scientific and Islamic. That is at the time of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) you should not be able to find any signs of ignorance, illiteracy, poverty of thought and culture in the world. At such a community, people can understand religion properly and—as we know—this was one of the objectives of the prophets (P.B.U.T.) which the Commander of the Faithful (P.B.U.H.) has addressed in a sermon of the noble *Nahj al-Balāgha* as the following, “unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom”^{1,2}. It is related in our narrations that once the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) reappears, if a woman reads the Qur’an at her home, she extracts the truths of religion from the scripture and understands them fully. What does this mean? This means that the Islamic and religious culture promotes to the extent that all the human beings, all the members of society and even women who do not participate in the social context and stay at home can be like a jurist or a theologian. They can open the Qur’an and understand the truths of religion from the Qur’an. You see that in such a community where all men and women from every walk of life have the ability to understand religion and draw inferences from the Holy Qur’an. This community is extremely luminous and there is no dark side. All these disagreements and disputes over the procedure are meaningless in such community.

The third feature of the community of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake)—the Mahdvī community—is that, on that day, all the forces of the nature and

١- «وَيُتَبَرُوا لَهُمْ دَفَائِنَ الْعُقُولِ».

2- *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Sermon 1.

human resources are extracted and indeed, nothing remains in the heart of the earth that human beings cannot use it: all these indefinite forces of nature, all these lands which could feed human beings, all these unknown forces such as the forces which had not been discovered for centuries in the history such as nuclear power, electric power and electricity; centuries had passed since the creation of universe and these forces were hidden at the heart of the nature yet the man did not recognize them and gradually after a time, they were dug out and extracted. All the myriad forces of this sort situated at the heart of the nature will be extracted at the time of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake).

The other statement and feature is that the pivot point at the time of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) will be on the virtue and morality. In other words, whoever has higher moral virtues is the preferred and foremost.¹

In another narration, it is related as, "The up-riser from us will be supported by terror (in the hearts of enemies) and will be confirmed by the [Divine] assistance, the earth will fold up for him and the treasures will be exposed for him. His dominions will be in the east and the west"^{2,3}. This means that our up-riser will be helped by (filling the hearts of the enemies with) horror and so the oppressive and tyrannical governments will be unnerved by him. This is what we see today in our society in a small sample. Today, our government, our society and our Islamic system which are only a drip of the Islamic state—a drop in the bucket of that Divine majesty and king of Allah—have struck fear in the hearts of the powerful and the oppressors of the world; and the same fear is the means of our victory. To-

1- Delivered on June 27th, 1980.

٢- «الْقَائِمُ مِنَّا مَنْصُورٌ بِالرُّعْبِ، مُؤَيَّدٌ بِالنَّصْرِ، تُطْوِي لَهُ الْأَرْضُ، وَتُظْهِرُ لَهُ الْكُنُوزَ، وَيَبْلُغُ سُلْطَانَهُ الْمَشْرِقَ وَالْمَغْرِبَ...».

3- *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni'ma*, vol. 1, p. 331.

day, the tyrants of the world are afraid of the Islamic Republic, our revolution, our nation and our system. That is for this very fear that they attempt to get rid of this annoying power of their oppressive power and despite this—as you see—their attempts have led more to the victory of Islam and Muslims in the global politics. On the time of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake), such cases will become so pervasive and common that a global government will be created of. “[He] will be confirmed by the [Divine] assistance”¹ that is the Divine aid will admit him. That “the earth will fold up for him” means all the Earth will be subjected to his control and sovereignty. All the treasures will be exposed for him and his kingdom will be extended from the East to the West.

After a few more sentences, the narration adds, “Then no ruin will remain in the earth unless he will restore it.”^{2,3} This means that this power will be spent for the development of the world not for the dominance on the human interests and the weakness of the humans. There will be no ruin and destruction in the entire field of the world unless they will be rebuilt; whether they are man-made or imposed on humans due to human ignorance. Another narration from Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.) indicates that, “When the up-riser makes his advent, at that time, friendship and unity will be established to such a degree that a person will be able to put his hand in his brother-in-faith’s pocket and take whatever he needs without his brother preventing him from doing so.”^{4,5} This is a reference to the ethic of seeking equality and egalitarianism as well as the self-sacrifice and forgiveness in the human beings. It refers

١- «مُؤَيَّدٌ بِالتَّصَرُّفِ».

