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6. Regarding the academic nature of this journal, using abusive or consulting language in essays or articles towards opposite thoughts or views should be highly avoided.
7. The articles will not be returned.
8. The responsibility of the accuracy of the content of articles is on authors.
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Editorial

Dear Readers,

In this issue we have gathered very different subjects from various realms, from philosophy to history, and from the holy traditions to the dramatic real stories.

Still our main article discusses the Divine granted essential knowledge of mankind, which is also called as “conscience” or “nature” of man.

It is one of the key issues in the human related sciences. Since conscience involves thoughts, emotions, perceptions, dreams, sensations, self-awareness, etc., the issue of conscience and the kind of its existence has been the subject of much research in philosophy, neuroscience, psychology, cognitive science, etc. Consciousness is also a man’s mental state which perceives a relation between “self” and “other”.

In a common definition, conscience distinguishes the quality of being awake and responsive to the environment. In next parts of this article, our respected writer has developed the phenomena soul and spirit.

Ghadir khum, which is still an inspiring and productive source of introducing true Islam, on its anniversary date, deserved a remembrance. We will have more talks about it in the future.

The recent Islamic occasions provided the opportunities that we remind of the true teachers of human communities, the holy Imam Hasan (p.b.u.h.) and Imam Riza (p.b.u.h.). We will try to show episodes of lives of those brilliant stars and lights of guidance, from time to time, on due occasions.

And in current days, we received many congratulation cards, letters, and e-mails on the birth date anniversary of Jesus Christ, the holy and blessing messenger of peace, Justice, and kindness. I would like to draw my best wishes for a health, peaceful, and prosperous year for all his lovers and true followers despite the current international unstable condition.

Amen

Hamid Farnagh

The Innate Gnosis of God

Ways of Remembering And Recalling

The Innate Gnosis

Reza Berenjkar *

***Abstract:** All people have a kind of innate knowledge of God. Upon entering the materialistic world, they forget and neglect this knowledge. The Almighty God reminds them of His innate knowledge in various ways in which the most important of them are Severance, Signs, and worship. God, by making them suffer from problems and difficulties of life, reminds this knowledge to them without people's will; God's creatures are, all, one of the means of reminding of God. Human beings by thinking in God's creations and by their intellect can prove the Creator. But it is also possible that these creations themselves remind mankind of this knowledge. Worship of God is one of the ways of getting to the higher levels of knowing God innately.*

***Keywords:** severance, signs, worship*

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Second Stage

On the basis of what was explained in the first stage “introduction” (Safinah, No.1), the human beings possess a clear and lofty gnosis about God, Exalted be He. Moreover, they have received this gnosis from His holy Essence. Once stepping into this world, man tends to neglect the innate gnosis and consigns this to oblivion, therefore God appoints the Prophets to remind him of this very innate gnosis. As such, the argument is finalized and the path of guidance and perfection is kept open before him.

Regarding the Prophet’s duties, Amir al-Mominin Ali (p.b.u.h.)¹ in sermon 1 of Nahjul Balagha says:

“Then Allah sent His Messengers and series of His Prophets towards them (mankind) to get them to fulfill the pledges of His innate disposition and to recall to them His forgotten bounties”.

The renowned historian al-Masudi has narrated in the beginning of his book “Muruj al-Zahab”, a very lofty and meaningful sermon from Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) .

In this sermon, aside from the Prophet’s virtues, it has come down that the Prophet used to awaken the people about their pledge in the world of preexistence.

Moreover, numerous verses of the Qur’an reckon the Prophets role, the heavenly books and the creative signs to be nothing but “reminders”² and just as mentioned in the lexicons, “reminding” means to recall the rational and forgotten affair.³

¹p.b.u.h. stands for peace be upon him.

²For instance, refer to The Holy Qur’an, 88:21; 20:2-3, and 25:62.

³Ibn-e-Fares, Mu’jam Maqayes al-Lugha, vol.2, p.358; Al-Jowhari, Sihah, vol. 2, p.665; Al-Fayyomi, Al-Misbah al-Munir, p. 209.

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The divine holy Essence reminds man of His gnosis through numerous and diverse ways; the most important amongst them being “severance”, “signs” and “worship”. We shall explain each of these in length in the following.

- **Severance**

Severance and disconnection from the material attachments take place in various ways. Sometimes, it is achieved without man’s authority and sometimes through man’s authority, endeavors and struggle. Depending upon degree of this achievement, the level of granted gnosis varies from person to person.

Material attachment is the most vital factor in making man neglect the innate gnosis and with its elimination, the obstacles and material curtains are cast aside from the ‘Fitrat’ (innate disposition) and the light of innate gnosis begins to glow. This radiation is the same gifted gnosis which has been explained in the Qur’an as “...we have given them” (آتيناهم).¹

One instance where one experiences severance without authority (and described in numerous places of the Qur’an and traditions) is the state of helplessness and despair which befalls one during moments of severe hardships and calamities. Under such circumstances too, God’s introducer and the real reminder is God Himself. However, whenever the Infallibles (p.b.u.t.)² came across the true seekers of guidance and gnosis, they would remind them about these very situations and manifestation of gnosis (of God) in their hearts. This was so

¹ The Holy Qur’an, 16:53-54

² p.b.u.t. stands for peace be upon them.

that the people would recollect the gnosis which they had received during such moments.

As a proof and evidence, the outcome of such type of reminding is general guidance.

General and Special Guidance

The first degree of “general guidance” is the stage wherein the gnosis of God is granted to all of the common human beings. Pursuant to this, man is unable to deny it by heart.

If man disbelieves and turns his back to the reality acquired by him in this stage, he will stray (away) from the path of perfection. Besides, he might even become deprived from recollecting this very primary gnosis.

But, if man submits himself before the Compassionate God, innate gnosis will glow in his heart to the same extent of his submission and diligence. In such a case, the gnosis of God shall intensify and glow more than before.

This intensification of gnosis, which possesses countless stages, is called “special guidance” as it does not accrue to the common mass. Rather, it is peculiar to the believers.

The believer’s endeavors and diligence for overcoming the worldly attachments, their attention towards God and His worship can be named as “voluntary severance”. The result: Intense remembrance of divine and innate gnosis leading to higher level of special guidance.

Here, the role of ethics and its importance becomes clear. Moreover, the close relation between ethics/real mysticism and the most fundamental matter of belief in the school of revelation becomes obvious. As such, ethics (not as a set of directions, but as a path which acquaints man with the real

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gnosis and the basic guidance), smoothes the way for ascension to the peak of servitude and perfection.

- **Signs**

One of the ways through which Allah, Exalted be He, introduces Himself is through His creatures and the affairs pertaining to them where in the terminology of the Qur'an, they are reminisced as signs, tokens and reminders.¹ From the viewpoint of divine gnosis, the creatures are signs of God's existence and His attributes; since contemplation and deliberation in them leads to the remembrance of innate gnosis of God.

In explanation of this discussion, it is worthy to mention the following points:

1. As mentioned before, in numerous verses of the Qur'an, God declares guidance as His exclusive act. Moreover, in the traditions too, the gnosis of God has been remembered as God's deed where none has any share in it.

By paying attention to this matter, it should be said that God has not only created the creatures, but has rather originated them as signs of His existence and attributes. Thus, the existence of the creatures and their status of being signs are both from God's side and God introduces Himself and His attributes through His creation. As such, in a few verses, God introduces Himself as the One who reveals the signs:

¹ The Holy Qur'an, 2:164, 10:6, 13:3-4, 16:11-13,16, 17:66, 20:54, 21:32, 26:8, 30:20-26,46, 31:31, 32:53, 40:13,81, 25:62, 51:49,55, 56:73, 10:3, 88:17-21, 87:1-10.

“We will soon show them Our signs in the Universe and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the truth”. (Qur'an; 41:53).

In another place, after describing the wonders of creation, He says:

“And He shows you His signs: which then of Allah’s signs will you deny?” (Qur'an;40:81)

“Do you not see that the ships run on in the sea by Allah’s favor, that He may show you of His signs? Most surely there are signs in this for every patient endurer, grateful one”. (Qur'an; 31: 31)

Basically, in the divine logic, man does not discover God by means of his own imagination and conception. Rather God manifests Himself either directly or through the ontological signs and man only perceives this manifestation and remembers God. Thereafter, he expresses this very manifestation in words and on occasions, utilizes it in debates and argumentation.

On this basis, the gnosis of God that is acquired via the spiritual journey in the horizons and the “self”, is also the gift of God¹ and not the outcome of man.

Thus, man is helpless in expressing the essence of such gnosis. He only confesses that he has perceived the Wise, the Powerful, the Compassionate and the Merciful God outside the

¹ Gnosis of God is among the clear evidences of this hadith just as the first and preferred guidance is true of gnosis of God. Another noteworthy point in this hadith is that submission is given priority over knowledge and guidance. This matter will be discussed in the third stage.

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two constrictions (ta'til and tash'bih) and without any resemblance to creatures (in essence and attributes).

2.Regarding reflection on the creatures, the most important point is that God is remembered through deliberation, meditation and reasoning.

This is the fundamental point of difference between this method and the first method of reminding i.e., “severance”.

To elaborate further, in the first method (severance), the innate gnosis incarnates in man's heart without any deliberation and sometimes, man pays attention to God and His attributes, involuntarily. But, in the second method, remembrance (of God) takes place only after reflection and deliberation in the creatures and their order.

3. Contemplation of the creatures and ontological signs is a means not only for remembering God but also a tool that can be used in debates and arguments against the opponents and obstinate people. Similarly, this method can be employed by those who face difficulties and obstacles on the path of guidance or wish to seek reasoning and rational explanation about God.

In other words, due to differences in capabilities and alertness among individuals, the genetic signs and their rationalization have diverse effects and consequences. If an addressee aspires to guidance and seeks the truth, he can remember the innate gnosis of God through deliberation and meditation on the ontological signs. Contemplation of creatures will lead him to the gnosis of God and will obviate the obstacles lying on this path. If the addressee seeks rational proofs for God's existence, he will, through inferential proof of the creatures and the order prevailing in them, confess His

existence. Besides, if he possesses rational obstacles on the way of guidance, he can overcome it by such rationalization.

However, if the addressee happens to be an obstinate person who pursues some other aims, he can be made to surrender before the truth and silenced through such argumentation. Verily, rationalization through the signs is offered as argumentation in the case of the last three individuals. In the next issue, we will talk about the place of Argumentation and Disputation in the religious theology.

• **Worship**

Here, worship is used in the general sense, which includes obedience to God and acting upon the divine laws; remembrance of God; invocation and imploring forgiveness; meditation and devotion and in general, all the phases connected to obedience to God.

In reply to the question: ‘What is worship?’ Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) said:

“Good (and correct) intention by following God through the ways that leads to obedience of God.”¹

Concerning the importance of worship, it is suffice to say that it has been propounded as the goal of creation:

“And I have not created the Jinn and the men except that they should serve Me”. (Qur’an; 51:56)

The fundamental role of worship will be known only when the meaning of worship and its various dimensions and diverse effects are clarified.

¹ Al-Kulayni , Al-Kafi, vol. 2, p.83

That which will be pointed out in this regard will be the reminding aspect of worship.

After acquiring the general guidance, man is now prepared to acquire, through the afore-mentioned ways, the special guidance and the journey to God, i.e., wider remembrance vis-a-vis the innate gnosis and wider attention to the lofty levels of gifted gnosis which was bestowed to man in the worlds of preexistence.

Now, the question is how and by what means can this remembrance and intensification of innate gnosis take effect? Can it be achieved through greater imagination about God? Or is it possible through various asceticism, seclusion and withdrawal from society?

In this regard, the divine religions have set forth remembrance (of God) through worship and emphasized that worship is the only means for gaining proximity to God and the only channel for gaining access to the lofty divine gnosis and guidance.

In the verses and traditions, worship is remembered under such names as “remembrance”¹, “the right path”², “light emitting from heart”³, “the lovers delight”⁴, “the way of the prophets”⁵, “the path of attaining God”⁶, and “confession of God’s divinity”⁷.

¹ Qur’an, 20:14, 62:9, 5:91, 87:14-15.

² Qur’an, 3:51, 43:64, 36:61.

³ Al-Amodi, Ghurur al-Hikam, Hadith No.6103.

⁴ Ibid., Hadith No. 670.

⁵ Al-Saduq, Al-Khesal, p. 621.

⁶ Al-Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar; vol.84,p.134.

⁷ Al-Saduq, Elal al-Sharaye’a; p. 114.

Amongst the consequences of worship, we come across such names as “guidance”¹, “faith and the light of gnosis”², “abundance in religion and remembrance of God”³, “fear of God and feeling of needlessness”⁴, “salvation”⁵, “seeking nearness to God”⁶, and “satisfaction of God”⁷. And the devotees on the path of devotion and remembrance are called by such titles as “the people of God”⁸ and “God’s companions”⁹.

In this manner, worship is the path illuminating the heart and a means for deriving the divine gnosis of God and His remembrance. In general, it is the way of acquiring the special guidance and recognizing God at the highest level.

Similarly, “*Salat*” (prayers) and other divine worships are the only way for gaining proximity to God. Compare this matter with this view: “With the discovery of the self and opposition with the apparent state of religious laws, the divine duty ceases because, there is no duty for the enchanted ones.”¹⁰ The difference between these two reveals the difference

¹ Qur’an, 24:54, Al-Saduq, Al-Khesal; p. 621.

² Al-Saduq, Ibid., p. 621.

³ Al-Saduq, Elal al-Sharaye’a, p. 114.

⁴ Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi, Vol.2, p.83.

⁵ Qur’an, 87:14-15, 62:10.

⁶ Dua-Kumail

⁷ Al-Saduq, Al-Khesal; p. 621.

⁸ Al-Amodi, Ghurul al-Hikam: Hadith No.1467.

⁹ Ibid, Hadith No. 322.

