

Safinah

An International Quarterly Journal of Islamic Studies
Vol.3 , No.9, January-February 2010

Published by: Naba Cultural Organization
Managing Director: Muhammad H. Shahri
Editor- in- Chief: Hamid Farnagh

Editorial Board (alphabetical order):

Seyed Muhammad Azizuddin Husain Hamedani - <i>Prof. of Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi</i>	<i>India</i>
Husain BeikBaghban - <i>Prof. of Strasbourg University</i>	<i>France</i>
Ahmad Mahdavi Damghani - <i>Prof. of Harvard University, Mass.</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>
Farideh Mahdavi Damghani - <i>Researcher in Medieval literature Studies</i>	<i>Iran</i>
Muhammad Ja'far Mo'in Far - <i>Prof. of University of Paris</i>	<i>France</i>
Mansoor Pahlavan - <i>Prof. of Tehran University</i>	<i>Iran</i>
Mahmoud Sadri - <i>Prof. of Texas Woman's University</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>
Hasan Taroni - <i>Associate Prof. of Islam's World Encyclopedia</i>	<i>Iran</i>

Administrative

Manager:

Mina Oskouei

Consultation Board:

Abdul Hossein Taleie,
Mahdi Aghareb Parast,
Ali Reza Ghavidel,
Muhammad Aghareb
Parast

**Co-operators with this
issue:**

Jalil Dorrani, Husain
Eshghi, Hasan Karami,
Abbas Sokout, Hamid
Shahedi, Ali Reza
Karimi

Address:

P. O. Box 15655 – 377,
Tehran – Iran.

Tel & Fax:

+ 9821-77504683

E- mail:

info@nabacultural.org,
nabamobin@yahoo.com

Distribution center:

3rd floor, No. 26, Adibi
Alley, Shabestari St.,
Shariati Ave,
Tehran, Iran.

Author's Guidelines

All researchers, scholars, and those who are interested in Islamic issues are invited to provide us with their academic researches, findings, and articles to be published in Safinah. To this end, considering the following points is recommended:

1. *The contributions should be original resulted from academic studies and researches.*

2. *The articles have not been published earlier and are not currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.*

3. *Articles should contain author's name, academic status, country and living city.*

4. *The editors of Safinah retain their full authority to bring the accepted papers in conformity with the Safinah house style, and edit them for length and clarity.*

5. *The length of articles should be 3000 words (10 pages) at maximum.*

6. *Regarding the academic nature of this journal, using abusive or insulting language in essays or articles towards opposite thoughts or views should be highly avoided.*

7. *The articles will not be returned.*

8. *The authors are responsible for the accuracy of the articles.*

9. *Using parts or complete articles of Safinah by citing the source is allowed.*



Table of Content

<u>WHY DO WE BELIEVE AND PRACTICE RELIGION? HAMID FARNAGH</u>	4
<u>PURITY (TAHARAH): AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION</u>	6
<u>SENTENCES OF ALI, SON-IN-LAW OF MAHOMET, AND HIS FOURTH SUCCESSOR- SIMON OCKLEY</u>	17
<u>DE'BEL'S SECRET-MARYAM KALHOR</u>	43
<u>WHEN ALL GOOD DEEDS ARE COUNTED AS "WORTHLESS..."-JAVAD MOHADDESI</u>	50
<u>TRAINING OF CHILDREN-ABBAS PASANDIDEH</u>	51
<u>A SACRIFICE STORY-NARGES REZAIAN</u>	58
<u>IMAM MAHDI IN THE QURAN-REZA HEMYARI</u>	59
<u>GOOD DEEDS FROM HOLY QURAN'S POINT OF VIEW- FATEMEH YAZDANDOOST</u>	64
<u>ETHICS FROM THE WORDS OF THE PROPHET-SHYKH AL-SADUQ</u>	69
<u>A DISPUTABLE QUESTION:GOD'S "JUSTICE" AND "MISFORTUNES"- HUSSEIN TALEIE</u>	81
<u>ABOUT NAHJ AL BALAGHA- MANSOOR PAHLAVAN</u>	89

Note:

The abbreviations (*s*) and (*as*) following certain names in this article stand for "*Salawat Allah alaihe va aleh*" (*May the blessings and peace of God be upon him and his family*) and "*alaihe/alaihuma/alaihem salam* (*upon him/her/them be peace*), respectively. Their omission in certain circumstances may be accidental or for fluency, but in any case may God, the Praised and Glorified, continue to shower his blessings and peace upon these personalities until the end of the world.

Editorial

Why do we believe and practice religion?

*S*o keep your face set enquiringly towards the true religion; God's natural handiwork along which lines He has patterned mankind. There is no way to alter God's creation. That is the correct religion, though most people do not realize it.

(The holy Quran, 30:30)

Why are the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam despite some differences – are similar or common in sources and principles? What kind of factors separates them from Hinduism or Buddhism?

The key components of the Divine religions are:

1. To consider the Almighty God as the Creator and Sustainer of the entire created world.
2. The Divine Justice
3. Religion's ultimate goals, teachings, and traditions,
4. Concepts of the Divine
5. The Sacred people (the holy Prophet, the Imams, the disciples), texts, objects, and spaces

By a study the above subjects, we find out that the essential knowledge and principles of religion(s) are natural and intrinsic in the human beings. On the other hand, religion affects our lives in different ways. It shows that religion is a powerful force in our daily activities:

- 1.It forms a basis for a wide range of moral codes.
- 2.It affects the public/private lives of people, through religions based acts of the governments.
- 3.It can influence the behavior/action of the nations on the world stage.
- 4.It is the motive of the acts and conducts of many individuals. Since the religious issues are so naturally acting in our public and private lives, it is impossible to neglect this important subject.

Our respected writers have talked about different aspects of religions for you dear readers.

Hamid Farnagh

Salaat
Purity (taharah): an essential condition

Muhammad Biabani Oskouei

***Abstract:** the present article is the second part of Salaat, its prerequisites and how tos. In the article of this issue, a couple of important parts of salaat which can be considered as prerequisites are introduced which are: Purity, Azaan, Takbiratul ehraam and invocation for attention.*

¹ Also known as Namaz or the 'daily prayers

² translator: Jalil Dorrani

Purity

As *Salaat* means to stand before the Almighty, seeking closeness by the pious servants towards their Lord and the ascension of the believers, there are some essential conditions in it, which should not be ignored or overlooked by the praying one.

One of these conditions, when the slave is being honored by being in the presence of His Master, is that he should purify himself from all sorts of filth and presents himself before His Lord with clean clothes and pure body. More importantly, he should perform either of the ritual cleanliness, viz. *Wuzu* or *Ghusl*. If neither of them is possible, then he must do *Tayammum*. In addition, as there have been special orders from divinity for these three forms of purity, it is obligatory that we perform them by keeping all their essentialities into consideration and apart from the divine orders; we must not include anything from our will in their performance.

The Holy Prophet (*as*) says,

“There are two things for which I do not like to include anybody in their performance. Wuzu for it is from my prayers and my charity.”¹

Ameerul Momineen (*as*) while performing *wuzu*, did not permit anybody to pour water for him. Somebody questioned him regarding this, he (*as*) replied, “I do not like to include anybody in my worship (of Allah). Allah the Almighty says,

“Then whosoever desires to meet his Lord, then he must act righteously and not include anybody in the worship of his Lord.”²

Imam Reza (*as*) says,

¹ Khesaal, p. 33

² Kahf: 110/Wasaaelush Shia, vol. 1, p. 477

“Here, I am performing wuzu for salaah. And it is worship which I do not like to share with anybody.”¹

We shall talk about worship and sincerity later. Here, we shall suffice to state that by itself, *wuzu* is not obligatory. Therefore, if somebody performs *wuzu* with the intention of its being obligatory, without keeping in mind any of the desired acts to be performed with it, then such a *wuzu* is void and an innovation. But because *wuzu* is recommended and an act loved by Allah, therefore, if somebody performs it for gaining nearness to Allah (without the intention of any action), then such a *wuzu* is correct. Consequently, he can perform *salaah* and all other actions of worship for which *wuzu* is a must.

Azaan And Eqaamah

Both *Azaan* and *Eqaamah* are considered to be highly recommended and emphasized acts in *salaah*. Numerous traditions have underlined their significance and importance. *Azaan* and *Eqaamah*, with their profound meanings and concepts, prepare a worshipper to acquire proximity to the Almighty in the way of worship and ascend to great heights. The Holy Prophet (*peace be upon him and his progeny*) advised Abuzar (Allah be satisfied with him) thus:

“Allah always takes pride and boasts about three individuals to his angels: (Among them is the) One who gets up in the desert without food and water but says his Azaan and Eqaamah and only then performs his salaah. Your Lord says to the angels, “Look at My slave how he is worshipping Me when he cannot see anybody other than Me.”

Thereafter, seventy thousand angels come forward and perform salaah behind him and seek forgiveness for him till tomorrow. O’ Abuzar! When a person is hungry and thirsty on the earth, and does wuzu or tayammum and performs salaah after reading the

¹ Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 21

Azaan and Eqaamah, Allah orders the angels to pray behind him in rows in such a way that he cannot be spotted. They bow when he bows and prostrate when he prostrates and say 'Aameen' when he invokes.

*O' Abuzar! If somebody says only the Eqaamah but forsakes the Azaan, only two angels perform the salaah with him."*¹

Imam Husain (as) narrates,

"We were sitting in the mosque when the caller for prayers (moazzin) went on the minaret and cried, 'Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar.' On hearing this call, Ameerul Momineen (as) wept profusely due to which even we began weeping. When the moazzin completed his Azaan, Ali (as) said, "Do you know what did the moazzin say?" We said, "Allah, His Messenger and his successor know the best."

He said,

"If you knew what he said, certainly you would have laughed less and cried more. The call of Allahu Akbar bears a few meanings:

One meaning of Allahu Akbar denotes the eternity, everlastingness, knowledge, power, strength, benevolence, endowment, greatness and honor of Allah the Almighty. By saying Allahu Akbar, the moazzin implies, 'Allah is He to whom belong the creation and the command. He brings everything into creation by His Will. All that the creation possesses is due to Him. Also, its return is unto Him. He is the First, before everything, from eternity. He is the Last, after everything, and is Everlasting. He is Evident, more than anything else, but cannot be comprehended. He is the Hidden, more than anything else, but is sans limits. (In other words, His being apparent is more evident than the

¹ Wasaaleush Shia, vol.5, p. 383

manifestation of anything else and His concealment is more hidden than anything else).

The second meaning of Allahu Akbar is:

He is the All Knowing and All Aware. That is, He knows what has occurred and what will occur before its occurrence.

The third meaning of Allahu Akbar is:

He is the All Powerful and commands authority over everything. His dominion extends over whatever He wishes. He is Strong means that He has power over His creation and rules them. His Strength is His Own and His Power is dominant and established over all things. When He desires to bring something into existence, He just commands 'Be' and it is.

The fourth meaning of Allahu Akbar connotes His Forbearance and Honor. He is so Forbearing as if He does not know (our mistakes) at all. His is so Forgiving as if He has not seen (our sins) at all. He conceals our transgression as if there had been no obedience.

He does not hasten to punish or reprimand because of the aforementioned attributes.

Another meaning of Allahu Akbar is:

He is Generous and Munificent. His endowments are plenty and His actions honorable.

The fifth meaning of Allahu Akbar is:

He can neither be described nor does He possess any how-ness (kaifiyyah). When somebody says Allahu Akbar it is as if he is confessing that Allah is too Great than to be comprehended by the attributes ascribed unto Him by the describers. These so-called describers of attributes do so according to their own whims and imaginations and not in correspondence with His

Greatness. Allah is much Higher than that the describers comprehend His attributes.

Yet another connotation of Allahu Akbar is that Allah is the Greatest and Highest. He is Needless and can dispense with the actions (or existence) of His creatures.

The statement 'I witness that there is no god but Allah' is an announcement that testimony without recognition from the heart is impossible. The announcer confesses:

I know that there is no god but Allah and every deity besides Him is false. I hereby make a verbal admission and acknowledge from the depth of my heart that there is no god except Him. I also witness that no other god can provide refuge but Him and there is no asylum from evils, mischief and corruption except in His Holy Being.

And the testimony, 'I witness that there is no god but Allah' for the second time suggests:

I testify that there is no guide except Allah and none can acquire guidance in religion except through Him. I take Allah as Witness that there is no deity but Him. I take the inhabitants of the skies and the earth and everything in between them, among the angels, mankind, mountains, trees, wild animals, reptiles, in short, all existents of the world of creation, as witnesses, that I bear testimony that there is no creator except Allah. Also, there is no sustainer, no deity, none who can harm, none who can benefit, none who can straiten things, none who can grant salvation, no bestower, no restrainer, no adviser, none who can cure, none who can advance matters or postpone them, except Allah the Almighty. Creation and command is only in His authority. All the goodness is only in His hands. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

And the announcement, 'I witness that Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is the messenger of Allah', means:

I bear witness that certainly there is no god but Allah, Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is His slave, His messenger and His chosen one. He has sent him (peace be upon him and his progeny) for the guidance of the entire mankind and conveyed him the true religion. He will make his religion dominate all ideologies even if the polytheists detest it. And I take all the messengers and prophets (peace be upon them) as witnesses, so also the angels and the entire mankind, residing in the heavens and the earth, that Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is the master of the first and the last.

