Essence Of Shi’a Faith

Essence Of Shi'a Faith - Itiqadat Al-Imamiyah

Al-Saduq - Explanations of the Text by Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Al-Najafi

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This text presents the translation of Itiqadat Al-Imamiyah, a foundational work outlining the core beliefs of Shi'a Islam. Each chapter is accompanied by commentary from Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Al-Najafi, offering clarification and expanded insights. It explains the oneness of God, divine attributes, prophecy, and the necessity of the Imamate.

The work addresses resurrection, accountability, the soul's journey after death, and divine justice. Philosophical and theological arguments are presented alongside practical guidance on worship, human actions, and moral duty. It also covers the Qur'an, angels, prophetic purity, and the rights of the Prophet's family, while exploring the development of Shi'a thought and its current practices.

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Essence Of Shi'a Faith A Translation Of Itiqadat Al-Imamiyah (The Beliefs Of The Imamiyyah) By Shaykh Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Husayn Ibn Musa Babawayh Al-Qummi, Known as Shaykh As-Saduq Explanations of the Text by Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Al-Najafi A Shi'ite creed: A translation of Itiqadat al-Imamiyah (The beliefs of the Imamiyyah) of Abu Jafar, Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn, Ibn Babawayh Al-Qummi, known as ash-Shaykh As-Saduq (306/919-381/991) English Translation by Dr. Safi Hasan Maktaba Sibtain 296/9 B, Satellite Town, Sargodha All Rights Reserved with the Publishers Published in 2012 by Maktaba Sibtain 296/9-B, Satellite Town, Sargodha Printed by: Sayyid Izhar al-Hasan Rizvi at Izharsons Printers 9-Rattigan Road, Lahore e-mail: azam_irip@yahoo.com

About The Author Shaykh As-Saduq

The exact date of birth of Shaykh As-Saduq is not known. However, the year of his birth can be determined from the fact that his father Ali Ibn Babway had requested the 12th Imam through his emissary – Hazrat Husayn Ibn Ruh to appeal to Allah to grant him a son. Hazrat Husayn Ibn Ruh had passed his request to the Imam, who had replied in writing that God would grant him with a son in the near future, who will be of great benefit to the people. Shaykh As-Saduq thus, came to this world after Imam's intercession.

Hazrat Husayn Ibn Ruh started as Imam's emissary in 305 Hijrah. Therefore, Shaykh As-Saduq's birth may be ascertained as around 306 Hijrah. He was born in the city of Qum and his birth is considered as one of the miracles of the Twelfth Imam.

His initial education started under the patronage of his father, Ali Ibn Babway Al-Qummi, whose piety, God-fearing qualities and knowledge were well known to the people. Thus, the depth of knowledge and capabilities a child who was born with the intercession of Imam, can be easily imagined. Within the first twenty years of his life, he had memorized thousands of traditions from the Prophet and his Holy Progeny along with their levels of authenticity and chains of narration. He became the grand leader of Shi'as at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, after the death of his father.

Although several Ulama (Scholars) travelled to Qum to meet the Shaykh, he himself journeyed to other parts of the Islamic world to gain knowledge from other grand masters. He extracted Ahadith from both Shi'a and Sunni sources and also removed many misunderstandings that existed in their minds about the Shi'a school of faith. This provided him with a golden opportunity to extend Shi'a points of view amongst the other schools of Islam.

Even though the Abbassids were no less cruel to the followers of Shi'a faith, God had willed that his message would spread. Therefore, the rulers failed to suppress the message of Shaykh As-Saduq, in line with that of the great Imams.

During this period the Abbassid's reign weakened in Egypt and other African territories and as a result several independent dominions evolved, which helped Shaykh As-Saduq to spread the message of Ahl al-Bayt within those territories.

Shaykh spent his entire life in propagating the teaching of Ahl al-Bayt, and in this capacity, he wrote several books on every aspect of Shi'a faith. According to Shaykh at-Tusi, he had written around 300 books but Shaykh Najashi counts his books to be around 200. His greatest achievement is a remarkable book called *Man La Yahduruhu Al-Faqih*, which provides guidance on Islamic law. His other great work is a book called *Al-I'tiqadat Al-Imamiyyah* whose English translation and commentary is being provided for your reading.