¹⁰ Al-Qaisari, “*Rasa’el Qaisari: risalah al-Tawhid wa’l nabuwah wa’l wilayah*”, Chapter 2; section 1; p. 24. While summing up the matter of the mystics, Lahiji, a researcher says: “ If the absolute enchanted one is spiritually intoxicated and dying to self then, there remains no divine duty for him. If he belongs to the group of perfect ones (who were referred to as the third kind) then, although his obligation to guide others and the divine commandments and prohibitions does not cease, nevertheless, he need not observe (the rules) for perfection of the self as he has reached the extreme level of perfection.”

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between the divine way and the human way of gaining proximity to God.

From the above discussion, the role of religious laws and commandments, as a means of special guidance and intensification of innate gnosis, becomes clear. It also reveals that religion without the divine laws and commandments is imperfect. By pursuing this discussion and explaining its diverse aspects, one can unfold the firm connection between gnostic dimension of religion; and practical dimension of religion and in the final analysis, come to this conclusion that the teachings of the Prophets and divine Imams is a collection, inter-related and inter-connected to each other where, separation between their elements and disbelief in some of them would take one to a deviated path.

The Feasts: Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha

Muhammad R. Hakimi*

***Abstract:** Muslims of the Islamic countries of the world hold some feasts with special customs and religious rituals of which are: Eid al-Fitr held on the first day of Shawal month, Eid Al- Adha on the tenth of Dhu al- Hijjah month. This article refers to some orders of these feasts especially Eid al-Fitr of which Zakat al-Fitr, Fitr prayer and Ziarat of Imam Husain (p.b.u.h.) are included.*

The roots and branches of religion are explained in the article as well. The author says that different worship and branches of religion are considered from two aspects: The aspect of mere worshipping God and the communal aspect which refers to the individual and social aspect of the worship.

***Keywords:** Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha (Qurban), roots of religion, branches of religion*

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** Translator: Behzad Ale Momen

Eid Al-Fitr

The first day of Shawal month is called *Eid al-Fitr*. The term Fitr means breaking the fast. *Eid al-Fitr* is the Muslims' feast (*Eid*) which is held after Ramadan month. Throughout the Islamic countries and among the Muslims from other countries of the world, this Feast is held with special custom and religious rituals of that Region. In Islam religion, the religious orders and commandments like fasting have been taught gradually not all at once. At about 17 months after the prophet Muhammad's Hijra, (Muhammad and his followers' emigration from Mecca to Medina) this kind of worship became a duty for Muslims. It means Shawal month of the second year of Hijra and about 15 years after the prophet *Be'sat* (mission). Fasting in Ramadan month became a duty by the verse 183 from *Sura 2* (al-Baqara). Fasting becomes a duty from the first day of Ramadan month (the ninth month of the lunar year) till the end of this month, of course for those who are at the legal age (Taklif age) and are able to do that. The first day after the month that you go on a fast, that is the first day of Shawal month (the tenth month of the lunar year) is called Eid al-Fitr. Fitr is an Islamic great feast. There are some orders, like Fitr prayer, for this day. Saying this prayer is a duty over the period of Imam Mahdi, and it is recommended while he is absent. This prayer can be said congregationally. If it is so the just Imam will preach two sermons. He reminds people about their duties and *Zakat al-Fitr* related affairs. On Eid al-Fitr, except doing good deeds, visiting intellectuals, the righteous and relatives, the other important thing is paying *Zakat al-Fitr* which is some sort of tax. The amount of *Zakat al-Fitr* is roughly 3 Kilos of the mostly used food, (It means

the food that is mostly eaten by that person) or the equivalent of its price. Regarding Muslims all over the world it could be a considerable amount. Of course, in a religious social system these funds can be consumed collectively than individually. It can be used for ending destitution and establishment of scientific, cultural and medical institutions. It can also be used for building hospitals, kindergartens, universities, and laboratories. These funds are also used for investing in doing scientific and medical findings and strengthening the Islamic borders, spreading Islam religion throughout the world by available means and dozens of important social and humane affairs.

In Payment of *Zakat al-Fitr*, one is recommended to give priority to his poor relatives. Then the priority shall be given to the poor students. *Zakat al-Fitr* shall not be given to a person who will use it performing sins. Understanding Islamic teachings one shall keep in mind that Islamic commandments do not merely involve other worldly and ethical aspects, but any commandment has been combined with its worldly and social aspects. Consequently, it causes a connection between these commandments and people's daily life, social conducts, and human relationships. As an example, consider saying prayer! Islam has regarded saying prayer as the *Miraj*¹ of the

¹ The meaning of *Miraj*: A ladder, a means for going up, a means for ascending to heaven and getting to the world above and approaching God. "Prayer is the *Miraj* of a believer" it means that the believer will spiritually approach God and he will be with God. His soul will be with God and the soul is talking to God while he is saying his prayer. For saying prayer to be *Miraj*, it must be said with "special attention" it means that one must say his prayer with attention to God. In addition, he must forget the world and worldly affairs. Having special attention while saying prayer, one must try and practice it. According to theologians one of the ways by which a person can have special attention while saying prayer is paying attention to the meaning of the words and sentences of the prayer.

believers, the pillar of religion and a meaningful and full of secret worship with giving consideration to God. In spite of all this, you see that Islam has involved this worship in the community to a great extent and has made it the cause of one of the most firm human relationships. Islam religion emphasizes the necessity of saying prayer congregationally and there is a prayer for great and social days like Eid al-Fitr. Another example: at the night and day of Eid al-Fitr, one of the acts that are recommended to be done is *Ziarat* of Imam Husain. It is emphasized and recommended for everyone at any place. One of the important things in this *Ziarat* is paying attention to the bloody earth of the martyred and its words and contests, the words that all indicate the philosophy of *Ashura*. Generally they indicate the philosophy of being active and rising up against the oppression and the corrupt government at any time and any place. So you can notice that in Islam, prayer, *Eid* (feast), epic, *Ziarat* of martyred and worshiping has been combined together. In short, Islam has combined all factors necessary for making a humane community.

These factors can be found in Islamic commandments. That's why in Islam there is always a relation between the individual and the community and visa versa, and in general between all human beings and God.

Eid Al-Adha

There are two great *Eids* (feasts) in *Dhu al-Hijjah* Month (the last month of the lunar year): they are "*Eid al-Adha*" on the tenth day and "*Eid al-Ghadir*" on the eighteenth. *Dhu al-Hijjah* month means the month of Hajj. Those Muslims who are able-bodied and can afford to do it must journey to Mecca

from all over the world on this month and join processions of people. For circumambulating *Kaaba*, (walking seven times counter clockwise around the *Kaaba*) pilgrims shall perform what is known as “Hajj Rituals”¹. In Islam religion basic religious beliefs are called “roots” of religion, and those acts of worship that are considered as duty are called “branches” of religion. The roots of religion are those affairs which Muslims must believe in, and the effect of this belief must be perceivable from their conduct and deeds. The roots of religion are as follow:

1. *Tawhid* (Oneness or Monotheism): Believing that this vast universe is under the control of a power with perception and determination, and that, this power is unique. He is the unique and always present and watcher God.

2. *Adalah*² (Justice): Believing in the justice of God and that nothing unjust or imprudence can occur on behalf of him.

3. *Nabuwwah* (Prophethood): Believing that God has appointed and sent on the mission so many of his best slaves as prophets for guiding mankind and also believing that our prophet Muhammad is the last prophet, it means that there would be no prophet after him and his religion, Islam has

¹ *Rituals* which is the pl. form of *Ritual* means worship in Hajj, like sacrificing an animal.

² Since the compassionate and almighty God do not need to oppress anyone, you shall notice that when it is said: “God is just” it means that there is no oppression with divine destiny. It does not mean that people have not suffered oppression at all. There have been oppression worldwide but it is done all by people to each other, so both the oppressor and the oppressed are responsible for that, especially about the oppression in the community. And undoubtedly the oppressed is going to be revenged. Nothing will be lost in this world, hence the effect of people's deeds will be considered and there would be a reward or punishment after them.

nullified other religions and it would justly be the best religion till the resurrection.

4. *Imamate* (Leadership): Believing that *Ali ibn Abi Talib* and, then after him, other eleven Imams are justly Muslims' leaders succeeding Prophet Muhammad. During the period which Imam (the twelfth Imam) is absent, all the religious duties must be fulfilled unchangingly whether they are individual or social and the Shias must follow a *Fiqh*-based school, that is based on the commandments and teachings of Qur'an and the exegeses by Imams who are the successor to prophet Muhammad. In other words, people must follow the successor to Imam over the period which Imam is absent. It is necessary for people to follow him both in individual and social acts.

5. *Ma'ad* (the Day of Judgment): Believing that all mankind will return to God, and there they will be with God and according to their deeds they will be punished or rewarded. Believing in the Day of Judgment (*Ma'ad*) is of great importance in the religious teachings. Maybe so many people of different religions, beliefs, and training believe in an origin for the universe; but the prerequisite for having faith in God and being pious believes in the Day of Judgment and that all mankind would return to God and would be with God.

The subordinate Islamic teachings are as follows:

1. *Salat* (prayer)
2. *Sawm* (fasting)
3. *Khums* (religious tax, 20% of surplus income)
4. *Zakat* (alms)
5. Hajj (pilgrimage)
6. Jihad (Holy war)

7. Encouraging people to perform good deeds
8. Discouraging people from performing sin
9. To love *Ahl al-Bayt*
10. To disassociate oneself from the enemies of the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

In Islam different worship and branches of religion are considered from two aspects. The aspect of mere worshipping that must be performed for the purpose of worshipping God; obeying the commandments of God and seeking the pleasure of God. To please God and the communal aspect of it which refers to individual and social aspects of the worship. Of course, in Islam both individual and social aspects of the acts must be performed for seeking the pleasure of God.

According to Islam everything belongs to God, whether it is one or more, visible or invisible. Hajj is one of the branches of religion and Islamic prays. In Hajj, in addition to worshipping affairs, purity and self teaching, social and political affairs in an international dimension must be considered. Hajj is a multidimensional and meaningful worship. Hajj is performed along with making a pilgrimage to *Kaaba*. Hajj has special rituals and shall be performed at a special time (*Dhu al-Hijjah* month) and a special place (Mecca). It is a duty for all adult and wise Muslims to make at least once in their lifetime if they are able bodied and they can afford to do so whether they are male or female. Hajj Rituals last for five days, from the 8th of *Dhu al- Hijjah* to the 12th. The tenth of *Dhu al- Hijjah* month is called *Eid al-Adha*. On this day, those who have made pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajjis*) and have performed some parts of their Hajj Rituals, leave *Kaaba* for “*Mena*”. Performing some rituals, pilgrims sacrifice animals.

This day is called *Eid al-Qurban* or *Eid al-Adha* (means sacrificing). *Eid al-Adha* is one of the great religious and social feasts of Muslims. Performing Hajj and making a pilgrimage to *Kaaba* is spiritually and individually an important worship. Many books have been written on this. Making a pilgrimage to *Kaaba* – (the House of God)-, this great place of worshipping God- the *Qiblah* of Muslims-one must be sincere. There pilgrims shall worship God with humility. They all walk with a plain garment. There, no rank, position, authority, nor other differences are concerned. Hajj is the man movement toward God, with his heart, his body, and his soul... . But the social aspect of Hajj is that many groups of Muslims from different parts of the world go on a journey to Mecca and gather there. They worship God with pure heart and good faith while they are wearing similar garments. In this religious ceremony, the great Islamic congregation is formed. Delivering speeches, distributing papers, etc.

The representatives of Muslims can notify other Muslims about their problems, their domestic problems and those problems that have external roots. They can ask for help and consult each other. They can also ask other's point of view and make a vow ...

In Hajj all Muslims can be warned about the dangers that threaten Islam and Muslims. So they can be mobilized for struggling and rising up against the oppression and aggression to save the poor nations. These are parts of religious, social and political duties of Muslims. These acts like other rituals of Hajj must be performed for seeking the pleasure of God. When these acts are performed for seeking the pleasure of God and fulfilling the duty, they are considered as worship.