And the announcement, 'I witness that Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is the messenger of Allah', for the second time implies: I testify that everybody needs Allah, the One, the Subduer, and the Needless from His servants, creatures and entire mankind. I witness that Allah the Almighty sent Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) as a giver of glad tidings, a Warner, to invite them towards Allah with His permission and be a shining lamp for them. So, whoever denies or refutes him or does not believe in him (peace be upon him and his progeny), Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) will throw him in hell fire, which shall be his eternal abode as he will never get respite from it.

The call, 'Hasten for prayers', indicates:

Hurry for your best deed, to the invitation of your Lord, towards forgiveness and pardon of your God, to extinguish the fire that you have kindled and to free your neck from the shackles that you have cast around it. So that Allah may erase your evil deeds, forgive your sins, convert your misdeeds to good actions, for He is the Master, the Honorable, Possessor of the great obligation. And indeed He has permitted us, the Muslim society, to enter in His service and to be in His presence.

And the call, 'Hasten for prayers' for the second time, implies:

Stand up to invoke Allah, your Lord. Present your needs to your Lord, seek from Him through His words, and ask for His intercession through them. Increase your remembrance (dhikr), your qunoot (the supplication in the second unit of prayers), your bowing, your prostration, your humility, your submissiveness; raise your hands to ask Him, for certainly, He has permitted us for all these.

And the call 'Hasten to success', connotes:

Perform and hasten to the act that will last forever and will never be destroyed, a safety that will never be annihilated, a life whose clue can never be found by death, a bounty that will never end, a kingdom that will never finish, a happiness that will never turn to grief, an acquaintance that will never be a stranger, a light that will never see darkness, a salvation that knows no bounds, a ceaseless splendor, self-sufficiency that will never see want, a health that will never know disease, a honor that will never witness disgrace, a strength that will never turn into weakness, a glory that will remain unsurpassed, and hasten to the joys of both this world as well as the hereafter.

And the call, 'Hasten to success', for the second time indicates:

Hasten to all the aforementioned bounties i.e. a great honor, a huge obligation, a lofty bounty, an enormous deliverance, an eternal munificence in the neighborhood of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) in the abode of truth and righteousness near the All Powerful King¹.

Again, the announcement, Allahu Akbar, suggests:

¹Shaykh Sadooq after narrating this tradition says, 'The narrator of this tradition has not mentioned the virtues of the statement, 'Hasten to the best of deeds', on account of dissimulation (taqaiyyah).

Allah the Almighty is Greater and Higher than that anyone among His creatures can understand the bounties available with Him for His obedient servant. A servant who possessed the following traits- obeyed His commands, worshipped Him, heeded His warnings, was engrossed in His remembrance, loved Him, was contented and satisfied with Him, relied on Him, feared Him, pinned his hopes on Him, and fully submitted and surrendered completely to His decree and destiny.

The announcement, Allahu Akbar for the second time indicates:

Allah is Greater, Higher and Majestic than that anybody can fathom the extent of His honor towards His servants. Or understand His chastisement for His enemies, the level of His pardon, forgiveness and bounties to the one who answers His call and that of His messenger (peace be upon him and his progeny), and the level of His punishment, wrath and reprimand for those who deny and refute Him.

Then the call ‘There is no god except Allah’ means:

For Allah is the clear proof against the people through His messenger (peace be upon him and his progeny), His message, His explanation and His call. And He is Majestic than for anybody to possess any argument against Him. So whoever answers Him, for him is light and honor. And one who denies Him, then indeed Allah is Needless of the universe and He is the quickest in accounting.

And the call, ‘Indeed the prayer has been established’, in the Eqaamah, suggests:

The time for visitation, whispering, fulfillment of needs, reaching the desire, uniting with Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) and His

honor, forgiveness, satisfaction and forgiveness, has indeed arrived.”¹

If one pays a little attention to the above tradition and deliberates over its various aspects, he will understand the importance and significance of *salaat*, to a considerable extent, the pillar of religion. Whoever utters the sentences of the *Azaan* and *Eqaamah* in the light of their aforementioned interpretation, will find his heart full of divine grace and honour and Allah’s manifestation in his heart will intensify with every passing moment. Saying the *Azaan* and *Eqaamah* is in fact the remembrance of Allah. And we have already stated that Allah the Almighty assures, “You remember Me, I will remember You.” It is evident that when the Almighty remembers His servant, His Power, Greatness and Kingdom encompass him. Consequently, all his thoughts are focused only on Him, and for the sake of his heart’s contentment, he prepares himself for *salaat*, quiet conversation with his Lord, and the fulfillment of his needs.

“Know! Only with the remembrance of Allah do the hearts gain contentment.” (The holy Quran, 13: 28)

Takbiratul Ehraam & The Invocation Of Attention

When the worshipper finishes with his purification, *Azaan* and *Eqaamah* and prepares himself for the adoration of his Lord, by saying “*Allahu Akbar*”- an element of *salaat*, he imposes on himself its prohibitions. That is, till he does not terminate his prayers with the *salaam*, he prohibits certain things for himself, among them being turning away his attention from Allah the Almighty. And as *Takbeeratul Ehraam* marks the commencement of prayers, the worshipper while reciting it, should at least intend that whatever he will do during the

¹ Maanil Akhbaar, p. 38-41

performance of this action, will be only and only for the obedience of Allah.

Insofar as he continues with this intention in his prayers and does not divert his concentration from it, he will find the reality of prayers and realize the worship of Allah the Almighty in himself. In fact, this only is the spirit and substance of prayers. Before uttering the *Takbeeratul Ehraam*, it is worthy that he recites the invocation of attention (*doa-e-tawajjoh*) which, in the narration of Abdullah Ibn Jafar Himyari (received in the *tawqee'* of Imam-e-Zamana (*as*) is as follows:

“I turn my face towards the One Who has created the heavens and the earth, being upright and submissive, on the nation of Ibrahim and the nation of Muhammad and the guidance of Ameerul Momineen. And I am not of the polytheists. Surely, my prayers, my sacrifice, my life and my death are (only) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. There is no partner unto Him. And thus have I been commanded. And I am from those who submit. O Allah! Make me from those who submit.”¹

How great it is if somebody utters these words, synchronizes his heart with his tongue, and gives his words a practical shape in its truest sense, really turns his heart towards Allah, and removes all other thoughts from his mind. Yes! How good indeed is the servant who, at any given moment of his life, does not do anything or commit any deed against the wishes of his Master and Lord and even goes to the extent of dying in His cause. If at all he does commit some sin or transgression, he immediately begs Him for forgiveness and seeks His refuge. May Allah make us, and all the friends of the Ahle Bayt (*as*), from those who submit to His wishes and may He not turn His attention away from us even for a moment.

¹ Al-Ehtejaaj, vol. 2, p.7; Wasaaelush Shia, vol. 6, p.25

SENTENCES OF ALI,
SON-IN-LAW OF
MAHOMET,
AND
HIS FOURTH
SUCCESSOR

Simon Ockley

(1678-1720)

SENTENCES OF ALI,
SON-IN-LAW OF MAHOMET,
AND
HIS FOURTH SUCCESSOR¹

[London: Bernard Lintot, 1717]

Edited and Annotated by
Muhammad-Reza FakhR-Rohani
University of Qom

¹Notice: “to be the Forth successor” referring to Imam Ali is not among the beliefs of Shia, but to be faithful to the original document we bring the complete text without any alternation or change. In this documents if there are some mistakes regarding the spelling and grammar, all, as what appeared in the original document.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to my colleague Mr. Abdol-Hoseyn Taleie for suggesting me to observe *al-Mawsem* 71-72 (2009) which contains a facsimile of Simon Ockley's volume. I am also grateful to Professor David C. Greetham who took trouble to provide me with the 1892 reprint edition of the present book, published by Cambridge University Press. It is time to thank my wife for providing a very fitting environment at home to attend to this religio-academic endeavor.

Preface

Human history has had several magnificent personalities who have impressed not only their own nations but have served as role models for other nations as well. Such personalities have been great and liberal thinkers, for exerting influence on other nations necessitate having a broad-minded and international outlook. No doubt, Imam `Ali b. Abi Talib was one such matchless figure.

It is a pity not only for Imam `Ali himself but for the mankind that he was not allowed to discharge his priceless teachings and enlightening discourses. Born *ca.* 599 AD, he was raised in the house of his cousin the Prophet Muhammad. He was reportedly the first man to embrace and accept Islam when yet a child. Being exceptionally born within the Kaaba, and constantly receiving the private and precious teachings of the Prophet Muhammad made Imam `Ali such a sublime personality that ordinary human minds are still short of appreciating the depth of his penetrating thoughts. He was so staunch in his belief and so brave that he made the most reliable companion for the Prophet Muhammad in helping him disseminate the global message of Islam.

No monarch or emperor ever in the world could live the modest and simple life of Imam `Ali. While he was the sole ruler of the whole Muslim world, his main food consisted of barley bread and salt to feel the hardships of the poorest people of his territory. No ruler can claim to follow Imam `Ali in being so attentive to the citizenship rights of the

religious minorities. When a ring was grabbed from the leg of a Jewish girl in a remote part of his Islamic empire, he announced in a hot sermon that if a sensible man perishes out of the shame of such citizenship insecurity, he must be blamed.

To conclude, the Prophet Muhammad rightly described Imam `Ali, inter alia, in that nobody has ever known Imam `Ali except God and himself. This symbol of justice and humanity was martyred at the age of 63, barely about five years after his caliphate, in the central mosque of Kufa, Iraq, in the dawn of 19 Ramadan 40 AH/ 23 January 661 and breathed his last just two days later. His sanctuary has long been a site of Shiite pilgrimage in Najaf, Iraq. [1]

Although the tyrant Umayyad and Abbasid rulers deliberately prevented people from conveying the merits of Imam `Ali, let alone transcribing and transmitting his discourses and aphorisms, we are proud to have received, out of a truly boundless occasion of his wisdom, just some limited collections of the remaining pearls of Imam `Ali. There have been several collections of the discourses, sermons, letters, and aphorisms of Imam `Ali. Of these collections, the *Nahj al-Balaghah* [The Path of Eloquence], ed. al-Sharif al-Radi (359-406 AH/ 970-1015) and *Ghurur al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim* [The Finest of the Wisdoms and the Pearls of Discourses], ed. `Abd al-Wahid b. Muhammad Mahfouz b. `Abd al-Wahid al-Amdi (d. 510 AH/1116) are just two more prominent texts. [2] However, historical records indicate that the earliest collection containing 100 aphorisms of Imam `Ali was made by Abu `Uthman `Amr b. Bahr al-Jahiz (d. 255 AD/ 869). The aphorisms translated by Simon Ockley in the present volume resemble the short quotations of Imam `Ali collected at the end of the *Nahj al-Balaghah* and/or in *Ghurur al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim*. Notwithstanding, Ockley never mentioned the exact title of the "Authentick Arabick Manuscript" which he found at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. [3]

Simon Ockley was a British Arabist and Orientalist. Born in Exeter in 1678, he studied at Queen's College, Cambridge, attained the fellowship of Jesus College, and became vicar of Swavesey. Ockley believed that it was a requisite for any serious scholar of theology to

obtain a knowledge of Oriental languages and literatures; he mentioned this point in the preface to his first book, *Introductio ad Linguas Orientales* (1706) in which he stressed on the significance of this study. In 1711 he became professor of Arabic at the University of Cambridge. His chief work, besides several others, was *The History of the Saracens* (2 vols, 1708-1718, with the third volume published posthumously in 1757). Simon Ockley breathed his last at Swavesey on 9 August 1720.

Republication of the present work serves several aims. The readership of the present volume can be divided to several groups. To the Muslim reader, it indicates that the aphorisms of Imam `Ali proved so impressive and thought-provoking that a Christian scholar like Simon Ockley in the 18th century rendered it into English. Those Muslim, and particularly non-English-speaking, teachers and students who are concerned with English language and literature can infer valuable lessons from it, both linguistic and religious. It is a sample of an 18th-century translation of sagacious and wise sayings rendered into English. To prove beneficial for this purpose, only some slight orthographical modifications have been incorporated, e.g. instances of "long 's' " have been replaced by its present-day character, viz., "s". No attempt has been made to change or update the linguistic features of the 18th-century English which sound archaic today, e.g., "-eth" for the third person singular -s. [4] They have been retained intact so as to mark fidelity. Further to this, the very text is a mark of a peaceful ground for a constructive and cross-cultural exchange between the Islamic culture, with a purely Shiite coloring in specific, and the Western culture, as found expression in the 18th-century England. The 1892 republication of Ockley's book by Cambridge University Press endorses the point that authentic Islamic texts can make their ways into the most prestigious Western centers of learning and scholarship.