Shaykh As-Saduq died in 381 Hijrah and was buried in Tehran. His grave was reopened in 1238 Hijrah and to the astonishment of the people his body appeared to be freshly laid down, while his shroud was completely worn out. May God send His blessing upon his soul.

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Ayatullah Muhammad Husayn Najafi

Grand Ayatollah Allama Shaikh Muhammad Husayn Najafi was the first Ithna 'Ashariyyah Shi'a Aalim from Pakitan to be elevated to the status of *marai'at*. He is now, after the demise of Sayyid Ali An-Naqi Naqvi of Lucknow, the grand spiritual leader of South Asian Shi'a Muslims.

At present, there are two *Marjas* of Pakistani descent. Ayatollah Shaykh Basheer Husayn Najafi, who chose to reside in Najaf, Iraq, while Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Najafi elected to live in Pakistan. He is the only *Marja* on Pakistani soil, running his Hawza (Religious Institute) in the city of Sargodha. He was included in the list of "Five hundred most influential Muslims of 2010" and was selected from Pakistan along with other 24 individuals.

Muhammad Husayn was born in Jahanian Shah; district Sargodha (Punjab, Pakistan), in April 1932. He belongs to Dhakku branch of the Jat community. He had two paternal uncles and both of them were Shi'a thinkers. Maulana Imam Bakhsh was a religious teacher in Jahanian Shah, while Maulana Sohrab Ali Khan was a reputed scholar of Uch Sharif.

His father Rana Tajuddin had the wish of making his son a great religious scholar. However, he died in 1944 when Muhammad Husayn was only twelve years old, after which the family members persuaded his widow that Muhammad Husayn should look after the family business. But she complied with the wish of her late husband and allowed her son to continue with his education.

After secondary school education, he got admission into Madrasah Muhammadiah in Jalalpur Nankiana, Sargodha, where one of his prominent teachers was Ayatollah Allama Husayn Bakhsh Jarra. In 1947, he initiated the study of Dars-i-Nizami under the tutelage of Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir Naqvi in Jhang, and completed the study under the guidance of Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Yar Shah Naqvi Najfi, the most prominent disciple of Allama Baqir Naqvi. In 1953, he passed the examination of Maulavi Fazil from the University of Punjab, and moved to Najaf in 1954 for higher education.

Before going to Najaf for higher religious education, he married to his maternal cousin in 1952. His teacher Allama Yar Shah had links with Ulama of Najaf, and he wanted Muhammad Husayn to be married in a scholarly family of Najaf, but Muhammad Husayn declined this proposal due to cultural

differences.

In 1954, his only son Muhammad Sibtain was born. At the age of five, he became seriously ill and died. Muhammad Husayn did not have enough money for his treatment. After Sibtain's death, Shaykh Najafi did not have children for the next eleven years. He married the daughter of Haji Muhammad Shafi (Faisalabad) in 1970, and was blessed with three daughters from this marriage. His first wife died in 1996.

In 1954, he moved to Hawza Ilmiyah of Najaf to finalize his religious education. He attended the lectures of the following Marjas:

- Grand Ayatollah Mohsin Al-Hakim for Dars al-Kharij of *Fiqh*
- Grand Ayatollah Sayyed Javad Tabrizi for Dars al-Kharij of Kifaya-tul-Usool
- Grand Ayatollah Meerza Baqir Zanjani for Dars al-Kharij of Usool al-*Fiqh*
- Grand Ayatollah Badhurrg Tehrani for Fehm al-Hadith wa Rajjal & Kutb Shanasi
- Grand Ayatollah Mahmood Shahroudi for Dars al-Kharij of *Fiqh*
- Grand Ayatollah Abdul Aala Sabzwari for Dars al-Kharij of *Fiqh*
- Grand Ayatollah Abul Qasim Rashti for Rasail wa Makatib
- Grand Ayatollah Abdul Husayn Amini (the writer of famous Al-Ghadeer) for Ilm al-Munazira
- Grand Ayatollah Mulla Sadra for Satheeyat and Asfar
- Grand Ayatollah Aqae Muhaqqiq for Darse Manzooma Sabzwari

- Grand Ayatollah Aqae Fazel for Ilm al-Kalam

- Grand Ayatollah Abdul Karim Zanjani for Tanawwo dar Islami Uloom wa Funoon and Ittehad al-Islami

He wrote following books:

- *Faizan ur-Rahman fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*. It is a 10-volume comprehensive Tafsir of the Qur'an.