100 Words From Holy Prophet* (p.b.u.h)

- *The son of Adam gets old, but two attributes become younger in him: avarice and ambition.*
- *Two groups of people will lead people to righteousness or wickedness, should they turn out to be righteous or wicked themselves: religion leaders and rulers.*
- *You are the shepherds and responsible for guarding each other.*
- *It is impossible to satisfy all by money and means, but possible with good-temper.*
- *Being poor is a disaster: worse than it, is suffering from body-illness; and the worst is the sickness of heart.*
- *The faithful man is always looking for Al-Hikma (Wisdom).*
- *It is not possible to block scattering of science.*
- *The heart of mankind is like feather, suspending from a branch of a tree in a desert, it is always in change by winds and turns up and down.*
- *The Muslim is the one whom others are in relief and satisfaction of his hands and tongue.*

* Compiler: Morteza Motahhari

- *The director to the good deeds is actually the doer of it. Each broken heart deserves a gift at last.*
- *The heaven is laid under the foot of mothers.*
- *In your behavior with women consider God; and do not obviate things they deserve, from them.*
- *Our God is the One, and the father of all us is the Adam. You are all the children of Adam and Adam is made from soil. The dearest of you before God is the most pious of you.*
- *Do avoid of obstinacy which its motive is ignorance and its fruit is regret.*
- *The worst of people is the one who does not forgive other's fault, and does not ignore other's mistakes and the worse than that is the one whom people have no hope in his goodness (k̄hair) and are not secure from his evils.*
- *Do not get angry, and if you become angry, think in God's power and majesty for some moments.*
- *If you are praised, say: God! Do make me better than what they think and forgive the things they do not know about me and do not make me responsible of the things they say.*
- *Throw soil at the face of flatterers.*
- *If God aims at His servant's goodness, He will set his heart as his leader and preacher.*
- *No morning and no night will be passed for a faithful, unless he is suspicious of his deeds of committing some evils.*
- *Your worst enemy is your carnal soul, which is in your chest.*

- *The bravest man is the one who overcomes his carnal desire.*
- *Fight with your carnal desire to become the master of your being.*
- *Good for those whom attention to their evils and weaknesses obviates them from focusing on others' evils and weaknesses.*
- *Truth will give peace and tranquility to the heart, and from lie doubt and regret will be born.*
- *The faithful will befriend with others easily and will be friend of others.*
- *The faithfuls will fortify each other like the parts of a building.*
- *The love and care of faithfuls to each other is like the body members. If a part of that body suffers, all other parts will have fever and insomnia as well.*
- *The people all are equal like the teeth of a comb.*
- *Being in the search of knowledge is incumbent upon each Muslim.*
- *There is no worst poverty like ignorance and no wealth better than wisdom and no worship higher than thought.*
- *Seek knowledge from cradle to grave.*
- *Look for knowledge even if it will be in China.*
- *The nobility of a faithful is in his night-staying-up, and his dignity is in being needless towards others.*
- *The scientists are thirsty of learning.*
- *Falling in love will be made blind and deaf.*
- *God's hand is with people while gathering.*

- *The piousness will put soul and body in relief.*
- *Who ever lives 40 days for God, the spring of wisdom will flood from his heart to his tongue.*
- *To spend time with family is nicer before God than to be secluded in the mosque.*
- *Your best friend is the one whom shows you your fault.*
- *Fetter knowledge by writing it down.*
- *Your faith never be true till your heart be sound and your tongue can not be sound till your heart be true.*
- *Do not accept other's belief in Islam unless try his mind and wisdom.*
- *The only way to get to goodness is via logic. The one who has no mind and logic is empty of faith.*
- *The harm of negligent people to religion is more than the harm of wicked people.*
- *Each and every wise men of my Umma (nation) should observe 4 things: listening to knowledge, learning it and spreading it, and acting according to it.*
- *The faithful man will never be bitten by the same hole twice.*
- *I am afraid of my nation's thoughtlessness not poverty.*
- *God is beauty and likes beauty.*
- *God loves the faithful man who knows and has a job.*
- *Flattery is not the manner of faithful.*
- *Power is not related to the power of body; the powerful man is the one who can overcome his anger.*
- *The best people are the most helpful of them to the others.*

- *The best house of yours is the one in which an orphan lives with respect.*
- *How good is the wealth in the hand of a good man.*
- *The deeds' string is broken by death with 3 exceptions: the good deeds (khairat) which are continued, the science and knowledge which is beneficial to others, and the good child who sends his good prayers to the parent(s).*
- *Those who worship God are of three groups: the one who worships Him out of his fear and this is the worship of slaves; the second one is the one who worships God out of his greed for reward and it is the worship of hired workers, and the third group are those who worship Him because of His love and this is the worship of free people.*
- *Three things are the signs of faith: helping others even though you need that thing more, neglecting your right in favor of others', and teaching science and knowledge to the ones who look for it.*
- *Show your friendship to your friend to strengthen your treads of love and kindness.*
- *Three things are pests of religion: religious scholars whose deeds are wrong, the cruel leader, and the naïve religious man.*
- *Know people from their friend, as human being chose the one compatible to his temper and manner as his friend.*
- *The hidden sin will harm the sinner only; the open sin to society.*
- *Do your best to build the world, but regarding the other world do as if you will die tomorrow.*

- *Search for daily bread in the depth of the earth.*
- *Oh, how many those are who decrease their value by egotism and who increase their value by being humble.*
- *Oh, God! Endowed me with your greatest and abundant daily bread in my elderly and last days of my life.*
- *From the rights of a child on his father are to be named by good name, to be thought writing, and when getting to puberty a spouse should be chosen for him.*
- *The owner of power will use it in favor of himself.*
- *The heaviest thing put in the deeds scale is good-temper.*
- *Three issues deserve wise man's attention: advancing life, the deeds for Hereafter, the lawful (Halal) luxury.*
- *How good for one who donates the extra of means to others, and keep the extra of words and speech for himself.*
- *Death makes us needless of any advisor.*
- *All these greediness for governing and all these sorrows and regret in other world!*
- *The worst of men is the rotten religious scholar.*
- *Wherever the sinful people be the leader and the naïve people be respected, a disaster should be awaited for.*
- *God's curse one who put his burden on others.*
- *The beauty of men is in his words.*
- *Worship is in 70 kinds, among them looking for Halal food is the highest.*
- *The sign of God's satisfaction of people is the cheapest prices and justice of their governments.*
- *Each society deserves the governorship it has.*

- *There is no benefit in cursing people but the people's hatred.*
- *I order you to assist any oppressed person, whether he is a Muslim or not.*
- *The work which is done without thought and foresight has the high chance of harm and regret.*
- *The one who does not enjoy the blessing of compatibility with people is bereft of all blessings.*
- *Do not ask others for anything even if it is a piece of a straw (used as tooth brush).*
- *God does not like to see one of His servants enjoys special place and credit among others.*
- *The faithful is good-tempered and humorous, and the hypocrite (Munafiq) is cross and quick-tempered.*
- *If you make ominous guess, keep on doing your job, and if you are suspicious of happening something bad, do forget it and if you become jealous, be patient.*
- *Keep each other's hands tightly for it will render hatred from your hearts.*
- *Whoever pass the night and do not think of helping other Muslims is not a Muslim.*
- *Good-temper will render hatred from hearts.*
- *Lest the fear of people keeps you of telling the truth.*
- *The wisest man is the one who gets along with other people.*
- *Live in the same level of luxury with each other to keep your hearts in the same level. Keep in touch with each other to become kind to each other.*

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- *At time of death, people will ask what did he leave from his prosperity? The angels will ask what did he send good-deeds forward?*
- *The most disgusting of Halals (allowed acts) before God is divorce.*
- *The best deeds are to ameliorate the relations of people.*
- *Oh, God! Empower me with knowledge, and adorn me with being patient and honor me with being pious and beautify me with healthy body.*

The Event of The Divine Appointment (Be'sat)

(Part Two)

Nader Fazli

The following article is the second part of the event of the divine appointment presented in last Safinah (No.3). All parts of this article are exact excerpts of Nahjul Balagha.

The Chosen of God

Allah chose him from the lineal tree of prophets, from the flame of light, from the forehead of greatness, from the best part of the valley of al-Bat'ha, from the lamps for darkness, and from the sources of wisdom.

...Until this distinction of Allah, the Glorified, reached Muhammad (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants); Allah brought him out from the most distinguished sources of origin and the most honorable places of planting, namely from the same (lineal) tree from which He brought forth other Prophets, and from which He selected His trustees. Muhammad's descendants are the best descendants; his kinsmen the best of kin and his lineal tree the best of trees. It grew in esteem and rose in distinction. It has tall branches and unapproachable fruits.

The Witness of Be'sat

Allah had put a mighty angel with him to take him along the path of high character and good behavior through day and night, while I used to follow him like a young camel following the footprints of its mother. Everyday he would show me, in the form of a banner, some of his high traits and commanded me to follow it. Every year he used to go in seclusion to the hill of Hira, where I saw him but no one else saw him. In those days Islam did not exist in any house except that of the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants) and Khadijah, while I was the third after these two. I used to see and watch the effulgence of divine revelation and message, and breathed the scent of Prophethood.

When the revelation descended on the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants) I heard the moan of Satan. I said, "O' Prophet of Allah, what is this moan?" and he replied, "This is Satan who has lost all hope of being worshipped. O' Ali, you see all that I see and you hear all that I hear, except that you are not a Prophet, but you are a vicegerent and you are surely on (the path of) virtue."

Doubt and Deny

I was with him when a party of Quraysh came to him and said to him, "O' Muhammad, you have made a big claim which none of your fore-fathers or those of your family have made. We ask you one thing; if you give us an answer to it and show it to us, we will believe that you are a prophet and a messenger, but if you cannot do it, we will know that you are a sorcerer and a liar."

The Messenger of Allah said: “What do you ask for?” They said: “Ask this tree to move for us, even with its roots, and stop before you.” The Prophet said, “Verily, Allah has power over everything. If Allah does it for you, will you then believe and stand witness to the truth?” They said “Yes”. Then he said, “I shall show you whatever you want, but I know that you won't bend towards virtue, and there are among you those who will be thrown into the pit, and those who will form parties (against me).”

The Sign of Prophethood

Then the holy Prophet said: “O' tree, if you do believe in Allah and the Day of Judgment, and know that I am the Prophet of Allah, come up with your roots and stand before me with the permission of Allah”. By Him who deputed the Prophet with truth, the tree did remove itself with its root and came with a great humming sound and a flapping like the flapping of the wings of birds, till it stopped before the Messenger of Allah while some of its twigs came down onto my shoulders, and I was on the right side of the Holy Prophet.

When the people saw this they said by way of pride and vanity. “Now you order half of it to come to you and the other half of it remains (in its place).” The holy Prophet ordered the tree to do the same. Then half of the tree advanced towards him in an amazing manner and with greater humming. It was about to touch the Prophet of Allah. Then they said, disbelieving and revolting, “Ask this half to get back to its other half and turn as it was.” The holy Prophet ordered it and it returned.

The Sign of Faith

Then I said, “O’ Prophet of Allah, I am the first to believe in you and to acknowledge that the tree did what it did just now with the command of Allah, the Sublime, in testimony to your Prophethood and to heighten your word. Upon this all the people shouted, “Rather a sorcerer, a liar; it is wonderful sorcery, he is very adept in it. Only a man like this (pointing to me) can stand testimony to you in your affairs.”

Certainly, I belong to the group of people who care not for the reproach of anybody in matters concerning Allah. Their countenance is the countenance of the truthful, and their speech is the speech of the virtuous. They are wakeful during the nights (in devotion to Allah), and over beacons (of guidance) in the day. They hold fast to the rope of the Qur'an. Revive the traditions of Allah and of His Prophet. They do not boast, nor indulge in self-conceit, nor misappropriate, nor create mischief. Their hearts are in Paradise while their bodies are busy in (good) acts.

The Midday Traveler

Soror Kotobi

In this part of magazine by recouring to literature, the best attempt is made to provide you with a small picture of the life of Imam Hasan (p.b.u.h.) under the title of "The Mid-Day Traveler".

The earth was hot and fire was pouring from the sky. He crickets were chirping in the thorny shrubs. Three men came down from a hill and a cloud of dust rose in the air. The first man stood at the bottom of the hill. He loosened the cover on his face and with great tiredness said, "We have been searching this desert for hours, but we haven't found a single drop of water."

The second man sadly looked around himself. Tired and sweaty, he filled his hand with dust, let them in the air, and quietly said, "The earth is dry, and I can't smell any water. Perhaps we are destined to die of thirst in this desert."

The third man crossed the hill and the two other men followed him. The hot earth was covered with soft sand and their legs sank in it up to their knees. Exhausted and thirsty, the three men searched around themselves but the hot desert lay ahead of them in every direction. Suddenly one of them shadowed his face with a hand, pointed in a direction, and cried, "Look!"

On the other side of the hill were a few palm trees. The palm trees had bent their long leaves towards a small pond. A sheep was lying in their shade. A distance further, a little hut

was seen. An old woman was sitting next to the hut, weaving. The three men ran towards her in a hurry. Seeing them, the woman got on her legs terrified and swung her walking stick in the air.

One of the men said, “We don't mean you any harm, we are travelers who have suffered from hunger and thirst in the desert.”

The woman looked at them with doubt and said, “Who are you?”

“We are pilgrims of Kaaba. We will be grateful if you give us some water,” said the man.

“Are you traveling to Mecca on feet?”

The man dropped his head and said, “I am ashamed of my God not to walk on feet. We have a pledge with our God to travel the way to his house on feet.”

The woman brought down her stick and said, “The door of my house is always open to the pilgrims of Mecca, go in the hut and rest.”

The three men went into the hut. The woman milked the cow. Moments later she entered with a bowl full of milk and said, “drinking water in this hot desert will weaken the eye sight. I have brought some milk to remove the thirst and tiredness from your bodies.”

They drank the milk with fervor. “I live with my husband in this hut. He always goes out to the desert in the morning and returns at dusk. I know that you are hungry, but I don't have anything in the house...,” continued the woman.

The woman became silent and stared at the sheep lying in the shade. The wind blew softly and moved the palm's long

leaves. The woman thought with herself, "If I kill the sheep, I can provide these tired travelers some food."

The woman walked slowly towards the sheep. One of the men got up, went towards the pond, and performed ablution. The woman looked at him. His body was trembling and looked pale. "Is this shaking of your body from hunger and thirst?" the woman asked.

"No," answered the man. "I want to stand to prayer before the God of the world. This trembling is out of fear of Him."

There was something familiar in the man's face. "Where have I seen him?" the woman thought with herself.

The man was fair and his hair was twisted and thick. His eyes were as black as the nights of the desert. With seeing him, the old woman remembered one of her childhood memories. A day when her mother had climbed one of the palm trees and picked the white unripe date sprouts to drop them down for her. That day, the palm grove had a strange scent. It was as if the air was filled with the scent of all the green groves of the world. At that moment, his father had suddenly come running to the palm tree and cried, "I have wonderful news. A man called "Muhammad" has invited everyone to worship of the One God. He rejects the worshipping of idols and criticizes the people for buying of girls. He is the messenger of God and he has brought the message of good fortune from the sky..."

The old woman took a deep breath. He looked at the man again and thought, "Who is this man? Why does he remind me of that day?"

The man lifted his head and said, "Mother, what are you thinking about?"

The woman came to herself and answered, "I... I want one you men to kill the sheep so I could make food for you."

“No, mother,” the man replied, “if your husband returns home and asks about the sheep what will you answer him?”