The present endeavor conveys a lot to the typical Western, particularly Anglophonic, audience. It records that we Muslims remain appreciative of the sincere efforts of a past British scholar who introduced to his nation some of the sublime percepts included in the aphorisms of Imam `Ali. Perhaps the very book might prove that not all Western scholars could be regarded as destroyers of other nations and plunderers of

the cultural heritages of other peoples. It follows that judged fairly, figures such as Simon Ockley are appreciable for bridging the cultures in the remote past when it was neither affordable nor that much practical to come up with a sound, unprejudiced, and reliable picture of the Islamic, especially Shiite, beliefs and teachings.

NOTES:

1. Books on the biography of Imam `Ali in such Islamicate languages as Arabic, Persian, and Urdu are legion. However, for a brief overview of the life and times of Imam `Ali in English, readers can see A. Sachedina, "Ali ibn Abi Talib", in J. L. Esposito, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, vol. 1 (4 vols., New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and S. H. M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'i Islam* (London: Longman, and Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1979; repr. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000). A collection of Imam `Ali's discourses in English translation is also available in S. H. M. Jafri, *Political and Moral Vision of Islam: As Explained by `Ali B. Abi Talib* (Lahore, Pakistan: Institute of Islamic Culture, 2001).

2. For a brief overview in this regard, see the introduction to the Persian translation of the *Nahj al-Balaghah*, tr. M-R. Ashtiyani and M.-J. Emami (3 vols., 13th imp., Qom: Madrasah al-Imam `Ali, 1381 Sh/ 2002).

3. The original title page of the work indicates that it was published as Simon Ockley, *Sentences of `Ali, Son in Law of Mahomet, and His Fourth Successor*, Translated from an Authentick Arabick Manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, London: Bernard Lintot, 1717. Its facsimile version was reprinted in *Al-Mawsem* 71-72 (2009): 33-77. S. Ockley's book also appeared in a reprint edition by Cambridge University Press in 1982. Readers must be aware that "Mahomet" was an earlier mis-spelt form of the name "Muhammad". For a brief historical discussion of the different spellings of the name "Muhammad" in English texts, see M. G. Carter, "Arabic Literature," in D. C. Greetham, ed., *Scholarly Publishing: A Guide to Research* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1995), p. 564.

4. For those not well-versed in English linguistic discussions, relatively short and accessible overviews of the linguistic features of the 18th-century English can be found, in addition to the relevant websites, in a number of scholarly books on the subject, e.g., R. W. Burchfield, *The English Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); D. Freeborn, *From Old English to Standard English* (3rd ed., Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); T. McArthur, ed., *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); and D. Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

SENTENCES
OF
A L I
SON-IN-LAW OF
MAHOMET,
AND HIS
FOURTH SUCCESSOR.

Translated from an Authentick *Arabick* Manuscript in the *Bodleian* Library at *Oxford*, by SIMON OCKLEY, *B. D.*, Professor of *Arabick* in the University of Cambridge, and Chaplain to the Right Honourable Robert Earl of Oxford, and Earl Mortimer.

LONDON,

Printed for Bernard Lintot, between the *Temple-Gates* in *Fleet Street*.
1717. [Price Sixpence.]

TO THOMAS FREKE
OF HANNINGTON, WILTS, *ESQ.*

SIR, I PRESUME TO PRESENT YOU WITH THESE FEW SENTENCES, AT WHOSE REQUEST I TRANSLATED THEM OUT OF THE *ARABICK* MANUSCRIPT. YOUR APPROBATION OF THEM, PREVENTS MY SAYING ANY THING MORE TO YOU CONCERNING THEM.

ONLY GIVE ME LEAVE TO ADD THIS, THAT THERE ARE FEW PERSONS OF YOUR GENEROUS TEMPER, WHO, AS YOU ARE PLEASED TO SAY, VALUE THE *ARABIANS* PURELY UPON THE SCORE OF THEIR *SINCERITY*, AND THEIR BEING ENTIRELY *IN EARNEST* BOTH IN THEIR WORDS AND ACTIONS. CERTAINLY THEY WERE VERY MUCH SO; AND IT WERE HEARTILY TO BE WISHED, THAT WE WHO DESPISE THEM, COULD LEARN, AT LEAST IN THAT RESPECT, TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE.

GIVE ME LEAVE, SIR, HERE TO ACKNOWLEDGE MY OBLIGATION TO YOU, FOR YOUR KIND ASSISTANCE, IN PROMOTING MY *SECOND VOLUME OF THE HISTORY OF THE SARACENS*. YOU WERE PLEAS'D FIRST TO INVITE ME TO THAT WORK; AND THE PUBLIC WILL BE INDEBTED TO YOU, AT LEAST, THAT IT WAS DONE SO SOON, IF NOT THAT IT WAS EVER DONE AT ALL.

I KNOW, SIR, YOU HATE FLATTERY, AS INCONSISTENT WITH THAT SIMPLICITY OF MANNERS WHICH YOU SO JUSTLY ADMIRE IN THE *ARABIANS*; WHEREFORE I ADD NO MORE, LEST YOU SHOULD MISTAKE ME.

I AM, SIR,
YOUR MOST OBLIGED,
HUMBLE SERVANT,

SIMON OCKLEY.

THE PREFACE.

If Providence hath removed us to a greater Distance from the Influence of those Genial Rays which ripen the Wits of the Eastern Nations, it hath made us abundant Amends, by indulging us in this Conceit, that we are Wiser than all the rest of the World besides.

There are some sorts of pleasing Madness, which it would be Cruelty to cure a Man of. By bringing him to his Senses, you make him Miserable. You will ask me, perhaps, what is the Meaning of all this? Why, in good truth, the Meaning of it is, a just Indignation against the Impertinence of those who imagine that they know every thing, when in reality they understand nothing.

And to be more particular: The Folly of the Westerlings in despising the Wisdom of the Eastern Nations, and looking upon them as Brutes and Barbarians; whilst we arrogate to our selves every thing that is Wise and Polite; and if we change to light upon a just Thought, we applaud our selves upon the Discovery, tho' it was better understood Three Thousand Years ago.

This happens to us through want of good Reading, and a true Way of Thinking; for the Case is this, That little smattering of Knowledge which we have, is entirely derived from the East. They first communicated it to the Greeks, (a vain, conceited People, who never penetrated into the Depths of Oriental Wisdom) from whom the Romans had theirs. And after Barbarity had spread itself over the Western World, the Arabians, by their Conquest, restored it again in Europe: And it is the wildest Conceit that can be imagined, for us to suppose that we have greater Genius's, or greater Application, than is to be found in those Countries: If it be allowed that we have of late made greater Advances in the Sciences; that is not so much to our present Purpose, as the Confederation of Things of Universal Necessity, the Fear of God, the Regulations of our Appetites, prudent Oeconomy, Decency and Sobriety of Behaviour in all Conditions and Emergencies of Life; in any of which Articles, (which, after all, are the

Grand Concern) if the Westerlings have made any, even the least Improvement; to the Eastern Wisdom; I must confess my self to be very much mistaken.

They have their Wisdom by Inheritance, derived from their Fore-fathers through numerous Generations. They are tenacious of their Ancient Customs, and retain the Percepts of their Ancestors; they couch more solid Wisdom under one single Aphorism, than some European Writers would put into a System.

They govern their Families with Prudence and Discretion. We make their polygamy an Objection against them; but we must consider that they are not Christians, and therefore continue their Way of Living, after the Patriarchal Manner. But to say no more upon that Point, how would they abhor and abominate the horrible Instances which we have if European Lewdness!

How would they smile, to see a Man jangling it out with his Wife thirty or forty Years together; which of the Two should govern the Family! Others calling Riot and Excess, Impertinence and Rage, good Fellowship! Another bespeaking a New Suit this Week, lest he should be the Jest of the Town and Country, for being out of Fashion the next! And some cumbring One House with far-fetch'd and dear-bought Superfluities, at such an Expencc as would provide decent Furniture for Fifty!

Some Persons of Understanding have been of Opinion, that the Wisdom of a Nation may be judged of by the Sententiousness of their Proverbs and Sayings in common Use among them: In this the Arabs excell all nations. As for their Proverbs, strictly so called, in which there is Allusion to some History, Animal, Vegetable, or the like, they cannot be understood without s Comment, and do not come under our present Consideration. What we here present the Reader with, is a little Collection of Wise Sentences, calculated for the Direction of a Man's Conduct in Affairs of the greatest Consideration, and are of the same Nature as the Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus.

They are called the Sentences of Ali the Son of Abu Taleb. The whole Book is, as near as I can guess, not much less than our New Testament. I shall not add any more concerning Ali in this Place, because I have written his Life at large: It is the First in the Second Volume of the History of the Saracens, which, by the Blessing of God, shall be put to the Press with all convenient Speed.

But I am far from Believing that Ali was the Author of all these Sentences. He might Collect them, for ought I know, and add some more of his own; but this I am sure of, that they favour of much greater Antiquity than the Time in which he lived; because he was Contemporary with Mahomet, who flourished in the Year of our Lord Six hundred and twenty two. Perhaps there are some who will not allow the Arabians to have had so much Learning among them at that Time, as to be able to undertake such a Work: But I shall not enter into that Dispute at present.

The Book is a Venerable Pisce of Antiquity, and it is Pity but we had it all Translated; which would be difficult to be exactly performed, unless by a Person who hath had the Advantage of Travelling into the Eastern Countries.

To criticise upon it in the proper manner, One ought to have regard not only to Percepts of that kind, contained in the Old Testament, but whatsoever else can be found that is Jewish, either in Ecclesiasticus, the Talmud, Sentences of Ben Syra, or any other Rabbinical Records. Not that I believe that the Arabians derived their knowledge from the Jews, but that they were Collateral with them in that respect; and that there are a great many things which they derived from Abraham, and Ismael. The same is to be conceived of the Idumeans, Moabites, and Ammonites, of all which there is no question but there are Remains in Arabia, though now undistinguished. Which that I may not seem to suggest without any Reason at all, give me Leave to offer this for the Present; That the Contest, before the Time of Alexander the Great, lay between the Eastern Powers and the more Western Parts of Syria, Palestine, Ægypt, and Æthiopia. The Peninsula of Arabia being coterminous, and yet quite out of

the Way of those numerous armies; it is reasonable to suppose that the distressed Inhabitants, thro' whose Country these Forces were to pass, retired thither. And it was their Custom always, either at the Parting with their Children, and especially upon their Death-Beds; to recommend to them some few Percepts founded upon their own or their Fore-fathers Experience, which afterwards encreasing, were collected into Volumes by Wise and Learned Men. After the same manner Ecclesiasticus was written, as appears by the Preface pf it, and this Arabick one of ours, without all question; but how, or by whom, remains yet undiscovered.

The Sentences are full, and to the Purpose: They breathe a Spirit of pure Devotion, Strictness of Life, and express the greatest Gravity, and a most profound Experience in all the Affairs of Human Life. It is not expected that there should be a Turn, as we call it, in every one of them, nor that we need be surprized at every Line, when we knew from the Divine Books the Contents of it before.

All that I say, is, That there is enough, even in this little Handful, to vindicate; in the Judgment of any Man of Sense, the poor injured Arabians, from the Imputation of that gross Ignorance fastned upon them by Modern Novices.

SENTENCES
OF
ALI, Son-in-Law
OF
MAHOMET,
AND HIS
Fourth Successor.

- I. Fear God, and thou art secure from every one else.
- II. Contradict thyself, and thou shalt find Rest.
- III. The Fear of God brightneth the Heart.
- IV. The best part of Riches, is that which is spent in God's Way.
- V. Acquiescence in the Divine Will, is the Healing of the Heart.
- VI. The Disease of the Heart is in Concupiscence.
- VII. A Man's Behaviour is the Index of the Man; and his Discourse is the Index of his Understanding.
- VIII. The Covetous Man's Peny is a Stone.
- IX. One Fault is a great Matter; but the Remembrance of Divine Things, and a thousand Obediences, is but a small Matter.
- X. The Remembrance of Youth is a Sigh.
- XI. The Sight of a Friend brightneth the Eye.
- XII. Reverence thy Father, and thy Son will reverence thee.
- XIII. The Enjoyment and Delight of Life consisteth in Security.
- XIV. The Order of a Wife Man is the Highest of Orders.