- *Masail ash-Sharia* (translation of *Wasa'il ash-Shi'a*). It is an Urdu translation of a great Shi'a book of Hadith compiled by Shaikh Hur al-Aamili; thirteen out of twenty volumes have been published.

- *Kawakib al-Muzayya* (translation of *Al-Jawahar as-Sunnia fil-Ahadith-al-Qudsia*). It is an Urdu translation and explanation of Shaikh al-Hur al-Aamili's book on *Hadith al-Qudsi*.

- *Ahsan al-Fawaid fi Sharh al-Aqaid*. It is a two volume Urdu translation and explanation of Shaykh As-Saduq 's famous Risala "*Al-Aqaid*". It contains all the Shi'a beliefs, and their truthfulness in the light of the Qur'an and Hadith.

- *Usool ash-Sharia fi Aqaid ash-Shi'a*. This book discusses the beliefs of Ghali, Tafwizi and Shaykhi denominations, who were propagating their thoughts under the guise of Shi'a Islam. He negated them in the light of Qur'an and Hadith.

- *Aitaqadat al-Imamia*. It is an Urdu translation and explanation of Allama Al-Majlisi's "*Risala tul-Lailia*".

- *Aqsam al-Tawhid Mukhtasir Aqaid ash-Shi'a*

- *Qawaneen ash-Sharia fi Fiqh al-Ja'fariya* (*Tawzih al- Masail*) It is a book of *Fiqh* in two volumes, covering all the aspects of human life according to the Ja'faria School of Jurisprudence, including the modern human issues. The superiority of Ja'fari Jurisprudence over other Islamic Schools of has been proven in the light of Qur'an and Hadith.

- *Khulasa tul-Ahkam*. It is an abridged version of *Qawaneen ash-Sharia*.

- *Hurmat al-Ghina Aur Islam*. This book discusses the prohibition of ghina in Islamic Sharia.

- *Hurmat al-Reeshtarashi*. This book discusses the prohibition of shaving beard in Islamic Sharia.

- *Namaz al-Juma Aur Islam* It is a book proving that Juma Prayers are wajib even during the occultation of the 12th Imam. Sayyid Muhammad Dehlavi published it in Karachi.

- *Iqd al-Juma* (Translation of *Mafatih al-Janan*). Ayatollah Najafi had translated Mafatih al-Janan during his stay at Najaf, but did not publish it, as another translation of the same book was available from Lahore. Grand Ayatollah Badhurrg Tehrani has mentioned it in his famous book "*Az-Zariya ila Tasaneef ash-Shi'a*" (A list of Shi'a Books), and Grand Ayatollah Husayni in his book "*Ziyarat*".

- *Zaad-ul-Ibad li-Youmil-Ma'ad*. It is a collection of supplications from reliable Shi'a books.

- *Saadat-ud-Darain fi Maqtal al-Husayn*. It is a comprehensive account of the Battle of Karbala that took place in 61 Hijra, and the tragic martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali.

- *Faiz ur-Rahman* (Translation of *Lulu wa al-Marjan*). Ayatollah Najafi translated Allama Noori's famous book *Lulu wa al-Marjan* during his stay at Najaf, but did not publish it as another translation "*Jawahir al-Bayan*" was published from Sargodha. Grand Ayatollah

Badhurrg Tehrani has mentioned it in his famous book "*Az- Zariya ila Tasaneef ash-Shi'a*", and mentioned in its foreword that its treatment of the prohibition of ghina is indeed useful.