The woman held her head up and said, “My husband will never leave anyone hungry in the desert.”

Then, she asked one of them to kill the sheep. She quickly prepared a meal. After eating their food, the three men got up and left the hut. One of the men turned to the woman and said, “thank you for your hospitality and kindness. Now show us the way to Mecca.”

The woman pointed to the east. The sun was gathering its last rays from the earth. The three men set off on their feet. The woman stared at them as they disappeared in the sunset.

Moments later the sound of her husband echoed through the desert: “where are you woman? Bring some milk for me to drink. Don't you know that I'm thirsty and tired when I come home?”

Troubled, the woman answered, “You know...our sheep... I mean I have...”

The man looked towards the palm trees and the empty spot of the sheep and asked with fury, “Where is the sheep?”

The woman looked towards the eastern horizon and quietly said, “They were three men; Three tired and thirsty men. Their food and water supply had finished. I quenched their thirst with the sheep's milk and then I asked them to kill the sheep and I...”

“What are you saying?” the man screamed. “Am I hearing right? You have killed our sheep for three strangers?”

“They were not strangers,” replied the woman as she kept her eyes on the eastern horizon. “I recognized something

familiar in the face of one of them; the light of prophets and the dignity of the great ones.”

“What are you saying? Who was he?” the husband yelled.

The woman like one talking with herself, slowly said, “He looked so much like 'Muhammad' the Messenger of God.”

The man hit himself in the head with both hands and cried, “Have you gone crazy woman? Don't you know that the Prophet has passed away many years ago? Don't you remember that you grieved on his death?”

“I swear to God that I have not forgotten that day,” answered the women.

The man screamed, “Then are you pretending to be crazy to free yourself from my punishment? You have given away our only sheep and you want to get away from punishment? Say that you regret what you have done.”

The woman brought her head up and said, “If I had a thousand sheep, I would have killed them all for them.”

The man got hold of his walking stick and rushed towards the woman. The woman ran towards the hill, terrified. The man could not follow her any more and screamed, “I swear to God, if I see a shadow of you on this desert, I would dig a whole and bury you in it alive,” and looked at the women disappearing on the other side of the hill.

The sound of the camels' bells could be heard from the alleys of Medina. The sun was shining on the long palm leaves. The wind lifted the soil from the ground and dispersed them on a grey-haired old woman. The woman had bent down and was busy picking the date seeds from the ground and put them in her basket. The people of Medina passed the alleys quickly. The woman lifted her head and looked at the sun, which had reached the middle of the sky. She thought with

herself, “the sun has reached the middle of the sky but my basket is not half-full yet.”

A grey-colored pigeon settled on the ground, next to the old woman and picked at the date seeds. The old woman gazed at the pigeon and said, “So you're after the seeds like me. Do you pass your days by selling date seeds?”

The pigeon circled itself and picked at the ground again. The old woman said, “I know that you are hungry and you're forced to find your food from the date seeds. If I had a house, I would take you with me and give you wheat and barley. I would then sit next to you to make baskets from the palm leaves. Just like those days...”

The woman sighed and thought deeply. The pigeon took a little twig in its bill and flew. It put the twig on the edge of a mud-built wall. The soft wind blew the twig in the air. The old woman moved her self. She wiped the sweat of tired face with the back of her hand and again bent herself to the ground. She thought with herself, “whatever it was, it has passed, but I do not regret what I have done. The face of that man reminded me of the Prophet. He had an oath with his God to travel the way to Mecca on foot and when he stood to pray his body trembled out of fear of God. At that moment, I felt as if he is like a bright pond reflecting the sun.”

She brought her head up and looked at the sky and said, “O' God, who was he?”

Suddenly the woman felt a heavy look on herself. She averted her eyes from the sky and gazed around herself. Her heart trembled in her chest. A man had kneeled next to the old woman and was looking at her. The man had a reddish face, and his eyes were as black as desert night. The woman came to

herself and said with terror, “My God! Save me from this dream. This is his vision, looking at me.”

She got up, pulled her basket after herself, and tried to get away from the man. The man stood up and said, “Wait!”

The woman froze on her spot.

“Do you know me?” asked the man.

“No, who are you?” the woman replied with a shaky voice.

“I am the person who was your guest along with two other men in a mid-day,” said the man.

“For God sake tell me, are you that guest or his vision?” asked the woman.

The man said, “Today, when I was crossing this alley, I saw you bent down on the ground, picking date seeds. It is now the time for you to rest. I went to give you one thousand sheep, and one thousand gold Dinars. Will you accept this gift from me?”

“One thousand gold Dinars?! But who are you?” the stunned woman said.

“I am a servant from the servants of God who was your guest one day,” answered the man.

The man wrote something on a piece of paper. He gave the paper to the woman and went away.

“But who are you?” the woman asked desperately.

A man walking the alley looked at the old woman surprised and said, “how can you not know him?! He is Hasan, the son of Ali, the second Imam of the Shias.”

The woman trembled, looked at the Imam disappearing on the end of the alley with astonishment.

The wind blew softly and filled the air with the scent of ripe dates.

Familiarizing With The 8th Light of Wilāyah

AliReza Ghavidel *

***Abstract:** Imam Riza (p.b.u.h.) is the eighth infallible Imam of the progeny of holy prophets (p.b.u.h.). The present article explains a short biography of him including some points about the period of his Imamate, and moral behavior. Some of his holiness character is presented through the article of which are his generousities, not irritating others, not interrupting other's speeches and so on. The article ends with a quotation from the special Ziarat of Imam which is dedicated to his holiness.*

***Keywords:** Imam Riza (p.b.u.h.), Imamate, Imam Riza moral behavior*

* Clinical psychologist

**Imam Riza (p.b.u.h.),
The Real King,
King of Love And Generosity**

Monday, the 11th of Dhu al-Qi'dah (Nov 10, 2008) marks the birth anniversary of Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Riza (p.b.u.h.), the Real King of Iran, the King of Love, Glory, and Generosity.

Imam Riza, or Ali ibn Musa al-Riza (p.b.u.h.), the eighth Infallible Imam of the progeny of the holy prophets, was born on Thursday 11th Dhu al-Qi'dah 148 A.H., (769) A.D. in the city of Medina. He was famous as the “Exalted Scholar of Family of the holy Prophet “.

His distinguished mother was a gentlewoman from the West, named Toktam (or Najmeh), and was often called Taherah (The chaste), by her husband and her attendants, too.

He was named Ali by his infallible father and was divinely entitled “Riza”, which means Almighty Allah and His Prophet were deeply pleased with him, and he is pleased with the will of Allah.

Subsequent to the martyrdom of his father, he was divinely appointed to the position of Imamate (mastership), when he was a thirty-five year old man.

A glance at the authentic Islamic sources helps us to get acquainted with the rich words and discourses of Imam Riza (p.b.u.h.) uttered and delivered on subjects like the principles of Islam, the Islamic teachings, the juristic issues, and many other subjects of research.

Al-Ma'mun's policy and his judgment of Imam Riza's extended knowledge can be counted as proofs of the holy Imam's competence in this regard.

Historical records confirm that Al-Ma'mun, the caliph, was himself a celebrated erudite, and his views were sound

here. He used to say in several occasions that, “I know not any person superior to this man [Imam Riza] in the whole world.”

In other words, wise men adored him and great scholars were full of wonder and admiration for his immense, superior knowledge. Imam Riza’s discourses and open debates were a source of joy for the audience, intellectuals, and ordinary folk alike.

Imamate (Mastership) Period

His 20 year-mastership, which began when he was 35 witnessed the rule of three Abbasid caliphs: Haroun, Muhammad Amin, and Al-Ma’mun. He amended to a great extent the distorted Islamic view of the ruling clique.

In the year 200 A.H., Caliph Al-Ma’mun requested Imam Riza to visit Marv (present Khorasan- Mashhad), and then proposed Imam Riza being king.

Appointed by Almighty God, already had a much superior position as Imam, a leader appointed by God for the whole world, and did not need endorsement of his inferior, who wanted to confine him to a limited realm. Imam Riza declined to become caliph. Al-Ma’mun insisted but Imam again refused Al-Ma’mun's proposal.

In fact, by this apparently generous move, Al-Ma’mun wanted to kill two birds with one stone:

1) By the very act of offering the caliphate or succession to him, Al-Ma’mun desired to show himself as a supporter of the family of the holy Prophet, to ensure loyalty of the Shia community for his system, who then rebelled against the Sunni despotic state which misrepresented Islam.

2) Underestimating Imam, the caliph considered that Imam's inclusion into his oppressive and cruel government

supervised by Al-Ma'mun's stooges, in a manner that could easily and mercilessly accuse and humiliate anyone would discredit the Imam before his followers. The idea was to defame Imam Riza and the true followers of Islam, if they refused the Al-Ma'mun's hierarchy. He even married his daughter to Imam, to forge a close tie with him.

Infallible Imam Riza was fully aware of different motives behind Al-Ma'mun's proposal. Even the majority in the Islamic state knew that nobody could trust a man like Al-Ma'mun, who had usurped the throne by killing his own brother! When insisted upon by Al-Ma'mun, the Imam accepted successorship to the throne, on the condition that the Imam would not interfere in the government affairs.

The men in charge of the ruling body were taken back at the popularity of Imam- whom they wanted to cast in the role of ceremonial figurehead- shooting into skies.

Al-Ma'mun decided to do what his predecessors had done as a normal practice: when he saw his plan backfired, Al-Ma'mun simply decided to kill Imam Riza.

So the Imam Riza was poisoned during a visit to Iran in 203 A.H. (824 AD) at the age of 55. The shrine of Imam Riza in Mashhad, Iran, a ziarat spot for millions of Muslims year by year.

His Holiness Character And Moral Behavior

Followings are some of his holiness personal and social behaviors the narrator has reported:

- His holiness never irritated others by verbal or practical teasing.
- His holiness did not interrupt other's speeches.
- His holiness never refused the demands of others.

- His holiness never swore at his servants.

- He was very generous as it is respected: “Once a stranger went to him and demanded some money for his travel expenses. On hearing the man's request Imam Riza gracefully went out, and after a short while he called the stranger to take the money from his hand being solely seen from behind the curtain. His holiness did not like to be seen by the demandant, nor did his holiness want to witness bashfulness on the visage of that person.

- Being Al-Ma'mun's crown prince, the holy Imam once generously donated all his own possessions to the needy that lived in the Khorasan Province.

- One of the distinguished companions of Imam Riza says, “Once I was in the presence of the holy Imam, and his holiness invited me to have dinner with him. I accepted the invitation, and entered the abode of Imam Riza. There among the servants we saw a black who seemed to be an alien fellow.” The holy Imam inquired about that man and asked whether his wage had been fixed in advance. “They stated that the black labor did not complain of the amount of the paid wage.” On hearing that, his holiness reminded his attendants by observing the following instruction, “Fix, Fix the wage, then employ a worker.”

Words of His Holiness

Following are a few words from thousands:

- 1) Man's wisdom is his friend, and ignorance is his foe.
- 2) Nothing is more worthy than good moral (temper).
- 3) Best wealth is that which provides a good name (prestige) for' its owner.

4) True faith means the accomplishment of the religious obligation and avoiding the forbidden acts.

5) He who assesses himself' carefully will final benefit, the negligent will lose out.

6) He who blames time should spend a long time blaming.

7) The generous are the masters of people in this world, while the pious are masters of people on doomsday.

8) He who wishes to be the dearest to the people must be virtuous both in public and in private.

9) Human wisdom (intellect) is a divine blessing but politeness is acquired through endeavoring.

10) Gifts cast out hatred from the heart.

Let's end this article by a quotation from the special ziarat of Imam which is dedicated to his Holiness:

“ ... O, Allah, send blessing on Ali ibn Musa who pleased Thee most, the chosen, Thy servant, the defender of Thy religion , rightly and justly established by Thee as an authority who made earnest presentation of arguments to promote Thy religion which is the religion of his truthful ancestors, blessing which no one is able to measure other than Thee ...”

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Nudity and Culture

(Part 2)

Gholam R. Haddad Adel*

Abstract: *The present article discusses about wearing clothes by human with the emphasis on the women. It refers to the concept of capitalism as the economical system of the secular world. The author believes that there are two giant economical branches which aim to exploit women: cosmetic producers and fashion companies.*

The article also tries to explain that the kind of clothes wearing by western men and women are according to their cultures and world views. It concludes that the main difference of new western culture and Islamic culture is reflected in definition of human. In Islamic culture human is a being whose desirable ultimate and all purposes of his(her) life is spirituality, while in the western culture human spirituality is as the secondary and cover of his material life.

Keywords: *capitalism, Hijab (veil), Islamic culture, western culture*

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** Translated by Somayeh Ale-Hosaini

The western materialistic and worldly insight which can not go beyond mundane concerns of sleep, eating, anger and lust, has created an economic system which is congruent with itself, and aims at encouraging the world and all its consisting elements like the nature, human, and animals to consume as much as possible. This is “capitalism”, the economic system of the secular countries. The multiplicity-based system of capitalism, which encourages more demands, is the world’s sucking machine. It was all powers and possibilities of the world, as well as the human beings abilities and instincts, to flourish the world’s production and consumption market. Sexuality, which is a natural instinct of human beings, has been exploited too. At this point, sexuality besides men and women differences (a sign of blessing and wisdom of God in spiritual cultures) would be explained to fuel the capitalist economy. What has been described as the peace and tolerance of human beings, now is transformed to a proper means of inflaming the desires, and the secular human wants that. Woman, condemned to live in such an economic system, is a means that consumes and is consumed. The western secular economy is not able to recognize anything but these two words. The woman is just a body and must consume or be consumed. This obligation determines her clothes too. Woman is the most oppressed victim of western capitalism, as well as the most potential weapon in its hand.