٢- «فلا يبقى في الأرض خراب إلا قد عمرا».

3- *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Niʿma*, vol. 1, p. 331.

٤- «إذا قام القائم جاءت المزايلة ليأتي الرجل إلى كيس أخيه فيأخذ حاجته لا يمنعه».

5- *Wasāʾil al-Shiʿa*, vol. 5, p. 121.

to the liberation of the hearts of the humans from the dominance of greed and gluttony which have been the main means of misery for the humans; it is the harbinger of such situation. A [religious] brother can put his hand in his brother-in-faith's pocket and take whatever he needs without his brother preventing him from doing so. This fact indicates that the system will be a sound Islamic economic, ethical and social one on that very day. There will be no trace of coercion and force; the human beings will save themselves from avarice and greed and such a humane paradise will be born. Another narration says, "When our up-riser rises, the appropriations [of property] will lessen until there are no appropriations."^{1,2} That is the offerings, which the arrogant powers of the world offer to their friends and companions for all time—such acts of generosity through picking the nations' pocket—will be all abolished from the world. The appropriations, which in the past were in the same way, will change. In the past, it was that like that a caliph or a sultan gave a piece of land, a desert, a village, a city or even sometimes a province to a person and told him, "Go there doing whatever you like, take taxes from the people, make use of the farms, use any of the profits for yourself." The person might have to give a share of to the sultan too. Today, this exists in form of various oil, commercial, industrial, and technical monopolies; and these large industries and cartels, which make nations miserable, are indeed the same appropriations. Today's monopolies are the same old appropriations too. That is because this is also caused by the wheeling and dealing of the governments, bribe giving and bribe taking. These political manipulations, which exterminate humans and destroy virtues, will be eliminated and the means of the exploitation and control of the humans will be available to all of them. In

١- «إذا قام قائمنا اضمحلت القطائع فلا قطائع».

2- Broujerdi, *Jāmi' Ahādīth al-Shi'a*, vol. 23, p. 1012.

another narration, it is related about the economic situation as, “Wealth will be distributed among the people in such an equitable manner that not a single person will be seen in need of alms”^{1,2}. The Imam will establish such equality between people in economic and financial affairs that you will not be able to find a poor person to whom you give your alms and these alms, for sure, will be spent for public purposes and will not be given to the poor as there will be no poor in the world on that day. Such narrations portray an Islamic paradise and a real world. Nay, it is not like the rest of the utopias imaginary and illusion. It is the same Islamic creeds and all are practical and we feel in the Islamic Republic that indeed a powerful hand, a heart and thought—which are connected to Divine revelation and approved—and an infallible person can certainly create such a situation in the world and humanity will welcome it as well. This will be the situation of the world.³

Our Duty During the Time of Imam Mahdi’s (P.B.U.H.) Occultation

Now if you refer to verses and traditions—which of course researchers and investigators have referred to, you will find more features. A society where there will be no trace of injustice, disobedience, tyranny and oppression; a society in which religious thought and scientific thinking of human beings will be at high levels; a society in which all the blessings, all bounties, all the goodness and beauties of the world will be flourished and placed at the disposal of men; and finally a society where virtue, forgiveness, sacrifice, brotherhood, kindness and honesty will be the principles and pivots. Consider such a soci-

١- «يُسَوِّي بَيْنَ النَّاسِ حَتَّى لَا تَرَى مُحْتَاجاً إِلَى الزَّكَاةِ».

2- *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 52, p. 390.

3- Delivered on April 10th, 1987.

ety; this is the same society that our Promised Mahdī (P.B.U.H.), our Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.), our so greatly longed beloved—who is living under the same sky and on the same earth amongst human beings—will create and establish. This is the belief in the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake).

We—the nation of Iran, brought about a revolution. Our revolution is a necessary introduction and big step in the way of achieving the same goal that the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) will come and reappear. If we had not taken this big step, certainly the emergence of Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent) would have been postponed. You—the people of Iran, the mother of martyrs, the bereaved fathers and those who have worked hard for this campaign—know that you have achieved the progress of humanity movement toward the destination of history and hastened the advent of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.). You are one step closer to this goal; and by this revolution, you have expatriated and eradicated this obstacle—which was the same oppressive government and system in this corner of the world and was very dangerous, insidious and annoying as cancer.