XV. Thy Lot, or Portion of Life, is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it.

XVI. The restraining the Soul [or Self] from the Appetite, is the greatest Holy War.

XVII. Attend diligently to the Consequences, and thou shalt escape from Slips.

XVIII. The Favour of God, is the nearest of all Ends to be obtain'd.

XIX. The Favour of God, He be Prais'd, is join'd to the Obedience towards him.

XX. Thy Delight in thy self, is from the Corruption of thy Understanding.

XXI. Thy Delight in the World, is from the Badness of thy Choice, and the Misery of thy Labour.

XXII. He delights in Contempt, who openeth his Grievance to another.

XXIII. The shewing Mercy to the Afflicted, bringeth down Mercy.

XXIV. He delights in Disappointment, who depends upon bad Men for his Subsistence.

XXV. I delight more in the Determination [or Opinion] of a Religious, than in the Strength of a Man.

XXVI. The Riding (i. e. Governing) thy Appetite, will procure Riches.

XXVII. The Riding the Appetites cuts off Mens Observation.

XXVIII. A Man's Advice is the Balance of his Understanding.

XXIX. Every Man's Portion is as much determined as his Latter End.

XXX. A Man's Advice is according to the Measure of his Experience.

XXXI. A Man's Subsistence is according to what he proposeth, i.e. according to his Management; because every Action of his Life tends to something or other which contributes either to the encreasing or diminishing him. Not that this can be affirmed of every Action considered abstractedly, but as it connects those Actions together, which necessarily tend to the Determining a Man's Condition of Life.

XXXII. A Man's gentle Behaviour and Liberality make his Enemies love him.

XXXIII. A Man's Messenger is the Interpreter of his Meaning; but his Letter is of more Efficacy than his Discourse.

XXXIV. The Apostles of God, He be Praised, are the Interpreters of the Truth, and the Ambassadors between the Creator and the Creation.

XXXV. The Delight of the Servant in himself is joyned to the Displeasure of his Lord.

XXXVI. Consider before thou doest any thing, and shalt thou not be blamed in what thou doest.

XXXVII. The glittering Ornaments of the World spoil weak Understandings.

XXXVIII. Liberality is the Cause of Love.

XXXIX. Performing a Man's Promise, is the Cause of Unity.

XL. Abstinence is the Cause of Pure Religion.

XLI. Concupiscence is the Cause of certain Destruction.

XLII. Trust in God, is the Cause of Pure Faith.

XLIII. Desire is the Cause of the Destruction of the Understanding.

XLIV. The Love of the Present World is the Cause of Misery.

XLV. Infidelity is the Cause of the Removal of God's Blessings.

XLVI. Following one's Anger is the Cause of Destruction.

XLVII. Good Education is the Cause of a refined Disposition.

XLVIII. Gentleness of Behaviour is the Cause of Reverence.

XLIX. The Power of Religion is the Cause of Abstinence.

L. Thankfulness is the Cause of Encrease.

LI. For the Soul to be employed about what shall not accompany it after Death, is the greatest Weakness.

LII. To depend upon every one without Distinction, is Weakness of Understanding.

LIII. That is the Man of Understanding, that overcometh his Appetite, and will not felt HIS WORLD TO-COME, for HIS PRESENT WORLD.

LIV. He is the Cunning Man, that neglects other People, and looks narrowly after himself.

LV. Fear with-holds the Soul from Sins, and restrains it from Transgressions.

LVI. He is an Understanding Man that refrains his Tongue from Detraction.

LVII. He is a Believer that purifieth his Heart from Doubt.

LVIII. Riches are a Damage to the Owner, except that Part of them which he fends before him.

LIX. The World is the Shadow of a Cloud, and the Dream of Sleep.

LX. The truly Pious, their Works are pure, their Eyes Weeping, and their Hearts Trembling.

LXI. The truly Pious, their Souls are contented, and their Appetites dead; their Countenances chearful, and their Hearts sorrowful.

LXII. The Believer always remembers God, and is full of Thought: He is Thankful in Prosperity, and Patient in Adversity.

LVIII. Partnership in Possession leadeth to Confusion: Partnership in Counsel leadeth the Right Way.

LXIV. KNOWLEDGE calleth out to PRACTICE; and if it answereth, [WELL:] If not, it goeth away.

LXV. Things (or the Affairs of Human Life,) go by Divine Decree, not by our Administration.

LXVI. There are two sorts of Patience; the one, by which we bear up in Adversity, which is fine and beautiful; but that Patience whereby we withstand the Commision of Evil is better.

LXVII. A Man's entertaining a mean Opinion of himself, is a Demonstration of the Gravity of his Understanding, and a Branch of the Abundance of his Excellency.

LXVIII. A Man's admiring himself, is a Demonstration of his Deficiency, and a Branch of the Weakness of his Understanding.

LXIX. He that is certain of (or firmly believeth) a Future State, is the most melancholy Man, upon his own account, of all Men in the World.

LXX. He that perishes, is one that busies himself beside himself; and whose TO-DAY is worse than his YESTERDAY.

LXXI. He is thy Friend, that takes care of thee as himself, and prefers thee to his Riches, Children, and wife.

LXXII. He is a Wife Man who can govern himself both in his Anger, Desire and Fear.

LXXIII. Weeping out of the Fear of God, enlightneth the Heart, and fortieth against the Return of Sin.

LXXIV. Opportunity is swift of Flight, slow of Return.

LXV. To make one good Action succeed another [constantly,] is the Perfection of Goodness.

LXXVI. Patience in Poverty, with Credit [or a good Reputation,] is better than a plentiful Maintenance with Contempt.

LXXVII. A Wife Enemy is better than a Foolish Friend.

LXXVIII. A Man's Affliction is the Fore-runner of his Prosperity.

LXXIX. Men are more like the Time they live in, than they are like their Fathers.

LXXX. A Man that knoweth the just Value of himself doth not perish.

LXXXI. The Value of every Man, is the Good which he doth.

LXXXII. He that knows himself, knows his Lord.

LXXXIII. A Man is hid under his Tongue.

LXXXIV. No Praise with Pride.

LXXXV. No Innocency with Covetousness.

LXXXVI. No Reft when there is Envy.

LXXXVII. It concerns thee more to fly from thy self, than from a Lyon.

LXXXVIII. He that hath no courage, hath no Religion.

LXXXIX. A Wife Man is never Poor.

XC. There is no Generosity in a Lyar.

XCI. He that is fearful, will be secure at his Journey's End.

XCII. No Health with Gluttony.

XCIII. No Generosity of Spirit with a bad Education.

XCIV. A Man governeth his People by doing them good.

XCV. The Tongue of a Wife Man lieth behind his Heart.

XCVI. The Heart of a Fool lieth behind his Tongue.

XCVII. The Compliance of a Fool is like a Garden in a Dunghill.

XCVIII. Impatience is more irksome than Patience.

XCIX. He that pursueth that which is not convenient for him, loseth that which is convenient for him.

C. A Man that is given to Jesting, will never fail of Hatred nor Contempt.

CI. Despair is a Freeman, Hope is a Slave.

CII. The Opinion of a Wife Man is Divination, [or an Oracle.]

CIII. Enmity is Business enough.

CIV. A Covetous Man doth not live.

CV. His Life is Long, whose Labour is short.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

* So long as a Man is in Expectation, his Thoughts are in Suspence, and he is in a slavish Condition; but as soon as he gives over his Pursuit, he is free, and at Liberty.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

CVI. The Pursuit of good Education, is better than the Pursuit of Riches.

CVII. His Grief is long, whose Hope is short.

CVIII. Happy is he that hath no Family.

CIX. It is better that Kings should be Unjust, that Mean-spirited.

CX. The Thirst after Wealth, is greater than the Thirst after Drink.

CXI. He cheats you, who makes you angry about a Trifle.

CXII. A Man's Glory from his Virtue, is greater than his Glory from his Pedigree.

CXIII. Your Victory over your Enemy, is your Forbearance.

CXIV. The Freedom of a Man consists in speaking Truth.

CXV. The Strength of the Heart, is from the Soundness of the Faith.

CXVI. The Word of God, is the Medicine of the Heart.

CXVII. Death will rid you of the Faults of the World.

CXVIII. There is a Cure for all Enmity, but the Enmity of the Envious Man.

CXIX. Being acquainted with bad Men, is going to Sea.

CXX. He that holdeth his Peace, doth not repent.

CXXI. He that gives a listening Ear to Reproach, is one of those that deserves Reproach.

CXXII. Your being angry, is reproachful before God.

CXXIII. The Praise of a Man, is under his Tongue.

CXXIV. The Conversation of Young Men is destructive of Religion.

CXXV. A Learned Conversation is the Garden of Paradise.

CXXVI. The Destruction of a Man is the Vehemency of his Temper.

CXXVII. The Forgetfulness of Death, is the Rust of the Heart.

CXXVIII. The Light of thy Heart is in Prayer in the Darkness of the Night.

CXXIX. The Greyness of thy Head, is the News of thy own Death.

CXXX. Trust in God, is the Believer's Castle.

CXXXI. Holy Wars are the Pillars of the Religion, and the Highways of the Happy: And to those that are engaged in them, the Gates of Heaven shall be open.

CXXXII. Repentance purifieth the Heart, and washeth away Sin.

CXXXIII. Men, or Mankind, is idivided into Two Parts or Sorts: The One seeketh, and doth not find; Another findeth, and is not contented.

CXXXIV. The Good Man liveth, tho' he be translated to the Mansions of the Dead.

CXXXV. The Declining from Evil, is better than the Doing Good.

CXXXVI. Knowledge is the Ornament of the Rich, and the Riches of the Poor.

CXXXVII. He that omitteth Practice, doth not sufficiently believe the Reward that is annexed to it.

CXXXVIII. Clemency in Power, is a Defence against the Vengeance of God, his Name be Praised.

CXXXIX. The Reverence of God, blotteth out a great many Sins.

CXL. Resignation to the Providence of God, makes the greatest Afflictions easy.

CXLI. Quarrelling discovereth a Man's Folly, but addeth nothing to the Truth of his Cause.

CXLII. Truth is the Conformity of Speech, to the End for which God ordained it.

CXLIII. A Lye is perverting Language from the End for which God ordained it.

CXLIV. Adversity makes no Impression upon a brave Soul.

CXLV. Trust in God, is a Castle of Defence to him that flieth to it.

CXLVI. Impatience under Affliction, is worse than the Affliction.

CXLVII. That Man hath a brave Soul, who declineth from Things unlawful, and keepeth at a Distance from what is criminal.

CXLVIII. Covetousness is the Head of Poverty, and the Foundation of Wickedness.

CXLIX. A Deceiver's Tongue is sweet, and his Heart bitter.

CL. Perfection consists in Three Things; Patience in Afflictions; Moderation in our Pursuits; and Assisting him that Asketh.

CLI. A Wife Man knoweth a Fool, because he hath formerly been ignorant himself: But a Fool doth not know a Wife Man, because he never was wife himself.

CLII. A Believer is always cautious of his Sins: He dreads Temptation, and hopes for the Mercy of his Lord.

CLIII. The Faith (i.e. Religion) is a Tree, the Root of which is firm Assurance; the Branch, the Fear of God; the Flower, Modesty; and the Fruit, Generosity of Spirit.

CLIV. Anger is a Fire kinled: He that restraineth it, putteth it out; but he that letteth it loose, is the first that is consumed by it.

CLV. Folly is an incurable Disease.

CLVI. They who are Friends in the Most High God, their Love remaineth as long as the Cause of it: But as for the Friends

of this Present World, their Love is broken off as soon as the Causes of it cease.

CLVII. A Fool doth not know what maketh him look little; neither will he hearken to him that adviseth him.

CLVIII. Riches, without God, are the greatest Poverty and Misery.

CLIX. Liberality and Fortitude are Noble Things; which God, whose Name be praised, giveth to him whom he loveth and maketh Tryal of.

CLX. That Man travels the longest Journey, that undertakes it in the search of a sincere Friend.

CLXI. He is the greatest of all Fools, that doth no Good, and would yet be respected; and doth that which is Evil, and yet expecteth the Reward of the Good.

CLXII. The most odious of Men to the Most High God, is he whose Thoughts are fix'd upon his Belly and his Lust.

CLXIII. The most Happy Man, as to his Life, is he to whom God Most High hath given wherewithal to be Content, and a good Wife.

CLXIV. He is the most Just Man, that doth Justice upon himself, without any one else to judge him.

CLXV. That Man best deserveth a Kindness, who when he is put off, beareth it patiently; when he is refused, executeth it; and when he receiveth it, is thankful.

CLXVI. The Diligence of the World, is Idleness; the Honour of it, Vileness; the Height of it, Lowness.

CLXVII. He that walketh upon the Back of the Earth, is going into its Belly.

CLXVIII. A believer should be ashamed, when any Action passeth him which his Religion doth not oblige him to.

CLXIX. Justice is the Balance of God, which he hath set for Men; wherefore do not contradict him in his Balance, nor oppose him in his Dominion.

THE END OF THE
CHAPTER ON THE
WORDS OF IMAM ALI
BY SIMON OCKLEY

Story

De'bel's Secret

Fariba Kalhor¹

Abstract: *the best way to tackle and confront the adversities of today's life is to revoke to the ones who are the mines of understanding and wisdom. And this regard there is no difference between to whom you are revoking . the point is that you should be wise enough to realize the importance of this and by be ready to accept change for perfection when possible. In this story we are going to read about De'bel and Imam Riza and the influence of this infallible Imam on De'bel.*

¹ Translator: Maryam Akhondali

No one could guess what De'bel was thinking about when he stared at a far away distance. Or for what reason his black, clear eyes filled with tears now and then.