Human inclinations and desires are endless, and the human is an even more wanting creature. All mundane-centered and spiritual-centered people have approved this. The Western economy abuses this desire in the consumption path; it gets on human, scourges his/her sexual instincts, makes this restive horse to run faster than normal. Disaster began by

ignoring the spiritual identity of humans. The very nature of woman was summarized in her body. So the zealous eyes of lustful men chose her as the lure of their markets, sacrifice her to gain more money. Love, a spiritual fairness, was changed to “sex” for economic purposes. It produced many industries and many consuming markets were fed by sex. Advertisement also opened the way for fast caravan of sex.

Art, once denoting the world of “meanings, sense and spirituality” now is the mirror of the world of “appearances”; meanwhile, cinema which was called seventh art, was a total reflection of triteness, sex and sexuality. Western capitalism is interwoven with cinema and sex. The television is also a cinema at homes. Theater beat by this trend, composed shows of nude alone and scenes of sexual intercourse.

Those who boast about the west’s industrial development, should answer this question: how do science and industrial development relate to nudity? Today in western world, nudity is beauty and love is replaced by sex. Triteness and sexual arousal are called art also. Alas, this civilization which humiliates all other civilizations got the woman as an animal which must be exploited sexually without any limitation. The animal, bridled by zealous worldly people, has itself the rein of men. Glance has bridled men who follow after women, like a slave. This trend continues; the woman needs to be looked at and the man is alive to have a glance at woman. And those glances would leave to “sin”.

So, it is not surprising that at least one third of the western press is “photo-centered” with higher rate of publication and sale (compared with other papers with different subject). This popularity triggers the idea of export. Painting, music, cinema,

theater, magazines, books, pictures, and posters, are all led to sexual women; But it is not the end. There are two main economic branches which aim to exploit woman. Cosmic producers and fashion designers. How should they survive if this mundane civilization is replaced with a spiritual one? Once again, clothes are to be the subject. Western woman or west-centered ones, not only must wear sexy clothes but also must change it frequently for new fashions. So the markets of fashion, sellers, tailors,... are always hot. Because clothes are the means of showing off. The more disastrous side is that woman should be used to consume everything else, more and more; i.e., for selling more tractor tire, there must be a bare woman in the picture! The salespersons in big stores should be of young women. In regular elections, sex and woman are also the means of candidates' propaganda.

Historical Fields And Scientific-Philosophical Aspects

Beside, the capitalists' zeal and greed, which are the main reasons of building woman's market, there are historical ground and scientific or philosophical theories which added fuel to sex and nudity market! If the church had not opposed the marriage as an act contrary to the spirituality, and abstinence of it as necessary for sanctity, maybe such reactions had not happened in the new civilization. It is true that excessiveness makes dissipation easy. If some people like Jesus had not advertised for some mottos like "cut the matrimony tree by virginity", we would not have witnessed "cut of matrimony tree by adultery."

Other assistance was provided by psychology and its most obvious manifestation, Freudism. It is not accidentally that in the middle of the clothes, and cosmetics markets, a scientific

school emerges that puts the sexual instinct at the pivot of human personality, the origin of spiritual belief and mundane problems. Since it believes that the suppression of sexual instinct is the reason of all problems, uses this excuse to omit all limitations in order to solve the sexual problems of human beings, and reach to peace. Now, “sex” has a background in the science and psychology.

Besides the psychology, many philosophies emerge justifying the slovenly. In existentialism, some schools only support the “freedom” of people, ignoring all other truths of the world and realities of the human. These schools put aside their rational, ethical, religions and custom regulations which bother human freedom, until they come to nothingness.

According to Sartre, “when there is no God, everything is allowed.” Such a philosophy allows every desire of people; the philosophy of the world in which people want to do everything they wish. People need philosophy, and this kind is so desirable! Such philosophies leave the human in a dark night and finite desert, named “freedom”. In this desert, there is neither a perspective of a town in the day nor the guidance star in the night. The modal of ideal human, presented in these philosophies, is the hero of stranger by Cumos. Jean Paul Sartre introduces this philosophic story:

Waking up, tramway, a four-hour work at the office or factory, lunch, tramway, a four-hours work, dinner and sleep, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday with the same order....

The world is nothing but chaos. There is an eternal balance originated from chaos. When the human dies, there is no tomorrow. Human feels strange in a world that is without

any illusion and light.... The empty human believes his/her being in mutiny.... He knows how a condemned to death person is free from responsibility forever. For him, everything is allowed, because there is no God and the human being would die.

Sartre says about the hero of “stranger”. The day after her mother’s death, he took a sea bath, slept with a woman; and just for laughing went to see a funny movie. He kills an Arab for sun and at the night of his execution, he claims that “he is happy and ever happier”, while wishes for more and more people around his gallows because likes “to be welcomed by cries of anger and rage”.

It is clear that how a man/woman with such a philosophy would think about issues likes clothes, chastity, and occultedness.

Hijab (Veil) And Islamic Culture

Till now, we discussed that clothes of western men and women according to their culture and world view. Now, we are going to talk about Islamic clothes and cultures.

The main difference of new western culture and Islamic culture is reflected in definition of human. If , according to western culture, human is less spiritual and should enjoy his(her) material life; in Islamic culture, human is a being whose desirable ultimate and all purpose of his life is spirituality. It is an ultimate aim which would be acquired by carefulness, and accurate use of all physical and psychological blessings. So, it is not necessary for people to sacrifice their material reality for reaching spiritual truth. Islamic spirituality is not a rival for materialism. So it does not aim to omit it. On the contrary, it controls the corporeality and materialism. The

religion teaches us about the “sizes” in order to maintain the balance and avoid considering ourselves as worldly bodies only and ignore every Godly aspects of ourselves but body-pleasure.

Sexual instinct is one of the natural instincts of humans and a reality of their beings. Islam does not ignore realities, like the sexual instinct, and does not believe that having such a desire is contrary to spirituality and holiness. All limitations and boundaries of Islamic religion about sexual instincts, is just to rein this wild horse, and help it to got freed from being scourged or tortured by passersby; perhaps it does not go wild and nor take the rider from the destination, neither throw him away and hurt others. In such an insight, body is not the only part of the human beings; human is not just the body which may be doomed to ruin. The only chance of being alive and happy is not bodily desires between birth and death. The human has a long way ahead and death is just one of the many highways. He aims to God who is the Only Almighty the origin of all goodness and values. So, he uses the body but cares about the time, place and people. The human identifies himself more virtuous to be known as a mere physical body; and knows that his responsibility is more important than showing off. In all spiritual insights, like Islam, human beings do not wear clothes to offer their body. She wears clothes to cover herself. Clothes are a frontage and a wall which protects the body from being attacked. The clothes are used to minimize the sexual arousal, not to maximize it. It is not the secondary tissue, it is assumed as the first home. The Islamic man does not imagine its utmost in decorating body, showing

it off and selling it down. He sells his body to God not to people.

Yes, clothes and other surroundings are neither superficial and simple, nor merely the production of people's tastes. This issue concerns two cultures and two views which are different from each other; manifested in all affairs concerning the human, like clothes. In practice, nothing is simpler than imitating other's clothes. But there are many centuries that we see the people of a society do not imitate other societies' clothes; they maintain their own tradition because the change of clothes usually goes after changing the culture. And it is not possible to lose the clothes and wearing alien cultures own culture and accepting others' culture. Accordingly, in Qur'an we read,: "*whoever dramatize itself to a group, is definitely one of them.*" The clothes of each person is his/her flag. The flag raised upon his/her minor home and demonstrates the culture being obeyed. As every nation shows its belief to the national and political identity by remaining loyal and respectful to its flag, every human would wear the clothes proper to a certain values and insights.

Clothes And The Heart Secret

You might have that the face shows the secret of heart. It means that natural changes in the face are resulted from inner conditions. We can go further and claim that, not only the natural changes of face, but also its artificial changes made by colors, reveal the secret of the heart.

Clothes are not only under the influence of the society culture, but also represent the personalities of its members. Of course, there is a relationship between the people's culture and the general culture of the society. In a society where spiritual

and human values are invalid, humans' inner world does not have any identity and meaning independent from out representations and manifestations, the human personality forcibly forms based on attracting others' attention and their comments. In such a society people try to obtain a kind of personification by any possible thing like clothes. The content of fashion and numerous changes is based on such factors. In western societies, in which established bureaucracy, government, economical systems domination on educational system and Medias resembles the people to each other, no personal identity is highlighted, the need for personification is highlighted. When there is no way for people to personificate themselves from many others, they will do their best, try every logical way even illogical to hit the point.

Not being successful, he changes his appearance and clothes to attract others' attentions and save him/her from being lost in the society. Because he/she does not believe in a super truth like God, he/she thinks that society lost is personality lost.

Now, it comes to fashion designers to satisfy this thirst. They exploit from this ethnical weakness which is resulted from a spiritual decline. But there are other ethnical and psychological reasons for fashion tendency. High social gap would be reflected in kind of house, car model, life style, and especially clothes. Rich people represent themselves by the clothes they wear. It is the best way of showing off. You can not take your car or house everywhere, but clothes are very identical, even in the swimming pool.

Those dirty complexes gushing from the heart of people are numerous. One is the desire to be flagrant and another is

self-glorification and acknowledging the amount of wealth. The desire to dominance and ambition is important in choosing the kind of clothes. Military officers are not the only people who could be distinguished by their clothes (and maybe it is necessary for them), the members of a society who enjoy being like each other, try to wear clothes which identify them. Sometimes, men may use their wives' clothes for showing their superiority; they show their priority by the clothes their wives wear in parties. Basically, in a spiritual-free society, wife is a means of husband's personification. She is a luxury mean, by which men show off as they do with their car, house, shoes and hat. In Islamic culture, clothes wear for distinguishing from others is severely forbidden. Imam Husain also says, "whoever wears clothes for personification, God will put him in clothes of fire on the doomsday." As mentioned earlier, rich people impose their material dominance to everyone. But the poor common people follow aimlessly rich people and are actually following fashion to be similar to them. The wealthy people of the society differentiate themselves from common people by wearing attracting clothes. Commons also are eager to be like the rich; so they would follow the fashion. The new fashion becomes common and wealthy people, passionate for being unique, follow another fashion, and the surprising commons will follow it after a short time. The story continues: the poor follow the rich people without any thoughtful mind. The slavery is so harmful, and such things are very widespread in a free, and free thinking society.

Reviewing The Theory of Qur'an's Adaptation

Is Islam Adapted From Previous Religions?

Gholam Husain Tajeri Nasab

During 2 last centuries, some orientalist argued that Similarities between some Islamic teachings, and teachings of Old Testament, New Testament, Avesta and likewise, show that Islam religion is adapted from previous religions. Their claim, regarding this matter, is presented in their books. In Mizan ul-Haqq written by (C.G. Pfander) – the German missionary and priest – he states:

In a word, there remains no doubt among the learned that the Qur'an is a book composed of matter selected from the doctrines and precepts of the Old and New Testaments from the legends which were current among the Christians and Jews in the days of Muhammad, and from the ceremonies and customs which prevailed among the Magi and Arabs of that time. Thus, we see that Muhammad, having the design of forming a new religious system out of the systems and ceremonies of the Jews, Christians, and Arabs, took from them whatever fell in with his opinions and suited his plan, and set it forth in the Qur'an.

It may be said, in brief, that as those things contained in the Qur'an which are true and good have been taken from the Old and New Testaments, they cannot prove anything as to its divine origin.¹

Also, a Jew Orientalist of Hungary, Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) in his books, "Schools of Kor'anic commentators" and "Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law" claims that Islamic teachings, even in their very beginning, were the trend of choosing and mixing Judaism, Christianity, Persian religion and other religions. Also, some strange works of teachings' experiments penetrated into Islamic society and grew up the issues which were become significant latterly.²

Islam, in its way of advances, was colored by Greek thoughts and ideas: its precise structure of Fiqh (jurisprudence) is the influence of Roman's laws; the Doctrine of its governorship, created in Abbasid era, declares the interference of Persian politics' point of view, its Irfan (Mysticism) is nothing more than imitating the thoughts of Indians Muhammad, its founder, did not bring new ideas and thoughts... . The message of this Arabian prophet is nothing more than a selected mixture of religions acquired by contacts with Jews, Christians and others; the ideas and thoughts by which he himself was affected significantly and recognized them important to awake religious feelings of his fellow countrymen... . Far from this, we come to Zoroastrian-

¹Fender, C.G., (1867), *The Mizan ul-Haqq or The Balance of Truth*, pp.108, 110. London.

² Goldziher, Ignaz.(1920) *Schools of Kor'anic commentator*.(Quoted and translated into English from Arabic translation: *Mazaheb al-Tafsir al-Islami*, p.171.)

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Persian customs affecting Arab's prophet's wisdom and recognition. Because He, besides being in connection with Jews and Christians, was in touch with the followers of these religions¹

Carl Brockelmann (1868-1956), the famous Semitist, also has some statements in his famous book, *Tarikh Al-Sho'ob Al-Islamiyah*. He claims that the Prophet's theology was not something new, except some small parts of it. The utmost part of it is derived from Judaism and Christianity. Muhammad adjusted them to the needs of his nation... undoubtedly, his beliefs of the Hereafter is traced back to Judaism and indirectly to Persian and old Babel.²

I.p.Petrushevski (1898 A.C.), a materialist Orientalist from Ukraine says in his book "Islam in Iran" that, "in this new religion (Islam) which is a reflex of the need of new society, the elements of other religions, more developed ones, like Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrian more, and Manichaeism and Gnosticism less, can be found. Especially some religious practices of the Arabs of pre-Islamic era can be seen in Islam as well."³

Yet some of Muslim scholars refuse these misunderstandings. They try to show, by proof and reasoning, the rightness of Islam's messenger. He made the spring of God's guidance through the hearts and souls of people; while they were entangled with the old, half-eaten, and damaged

¹ Goldziher, Ignaz. *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*. (Quoted and translated into English from Arabic translation: *al-Aghidah val Sharia in Islam*, p.11, 12, 26.)