Well, now, after this, what shall we do? After this, our duty is clear. Firstly, we should know that as the emergence of Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent) have come a step closer by our revolution, we can still bring it more close with the same revolution. This means that the same people, who revolted and took one step closer to their Imam (P.B.U.H.), can move a step, one more step and one more closer to the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake). How? Firstly, if you can extend the same circle of Islam that we have in Iran—we do not exaggerate the significance; although it is not the pure Islam, this nation have successfully implemented part of it in Iran—, if you can propagate and spread the same part of Islam in other spheres of the world, in other countries, in other dark and oppressed corners of the world, you help to the emergence

of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) and bring it closer.

Secondly, getting closer to the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) does not mean approaching him either in place or time. You, who wish to get closer to the emergence of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake), should know that the emergence of Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) is not a given date that we can say it happens a hundred years or fifty years from now; and that of this fifty years, we have passed one, two or three years and still forty-six or forty-seven years remain. This is not also the matter of place that we say if we move from here, for example, to the East, West, North or South of the world, we can find where the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) is and reach him, nay. Our approach and move toward the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) are spiritual. This means that if you can increase the quality and quantity of the Muslim community at any time from now up to five years, ten years or a hundred years, Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent) will definitely emerge. If you can provide virtue, morality, religiosity, piety and spiritual closeness to Allah for yourself and others within your community—the same old revolutionary community, you strengthen the base and foundation of the emergence of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) and the much you raise the number of the devoted and pious Muslims in terms of quantity, you are going to get more close to the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) and his emergence. So, we can bring our community, time and history closer, step by step, to the time of the emergence of Imam Mahdi (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake). This is the first point.

The second point is that today we have moves and procedures in our own revolution but to where should these moves

and procedures be led? This point is very remarkable. For example, imagine a student who is willing to become a master in Math. Now, how should we provide the preliminaries for him? The direction of the teachings we provide should be mathematics. It is meaningless to teach religious jurisprudence—as an example—to the person who is willing to be a mathematician. Or we teach natural science—as an example—to the one who seeks to be a jurist; in other terms, preliminaries should be commensurate with the result and goal. The goal is the ideal Mahdvī community with the same qualities I mentioned. Therefore, we should provide appropriate preliminaries of the issue as well. We should not compromise with oppression but we must set in motion for a decisive move against it—any form of cruelty from anyone. We should maintain our direction toward the enforcement of Islamic rules. We should not let any opportunity to spread non-Islamic and anti-Islamic thoughts in our society. I do not mean that one should do such by power, force and dominance—as we all know that there is no way to wrestle with thought and reflection but with thought itself—yet I mean that the Islamic thought should be spread in a right, logical and reasonable way. All of our laws, regulations of the country, state agencies and executive bodies should not only become Islamic both in terms of appearance and content but also get closer to the Islamization. This is the direction that waiting for the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) gives to us and our movement. We recite in the supplication of *Nudba* that the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) will fight against any debauchery, tyranny, disobedience and discord and will annihilate discord, disobedience, disunity and division. Today, we should also move and go toward the same direction in our community. This is what spiritually draws us closer to the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) and which brings our community closer and closer to

the community of the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake)–the *ʿAlawite* Mahdvī community.¹

Another result and impact of portraying such world for us is that it wipes off despair of the nations' hearts. We know that our struggle is effective and bears fruit. Sometimes, those who are not familiar with this aspect of Islamic thought feel a sense of discouragement and frustration from the immense material world's relations; they feel like now if even a nation can bring about a revolution, how can they withstand the enormous powers, this advanced technology, the weapons of destruction and the atomic bomb in the world and stay firm? These people feel that they cannot resist the pressure of tyranny and oppression; however, the belief in Mahdī and the era of Islamic and Divine government established by the Prophet's (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) offspring–the Imam Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake) raise this hope in humans that nay, we will fight because fate belongs to us; that our fate is determined to arise such a situation in which the world is and will be humble and submissive to him; because the ultimate drift of history is toward what we have founded today and made a sample of–albeit an incomplete one. If this hope raises in the hearts of striving nations especially Islamic nations, it will instill a tireless will into them in such a way that nothing can be able to make them turn away from their struggle and embroil them in internal defeat and rout.