Although De'bel was returning with a large caravan from Marve to Medina, however he did not sense the presence of the travelers around himself. Again and again, De'bel remembered the time which he had stood before Imam Reza and had read one of his poems for him. That poem was about the cruelties and oppressions which the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties had carried out against the household of the Prophet (peace be upon them).

He had recited for Imam Reza,

I see their spoils,

Divided among others,

And their hands,

Empty of their own spoils.

With this poem, Imam Reza had started to cry and had said, "Oh De'bel! You have said the truth."

When De'bel remembered the tears of the Imam, his heart filled with grief and tears rolled down his face and he quietly said,

"His hands are empty of their own spoils."

At this moment the caravan stopped to rest next to a river. De'bel sat next to a rock and stared at the water. Once again he recalled everything from his arrival in Marve, meeting with Imam Reza, and reciting poems for him.

A smile appeared on his face when he remembered how Imam Reza had liked his poem and that he had given one of his garments to him.

Imam Reza had given one of his garments to De'bel after hearing the poem and had said, "With this blessed garment you shall be protected from any harm."

De'bel was in his own thoughts when he suddenly heard screams from the caravan people,

- "Bandits! Bandits!"

Alarmed, De'bel looked towards where the bandits were coming from.

The bandits had covered their faces and were quickly getting closer. De'bel was too old and tired to run away, therefore he made no movement and sat on the same rock. It was as if nothing had happened at all.

The people of the caravan were still screaming and running for a refuge in every direction. When the bandits reached the caravan, they screamed with joy and plundered what ever they saw. The sound of crying and screaming was heard from every direction.

Suddenly De'bel remembered the garment which was the gift of Imam Reza. The garment was among his belongings and he did not want to lose it. For this reason, he went towards the caravan, to stop them, in any possible way, from getting their hands on the garment.

The happy sound of the bandits and the screams of the travelers were mingled together in a way that distressed De'bel greatly. He wanted to cry out, "Stop this plundering! Do you know what you're doing?"

But he knew that the only one to hear his voice would be himself.

Suddenly, as he was walking towards the caravan tired and terrified, he heard a voice singing,

I see their spoils,

Divided among others,

And their hands,

Empty of their own spoils.

It was, as if, his heart was beating a thousand times faster than before. He was trembling all over, and his hands were shaking. The voice sang again,

I see their spoils,

Divided among others...

"Who is singing? Where is it coming from?"

And their hands,

Empty of their own spoils...

De'bel sat on the ground hopeless and desperately said, "for God's sake, who is singing?"

As he was kneeling on the ground he saw one of the bandits singing happily,

I see their spoils,

Divided among others...

De'bel got up with great effort and brought himself to him; "Wait! Wait!"

But the Bandit was so overwhelmed of the spoils he had gained that he was deaf to any voice. De'bel ran after him with more strength and said, "Wait, for God's sake, wait!"

The bandit stopped. De'bel got closer to him, looked him in the eyes and asked, "Tell me, who has composed the poem you were singing?"

The bandit looked at him in surprise and asked, "what is the use of knowing the answer to this question?"

De'bel answered pleadingly, "I have a reason. Please tell me who the poet of this poem is?"

The Bandit who saw De'bel asking desperately answered him involuntarily, "De'bel bin Ali Khozaei, he is the best poet of the Prophet's Household (peace be upon them).

With hearing these words, De'bel fell to the ground and sat where he was. The man still looked at him, bewildered. De'bel spoke with a voice which seemed to come from deep down inside him, "I am De'bel, I am De'bel bin Ali Khozaei!"

He said this and again he remembered the moment which he had recited this poem in the presence of Imam Reza.

The man gazed at him for a moment. Then suddenly, he started to run and brought himself to the leader of the Bandits. As De'bel was sitting down, little by little the sound of the screams and cries disappeared. After some moments De'bel felt a shadow next to himself. Then someone said, "Hey you, why have you claimed falsely?"

De'bel did not answer and the leader of the bandits said with anger, "Why have you claimed to be De'bel Khozaei?"

De'bel said, "I am De'bel. You can go and ask from the other travelers."

The leader of the Bandits looked at the others and said, "We will do that."

The travelers, who had found out that something new had come up, gathered up in a corner. The leader of the Bandits got closer to them and looked them in the eye one by one. Finally he asked one of the men, "Do you know the name of that man?"

The man answered with a trembling voice, "we called him De'bel and he answered us."

The leader went close to an old woman and asked, "Do you know who that man is?"

The woman answered, "We called him..."

The leader of the bandits screamed, "Enough. Whoever I ask, gives me the same answer; how do I know that you are telling the truth. Perhaps you have all agreed to support the old man."

Then he became quiet and looked around himself. Everyone looked at him with fear and terror. Only De'bel's look was on the ground.

Suddenly the leader's eyes fell upon a little girl. He laughed happily and said, "The truth must be heard from the child." Then he got closer to the little girl and in order to influence her with his kindness asked her in a calm, soft voice, "that man over there, the one which is sitting on the ground, what is his name?"

The girl answered, "We called him De'bel," and hid herself behind her mother's back.

"And he answered you for sure," added the leader of the bandits.

Hearing this, the bandits all started to laugh. Their leader laughed too. Then he suddenly became serious and murmured, "it's not possible not to believe anymore. So, he is De'bel. De'bel; the famous poet of the household of the holy Prophet."

Saying this he went towards De'bel. De'bel was still sitting where he was. He lifted him from the ground. In the movements of the leader was such kindness and sympathy that the travelers all looked at each other with astonishment.

The leader said, "De'bel, say the rest of the poem."

And De'bel recited with an extremely sad voice, the rest of his poem.

After reciting the poem, De'bel did not know what happened. When he came to himself the bandits had all gone away and had returned the belongings of the travelers to their owners.

The people of the caravan were telling each other happily and with surprise, "It is amazing. It is really amazing for a group of bandits to keep the honor of a poet of the Prophet's household in such a way."

However, De'bel was not thinking about these things. To him the most important thing was the garment, which he had got from Imam Reza. That's why he ran toward his belongings. And when he saw the garment was untouched, he sighed in relief and smelled it. At that moment, once again he recalled the face of Imam Reza who was saying, "With this blessed garment you shall be protected from any harm."

*When all good deeds are counted as
“worthless...”*

Milk that is mixed with water gains in weight and volume but loses its natural taste and lacks its original color, taste, and smell.

Similarly, if man’s deeds even though abundant lacks piousness i.e., is deficient in purity and sincerity will be termed as flat and worthless.

Training of Children

Hasan Pasandideh¹

***Abstract:** children are the pure souls which are formed in a great extent by their parents training. So in Islam it is regarded as parent duty to train children in the way that they can be helpful to themselves and to their society. The present article deals with the meaning of growth and children's right of being educated and trained.*

¹ Translator: Somayyeh Alehousseini

Training of children is due to different motivations and diverse, but the most important is breeding righteous children and also considering their rights which involve all moral and social virtues, in addition to the purity and sanctity of motivation. Some of the motivations are more highlighted based on the relation of child's happiness to parents'. Imam Ali in a letter to his son, Imam Mojtaba says: "verily I found you as a part of my own soul and maybe more. So that if something too. As the grief may suffer you it would perturb me, too."

Imam's interpretation about his son is definitely wonderful and deep because in most of the world's cultures and ideas, children are considered as a part of parents' life, but here, Imam Ali regards him as the body and soul of his existence. So son's happiness is just like father's happiness.

The dignity and importance of children breeding to so vital that Imam Sajjad, as a perfect father and mentor, asks God to help him nurturing his children: "O' my Lord, Help me in training, educating discipline and showing courtesy to my children."

The importance of training from the perspective of Ahl- Beit, made it essential to consider infallibles' viewpoints too.

Right of children from the Imams' Viewpoint

One of the basic and essential beliefs of parents is that children are God's gifts and parents as His trustees must consider children rights if they want to be successful in performing their duty against God. Regarding the mutual rights of fathers and their children, Imam Ali says: "Verily, the right of the child (for) the father is a truth and for father, there is a right for the children. The children are to obey their fathers in everything except sins, and the fathers are to name their children finely, train them properly and teach them Quran."

It is clear that meritorious training is of high importance because Imam Ali considers it as a part of children's right and even fathers' responsibility.

In the same way, Imam Sajjad also details the right of children in 24 different treatises declaring "The right of children is that: you know them as part of your existence, so their good and evil relates with you. You would be questioned about your responsibilities against him from different views like: good and proper training, leading to theology, and helping them to obey God's rules. You would lead them in two ways: your conduct and the guidelines you may advise them to. Verily, you would be blessed enough for putting yourself in trouble and also would be punished for shortcomings.

In your relationship with children, do your best, be a honorable protector and use your capabilities to improve his deficiencies.

And no one except God may help you!

Basic Cognitive Approaches for Parents

Some of the major approaches, each successful parent should know, are as follows:

A) Familiarity with the process of Childs' growth and development

Growth is a continuous process which passes through various stages. Childhood would slowly pass and the uproar and clamor of adolescence and puberty comes by, and then it is the maturity of youth. In every period, parents and coaches are faced by a new perspective of their children life.

Recognizing the characteristics of all growth periods, parents can adopt their children's behaviors with desirable patterns and standards known as code of conduct and distinguish the proper from improper. In addition, they can interpret behaviors of each stage and apply the correct approach towards it.

B) Familiarity with mental needs

From the very moment of birth, human being seeks other's assistance for continuing his world existence. This series of needs that have a specific diversity are known as "basic needs" or "secondary needs" or mental needs.

Basic needs include: need for safety (feeling of security), need for emotional interact, need for success (sense of usefulness), need for acceptance (acceptance of others), and need for self-flourish.

In the adolescence, new branch of needs like having a definite philosophy for life and also understanding the ethical values would be added to this collection.

C) Familiarity with children's Talents and Abilities

One of the essential duties of parents is the recognition of adolescence's capabilities which is recommended based on two requirements: first, guiding the abilities of children; secondly helping the children to achieve self-confidence. The later has a direct relationship with talents recognition because the child or adolescent who follows parental guidance would be more successful than peers and definitely more confident!

D) Familiarity with child's trends and tendencies

The link between human beings and their tendencies is so intense that may affect an important part of their thinking system and practice. Recognition of parents about their children would be complete if they have a big picture children interests. So parents should practice linking with children through recognizing their interests. Doing this, they can continue the relation and use it for strengthening and deepening the emotional ties with their children. One of the practical and scientific methods of recognizing child's tendencies is through having dialogue with them. As far as we try to talk with our children, we would have better look on their interests. Another way is interacting with the school officials.

Undoubtedly interacting with peers, teachers and coaches, children show the real emotions and interests. Therefore, communication between home and school- as two important educational centers- provides the opportunity to exchange the experiences. Regular communication and consultation with school teachers helps parents recognizing their children desires and promoting their.

From the above four categories, familiarity with the process of child growth that is discussed in this book, will be investigated in details.

A Reflection on the Meaning of Growth

Experts often define growth as qualitative and quantitative changes in nature and behaviors of living creatures which happen gradually. They believe that these changes will go on and on during the life and leads to abilities, needs, and difficulties that necessitates some special training.

Harold Stevenson believes that "Developmental psychology studies the changes in human behavior during his life. Although it is reasonably to focus on growth during the lifetime, there is no steps taken so far and all researches have been based on studying newborn, children, and adolescence characteristics. Therefore, the term "Developmental Psychology" is often used instead of an older term "children and adolescence psychology." This term (Developmental Psychology) implies all terms that lead to emergence of many other behavioral changes."

The Concept of Growth in education

If we can consider the relation between growth and psychology as the relation between "process" and "knowledge", then the relationship between growth and education would be regarded as link between two continuous and correlated phenomena. John Dewey conceives this concept as follows "we have found that life is nothing but the process of growth; human beings continue to live as long as they are alive but there are differences in the form. A healthy man - whether the baby or adult -

continues to growth during his life time, depending on the surrounding environment. So growth is not a monopoly of childhood. He adds: "if we limit growth to the childhood, it's necessary to believe that childhood is the prelude of maturity. Doing so, childhood loses its fundamental importance and we are obliged to teach maturity specifications to our children." Jean Jacque Russo also declares that "we should consider childhood as vital and don't act like instructors who" look at children as mature people". Education is compatible with childhood and even its different stages.... Every man has unique talents as well as every age has specific conditions."

After focusing on the importance of childhood- which is valuable by itself- Dewey says: "we must be careful to consider two essential things: that the education is nothing but the essence of life and that education is a variant process which continues during the human's life.

Parental knowledge of child Growth

Based on parental knowledge, although familiarity with growth mechanism is the first training step, there are other issues that should be considered:

1- Familiarity with child growth paves the way for have a better understanding of emotional and psychological needs and also improves the mutual interaction.