² Brockelmann, Carl. *History of the Islamic Peoples*, Quoted and translated into English from Arabic translation: *Tarikh Al-Sho'ob Al-Islamiyah*

³ Petrushevski. I.p., *Islam in Iran*. Quoted and translated into English from Persian translation: *Islam in Iran*, p.19.)

inheritance of the former religions. This article will try to give two answers to this subject.

1. A simple, but necessary point one which can uproot the mentioned misunderstanding is:

All prophets were sent by the same God; their words and messages are from Him as well. So, inevitably, all heavenly religions, in their principles of knowing God and pillars of divine law, are compatible and similar.

This unity in religions and similarity among them, is not only due to their shortcomings or the Prophet's untruthfulness, but also is a sign of its originality and honesty of its carrier. Because, based on the witness of nature, on the long or small branches of a tree, one special fruit or blossom, with special fragrant and color will grow. And if some differences find among them is only in their sizes.

God, once creating human beings, with the abilities of understanding, thinking, recognizing, choosing, doing and making; out of his kindness and mercy, met their needs of heavenly guidance by appointing trained leaders. These heavenly Hojjahs (Signs of God) who were sent for all nations and in all ages bring the same and unique religion that was generally called "Islam". Its bases were on the unchangeable Fitrat (nature) of human being. Among those religions no significant differences can be found in their teachings, legal rules, in general, and even in lots of details. The contents of those religions are good evident on this truth. Mostly, the existing differences among these can be resulted from the following:

1. The academic statements or the level of people's understanding in comprehending the truth of religious beliefs

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are the reasons of differences. but differences in surface only and not in depth. As a matter of fact, such differences are signs of growth and development of human race, and perfection of religions.

2. The changes resulted from abrogation (Naskh) and change (Tabdil), which are in the domain of practical rules, and occur in order to meet the (special) personal and social needs of the nation(s) and communities. Sometimes, the aims of all these abrogation and changing are to give an independent identity to a group or to put them in trial or to punish them or to encourage the faithful people.

3. Edit (or distortion) of the original texts, or translation of some of the old religious texts, purposely or inadvertently, have significant role in make religious books incompatible.

After all, except the last case, we should not expect to observe differences or inconsistencies in subjects like ethical teachings, historical events, or the future-bound promised issues among heavenly religions. Therefore, the unity of the messages and similarities of the words of God's messengers should not be considered as “adaptation”. Though, according to sound mind, it is natural that an ethical truth or advice, practical principles and prophecies be mentioned by prior religion, and this priority is not opposite to the perfection and completion of newer religions.

2. To clear the negligence of the holders of this view, and extend credit to the above-mentioned explanations, we provide some examples from Qur'an:

1. The truth and stable religion of God is in fact the one which is based on human beings' unchangeable nature and it is named “Islam”. Therefore, the former prophets and their followers, in Qur'an 's words, are all called “Muslims”.

“surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam, and those to whom the book had been given did not show opposition but after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves; and whoever disbelieves in the communications of Allah then surely Allah is quick in reckoning” (Qur’an; 3:19)

“When his lord said to him, be a Muslim, he said: I submit myself to the lord of the worlds” (Qur’an; 2:131)

“And the same did Abraham enjoin on his sons and (so did) Jacob. O my sons! Surely Allah has chosen for you (this) faith, therefore die not unless you are Muslims” (Qur’an; 2:132)

“And when I revealed to the disciples, saying, believe in me and my messenger, they said: we believe and bear witness that we submit (ourselves) “ (Qur’an; 5: 111)

“But we did not find therein save a (single) house of those who submitted (the Muslims)” (Qur’an; 51:36)

2. There is no difference or logical controversies among God's messengers in the bases of intuitive knowledge (ma'arif) and principles of teachings and laws; the division-makers will suffer from God's anger.

“say: we believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Samuel and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to him do we submit” (Qur’an; 3:84)

“and those who believe in Allah and his messengers and do not make a distinction between any of them- Allah will grant them their rewards; and Allah is forgiving, merciful” (Qur’an; 4:152)

3.The holy prophet “Muhammad” approved the former messengers, and his book is in confirmation and protector of their books.

“surely we revealed the Taurat in which was guidance and light; with it the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allah) judged (matters) for those who were Jews, and the masters of divine knowledge and the doctors, because they were required to guard (part) of the book of Allah, and they were witnesses thereof; therefore fear not the people and fear me, and do not take a small price for my communications; and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers” (Qur’an; 5:44)

“and we sent after them in their footsteps Jesus, son of Mary, verifying what was before him of the Taurat and we gave him the Gospel in which was guidance and light, and verifying what was before it of Taurat and a guidance and an admonition for those who guard (against evil)” (Qur’an; 5:46)

“and we have revealed to you the book with the truth, verifying what is before it of the book and a guardian over it, therefore judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires (to turn away) from the truth that has come to you; for every one of you did we appoint a law and a way, and if Allah had pleased he would have made you (all) a single people, but that he might try you in what he gave you, therefore strive with one another to hasten to virtuous deeds; to Allah is your return, of all (of you), so he will let you know that in which you differed;” (Qur’an; 5:48)

“Nay: he has come with the truth and verified the messengers” (Qur’an; 37:37)

“In their histories there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding. It is not a narrative which could be forged, but a verification of what is before it and a distinct explanation of all things and a guide and a mercy to a people who believe” (Qur’an; 12:111)

“And who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you and they are sure of the hereafter” (Qur’an; 2:4)

“These are on a right course from their lord and these it is that shall be successful” (Qur’an; 2:5)

4.The Almighty God orders all those who accepted Muhammad's religion, the idol-worshipers, and unbelievers to believe and accept all other former holy religions.

“and do not dispute with the followers of the book except by what is best, except those of them who act unjustly, and say: we believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our Allah and your Allah is one, and to him do we submit” (Qur’an; 29:46)

“to this then go on inviting, and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires, and say: I believe in what Allah has revealed of the book, and I am commanded to do justice between you: Allah is our lord and your lord; we shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds; no plea need there be (now) between us and you: Allah will gather us together, and to him is the return” (Qur’an; 42:15)

5.The aim of the appointment of the prophets was to solve the problems, disputes and disagreement among people and not to intensify them.

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The arguments and disputes among nations and discrepancies among their beliefs are not only from people's ignorance and lack of information, but also from their enmity; as their mundane and mean drives make them distort or manipulate the content or appearance of the God's words.

“do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among them indeed used to hear the word of Allah, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this)” (Qur'an; 2:75)

“woe, then, to those who write the book with their hands and then say: this is from Allah, so that they may take for it a small price; therefore woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn” (Qur'an; 2:79)

“surely those who conceal any part of the book that Allah has revealed and take for it a small price, they eat nothing but fire into their bellies, and Allah will not speak to them on the day of resurrection, nor will he purify them, and they shall have a painful chastisement” (Qur'an; 2:174)

“(all) people are a single nation; so Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and he revealed with them the book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differed; and none but the very people who were given it differed about it after clear arguments had come to them, revolting among themselves; so Allah has guided by his will those who believe to the truth about which they differed and Allah guides whom he pleases to the right path” (Qur'an; 2:213)

“and they did not become divided until after knowledge had come to them out of envy among themselves; and had not a word gone forth from your lord till an appointed term, certainly judgment would have been given between them; and those who were made to inherit the book after them are most surely in disquieting doubt concerning it” (Qur’an; 42:14)

6.The trivial differences or secondary changes in some parts of legal or practical issues of one religion with other religions are more a means in order to test people.

“and we have revealed to you the book with the truth, verifying what is before it of the book and a guardian over it, therefore judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires (to turn away) from the truth that has come to you; for every one of you did we appoint a law and a way, and if Allah had pleased he would have made you (all) a single people, but that he might try you in what he gave you, therefore strive with one another to hasten to virtuous deeds; to Allah is your return, of all (of you), so he will let you know that in which you differed;” (Qur’an; 5:48)

“O you who believe! do not say raina and say unzurna and listen, and for the unbelievers there is a painful chastisement” (Qur’an; 2:104)

7.The teachings of Qur'an include all truths descended to all prophets, and therefore, are the most complete, perfect and comprehensive religion in the world.

“He has made plain to you of the religion what he enjoined upon Noah and that which we have revealed to you and that which we enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus that keep to obedience and be not divided therein; hard

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to the unbelievers is that which you call them to; Allah chooses for himself whom he pleases, and guides to himself him who turns (to him), frequently” (Qur’an; 42:13)

“forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols) and that you divide by the arrows; that is a transgression. This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear me. this day have I perfected for you your religion and completed my favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion; but whoever is compelled by hunger, not inclining willfully to sin, then surely Allah is forgiving, merciful” (Qur’an; 5:3)

Islamic Words

Qur'anic Word

Faith

Javad Mohaddesi*

In Qur'an, there are many cases in which word "Faith" accompanies with the word "good deeds". Therefore, it is very essential to comprehend what is the meaning of "Faith" and what are the responsibilities, commitment and obligations of a "Faithful" and what is the role of "Faith" in life?

Faith and its derivations are cited 811 times in Qur'an; the extent of its use in Qur'an shows the crucial significance of its status in Qur'anic- based thoughts. Now, what is it?

What Is Faith?: "Faith" is a soul tendency, a kind of bound of mind, believe and trust in One Deity; to a unique Dominant pole and center; to the point that all of the deeds of human beings be accordingly through observing all its commitment and responsibilities. It means the acceptance of a concept clearly to the extent that it fills the soul and heart completely.

* Professor of Osul al-din university, Iran

“Faith” means confession and confirmation, means pursuing, believing and trusting.

Allamah Tabatabai said: “The meaning of Faith is not only knowing something. But considering its aspects, it requires commitment, deep trust, and belief to the point that its practical and actual effects can be observable.

Therefore, “Faith” not only includes knowledge (an unfaithful person may recognize something as a reality and truth, but this knowledge is not called “faith”) but also it includes practice (an unfaithful person may practice something with no knowledge.). As “faith” includes knowledge, belief and practice, it can be changed along this specter....”

If faith is kept in heart only, it will perish, so it should be flow from heart to tongue to eyes to ears to hands to foot and to all members and parts of body and in all aspects of life as well. And this is the concept which our holy Prophet offered introducing **Faith (Iman)**.

“Faith” is introduced in 3 levels:

- Heart-bound, belief-bound and soul-bound knowledge
- Confession by tongue
- Practice with body members

“Faith” is a feeling in heart and acceptance by logic which will be proved “in practice”. Faith without practice and commitment is neither believable nor acceptable.

If everything has a reason and testifier, the testifier of faith is faithful’s good deeds. Therefore, the purity of deeds is the sign of the purity of belief and a pure, sound heart’s practice is pure as well.

The Referee of Faith: It denotes the things which we should have faith in them (which are the reference of our faith) and faith will be fulfilled by their acceptance or approval.

Quite in a few number of Qur'an's verses, their attachments are as follows:

1. Faith in God: as the Creature of the universe, and God of all human beings.

2. Faith in the Hereafter: accepting the life after death (in Otherworld) and the day of Doom.

3. Faith in prophets: acceptance of the Prophets' missions and following them.

4. Faith in Qur'an: knowing Qur'an as a holy book sent from God as well as believing the former holy books which are all from God to provide mankind with eternal guidance and happiness.

5. Faith in Ayat (signs): faith in all signs of God, whether they are phenomena, or Qur'an's verses.

6. Faith in angels: recognizing them as God's agents in the world.

7. Faith in Unseen: hidden world, metaphysics, the Next world

Having "Faith" and belief in these principles and prerequisites, has a very significant rule in mapping mankind's deeds and ways they will choose – faith will provide mankind with internal guidance and external guidance; faithfuls will find themselves in the constructive connection with world, God, holy schools, holy teachings of prophets and will see Unseen aspects of the world, the Hereafter, day of Doom,

And with these belief will find a confident heart and clear-end way, and will be free from all things.

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According to Motahhari, the results of Imam are as follows:

1. Ethical reliance
2. Healthy soul and body
3. Providing equilibrium and compatibility between man and society
4. Full dominance over carnal desires

The levels of Faith: “Faith” which is the conscious recognition and acceptance of God, religion, revelation and Hereafter, has various levels; its degree is not the same among all individuals, and in all situations. It can be increased in an individual.

“Faith” sometimes will be born in heart like a ray of light. Good deeds and piety will help to flourish and expand “Faith” to the extent that their hearts will be repleted with faith of God; in the utmost of faith “Certitude” will be born.

Listening to the holy verses will increase the level of Faith in one’s heart.

In holy Qur’an we read:

“They only are the (true) believers whose hearts feel fear when Allah is mentioned, and when his revelations are recited unto them they increase their faith, and who trust in their lord;” (Qur’an; 8:2)

“And whenever a sura is revealed there are some of them who say: which one of you hath thus increased in faith? as for those who believe, it hath increased them in faith and they rejoice (therefore).” (Qur’an; 9:124)

Faith, sometimes, is just on the surface. Sometimes, it is deep with its roots down in the heart. Sometimes, it is only a show-off, and sometimes it brings commitment and responsibilities.

In this way, Faithfuls all have the concerns about increasing their faith and try to get to the higher levels of faith. God also orders the faithfuls to believe in Him, though they have had an initial faith and trust in Him.

And the meaning of this is to increase their faith and commitment more and more.

“o ye who believe! Believe...” (Qur’an; 4:136)

In another verse,

“The wandering Arabs say: we believe. Say (unto them, o Muhammad): ye believe not, but rather say “we submit,” for the faith hath not yet entered into your hearts. Yet, if ye obey Allah and his messenger, he will not withhold from you aught of (the reward of) your deeds. O! Allah is forgiving, merciful.” (Qur’an; 14:49)

In this verse, the border between “Faith” and “Islam” has been drawn clearly. You can not name someone faithful, when he is just a Muslim.