There is one point that the false propaganda has stuck in people's minds during many years that every action and reform movement is useless before the uprising of Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent). The propaganda argues the world should be filled with oppression and tyranny to the extent that Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent) emerge and he

1- Delivered on June 27th, 1980.

will not emerge before the world is not full of oppression and tyranny. The propaganda says the Imam will certainly emerge after the world is filled with oppression and tyranny. The point here is that this sentence is like this in all the narration quoted about Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent): “who will fill the earth with equity and justice as it has been filled with oppression and tyranny.”^{1,2} I have not seen and do not suppose that the sentence “after it has been full with injustice and unfairness”³ has been mentioned in the narrations. Regarding this point, I referred to different traditions in different fields, there is nowhere it is said as, “after it has been full with injustice and unfairness”⁴ rather it is mentioned like, “just as it has been full with injustice and unfairness”⁵. That means filling the world with justice and equity by Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent) will not happen immediately after that the world is full of oppression and tyranny. As the world was filled with oppression and tyranny throughout history not once, not at a time but at different times in the era of the pharaohs, in the reigns of the tyrant governments and oppressive monarchies of the world and as all the world was under oppression and lived under the dark shadow of oppression and tyranny; and as there was no light to be the symbol of justice and freedom; as the world has seen such days, there will be days when there will be nowhere in this vast world that the light of justice cannot shine. There will be not one place on earth where injustice can be able to rule over. There will be not one place on earth where humans suffer from pressure, oppression, the cruelty of the tyrant governments, the brutality of the bullies and dis-

١- «يَمَلَأُ الْأَرْضَ قِسْطًا وَعَدْلًا كَمَا مَلِئَتْ ظُلْمًا وَجَوْرًا».

2- *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 341

٣- «بَعْدَ مَا مَلِئَتْ ظُلْمًا وَجَوْرًا».

4- Ibid.

٥- «كَمَا مَلِئَتْ ظُلْمًا وَجَوْرًا».

crimination. That means this situation, which is dominant in the most of the world today and had universality one day, will certainly turn to a universal equity.¹

Today, the uprising of Imam Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent) has taken a big step toward its goal by our Islamic revolution which is in line with establishing justice in the world. Not only establishing an Islamic state does not postpone that very promised fate but also it hastens it and this is the real meaning of waiting. Waiting for the Imam of Time's (P.B.U.H.) emergence means to wait for the dominance of Qur'an and Islam. In other words, you are not satisfied with how the world is currently; even you are not satisfied with the progress which you have made with the same Islamic revolution; indeed you are seeking to get closer to the dominance of the Qur'an and Islam; this is the real meaning of waiting for the Imam of Time's (P.B.U.H.) emergence. Waiting for the Imam of Time's (P.B.U.H.) emergence stands for the development of humanity affairs.

Today, humanity affairs are trapped in difficult, complex and miserable situations. The material culture of today which is forcibly imposed on humans is a miserable situation. In our day, the discrimination which harms humans in the world is also a great miserable situation. Nowadays, the wrong mentality has led people of the world to where they let the cry for justice of a revolutionary nation loses among the intoxicated roars of the powerful and authorities; this is indeed a miserable situation. In the present day, the oppressed in Africa and Latin America as well as millions of starving people in Asia and the Far East over and above millions of colored people who are suffering from the discrimination long for a redeemer and savior and the world powers do not let this call of salvation reach them; this is a miserable situation. The advent of the Imam of

1- Delivered on April 10th, 1987.

Time (P.B.U.H.) means to remedy these situations. Broaden your vision and let's do not limit it to our domiciles and ordinary life. The humanity is seeking for a relief yet they not know how to reach it.