2- Mutual cognition and understanding of parents and children strengthen their friendship, provide a sincere environment and lead to peaceful coexistence between them.

3- The possibility of predicting the children's behavior increases if the parents understand the behavioral elements, including growth characteristics. Therefore, parents can gradually achieve a special ability to predict their children behavior and its time to happen.

4- Accessing to behavioral prediction power, parents can also provide other abilities, known as behavioral control. The family that can

easily control its child's behavior can also find a favorable situation for training.

5- Ability to control behavior leads to another ability that is the parents' understanding of How and the quality of behavioral change. Certainly many parents wish to change some behaviors in their children but not knowing the way, would degrade their position in the family.

Poetry

A Sacrifice story

*I'm again bursting into tears
For thee and for your dearest dears
Wandering how thee could bear
Heavy disasters as the God souvenir
Those foes how they'd stood near
And tomorrow was bloody clear
You saw life with no freedom as vanity
And devotion of life as eternity
Damn with whom not impressing such certainty
Damn with whom treated thee with enytime
The beautiful tableau thee have created
Never would be worn out, forever appreciated
Life never sees like thee, shame on the world
Without thee shame on any spear and any sword
Shame on whom closed their eyes
For the sake of life ignore thee and lied
Shame on whom refuse thy children a drop of water
Shame on whom invited thee but carried out a plotter
Damn with whom killed thee and left your body
Bloody would be their eyes bloody
Thy sacrifice story would be a drama forever
Many graceful funerals would be held for thee any where*

Narges Rezaian
May 2008

Imam Mahdi in the Quran

Reza Hemyari

Abstract: *as the title of this article brings to the mind, the present article is an attempt to states the verses in holy Quran asserting the existence and presence of a savior who is Imam Mahdi (in Islamic thoughts).*

Quran as the last, ring of holy books' chain, and as a widespread divine message of God addressed to all people living in different ages of history till the Day of Judgment, which has pictured general principles of human's happiness forever, has shown a remarkable attempt to introduce the age of victory of Truth over evil.

The Noble verses of Quran carefully declare inevitable necessity of arrival of the Savior and worldwide development of the true religion, as well as integrated leadership of the believers and pious men in the Earth.

There are different types of verses in the holy Quran.

1. Verses regarding final save of believers and pious men.

"But We had willed to bestow our favor on the oppressed children of Israil to make them the governors and to make them the heirs of the oppressors." (The holy Quran, 28:5)

With regard to above verse, Sheikh Toosi quotes from Amir ul Momenin (as):

"The depressed and defenseless people are descendants of Mohammad (Ale Mohammad). God will arouse Imam Mahdi (as) who is from the same family, to them after their religious battles and degrade their enemies"¹.

In the above Verse, a plural pronoun is used to describe magnificence and glory of God. It also shows that leadership of the poor is an incident, according to God's Will; the Will under which everything will definitely happen, according to its nature and capacity.

"And We wrote in the Psalms which came after Taurat: My righteous believers shall eventually inherit the earth." (The holy Quran, 21:105)

Regarding the righteous persons, Tabarsi quoted following from Imam Bagher ul Oloom (as) (the fifth Imam):

¹ Mohammed Ibn Hassan Toosi, *Al Gheybah*, P.113.

"They are friends of Imam Mahdi (as) during last stage of history, before the Day of Judgment"¹.

"Allah has promised to those of you mankind who believe and do good that he will appoint them the rulers in the world as he appointed those before them; and will establish in authority their religion which he is pleased with it; and he will replace security for their fears; [and Allah states:] They should worship me only and should not consider any partner for me; so those who disbelieve they are indeed transgressors." (The holy Quran, 24:55)

Ali Ibn Ebrahim Ghomi writes in his commentary book that the above verse is revealed about the last living Imam, who is a member of Prophet Mohammad's (as) family.²

Tabarsi also writes in "Majma ul Bayan" that this verse has been revealed about Mahdi, son of Mohammad (as)³.

In the same commentary, it is said that Hazrat Zeyn ul Abedin (p.b.u.h.) after delivering above this verse says:

"I swear to God that these people are followers of us, family of Prophet Mohammad. God will perform all these through one of our family, who is Mahdi of the Islamic society."

2.The second group, are verses which give promise of universal state of Islam, victory of Truth over Untrue, victory of the belief of oneness of God over Polytheism and victory of Justice over Injustice.

"Allah is the One who has sent his messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to over shine all religions by it, though the polytheists may dislike it." (The holy Quran, 9:33)

¹ Tabarsi, Majma ul Bayan , Vol. 5, P. 64

² Gaeme Al e Mohammad – the 12th Imam of Shiite .Ghomi, Nur ol Saghalayn, Vol 3, P.619

³ Majma ul Bayan, Vol 7, P.152

While during the last days of the life of the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.), Islam had prevailed over other religions in Arabia, the holy Quran tells about a thorough victory and its spreading all over the world.

Late Tabarsi, quotes from Meghdad Ibn Asvad, who said that he had heard from Mohammad (*as*) that said:

“At that time, there will remain no house of any kind of stone, wooden, or a camel wool tent unless the Almighty would introduce and enter the message of Islam to that house”¹

“And say [proclaiming] Truth succeeded and falsehood perished, surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish.” (The holy Quran, 17:81)

Imam Mohammad Baqer (*as*) (The fifth Imam) said about this verse:

“When Imam Mahdi (*as*) rises in revolution, false governments shall be demolished”²

3. Third group are the verses that explain the continuation of the leadership and guardianship of the holy Prophet (*as*).

“And the disbelievers say: Why a miracle is not sent down to him from his creator & nurturer? You are only a warner and to every nation there is a guide. [They are not supposed to bring a miracle].” (The holy Quran, 13:7)

Siyouti reports from different sources that when the above verse was revealed, the Messenger (*as*) pointed his hand to himself and said: "I am the one who gives warning," and then pointed to Ali (*as*) and said:

“O' Ali! You are the one who is to guide, and those who accept guidance are to be guided only by you.”¹

¹ Tabarsi, *Majma ul Bayan* Vol. 5, P.25

² Nur ul Seghleyn, Vol. 3, P. 212

As the divine leadership did not end with the holy Prophet, and was continued by Amirul Momenin, Ali (*as*), it is supposed to continue after Ali (*as*), and God always assigns a leader for every nation, and seekers of truth, who will always seek him out.

“The angels and the holy spirit descend therein by their creator's command, to proclaim the ordainments about everything.” (*The holy Quran; 97:4*)

The above verse is about the night of Qadr (the night when the holy Quran was revealed to the holy Prophet Mohammad (*as*) for the first time.. Qadr is the most important occasion of Islamic culture, which is not limited to Messenger (*as*) days, and it is repeated every year after his death.

Imam sadeq (*as*) quotes from his father that:

Once Ali (as) was delivering the chapter of "Al – Qadr". His sons, Hassan and Hussein were with him. Then Husein said to his father that "there was an special sweetness about that verse when he delivered it.

Ali (as) replied, 'O' my dear son , I know something about this verse that you do not know now. When this verse was revealed, your grandfather, the Messenger (as) summoned me and then when I went to him, he delivered this verse and put his hand on my right shoulder and said: O' my brother and leader of my people after me, who will fight my enemies...this Surah (chapter) will be yours after me and belongs to your sons after you. *Gabriel who is my brother among the angels- will report the events of my people during the year at the Qadr Night, and he would report them to you after me.(and this Surah will light your heart and your successor's people's hearths, until the day of Ghaem reappearance.)

¹ Aldor ul mansour , Vol. 4, P.608

*Good Deeds from
Holy Quran's Point Of View*

By: Mahbobe Yazdanpanah

Abstract: *In Islamic ethical regulations, one of the fundamental issues is reward or punishment in return to good deeds or bad deeds. Good deed is the one which deserves rewards in this world and Hereafter.*

Personality, as usually all people believe, is the most important thing which can bring you an honored status in society or on the contrary draws you aside from success and respect; if one is well-behaved, enjoying moral virtues, these valuable characteristics will put his/her respect in other people's heart. Therefore, it can be claimed that it is the behavior and manner of people which determine their status in the society respect-wise. "Amal Saleh" are the same words applied to "Good deeds" in the holy book, Quran. These two simple words are the words which bring respect to one or lack of them can draw shame and disrespect to him. In the holy book, it is frequently talked about good deeds and it is introduced as a guide, a sign of Faith. It is even more than this and it is considered as a basic and fundamental condition of Faith.

According to the holy Quran, "deed" means something which is done deliberately, out of will regardless of being good or bad. "Faith" is along with ethics and good deed which can find its true meaning. In Quran it is often advised to observe ethics.

As we read: "O children of Adam! We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame, and splendid vesture, but the raiment of restraint from evil, that is best. This is of the revelations of Allah that they may remember" (*The holy Quran,7 :26*)

Or in other place we read:

"whoso desireth power (should know that) all power belongs to Allah. Unto him good words ascend, and the pious deed doth he exalt; but those who plot iniquities, theirs will be an awful doom; and the plotting of such (folk) will come to naught." (*The holy Quran,82:10*)

"Faith" is the wings to soar to height but it is impossible to reach it unless man seeks knowing God.

Though "good deed" is not acceptable by God unless the doer carried it out on the basis of his knowledge of God. This knowledge is the very soul of deed; as Imam Sadiq said: "God, does not accept any action unless its down purposefully, because the soul of action is knowledge."

Pure life and good deed

Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, him verily we shall quicken with good life, and we shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do. " (*The holy Quran, 16:97*)

Faith is the ground for salvation in the world and hereafter.

Those who come to believe deeply in the unity of God and His revelation firmly ascertained that God creates no one in vain but he has a purpose from the very beginning of creating the world. The reason behind man's creation is to put him in test, then bringing him to perfection weather by His revelation or guiding of holy leaders.

The one who reaches true faith, to get to higher levels in his travel to perfection should become nearer to Him trough His holy attributes, as holy Quran said:

“Those are they who will be brought nigh. In gardens of delight” (*The holy Quran, 56:11,12*)

Because Faithfuls enjoy the attributes to feel peaceful in this world, trust God, be patient,, practicing good deeds,

“Save him who shall repent and believe and do right. Such will enter the garden, and they will not be wronged in aught” (*The holy Quran, 19:60*)

The other implications of Faith is to believe in the Prophethood of holy messenger, because they are the holy leaders sent by God and are teachers of humanity to guide people. They came to teach us how should a proper, good, human deed done and why in doing good or bad deed there is a perfection for us, as God says: " and whosoever of you is submissive unto Allah and his messenger and doeth right, we shall give her her reward twice over, and we have prepared for her a rich provision." (*The holy Quran, 33:31*)

“Read: in the name of thy lord who createth, createth man from a clot.” (*The holy Quran, 96:1,2*)

“Surely, you (Prophet Muhammad) are of a great morality.” (*The holy Quran, 68:4*)

“But for those who believe and do good works are gardens of bliss, where they shall live for ever. the promise of Allah is the truth; he is the almighty, the wise.” (*The holy Quran, 31:8,9*)

“You (alone) we worship; and you (alone) we rely for help. Guide us to the straight path,” (*The holy Quran, 1:5,6*)

“Those who believe, Jews, Nazarenes and sabaean whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good deeds shall be rewarded by their lord; they have nothing to fear nor are they saddened.” (*The holy Quran, 2:62*)

“Allah has promised those who believe and do good works forgiveness and a great reward.” (*The holy Quran, 5:9*)

“Allah has promised those who believe and do good works forgiveness and a great reward.” (*The holy Quran, 9:102*)

“Believers, if you fear Allah, he will give you a criteria and cleanse you of your sins and forgive you. Allah is the owner of great bounty.” (*The holy Quran, 8:29*)

“Save him who repenteth and believeth and doth righteous work; as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds. Allah is ever forgiving, merciful.” (*The holy Quran, 25:70*)

The relationship between good deeds and faith

Faith and good deeds in Quran are mentioned mostly together and always faith comes before good deeds, because good deed will be issued from faithful and whenever there is faith, good deed is assured. Faith is an internal matter and its light will be mirrored by members of body.

True faithful are always along with good deeds, good deed is worthy and valuable only if it comes from deep, internal faith and not temporary willingness or mood.

A To Z

of Ethics from the Words of the Prophet

Abstract: The following are mostly extracts from the last narration mentioned by al-Saduq in his book *Thavab ul-a'mal va Iqab ul a'mal*, 'The rewards of deeds and the punishments of deeds'. This narration from the Prophet Muhammad (*as*) consists of ethical and moral subjects and the rewards/punishments for performing/disregarding them. Some other narrations from the prophet (*as*) have also been included from other sources. These have been summed up to create an A to Z of ethics from the words of the Prophet.

Narrations without a reference can be found at: al-Saduq, *Thavab ul-a'mal va Iqab ul a'mal*, P. 280-295

Asking Permission

He who looks in his brothers letter (i.e. reads it) without his permission is as if he has looked into the hell-fire¹.