“Faith” should enter the heart and be visible in people’s practice. The holy prophet says:

The residence of faith is the heart and practices are the proofs of that faith; otherwise, faith is only a claim.

Qur’an, in some verses, introduces those enjoying some characteristics and performing specific practices as true faithfuls.

In al-Anfal chapter, faithfuls are introduced as:

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“for, believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear his signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their lord; who establish regular prayers and spend (freely) out of the gifts we have given them for sustenance”
(Qur’an; 8:2-3)

And in another verse we read:

“Those who believed and left their homes and strove for the cause of Allah, and those who took them in and helped them - these are the believers in truth. For them is pardon, and bountiful provision.” (Qur’an; 8/74)

According to the verse, the true faith is defined in the shadow of believing God, adopting exile, fighting for the faith, giving (them) asylum and aid. From this we can infer that the faith which is not in accompany with social and practical commitments is the lowest level of Faith and maybe it should not be considered as faith.

Habitation Faith And A Repository Faith: Faith can be Habituated, stable, fix, rooted, and internal one, or it is repository, rootless and external.

The stable faith is a faith which is conscious, resulted from knowledge and insight. Such a belief, due to its depth in the soul of human beings, cannot be uprooted or destroyed by doubts, problems, anxieties, cruelties, and harshness. The possessor of such a faith enjoys a strong will, and calm and peaceful soul. He will never feel anxiety or failure in any circumstances of his life.

But the faith which is out of prejudice, blind following and lack of knowledge is a shaky shadow and rootless bush

which will be uprooted and destroyed by pressure or some doubts.

The “Habitation” and “Repository” are incited in Qur’an and defined like what mentioned earlier.

Imam Sadiq, in the interpretation of the verse “*and he it is who hath produced you from a single being, and (hath given you) a habitation and a repository. We have detailed our revelations for a people who have understanding.* (Qur’an; 6/98)” says: “The Habitation faith is fixed and ever-lasting but the Repository one is eternal.”

The thing which is eternal and faked does not stay with mankind; but the Habitation faith is stable and inflexible.

Repository faith is like a rented house which the land lord is about to throw you out, but it is not the case when you are the owner of the house. The Habitation faith is like a real fruit which grows on the branch of a tree naturally. but the false faith is like a fruit which is attached to a branch by a piece of thread.

Faithful Deeds: The Qur’anic teachings and commands deserve deep consideration. In fact, it is like the necessary circular that is issued from God including law and economic issues, ethical or social issues, to address all those who are faithful and orders them to act upon them.

One of the frequently used addresses in Qur’an is “*o ye who believe!*”, then it gives some commands.

Going over these commands and orders is helpful in recognizing the deeds rooted from faith.

Some of these commands are as follows:

“O you who believe! Take not for intimates others than your own folk, who would spare no pains to ruin you; they love

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to hamper you. Hatred is revealed by (the utterance of) their mouths, but that which their breasts hide is greater. We have made plain for you the revelations if ye will understand.” (Qur’an; 3:118)

“O you who believe! Squander not your wealth among yourselves in vanity, except it be a trade by mutual consent, and kill not one another. lo! Allah is ever merciful unto you.” (Qur’an; 4:29)

“Save those who repent and amend and hold fast to Allah and make their religion pure for Allah (only). those are with the believers. And Allah will bestow on the believers an immense reward. “(Qur’an; 4:146)

“O you who believe! Forbid not the good things which Allah hath made lawful for you, and transgress not, lo! Allah loveth not transgressors. “(Qur’an; 5:87)

“O you who believe! When ye meet those who disbelieve in battle, turn not your backs to them.” (Qur’an; 8:15)

“O you who believe! Betray not Allah and his messenger, nor knowingly betray your trusts.” (Qur’an; 8:27)

“O you who believe! Choose not my enemy and your enemy for allies. Do ye give them friendship when they disbelieve in that truth which hath come unto you, driving out the messenger and you because ye believe in Allah, your lord? if ye have come forth to strive in my way and seeking my good pleasure, (show them not friendship). Do ye show friendship unto them in secret, when I am best aware of what ye hide and what ye proclaim? And whosoever doeth it among you, he verily hath strayed from the right way.” (Qur’an; 60:1)

“O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of the devil. Unto whomsoever followeth the footsteps of the devil, lo! He commandeth filthiness and wrong. Had it not been for the grace of Allah and his mercy unto you, not one of you would ever have grown pure. But Allah causeth whom he will to grow. And Allah is hearer, knower.” (Qur’an; 24:21)

“O you who believe! Let not a folk deride a folk who may be better than they (are), not let women (deride) women who may be better than they are; neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. Bad is the name of lewdness after faith. And whoso turneth not in repentance, such are evil-doers.” (Qur’an; 49:11)

“O you who believe! Let not your wealth nor your children distract you from remembrance of Allah. Those who do so, they are the losers.” (Qur’an; 63:9)

“O you who believe! Strong drink and games of chance and idols and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan’s handiwork. Leave it aside in order that ye may succeed.” (Qur’an; 5:90)

All of these commands are started with “*O ye who believe!*” and it denotes that faith is in accompany with these deeds.

All mentioned verses ask Faithfuls do not do the mentioned deeds.

Other commands of God which orders Faithfuls to do the deeds are as follows:

“O you who believe! Endure, outdo all others in endurance, be ready, and observe your duty to Allah, in order that ye may succeed.” (Qur’an; 3:200)

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“O you who believe! be ye staunch in justice, witnesses for Allah, even though it be against yourselves or (your) parents or (your) kindred, whether (the case be of) a rich man or a poor man, for Allah is nearer unto both (them ye are). So follow not passion lest ye lapse (from truth) and if ye lapse or fall away, then lo! Allah is ever informed of what ye do.” (Qur’an; 4:135)

“O you who believe! Fulfill your indentures. The beast of cattle is made lawful unto you (for food) except that which is announced unto you (herein), game being unlawful when ye are on the pilgrimage. O! Allah ordaineth that which pleaseth him.” (Qur’an; 5:1)

“O you who believe! When ye meet an army, hold firm and think of Allah much, that ye may be successful.” (Qur’an; 8:45)

“O you who believe! Obey Allah and his messenger, and turn not away from him when ye hear (him speak).” (Qur’an; 8:20)

“O you who believe! Be Allah’s helpers, even as Jesus son of Mary said unto the disciples: who are my helpers for Allah? They said: we are Allah’s helpers. And a party of the children of Israel believed, while a party disbelieved. Then we strengthened those who believed against their foe, and they became the uppermost.” (Qur’an; 61:14)

“O you who believe! ward off from yourselves and your families a fire whereof the fuel is men and stones, over which are set angels strong, severe, who resist not Allah in that which he commandeth them, but do that which they are commanded.” (Qur’an; 66:6)

“O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance.” (Qur’an; 33:41)

“O you who believe! Guard your duty to Allah, and speak words straight to the point;” (Qur’an; 33:70)

“O people of the scripture! Now hath our messenger come unto you, expounding unto you much of that which ye used to hide in the scripture, and forgiving much. Now hath come unto you light from Allah and plain scripture” (Qur’an; 15:15)

In the holy Qur’an, there are two chapters named “Faithful” and “Faithfuls”. In the beginning of “Faithfuls” chapter, some of the attributes and characteristics of the owners of Faith - those whose Faith leads them to “success” and “salvation” are given.

“Successful indeed are the believers (1)who are humble in their prayers, (2)and who shun vain conversation, (3) and who are payers of the poor-due; (4) and who guard their modesty - (5) save from their wives or the (slaves) that their right hands possess, for then they are not blameworthy, (6) but whoso craveth beyond that, such are transgressors - (7)and who are shepherds of their pledge and their covenant, (8) and who pay heed to their prayers. (9) These are the heirs (10) who will inherit paradise. There they will abide. (11) verily we created man from a product of wet earth; (12)” (Qur’an; 23:1-12)

Book Introduction

Al-Kafi

Sedighe Shakeri*

The book Al-Kafi written by Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq al-Kulayni al-Razi is translated by World Organization For Islamic Services. Tehran: World Organization for Islamic Services (WOFIS), 1401 = 1981.

* Master of Science in library and information science, from National Library and Archives of Iran

About The Author

Al-Kafi is a collection of the words taught by the Prophet and the Imams, handed down to the Muslim community by the disciples of the Imams. It is regarded as one of the four major works of Shia traditions. It authored by thiqat al-Islam, Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Ya'qub b. Ishaq Al-Kulayni al-Razi, who was the foremost Shia compiler of hadith following into the footsteps and the traditions of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt . He belonged to the period of minor occultation of Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.). It is said that he greatly benefitted from the living source of Divine knowledge, by interacting through living Imam's deputies and emissaries. For this reason he has highly exalted status among the scholars of successive generations.

Al-Kulayni has written a preface to his book. There he has provided certain explanatory notes, in chapters, which show his skill and proficiency in writing and in Arabic literature.

He is accredited with several invaluable works. Among them are tafsir ar-ru'ya, al-rijal, al-radd 'ala 'l-qaramata, ar-rasa'il al-imamah, ma qila fi al-a'immah mina'l shi'r.

About Al-Kafi

Al-Kafi is one of the most important reference books recognized by the Shia. It contains the ahadith (traditions) of the holy Imams (Peace be upon them) and the holy prophet (peace be upon him). Such books constitute the secondary sources - the holy Qur'an being the first- whereby one may obtain a better understanding of Islamic beliefs, jurisprudence, history, biographies, morals and behavior, the kinds of worship, business, considerations for the individual, family and society, etc.

The word Al-Kafi means “that which is sufficient”; that is, the book was intended to be a comprehensive collection of Imami-Shi'i traditions. This is explained by al- Kulayni in his introduction to the work:

“...You wanted to have a book which would be sufficient (for your religious needs), which would include all kinds of knowledge ('ilm) of religion, which would be adequate for the student, and to which the teacher might refer. Thus it could be used by anyone who wanted knowledge of religion and of legal practice according to sound traditions and words from the truthful ones (the Imams) ...”

It is claimed that it took Al-Kulayni twenty years to complete Al-Kafi.

General Structure Of The Book

The present book consists of English translation and Arabic text. It was translated and published by World Organization for Islamic Services (WOFIS) in 1978.

The design of the book for its translation, indexes, revisions, explanatory remarks and other related work had been done by Al-Shaykh Muhammad Riza Al-Ja'fari.

Al-Kafi is a high status source of religious knowledge, and so respected in the Shia circles, and its author is considered highly honest and reliable. So the comprehensive introduction of the book takes care of the introducing Al-Kafi, its distinctive features and commentaries as well as its author along with words in Shia appreciation and his compilations which show Al-Kafi's significance and its status in our heritage, namely the heritage transmitted to us through Ahl al-Bayt of the holy Prophet.

The compiler, in his esteemed Al-Kafi collection, from the three parts of his own book, part one and two are divided into several books, and every book in its own turn, has been divided into several chapters. Now, to these translated sections, a successive number hasn't been given, instead, for every section of this translation, the successive number of the translated book and the title of that book is registered. Everytime a book specializes in more than one part of the translation, another number is given under the title of the book so it distinguishes the small translated parts of that book. For example, the second translated section of the book of divine unity is the third book of Usul Al-Kafi, taking note that in the issue of “dar al-ketab al-Islam” press, this translation is arranged according to this issue, the section of usual in itself two volumes, the first and second volumes of the eight volume collection of Al-Kafi, and is distinguished thus:

Volume One

AL-USUL- Part One

3) THE BOOK OF DIVINE UNITY

Note that the page numbers of this small section, which will be published gradually, even though they are singular they are in sequence and is in such a way that after the completion of the work you can bind every single part into one ordinary volume. In situations where one book, for example, (the book of hojat) occupies two ordinary volumes and the page numbers begin once again from one, on the back cover, after the title (book) the number two is placed, and the number of small sections under the book title starts, once again, from one, like this:

4) THE BOOK OF DIVINE PROOF

The book is included along with the English translation, the complete original Arabic version being placed at the top of each page with the corresponding English translation below.

However, neither the ahadith are equal in value and significance, nor are the supporting evidence for the narrations (the persons relating the ahadith equal in terms of reliability and credibility and in no way can one give them same appraisal). So, because of this, the original Arabic text has been used and even any of the links in a narration chain has not been omitted.

In translation, the Islamic format and the Arabic pronunciation of the names and proper names, encountered in various ahadith, have been retained.

There is a table at the beginning of each section giving general particulars and information in tabular form about the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H), Fatima al-Zahra (P.B.U.H) and the twelve Imams. A number assigned to each of them according to their sequence. This table will help the reader to understand some important expressions encountered in the process of the narration of hadith.

At the end of each section there are four indexes included:

1. The first index lists the originators of the ahadith to be found in the section-the holy Prophet and the Imams.
2. An index containing symbols for terminology commonly encountered in the process of narration of hadith.
3. Index of the names of key personalities
4. Index of key places, names of tribes, families, and sects

The Number Of Traditions And Three Subdivisions Of The Book

The number of traditions in Al-Kafi is 15,181; according to another reckoning 15,176. If the traditions reported in different sections are counted, the number is over 1,000 more. Of the basic traditions, 5,072 are considered sound (sahih) by scholars, i.e. first category; 144 are regarded as good (hasan), second category; 178 are held to be trustworthy (muwaththaq), third category; 302 are adjudged to be strong (qawi), fourth category; and 9,484 are considered weak (da'if), fifth category.

The book has been subdivided into three parts. each part is divided into some books (or chapters) and most of them are divided into sections.