You, as a Muslim revolutionary nation, should get closer to the universal relief of humanity through your orderly move in the continuation of the Islamic Revolution and you should bring yourself and humanity closer, step by step, to the advent of the Promised Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) and the ultimate Islamic revolution of humanity which will extend around the world and remedy those miserable situations; this is waiting for the Imam of Time's (P.B.U.H.) emergence. In such way, the grace of Allah and the answered prayer of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) are with us and we must get more familiar with him and remembering him. Let us not forget the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.). Our country is the country of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.). Our revolution is the revolution of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) because it is the revolution of Islam. Put the Imam of Time's (P.B.U.H.) name in your hearts and remember him. Recite the supplication of "O' My Lord, we earnestly desire from You an honored state"^{1,2} with all your heart and soul. Not only your soul should be in waiting for the emergence of the Imam of Time (May Allah hasten his advent) but also your physical strength should be used in this way. Every step you take toward the stability of the Islamic Revolution brings you one step closer to the advent of Mahdī (May Allah hasten his advent).³

١- «اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَرْجُو إِلَيْكَ فِي دَوْلَةِ كَرِيمَةٍ».

2- *Al-Kāfī*, Duā-e-Iftitāh, vol. 3, p. 424.

3- Delivered on June 19th, 1981.

Improving Spiritual Interest Toward Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.)

The government, which is now in your hands, is indeed what the believers have been longing for thousand years. All of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) had moved in this line to establish the sovereignty of Allah and the Divine rule in the communities. Extraordinary efforts were made, many strivings were performed, countless tortures and torments were endured. In this way, innumerable yet fruitful and productive sentences, exiles and martyrdoms were undergone. Today, you have found this opportunity as the Children of Israel experienced such an opportunity after centuries at the time of Prophet Solomon and David. O' Muslim nation, o' the striving and triumphant nation of Iran! Appreciate what you have got and keep it up until the day, God willing, this government hands over to the Imam of Time—the Promised Mahdī's (P.B.U.H.) government.¹

This is the way you—dear Iranian nation—have chosen, followed, moved in and will keep going on, God willing, and this is the same way that fortunately we see, nowadays, Muslim nations across the Islamic world move toward gradually and slowly. Allah the Almighty has said, "...and the outcome will be in favor of the God-wary."^{2,3} Surely, if we make virtue the basis of our deeds, the future and destiny belong to the Islamic nation and is not far off, God willing.⁴

At the end, I like to mention some words on the need of maintaining an emotional, spiritual, mental relation with that honorable Imam and Divine infallible ruler (P.B.U.H.) for each one of us. Do not limit issue to an intellectual and enlight-

1- Delivered on May 8th, 1981.

٢- «وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ».

3- *The Holy Qur'an*, Al-A'rāf (7): 128.

4- Delivered on February 21st, 2011.

ened analysis. That Allah's chosen infallible person (P.B.U.H.) is living today among us in a part of the world we do not know. He is alive, he prays, he recites the Qur'an, he explains Divine stances, he bows down and prostrates, he worships, he prays, he appears in some occasions and lends people a hand. He exists, he has an objective existence; however, it is unknown to us. This chosen man of Allah (P.B.U.H.) is alive today and in addition to the social and political forms, we should strengthen our relationship with him in person, heart and soul—which our system, thanks to Allah, is and will be in the direction of that honorable Imam's (P.B.U.H.) wishes, God willing. It means that every member of our society should not only feel a duty and an obligation to seek the intercession of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) over and above to get familiar and communicate with him but also they should pray for the Imam (P.B.U.H.) as it is frequently mentioned in narrations. This supplication of "O' be, for Your representative, the *Hujjat* (proof),"¹ is one of the many authentic supplications. Besides their intellectual, insightful and informative dimensions, all these *Ziyārats* and supplications, which are mentioned in the books, enjoy mental, affective and emotional dimensions and indeed, we need them. Our children, our youth, our warriors on the battlefield raise their morale and hopes and liven up with recourse to the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) and becoming aware of him. By flowing and shedding tears of joy, they not only bring their hearts closer to the Imam but also they get the attention and gain the favor of Allah and that honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.); and this should exist.²

O' the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.)! O' the beloved promised Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) of this nation! O' the pure descendent of the prophets! O' the inheritor of all the monotheistic and worldly

١- «اللَّهُمَّ كُنْ لَوْلِيكَ الْحُجَّةَ بْنَ الْحَسَنِ صَلَوَاتِكَ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آبَائِهِ فِي هَذِهِ السَّاعَةِ وَ فِي كُلِّ سَاعَةٍ وَلِيّاً وَ حَافِظاً وَ قَائِداً وَ نَاصِراً وَ دَلِيلاً وَ عَيْناً حَتَّى تُسْكِنَهُ أَرْضَكَ طَوْعاً وَ تُمَتِّعَهُ فِيهَا طَوِيلاً».