Back-biting

He who defends his brother (in religion) in a meeting when others are back-biting him, Allah will turn away from him a thousand chapters of evil in this world and the hereafter and if he doesn't defend his brother he will go through the same burden (punishment) that the back-biters will go through.

Betrayal

He who cheats a Muslim in his trades with him is not one of us (has no relation with us) and will be gathered with the Jews on the day of rising.

The blind

He who guides (takes) a blind person to his prayer place or to his house or strides to help him in one of his needs until he satisfies it, God will give him two letters of immunity (*bara'atain*) one from fire (Hell) and the other from hypocrisy and He will fulfill for him seventy thousand wishes in this passing world and he will be under God's grace until he returns (from helping the blind person).

Custodian

He (who accepts to) take over the affairs of a group of people and does not perform his duties in an appropriate way, will be imprisoned on the brink of Hell a thousand years for every day (that he has not performed his duties).

¹ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 9, p. 159

Dowry

He who acts unjustly regarding his wife's dowry is regarded by Allah as someone who commits adultery.

The elderly

The blessings are with your elderly¹.

Exposing indecency

He who hears about an indecency (scandal) and exposes (spreads) it is like someone who has committed it.

False testimony

He who makes a false testimony against a Muslim man or someone who lives under the protection of the Muslim state or any one from the people, will be hanged from his tongue on the day of Rising and will be placed with the hypocrites (*munafiqin*) in the deepest level of fire.

Family/Women

The best amongst you are those who act the best towards their women and I am the best of you in this regard².

Flattery/Lauding

Throw dirt (soil) in the face of those who flatter/laud³.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 72, p. 137

² al-Saduq, *Man la yahzoroho al-faqih*, vol. 3, p. 443

³ al-Saduq, *Man la yahzoroho al-faqih*, vol. 4, p. 381

Flaws/ Defects/ shortcomings

He who strides to expose (to others) the shortcomings (flaws) of his brother, the first step that he takes will be brought down in hell and God will expose his shortcomings (flaws) in front of the people.

Forgiveness

Forgive the sins of the people and for that God will repel from you the torment of the hell-fire. Forgive the errors of those who make mistakes and for that God will protect you from bad fates¹.

Giving Gifts

Give each other gifts because gifts remove hatred from your hearts².

Good-naturdness (Hosn ul-khulq) /

Family/Relatives/Kin

Good-naturedness, bonding with your family and helping the near relatives results in longer lives and makes the lands thrive even if the people are unrighteous³.

Verily, being good-natured makes that person acquire the ranks of those who are fasting and standing (i.e. Performing salat)⁴.

Good-naturdness keeps love (friendships) firm and affability destroys hatred¹.

¹ ibn abi feras, *Majmuat ul-varram*, vol. 2, p. 119

² Sheikh Musa al-Zanjani, *Madinat ul-balaghah*, vol.2, p. 475, a similar narration can be found at al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.5 p. 143

³ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 174

⁴ al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.2 p. 103

Gratitude/thankfulness/appreciation

God will not appreciate those who are not thankful to people².

Helping each other

He who strides to Help his brother and cause him benefit will have the reward of those who fight for the cause of Allah.

Helping the Distressed

He who helps out his distressed brother from the hardships of this world, God will glance at him with His grace and by this he will earn Heaven and God will help him out with his distresses in this world and the hereafter.

Honesty/truth telling

Do not consider the high amount of their prayers (*salat*), fasting, Hajj pilgrimage, good deeds (alms) and their murmurs at night (their sounds while reciting Quran and prayers) but consider their honesty (truthfulness) and them giving back what has been given to them as a safekeeping³.

Humbleness

Be humble and do not be arrogant to each other for God's Grace is bestowed on all of you⁴.

¹ al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.2 p. 103; Affability: "pleasant, friendly and easy to talk to", oxford advanced learners dictionary

² al-Saduq, *Man la yahzoroho al-faqih*, vol. 4, p. 380

³ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 68, p. 9

⁴ ibn abi feras, *Majmuat ul-varram*, vol. 2, p. 119

The Ill/Sick

He who takes care of an ill person a day and a night, God will resurrect him in the company of Ibrahim al-khalil (*as*) and he will pass the (bridge of) *serat* like a flash of lightning and he who makes an effort to satisfy an ill persons need and satisfies it will be purified from his sins like the day he was born from his mother.

Injustice/Tyranny

Be aware that God the most Exalted and the most Majestic is not unjust and He will not let injustice go unanswered and he is lying in ambush (*mirsad*) to punish the bad doers for what they have done and to reward the good doers with good things. He who does good has done it for himself (will benefit from the results himself) and he who does bad then it will be against himself and your Lord is not the least unjust to the servants.

Kin

He who strides toward a relative or someone with close relations with him to see how he is doing, God will award him with that equal to the reward of one hundred martyrs. If he then asks him about what he is doing (and if he has any needs) and then bonds with him using his wealth and his soul he will be rewarded for every step that he takes with forty thousand thousand kindnesses (*hasanah*) (from Allah) and his rank will be increased by forty thousand thousand and he will be like one who has worshipped Allah for one hundred years. And He who strides to make corrupt the (bonds) between them and separate them from each other, God will be angry at him and he will be far from His mercy in this world and the hereafter and he will have the same burden (punishment) as he who breaks bonds with his family members (*qate' rahim*).

Lending

He who's brother (in religion) needs a loan from him and is able to give it to him but doesn't, God will forbid from him the scent of Heaven¹.

Loan

He who loans his Muslim brother, will be rewarded for each *dirham* that he has lent, good deeds the weight of the mountain of *Uhud* and the mountains of *Rizvi* and the mountain of *Sina*. If he tolerates him (e.g. if he returns the loan late) he will cross the (bridge of) *Serat* like a flash of lightning without (his sins) being accounted for and without being punished. He whose Muslim brother complains to him (about his needs) and he does not loan him God will forbid from him the reward of the good-doers.

Loans with interest

God will fill with hellfire the stomach of he who eats from the interest of the loans he has given, equal to the amount he has eaten².

Marriage

He who makes an effort to bring together two believers so that they marry each other, God will marry him to a thousand thousand Heavenly women (*hurun ein*). Each woman will be in a palace made of rubies and great pearls. For every step he has taken and every word he has spoken (to bring these two together) he will be given the reward of a year in which he has not slept in its nights (to worship God) and has fasted its days. He who makes an effort to separate a wife and her husband, will be under the wrath and curse (*la'n*) of God in this world and the Hereafter and God will surely pound him with a thousand boulders made of fire. He who makes

¹ ibn abi feras, *Majmuat ul-varram*, vol. 2, p. 261

² Note: eating here does not necessarily mean eating like eating food. It can also mean spending, consuming or using.

an effort to make mischief between these two (married people) and does not succeed in separating them will be under Gods anger and his curse (*la'n*) in this world and the hereafter and God will forbid him from glancing at His Face (*vajhullah*).

Mercy

Those who have mercy the Merciful (God) will have mercy on them. Have mercy on those who (dwell) on earth so that he who is in the skies has mercy on you¹.

Neighbors

Be aware that Allah will question you about the rights of your neighbors and he who deprives his neighbor from his rights is not one of us (has no relation with us)

Openhandedness/Generosity

The generous are close to God -The Almighty-, are close to the people, close to Heaven and far from Hell. The ungenerous are far from God -The Almighty-, far from the people, far from Heaven and close to Hell².

Orphans

The best of your houses is a house in which there is an orphan who is treated kindly. The worst of your houses is a house in which (the orphan) is treated badly³.

I and he who takes care of an orphan are in heaven like these two. The prophet (*as*) then pointed to his index and middle fingers. (i.e. we are very close in heaven)¹.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 169

² Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 70, p. 308

³ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 2, p. 474

Parading/showing-off/ostentation

He who feeds food to parade himself (or to show-off) or so that people speak about this act, God will feed him from the blood and pus of the festering wounds of (those in) hell.

Parents

God have mercy on he who helps his children to be kind to him².

The poor/needy/impoverished

He, who insults a poor Muslim because of his poverty and humiliates him, has not paid attention to the rights of Allah and Allah will be his enemy and angered at him until he satisfies the poor person.

Quran

He who reads the Quran and does not act according to it will be gathered blind on the day of rising, then he will say: <Lord, why have you summoned me blind but before I could see. (Allah) will answer: likewise our signs came to you and you forgot them and so you have been forgotten today>(The holy Quran 20:125-126). Then he will be ordered toward fire.

He who learns the Quran for anything other than God and to become famous so that he can quarrel with the fools or to show-off to the learned and to attain by it worldly things, God will separate his bones at the day of rising (*qiamah*) and their will not be anyone in the hell-fire with a more severe punishment than him. There will be no kind of punishment except that he will be punished like that because of the extent of God's wrath and anger at him.

¹ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 2, p. 474

² al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.6 p. 50

And he who learns the Quran and is humble towards (this) knowledge and teaches it to Gods servants and he longs for what is with God, there will be no one in Heaven who has a greater reward or higher rank than him and there will be in heaven no position and no high rank and nothing that is the best of its kind except that he will have the best share in it and the greatest position.

Reconciliation/reunion/making peace

He who strides toward making peace between two people God and his angels will bestow their grace upon him until he returns and he will be rewarded the reward of the night of *Qadr* (*Lailatul Qadr*). He who strides to disunite two people will have as much sin as the reward given to he who made peace between two people and he will be far from God's mercy until he enters Hell and then his torture will be multiplied.

Repentance

Verily he who repents a year before his death God will forgive him and a year is too much. He who repents a month before his death God will forgive him, and a month is too much. He who repents a Friday before his death God will forgive him and a Friday is too much, He who repents a day before his death God will forgive him and a day is much, he who repents an hour before his death God will forgive him. He who repents and his soul has reached here (The Prophet then pointed to his throat) god will forgive him.

Safe-keeping/Trust

He who betrays what has been given to him as a trust and does not return it to its owner in this world and then dies, will have died whilst not being part of my nation and he will meet God while God is angry at him¹.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 72, p. 171

Spouse / wife

He who has a wife who disagrees with him and does not have patience regarding the provisions that Allah gives them and forces him to do what is difficult for him and not in his ability; Allah will not accept from her any of her good deeds to shield her from the heat of hell and Allah will be angry at her whilst she has this attitude.

Tolerance and patience towards people

Half of being faithful is tolerating people and being kind (friendly) with them is half of having a good life¹.

I have been ordered to tolerate people and have patience towards them just as I have been ordered to announce Gods messages².

Two-facedness/backstabbing

He who is two-faced and two-tongued (backstabber) in this world will be two-tongued in Hell³.

Tyranny

The prophet (*as*) was asked: “what is the status of a tyrant aggressive leader who does no good for his citizens and does not perform Gods orders between them?” He answered: “He is the fourth of the four people who have the harshest punishment in hell: Satan (*iblis*), Pharaoh (*fir'on*), he who kills himself and the tyrant ruler.”

¹ al-kulaini, *al-kafi*, vol.2 p. 117

² Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 153

³ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 74, p. 90

Visiting the sick/ill

He who visits a sick person, for each step that he takes until he returns home, will be given seventy thousand thousand (of Gods) kindnesses (*hasanah*) and seventy thousand thousand sins will be deleted from him and his rank will be increased by seventy thousand thousand degrees and seventy thousand thousand angels will be appointed over him who will visit Him in his grave and will ask God to forgive him until the day of rising (*yom al-ghiamah*).

Wanting the good of others/Desiring good things for others/Generosity towards others

The summit of common sense (*aql*) after having faith is to love people (or be friendly to them) and to do good to the righteous and the unrighteous¹.

Women

He who harms a woman until she commits suicide, Allah will not be satisfied as his punishment anything but hell.

Worker/Laborer

He who acts unjustly regarding the wage of a laborer will have his good deeds annihilated and the scent of heaven will be forbidden from him even though it can be smelt from a distance which takes five hundred years to travel.

Give the laborer/worker his wage before his sweat dries up².

Being unjust to the worker is one of the Great sins³.

¹ Al-majlesi, *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol. 71, p. 400

² al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 14, p. 29

³ al-Nuri, *Mostadrak ul-vasael*, vol, 14, p. 31

Questions and Answers

*A disputable Question:
God's "Justice" and "Misfortunes"*

Question: We always heard and read every where God is kind and has mercy on everything. He is fair and just. If it is true, why do we witness all around the world when a natural catastrophe breaks out like flood, earthquake, most of the people living there, including children, women or innocent people are involved? They will suffer the same torture the others like sinful people suffer.

Answer:

To answer this question, there is a need to go over a couple of some essential points first. In the doctrine and ideology of our infallibles (Alul Bayt) the end of our life does not equal death. As a matter of fact, our life on this world is just a first step of a very long way to an eternal life. If I want to use metaphor, I could compare life on the earth like a resting place in a shade of tree to find energy to go on and cross through a desert. Or like a bridge which should be crossed to get to the destination.