Part 1. Al-Usul

It consists of the traditions on the principles of faith and the explanation concerning the belief. The subject matters dealt in this part are under the following titles:

1. The book of reason and ignorance (kitab al-aql wal-jahl) which has only 1 chapter consisting 34 traditions

2. The book of excellence of knowledge (kitab fadlu l-ilm). It has numerous chapters of which are: the necessity of science and its search; how is science and its superiority, the superiority of its intellects; socializing and companionship with the intellects; the distribution of science, and on those whose action are without scientific back-up; the intellect being inexcusable for treading on the wrong path, and the severity of the law concerning him etc.

3. The book of divine unity or Oneness of God (kitab al-tawhid)

Some examples of titles in this book:

Interpreting the word object about God; negation from talking about the quality of the creator's essence, abolishing the possibility of eyes seeing Him, negation from relating a body or form to the Creator, recently created names of the exalted Lord.

4. The book of proof (kitab al-hujjah)

The largest book contained in the Usul of Al-Kafi talks about the beliefs and teachings of Shia Islam, is the book of Divine Proof, for it is in this book that the question of the Imamate, the Imams and their attributes and specific characteristics is dealt with. There can be no doubt that the subject of Imamate is the most important one, which distinguishes the Imamate Shia from other sects of Islam, and thus the subject is of special importance both to those who believe in it, and those who disagree with it.

The titles of some of chapters of this book are; the need (necessity) for proof and an Imam; the ranks of Prophets, messengers, and Imams; the difference between interpretations of Messenger; Prophet; relater of traditions; no proof, for the servants of God, stands, other than with an Imam.

5. The book of belief and disbelief (kitab al-Iman wal-kufr) is the most comprehensive book in Usul Al-Kafi

6. The book of invocation (kitab ad-du'a)

7. The book of preferences of Qur'an (kitab fadlu l-Qur'an)

8. The book of social relations (kitab al-ishrah)

This part includes 2 volumes of the present book.

Part 2. Al-Furu

In this part the author has quoted traditions on Islamic jurisprudence, and has explained the order and the commands about the acts of worship, transactions, judgment, etc.

It consists the following:

1. The book of cleanliness (kitab at-taharah)
2. The book of menstruation (kitab al-hayd)
3. The book of burial ceremonies (kitab al-jana'iz)
4. The book of prayer (kitab as-salat)
5. The book of Alms tax (kitab az-zakat)
6. The book of fasting (kitab as-siyam)
7. The book of pilgrimage (kitab al-hajj)
8. The book of holy war (kitab al-jihad)
9. The book of livelihood (kitab al-ma'ishah)
10. The book of marriage (kitab an-nikah)
11. The book of acts of children (kitab al-aqiqah)
12. The book of divorce (kitab at-talaq)
13. The book of regulations on the Emancipation of slaves (kitab al-itq wa't-tadbir wa l-mukatabah)
14. The book of hunting (kitab as-sayd)
15. The book of animal slaughtering (kitab adh-dhaba'ih)
16. The book of foods (kitab al-at'imah)
17. The book of beverages (kitab al-ashrabah)
18. The book of dresses, beautifying and the ideal of manhood (kitab az-zay wa't-tajammul wa'l-muru'ah)
19. The book of tame animals (kitab ad-dawajin)
20. The book of wills (kitab al-wasaya)
21. The book of inheritances (kitab al-mawarith)
22. The book of Islamic punishments (kitab al-hudud)
23. The book of idemnity of bodily injuries (kitab ad-diyat)
24. The book of evidences (kitab ash-shahadat)
25. The book of judgment and decisions (kitab al-qada wa'l ahkam)
26. The book of oaths, vows and expiations (kitab al-ayman wa'n-nudhur wa'l-kaffarat)

The second part included in the book is in five volumes.

Part 3. Ar-rawdah

In the Rawdah of Al-Kafi, Al-Kulayni does not follow the systematic method he had used in the “usul” and the “furu”.

The traditions follow one another in what appears to be a fairly inconsistent order. It certainly lacks the detailed systematic approach that is so obviously present in the other two parts of the book.

One volume of the present book is devoted to this part of Al-Kafi.

Al-Kafi's Distinctive Features

1. The compiler of Al-Kafi, al-Kulayni was contemporary to the four successive special representatives of Imam Mahdi. As al-Sayyid ibn Tawus has pointed out, "All the works and the collections (of hadith) of al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Kulayni had been completed during the life time of the special representatives of Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.). It is a ground to believe the veracity of his collection of hadith.

2. The compiler, except in the case of a few hadith, has named the whole chain of narrators up to the infallible Imam. In certain cases he deletes the first narrator probably because he quotes from the original book that narrates directly from the Imam.

3. According to great scholars, Al-Kulayni's method of collecting and grading Ahadith in a chapter is by the order of the authenticity and the clarity of their meaning. It is, therefore, the last hadith of every chapter is probably general, unclear, or problematic.

4. The compiler generally has avoided the Ahadith that are contradictory. Under the heading of a chapter he has recorded those Ahadith that relate best.

Interview With Hujjat al-Islam Muhammad Rizvi

Interviewer: Husain Eshghi

1- Please introduce yourself.

Biography,
Classic and Religious educations

I was born in 1957 in India, in a family of 'ulama. My father is the late Hujjatul-Islam wal-Muslimeen Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, the founder of the famous tablighi institution in Africa, "Bilal Muslim Mission". I was three years old, when my family migrated from India to Tanzania.

I completed my elementary study in Tanzania and then privately studied Arabic and Farsi languages with my late father and a scholar in Dar-es-salaam.

In 1972, at the age of 15, I went to Qum for religious studies in the Hawza 'Ilmiyya. I studied there for ten years under various teachers till 1982 when I returned back to my homeland, India.

For my MA in History, see below under migration to Canada.

2-How did you go to Canada ?

Immigration
Staying

In 1983, I migrated to Vancouver, Canada, by the invitation of the Shia Muslim Community of British Columbia and worked there as the Imam (religious guide) of the community till 1991.

During my stay in Vancouver (Canada) in 80s as the Imam of the Shia Community, I got an opportunity to join the Simon Fraser University (Vancouver, Canada) in its Master program. This was indeed an unexpected gift from the Almighty Allah. They accepted my published works as sufficient for admission into the MA program without any prior degree(s) or certificate(s). Al-hamdu lil lah, I was able to complete my MA thesis and attained my Master degree in History.

From July 1991 to July 1996, I became the Executive Director of Islamic Education & Information Centre, Toronto, Canada.

From July 1996 till the present, I hold the position of the Religious Guide & Imam of the Ja'fari Islamic Centre, the biggest Shia centre in Canada.

3- scientific works:

Books & Magazines

Publications & newspapers,

Articles

Book:

1. *An Explanatory Translation of the Qur'an*, vols. 1-3 published 1983-1984. (This covers half of the Qur'an; the remaining three volumes, unfortunately could not be completed till recently and we hope to get the whole Qur'an published soon before coming Ramadan.)

2. *Imam Husain: the Saviour of Islam*. 1984.

3. *An Introduction of the Islamic Shari'ah*. 1992. Also translated & published into Italian by Jami'atuz Zahra, Qum.

4. *Khums: An Islamic Tax*. 1984. Also translated & published into Italian by Jami'atuz Zahra, Qum.

5. *Ritual & Spiritual Purity*. 1989. Also translated & published into Swahili by Bilal Muslim Mission, Tanzania.

6. *Ritual Purity for Women*. 1985.
7. *Marriage & Morals in Islam*. 1990. Also translated into Indonesian & Spanish.
8. *Writing An Islamic Will*. 1993.
9. *Hajj: the Pilgrimage to Mecca*. 1996.
10. *Shi'ism: Imamate & Wilayate*. 1999. Also translated into Japanese.
11. *Hijab: A Muslim Woman's Dress*. 2004.
12. *Islam: Faith, Practice & History*. 2004.
13. *Business Ethics in Islam*. 2007
14. A series of 5 booklets on Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.):
 1. Muhammad: the Messenger of God; 2. Peace & Jihad in Islam; 3. How Did Islam Spread? by sword or by conversion; 4. Polygamy & Marriages of the Prophet; 5. Justice Peace & Prophet Muhammad. Published in 2007.
15. Infallibility of the Prophets in the Qur'an.

Articles:

I have written many articles. A partial list is as follows:

1. An Introduction to Islam.
2. An Introduction to Shia Islam.
3. Jesus: the Prophet of Islam.
4. Imam Husain's Mission: Reforming the Ummah. 1992
5. Freedom of Expression: only a right or also a responsibility? 2006
6. Samarra, O Samarra; Your Golden Dome Shall Shine Again. 2006
7. The Last Messenger's Last Message. 2006
8. Salat al-Jum'a / Friday Prayer: a few reminders. 2006
9. Proposal & Engagement: a few pointers. 2006
10. Optional Conditions in An Islamic Marriage Contract. 2006
11. Organ Donation & Transplantation. 1993; 2006
12. Gender Apartheid or Respected Interaction? 2006
13. Respectable Interaction or Mixed Gathering. 2006
14. The Shias of Lebanon (1). 1993; 2006
15. The Shias of Lebanon (2). 1993; 2006
16. Brotherhood, Courage & Loyalty in 'Abbas bin 'Ali. 2006
17. Basic Fasting Guidelines. 2007
18. What After Ramadan? 2007
19. Health Care in Islam. 2007
20. Al-Fajr as-Sadiq: A New Perspective. 199?
21. *The Da Vinci Code*: from a Muslim's Perspective. 2007
22. Apostacy in Islam. 1997; 1998.
23. Ghadir & the Orientalists. 1991
24. The Story of the Crescent. unpublished.

25. Ababil Air Force. (the story of the Surah "Fil" for children, unpublished).

26. Zakat in the Shia Fiqh.

27. On the Zabiha of Ahlul Kitab. 1996

4- Religious activities:

Teaching

Speeches

Other activities

Lectures & Other Activities:

I have had many travels to various countries for giving lecture. Besides Canada and the USA, I have also lectured in Trinidad, Guyana, Australia, UK, Dubai, Pakistan, Tanzania and Kenya.

I have also appeared in a TV program of our centre broadcast all over Canada entitled as "Islam in Focus" which ran for half-an-hour on first Saturdays of every month. This was temporarily suspended for reasons beyond our control, and we hope to relaunch it on a weekly basis from November 2008.

I was the founding editor of the quarterly magazine, The Right Path, published by Ahl al-Bayt Assembly of Canada from 1992 to 1998. Unfortunately, it was discontinued due to my illness in 1999.

I give speeches at the Ja'fari Islamic on weekly program (Thursday night and Friday - Jum'a khutbas) which are broadcast live also through internet and are heard/seen by many viewers at www.jaffari.org or www.islamicentre.org The latter website has an archive from all our lectures at the centre.

In addition to the weekly programs, I talk at various special occasions celebrated and commemerated by our community. We also host about 200 visits from high schools students of non-Muslim Toronto schools during the academic year, where I give a talk on Islam for 15 minutes and then we

give the opportunity to the students to ask questions about Islam and the Muslims. We also hold interfaith gatherings at our centre.

I also have weekly classes of a more advanced level between the months of Shawal to Eid al-Adha, and between Rabi ath-Thani to Rajab. In these classes, we select a subject and dedicate the whole semester on that subject. Some of the subjects covered are: Infallibility ('ismah) of the Prophets in the Qur'an; Islamic Theology (using the Sharh Bab-e Hadi 'Ashar as a text); a look at Nahjul Balagha (in 10 sessions); A study of Risalatul Huquq (in 8 sessions).

Besides lecturing and teaching, I am also involved in providing guidance and counseling to individuals on their personal problems, and for couples in their marital issues.

I am also involved in the full time Islamic school known as "Sadiq Islamic School" which was established in 1994. Its program starts from pre-school to Grade 8 levels; and presently has 300+ students.

5- How many people became Shia follower by your guidance?

In what manner
How many
Previous faiths

This is a difficult question to answer since I don't keep a record for this. I know that many people hear my talks in person (in Toronto) and on line (in difference parts of the world), they communicate with me through mail or email, read my books and publications, and are inspired.

I just pray that may Almighty Allah give me the success (tafwiq) to be useful in the way of spreading the faith and religion of Ahl al-Bayt. It is for us to work; the results are in the hands of Allah.

6- What is your opinion about the tendency of people to Islam and Shiism in the Western community. Specially in Canada?

Unfortunately, due to the political tension between the West and the Middle Eastern region, the media and anti-Islamic forces (especially the Fundamentalist Christians) have intensified their attack on Islam and Muslims. This has made our task for difficult and challenging. But we are hopeful; many times adverse propaganda against Islam becomes a blessing in disguise (many converts came to Islam because they had hatred towards Islam and wanted to study themselves about this 'evil' religion - and then their search for information led them to the true nature of Islam and they ended up becoming Muslims. Makaru wa makarallah...)

7- Please explain the detail of some religious trips to other countries, or cities, and the results?

I have mostly travelled during the months of Muharram and Safar intensively to various cities and countries for lecturing, and have talked on a variety of topics. Hopefully, we have increased the level of their Islamic understanding, and helped them in improving their religious life.

8- Do you have any cooperation with other Muslim centers (Sunni or Shia)? How?

In Toronto, there are about ten Shia centers and we have a good working relationship with them. Occasionally, we also try to hold some programs together.

9- Please give a message to Muslim youths around the world.

In this world of easy and fast communication, there is no more excuse of saying that we don't have access to sources in our

languages. So use the new tools to enhance your religious knowledge and improve your spiritual life. However, remember that this new tool (internet) has *negative side-effect* attached to it. So be cautious in what you see and what you read. Even on the positive side of information, be careful and use the sources after verifying its authenticity.

The social ills of the Western society and its present financial crisis clearly portrays that peace and tranquility cannot be bought by dollars - that also on credit! Real peace and tranquility comes with peace in our mind and heart; and that only happens by connecting ourselves to the Almighty, through Prophet Muhammad and his blessed Ahl al-Bayt.

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