2- Delivered on April 10th, 1987.



revolutions! Our nation has gotten used to bear in mind you and your name from the very first moment and has testified your kindness in its life and its existence. O' the righteous and worthy servant of Allah! Today we need your prayer, which is said from your pure Godly heart and blessed spirit, for the victory of this nation and revolution; and help this nation and its way with the power and authority Allah has put within you. "It is hard for me that I can see all creatures but I can neither see you."^{1, 2} O' the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.)! It is very hard for us to see the enemies of Allah in this world—in this endless nature, which belongs to the righteous and Allah's servants, and feel the presence of the enemies of Allah but not be able to see you and find the favor to be in your presence.

O' Our Lord! We ask You in the name of Muḥammad and his household (P.B.U.T.) to refresh our hearts with the name of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.).

O' Our Lord! Hasten the advent of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) on our time.

O' Our Lord! Place these troops of Allah—these people who have fought in your way among the soldiers and devotees of the Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.).³

O' Our Lord! We ask You in the name of Muḥammad and his household (P.B.U.T.) to make the sacred heart of your infallible Imam (P.B.U.H.) happy of us. Put us among those who having recourse and paying attention to that honorable Imam (P.B.U.H.).

O' Our Lord! We ask You in the name of the holiness of Muḥammad and his household (P.B.U.T.) to hasten the advent of the Imam and bring that Divine uprising forward.

O' Our Lord! Grant us the opportunity to duplicate that era

١- «عزيرُ عليّ أن أرى الخلق ولا تُرى».

2- *Bihār al-Anwār*, A part of Nudba Supplication, vol. 99, p. 108.

3- Delivered on June 27th, 1980.



and system in organizing and building this newly-founded Islamic community.

O' Our Lord! We ask You in the name of Muḥammad and his household (P.B.U.T.) to put us among his followers and Shi'ites in all circumstances and affairs.¹



1 - Delivered on April 10th 1987.

Arabic Transliteration Guide

ا	alif	a ā (long vowel)	ط	tā	t/Ṭ
ب	bā	b	ظ	zā	z
ت	tā	t	ع	‘ayn	‘
ث	thā	th	غ	ghayn	gh
ج	jīm	j	ف	Fā	f
ح	ḥā	ḥ/Ḥ	ق	Qāf	q
خ	khā	kh	ك	Kāf	k
د	dāl	D	ل	Lām	l
ذ	dhāl	dh	م	mīm	m
ر	rā	R	ن	Nūn	n
ز	zā	Z	ه	Hā	h
س	sīn	S	و	wāw	w (consonantal) ū (long vowel)
ش	shīn	sh	ي	Yā	y (consonantal) ī (long vowel)
ص	ṣād	Ṣ/ṣ	ء	hamza	,
ض	ḍād	Ḍ/Ḍ			
Short vowels	fatḥa		َ		= a
	Kasra		ِ		= i
	ḍamma		ُ		= u

Book Reading Competition

The following questions are chosen from the book context. To participate in the competition, you may choose one of the following methods:

- 1- Complete the answer sheet and email it to iro@imamrezashrine.com.
- 2- Go to www.imamrezashrine.aqr.ir and fill out the answer sheet.

1- Waiting for the savior at the end of world (era) is not only in Islam but also in other faiths. So what is the difference between Shi'a beliefs and other religion's beliefs about the savior?

a) The followers of other faiths have understood a part of this matter as well. But they have no acknowledgement in recognizing and no knowledge about the savior and the Shi'ite knows the savior by the name, identity, characteristics, and the date of birth.

b) The outstanding characteristic of savior in Shi'a beliefs has been transformed from an aspiration and an abstract concept into a concrete reality.

c) Shi'as are not lost in their fantasies, they are searching for a reality. Imam Mahdī (P.B.U.H.) is alive and lives among the people. He can feel their sufferings. Those who are lucky enough and have the capacity sometimes meet him without recognizing him.

d) All above

2- Which one of the following is not included in the definition of waiting for *Faraj*?