The life, the true life, the one which God created us for, eternity, is just to begin when we leave this life. The adversity, difficulties and relief of this world all are limited to this world, they are transitory and ephemeral, like a dream.

If you reflect more, you will get to believe that the problems of this world we are facing to is trivial and passing.

On the other hand, we believe that God is Omniscience, Omnipotent, knowing every thing said or unsaid, done or undone. Now, let's imagine someone's right is violated. Even it is possible someone's

right is violated because of the cruel relations of other people with each other which its side effect is violating other's right and this person fails in gaining their right; in this case, we believe that God, in the other world, will compensate this violation of right for him in a way that these suppressed ones would wish they suffered more in this world.

I am going to make some examples to make this point more tangible.

Someone lining up in a long line awaiting to receive something essential to him in the hot summer day, he knows why he is waiting for, but maybe a passer by laughs at his patience standing in line.

Or a patient in a theater room accept to go under the surgery , a sharp knife of a surgeon and lots of pains after it, to find his health back and go on a healthy life then after.

A student ignoring all possible fun things around though attracting his attention and naturally he prefers to spend his day with those funny things and plays, but against his desire he accept the difficulty of spending his time for studying which sometimes even means to scarify his natural wishes.

Or like a farmer who accepts to tolerate the difficulty of cultivating his farm in a hot days...

These examples all are bringing forth an idea the same idea, that is this life in this world is like a farm its result would be gathered in the next life.

ONE OF THE BASICS OF OBVIATING CRUELTY AND UNJUSTICE FROM GOD IS TO BELIEVE IN HEREAFTER, THE OTHER WORLD, NOT ONLY TO REWARD THE ONES WHO UNDERGONE SUFFERERING BUT ALSO TO PUNISH THOSE CRUELS WHICH HIS CRUELITIES IS MORE THAN THE SCOPE OF THIS WORLD TO BE PUNISHED FULLY HERE, A PUNISHMENT WHICH DESERVERS THEIR BROAD DOMAIN OF CRUELITIES.

To one who believes he is going to go to a just court is assured:

First: no right of him has been violated.

Second: some of his rights has been violated which he is sure those rights will be refunded in the court.

Now, in this part I would like to address some reasons behind catastrophes or misfortunes mankind is faced with. it should be mentioned that I don't claim I am aware of all the reasons just I put my finger in several reasons which are mentioned in traditions and sayings of our infallibles.

The reasons can be classified into different groups:

Test of God

It is mentioned in holy book Quran, test of God is His Way treating with every nations and community from the first of creation till the end. Some times, misfortunes and problems happen to put him in the test. Holy Quran states:

“And surely we shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast, who, in adversity say: 'we belong to Allah and to him we shall return. on those will be prayers and mercy from their lord, those are guided.” (Holy Quran, 2:155-157)

Reminding and warning

In some cases, the misfortunes are to be a reminder or warn. In this way, God awaken them of their false way and at the same time forgives their sins. Here, the misfortunes should be regarded as a blessing helping them to be purified.

Training and perfection

Not all misfortunes should be treated as something negative as in some cases they are necessary to discipline someone to help them to reach a higher place, getting closer to God. Like a file brushing and shining a metal stuff. Like a hammer carving a stone making a nice figure out of it. In this way, the misfortunes are gifts of God, a speeder for the soul to get to purity and perfection. With this meaning we have quite a few number

of traditions, it is mentioned in these traditions, there is a direct link between being good and facing more problems. The proof to this meaning is the life story of our infallibles and other holy men.

Reflection of our deeds

Sometimes misfortunes and catastrophes are the outcome of our own deeds. As holy Quran states:

“And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought, and (yet) he pardons most (of your faults)”

(The holy Quran: 42:30)

The outcome of one's deed could bring them misfortunes in these two ways:

A reflection of someone's bad deed

In cases when men willingly do something, the result of it bounces back to him and his community. Like one who is poisoned by his action eating go off food or the one who dies out of his careless driving. In the same way, a tyrant can bring misfortunes to his people out of his cruelties and negative deeds. Generally speaking, lots of sufferings mankind afflicted with is the result of his own actions.

A punishment for wrongdoings

Quran has frequently referred to this meaning saying the misfortunes are the punishments of their wrong doing, such as befalling

stones, or a loud shout from sky, or entering into earth, or drowning in the sea.

“Each of them we seized for his sin. on some we loosed a squall of pebbles, and others were seized by the cry. Some we caused to be swallowed up by the earth, and some we drowned. Allah would never wrong them but they wronged themselves.”

(The holy Quran 29:40)

If we accept this concept that our misfortunes are the result of our own deeds, the only point questioning the justice of God is about massive catastrophes afflicted a large group of people, including children and innocents. To answer this question we are narrating three hadiths:

- ***After Yunes asked God to punish his tribe, God said him: oh! Yunes! In this tribe there are innocent people like children, old men and women, and oppressed ones and I am a just Ruler and my mercy outspeed my Anger. I never punish children for the wrongdoings of their adults.***¹
- Someone asked Imam Riza:

Why God drowned the entire world in the time of Noah?

He said:“There was no child among them. Because God was cut their child bearing ability since for 40 years , and God do not punish a group unless they are sinful. In that community, there

¹ Bihar Al-Anvar 4:393

was a group did not accept Noah and the rest were satisfied with the mentioned group disapprovalment.”¹

- *God in the response to Ozair about punishing a community while having babies among them said: o’ Ozair! When it comes the time to punish a community out of their sins, I put the dead time of kids of that society simultaneously with the breaking out of that punishment. So the kids are living their natural, predetermined life time and their death is a natural death and to others it is my punishment.”²*

¹ Bihar Al-Anvar 5:283/ elal al-Sharaye:43

² Bihar al-anvar, 5:286, no.8

Book Introduction

About Nahj al Balagha

Seyyed Razi

Abol-hassan Mohammad Ibn Hossein Ibn Mowso known as Sharif Razi or Seyyed Razi is one of Shi'a famous scholars in the century of 4 Hijri. He was born in 395 Hijri in a well-known clergy family. His parents were both Sadat from Shi'a well known scholars. Seyyed Razi was 4 years younger than his brother, Seyed Morteza –a great Shi'a's scholar. It is quoted that their mother took them together to Sheikh-e-Mofid's school for studying religious primes (Sheikh-e-Mofid accepted them after an impressive night-dream).

Finally, in 406 Hijri, Seyyed Razi died while he was 47 years old and known as a great master of Shi'a for political and social issues.

Just about his more or less short life, he met many prominent personalities of Islamic Sciences.

As for his Islamic Studies, he enjoyed elites who were fine experts in various issues such as syntax, decorum and Arabic, an important point strengthening his scientific skills like Arabic literature and eloquence. Among his tutor, there are some Sunni tutors. This points towards his liberal personality: gaining knowledge from every possible source, even not Shi'a sources. Per se many of Shi'a's notables are among his students and narrators.

In addition to his prominent scholar personality, Seyyed Razi had a great position among Shiite and was appointed to important governmental posts by Abbasi and Al-e-Bouyeh monarchs. The most recognized post for him was Alavian's overseer. It was both a political and

social position which has previously been acquired by his father and included supervision and administration of Shiite's affairs in the region.

At 380, Seyyed Razi was officially appointed to this post but the important point is that he gained the highest level of command at 403. He was the first Shiite who acquired the pose; not achieved after him. Appointed as the attorney general, the supervisor of Hajj arrangement and the caliph's representative in holy shrines, he served the Islamic society, especially Shiite.

He passed away at Moharram 406 and the majority of the people, aristocrats and then minister- Fakhrol Molk attended at his funeral. Seyyed Razi was buried in his home in Baghdad; and his brother who was badly influenced by his death, left the city for Mashhad.

About Nahj-al-Balagheh

One of the eternal works of Seyyed Razi is Nahj-al-Balagheh, the Shi'a undoubted Hadith source. In other words, whoever wants to study Shi'a Hadith and its progress from the beginning till now is obliged to quote from Ali's words and ascribe to Nahj-al-Balagheh.

The holy book of Nahj al Balagha includes sermons, letters, and superlative quotations of Imam Ali (AS) which has been declared in different social, political, and military situations, addressed various people and tribes. All followers and people who were fond of Imam Ali, as well as many Arabs, were attracted by His fluent language, in this way, the conditions for recording Imam's words were prepared. This process was so astir that many people were known as references' of Imam Ali's quotations.

In century 4 (Hijri), Seyyed Razi come to compile a resource book collecting the words of Imam Ali (A.S.). Since he was one of the contemporary fluent poets and was fond of eloquent prose of Imam, decided to compile a selection of all quotations in three parts: sermons, letters, and aphorism titled as Nahj-al-Balagheh. As he declares at the beginning of the book, the followers' maintain made him to carry out. So Nahj al Balagha is obviously a selection of Imam Ali's words and quotes which Seyyed Razi signified as more prominent. The evidence is his claim for the comparison of Nahj-al-Balagheh's sermons and other available sources'. It has also seen that for explaining a part, the narratives of Nahj al Balagha like Ibn Abi Alhadid have declared that section is a part of a long sermon, the main version of which is available in historical books. After Seyed Razi, however, many Islamic scientists decided to complete his work and provided books as for the complement of Nahj-al-Balagheh.

Nahj al Balagha compiled by Seyyed Razi includes 239 sermons, 79 letters, and 472 quotations. These sermons, letters, and quotations are of different subjects of political, social, ethical issues, as well as various fields like beliefs, disputation, and sermons. Most of them belong to Imam Ali's caliphate period and narrates the events and happenings of Islam outset.

Another significant point about Seyyed Razi work is that the book was a focus for all scholars and Islamic erudite from the very beginning. They were so wistful that acted to memorize the sermons. Some started paraphrasing Nahj al Balagha and many tried to translate it to other languages. Especially, its translation process was effectively followed up. Lately, Sheikh Agha Bozorg Tehrani has provided nearly 150 books as the

Nahj al Balagha's commentary and also translated it to many languages like Urdu, Gozorate, Turkish, Arabic, etc. Seyyed Abdo-zahra Hosseini khatib has also binged in 101 commentaries in a book Masader of Nahjol Balaghe va Asanideh. Alama Amini also mentioned about 20 Islamic scholars as well as 81 interpreters who have references to Nahj al Balagha. Finally Sheikh Hosseini Jom'e has provided nearly 210 commentaries of Nahj al Balagha's commentary from libraries of Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, etc.

Hence after Holy Quran, Nahj al Balagha is the only book that has attracted many Islamic scholars and researchers attentions. It's worthy to mention that two commentaries of Nahj al Balagha are more prominent, namely the commentary of Ibn Abi-hadid Mo'tazali (the Sunni scholar) and Ibn Meisam Bohrani (the Shi'a scholar).

Study of Nahj al Balagha Ascription to Imam Ali

From the first days of inscription, the most important issue about Nahj al Balagha was the reality of its contents' ascription to Imam Ali (AS). The origin of all doubts is that there are only six references mentioned by Seyyed Razi. The clime is that: "Although, it's impossible to prove that all sermons are unexceptionally worded by Imam Ali; based on Shi'a scholars, the book ascribes to Imam Ali by no doubt for the following reasons:

A) The content of most sermons, letters, and aphorism of Nahj al Balagha conforms by all people be familiar with Imam Ali as well as Shi'a fixed viewpoints of Imamate (leadership), predominance, and innocence of Ahle-beit.

B) All prominent scholars believe in Seyyes Razi's pietism and honesty.

C) Prior to the inscription of Nahj al Balagha, many of its sermons and letters have been used in different sources. The claim is obvious in the studies of late and contemporary researchers.

D) Mentioning the exact date of events in half of the 1st century may regarded as strong evidence for originality of Nahj al Balagha content.

E) Nahj al Balagha unique eloquence indicates proof for being worded by Imam Ali.

Sunni Scholars has also accepted the Ascription of Nahj al Balagha to Imam Ali, insofar as some of them like Ibn Abi-hadid, Sobhi Saleh, and Sheikh Mohammad Abdeh have provided commentaries, edited the content, and acted other services that are rare in Shi'a versions. Meanwhile, Ibn Abi-hadid's book has rejected the doubts in many cases and defended the originality and authenticity of the Nahj al Balagha by Seyyed Razi.

**SUBSCRIPTION FORM FOR INTERNATIONAL
QUARTERLY OF SAFINAH**

Personal Subscriber	
First Name:	Last name:
Date of Birth:	Gender:
Education:	
Address:	
Email:	
Body Corporate	
Name of Organization:	

Ordering Information

- Subscription: For Europe, Canada and America is \$5 and for Asia, Far East and Africa is \$2.
- To subscribe, use the following accounts: Alshahd Trading Company- Bank Emirates- Mankhool branch. Dollar account: 0058-245027-010 / Euro account: 0058-245027-016, Swift: EBILAEAD and send the bank draft to info@nabacultural.org or nabamobin@yahoo.com
- Postage of the quarterly to subscribers is free of charge.