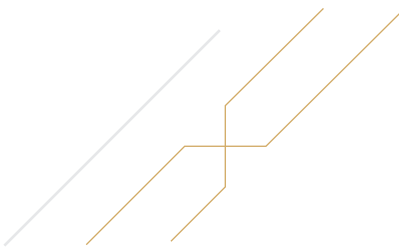
a) Waiting for the establishment of the rule of justice at the end of the era which we are currently in.

b) Not only is it necessary for human to keep away from oppression and tyranny but also they should wait for the arrival of the Imam of Age and the establishment of justice by him.

c) Despite all hardships of life, man should wait for *Faraj*.

d) Waiting is preparing for courage, daring in heart and conscience, and having a sense of vitality and dynamism in all fields.

3- Which of the following options is the meaning of the



following sentence?

“The Imam of Time (P.B.U.H.) is the inheritor of all prophets.”

a) All prophets have been the forerunners of that ideal human community which will be finally established by the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake).

b) From the beginning of human history, all Divine prophets were sent to ensure the ideal community which will be finally established by the Imam of Time (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake).

c) All the Divine prophets, one after another, came to take the community and humanity one step closer to the ideal society based on freedom and the last step for establishing the Divine community will be taken after the reappearance of Imam Mahdī (May our souls be sacrificed for his sake).

d) All above

4- What is our duty during the time of Imam Mahdī's (P.B.U.H.) occultation?

a) Just waiting for Faraj

b) Doing your best in spreading and propagating Islam around the world and providing virtue, morality, religiosity, piety and spiritual closeness to Allah for yourself and others within your community

c) Cleansing our souls from injustice and determinedly stand against injustice and do not spread anti-Islamic thoughts within our community

d) Both b & c

5- How and when was Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.) martyred?

a) He was killed in prison when he was at the age of twenty-eight.

- b) He was poisoned at the age of twenty-five.
- c) He was poisoned at the age of forty-five.
- d) He was killed in prison when he was at the age of twenty-five.

6- What did Mu'taṣim do when he heard that the eldest son of Imam Jawād (P.B.U.H.)—'Alī b. Muḥammad—was six years old?

- a) He put Imam Jawād's son (P.B.U.H.) in prison while he was only six.
- b) He called him from Medina to his court to watch him.
- c) Mu'taṣim delegated someone to go from Baghdad to Medina to find someone who was an enemy of the household of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.T.) and put Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) in his custody to act as a teacher of Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.) and teach him how to become the enemy of his own family and to bring him up according to the perspectives of caliphate.
- d) He killed Imam Hādī (P.B.U.H.), Imam Jawād's son, while he was only six.

7- Why did Ma'mūn invite Imam Riḍā (P.B.U.H.) from Medina to Khurāsān and offer him vice-gerency by force?

- a) Because he understood that Hārūn's despotic rein could not avoid revolutionary, political, military, and propagational campaigns by suppressing them and poisoning the seventh Imam (P.B.U.H.) in prison.
- b) The fifteen-year period between the seventh Imam's (P.B.U.H.) martyrdom and the day (Ma'mūn came to power)—and in particular the five-year civil war—provided the Shi'ites with a particular opportunity to prepare themselves more to raise the banner of the 'Alawite rule.
- c) Ma'mūn had the desire to remove the veil that kept the

combatants in hiding, causing the Imam (P.B.U.H.) to leave the field of revolutionary campaign and step into the arena of politics. In this way, he thought he would (be able to) reduce to nothingness the efficiency of the Shi'ite movement that had already gained momentum in hiding.

d) All above

8- Which is the main advantage that the Imam (P.B.U.H.) took from accepting vice-gerency in publishing ahl al-bayt's (P.B.U.T.) teachings?

a) The assembly formed in the presence of Ma'mūn, and scholars in which the Imam (P.B.U.H.) offered irrefutable proofs concerning the issue of the Imamate.

b) Jāmi' al-Sharāyī, in which he outlined for Faḍl b. Sahl all doctrinal and jurisprudential points

c) The well-known Imamate *Ḥadīth*, which he expressed to 'Abdul 'Azīz b. Muslim.

d) All above

9- What did Ma'mūn do when he was defeated by the irreconcilable enemies of the caliphate organization?

a) Spreading rumors and faking stories about the Imam (P.B.U.H.)

b) The formation of assemblies of disputation with the Imam (P.B.U.H.) (hoping) that at least one of them might probably convince the Imam (P.B.U.H.).

c) Deposing Imam (P.B.U.H.) from the office of being the heir to the Caliph

d) a & b

10- How were the forms of *jihād*, struggle, and resistance of the Imams (P.B.U.T.) throughout the 250-year period? How was

the form of Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far's (P.B.U.H.) *jihād*?

- a) to explain the pure Islam, the correct interpretation of the Qur'ān and presenting a clear picture of Islamic knowledge
- b) to explain the issue of Imamate and political sovereignty in an Islamic society
- c) to endeavor and attempt to establish that society and to realize the goals of the holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and all the prophets (P.B.U.T.), that is to implement equity and justice and obliterate [those taken as] the partners of Allah from the scene of government
- d) All above

11- How did Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.) struggle with the Umayyads' system?

- a) Explaining the truthful words of Islam and the main concepts of the Qur'ān that had been distorted by spiteful and corrupt people
- b) Creating an Islamic state to eradicate the Umayyads
- c) Creating an extensive and continual organization
- d) All Above

12- Who was Rabī Ḥājib?

- a) Close associate of Manšūr.
- b) He was one of the followers of the household of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.).
- c) He was one of Manšūr's managers.
- d) He was fully and sincerely devoted to Imam Šādiq (P.B.U.H.).

13- What does *taqīyyah* mean in the following sentence?

- a) Fear is like the shield which is used in the battle field and at the time of killing.

b) *Taqīyyah* is the blow of the sword on the body of the malevolent enemy; but in such a way that he could not see the sword or the hand that was holding the sword nor the sensing the raising and bringing it down.

c) *Taqīyyah* is fearing from the enemy.

d) Both a & b

14- Was Ja'fari Jurisprudence, contrary to the official jurisprudence of the jurist of the time of Imam Ṣādiq (P.B.U.H.), just a simple discrepancy of religious belief?

a) The proof of the ruling system's lack of religious awareness and its inability to manage the intellectual affairs of the people

b) Its incompetence to hold office of the Caliphate

c) The clarification of the cases of distortion in the official jurisprudence, which originates from that which is in the interest of jurists in the expression of jurisprudential laws and their circumspection and the domineering and the will of the ruling powers.

d) All above

15- What was the aim of the cultural struggle at the time of Imam Bāqir (P.B.U.H.)?

a) Stating and explaining some Islamic laws

b) Endeavoring to change the mentality of the people

c) Paving the way for a Divine rule, and close the way for tyrannical and satanic rule

d) Both b & c

16- What does *Bāqir al-'Ilm al-Awwalīn* mean?

a) He is *Bāqir* and the first one who splits knowledge open.

- b) The cleaver of the Qur'ānic truths and Islamic sciences.
- c) Indeed he explains the Qur'an to people.
- d) All above

17- What is the role of Zaynab Kubrā (P.B.U.H.) in the tragedy of Āshūrā?

- a) She disposed the so-called military defeat to decisive permanent victory.
- b) The enemy becomes humiliated and crushed in the palace of his rule and she imprints the mark of everlasting shame on the enemy's forehead and turns his victory into defeat.
- c) Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) showed that she can turn womanly veils and chastity into a combative valor, into a great *jihād*.
- d) All above.

18- What is the factor that caused the blood emerged victorious over the sword in the incident of Karbalā and on the day of Āshūrā?

- a) The martyrdom and blood of Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.)
- b) The martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) seventy two companions in the region of *Karbalā*
- c) The endurance of women and children after the incident of *Karbalā*
- d) The role that lady Zaynab (P.B.U.H.) assume.

19- Who has said this saying about Lady Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.), "She never made me angry and never disobeyed my order"?

- a) The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H. & H.H.)
- b) 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (P.B.U.H.)
- c) Both a & b

d) This saying is not about Fāṭima Zahrā (P.B.U.H.)

20- What was the main goal of Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) uprising?

a) Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) revolted to become martyred.

b) Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) revolted to establish 'Alawī's just government.

c) Imam Ḥusayn (P.B.U.H.) was ready for both of them, martyrdom and establishing 'Alawī's government.

d) Imam Ḥusayn's (P.B.U.H.) goal was to perform one of the great obligatory duties among our religious obligations.

Personal Details

First Name:

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and Fifty-Year-
Old Man*



*One
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