- *Shuhada al-Khamsa kay Haalat al-Zindagi*. It contains biographies of the five Shi'a martyred scholars:
    - Shaheed al-Awal Muhammad Jamaluddin Makki Amili
    - Shaheed al-Sani Zainuddin Amili
    - Shaheed al-Salis Qazi Nurullah Shustari
    - Shaheed al-Rabey Mirza Muhammad Kamil Dehlavi
    - Shaheed al-Khamis Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr

- *Isbat al-Imamat*. It is a book on the issue of Khilafat and Imamat. It establishes that Imam Ali was the true successor of the Prophet. (Read online) Grand Ayatollah Badhurrg Tehrani has mentioned it in his famous book "*Az-Zariya ila Tasaneef ash-Shi'a*".

- *Tahqeeqat al-Fariqain fi Hadith ath-Thaqalayn*. It is a book presenting extensive research from both Shi'a & Sunni sources of Hadith on the authenticity of Hadith ath-Thaqalayn. Grand Ayatollah Badhurrg Tehrani has mentioned it in his famous book "*Az-Zariya ila Tasaneef ash-Shi'a*".

- *Tajalliat al-Sadaqat fi Jawab Aftab al-Hidayat*. It is a book written in two volumes in response to an anti-Shi'a book "*Aftab al-Hidayat*" by Maulavi Karam Deen.

- *Tanzeeh al-Imamia amma fi Risala Mazhab ash-Shi'a*. It is the book in response to an

anti-Shi'a risala "*Mazhab ash- Shi'a*" by Pir Siyyalvi.

- *Khatm al-Nubuwwaht ber Khatmi Martabat*. This book proves Khatme Nubuwwaht (Prophethood has come to an end after Muhammad.)

- *Adab al-Al-Mufid wa al-Mustafeed* (Translation of Munia tul-Murid)

- Ayatollah Najafi translated Shaheed al-Sani's famous book *Muniatul-Murid* during his stay at Najaf, but did not publish it as another translation by Mufti Inayat Ali Shah was published. Grand Ayatollah Badhurrg Tehrani has mentioned it in his famous book "*Az-Zariya ila Tasaneef ash-Shi'a*".

- *Islah al-Majalis wal-Mahafil*. This book discusses the wrong customs associated with majlis of Imam Al-Husayn, and how to correct them.

- *Islah ur-Rusoom az-Zahira ba Kalam al-Itrat at-Tahira*. It is a comprehensive book that discusses entire *bidah's* (improper innovations) and false customs in Islamic society, and how to correct them.

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Acknowledgment

I am indebted to Maulana Sayyid Amir Husayn Naqvi and Maulana Abdul Ghafoor for their expert guidance on the Arabic text, and also in persuading me to embark upon the translation of this work.

This book is prepared primarily for a European readership, which is either working or studying in universities, and others who are new to Islam or interested to learn more about Shi'a school of thought. It also provides guidance to the young Shi'a community that is growing in the secular educational system of the West.

It is important to mention here that salutations are generally reserved with the names of the Prophets and Imams, and those are symbolically placed after their holy names. Readers must not be confused

with those symbols.

Shi'as of Ahl al-Bayt have long suffered under the dictatorial regimes of Banu Umayyah and Banu Abbas. If we unfold the pages of history, we can find a long list of atrocities against the followers of Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Allama Abu Bakr Khawrzami had written a letter to the Shi'as of Nishapur reminding them of the atrocious period they had undergone in the past, when Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim, the ruler of Nishapur intended to visit them. We have presented here some extracts from that letter. He wrote:

"May God bless you as we are the same nation. God did not desire to provide us with the opulence of this world. Instead, He gathered the blessings of the hereafter by disapproving the mundane glamours for us and divided us into two groups. One of those groups was martyred in the path of God, and the rest were exiled from the cities, therefore those who survived were envious of those who had died, due to the excessive atrocities they were going through.

Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) has said that calamities and misfortunes follow our Shi'as more rapidly than the water travels from the high ground towards the lower levels. The basis of this statement is the proclamation that they are born under the shadow of tyranny and their life ends before its natural sequence is completed. They do not blossom from the inside as their interior is full of excruciating pains. The humanity oppresses them and the world slips away from their grips. If we proclaim to be the ardent followers of our Imams in all avenues of religion then we must share the sufferings, which they endured in the love of God.

On the day of Saqifah, the legacy of her father was seized from Fatimah ('a), and Ali ('a) was deprived from his rightful position of the Caliphate. Imam Al-Hasan ('a) was poisoned and Imam Al-Husayn ('a) was overtly murdered. Zaid Ibn Ali was beheaded in the military encounter, while his two sons Muhammad and Ibrahim were painfully put to death by 'Isa Ibn Musa Abbasi. Hazrat Musa Ibn Ja'far ('a) died in the torture cell of Haroon Rashid, and Ali Ibn Musa ('a) was poisoned by Mamoon. Idrees retreated to Fakh and then travelled to Andalus. 'Isa Ibn Zaid died in exile, while Yahya Ibn Abdullah was murdered despite offering him official protection.

All of this is other than what Yaqoob Ibn Laees had done with the Alawites in Tabristan. Muhammad Ibn Zaid and Hasan Ibn Qasim were assassinated by the family of Sasan. Abu Sayyah attacked the Alawites of Medina, while they were unarmed, and exiled them to Samarra, this episode happened after the murder of Qotaiba Ibn Muslim Bahli, who offered protection to 'Umar Ibn Ali. Husayn Ibn Isma'il Al-Moseehi extended his anger towards Yahya Ibn 'Umar Al-Zaidi. And, Mazahim Ibn Khaqan committed acute atrocities on Alawites – another name for the progeny of Ali ('a), in Kufa. As a result, there was no city in the entire Muslim Empire, where an Alawite was not murdered backed either by Umayyads or Abbasids.

The religious pride invited Alawites towards death, as they were not willing to breathe a life of disgrace. So, they chose to die with honour, in conformity with their faith in consolation of the hereafter. In this

struggle no Alawite left the perishable world alone. Many of their Shi'as and friends participated on equal terms.

Othman Ibn Affan kicked Ammar Ibn Yasir in the groin and Abu Dharr was banished in the desert of Rabza. Aamir Ibn Abdul Qais Al-Tamimi was thrown out of the city, followed by Malik al-Ashtar and Uday Ibn Haatim. 'Umar Ibn Zarara and Kumayl Ibn Ziad were exiled to Syria and Iraq respectively. Ubaid Ibn Kaab and Muhammad Ibn Hozaifa were tortured and then expelled from the city. They did whatever they wanted to do with the blood of Muhammad Ibn Saalim and Kaab Zilhatba.

Following the footsteps of Othman, Umayyads killed those who opposed them and deceived those who wanted to live in peace with them. No Muhajirin or Ansar was safe from them, since they had no regard for the heavenly law. They are used to treat general public as their slaves and considered the treasury as their personal property. They tried to demolish Kaaba and asked the companions of the Prophet to revere them. They had abandoned the obligatory prayers and desecrated the respectable Islamic sites, similar to the behaviour of the infidels.

The family of Umayyah had crossed all limits of corruption and lewdness. Mu'awiyah murdered Hajjar Ibn Uday Al-Kindy and 'Amr Ibn Al-Hamaq Al-Khazaee, after agreeing to give protection to them. Ziad Ibn Samiyya murdered thousands of Shi'as in Basra and Kufa, and imprisoned the others until God recalled him to His presence to answer for his crimes as well as his excessive ills and abuse of power. After his reprehensible death his son followed his footsteps.

Yazid also copied Mu'awiyah to the last letter and killed the remaining family members of those whose elders were killed by Mu'awiyah; to the extent that he approved the killing of Haani Ibn Urwa.

When all the land was free of the family of Abu Talib, they then handed over the provinces of Hijaz and Iraq to Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf, who played with the lives of the Hashmites. He frightened Fatimids and butchered the followers of Ali and demolished the symbols of the progeny of the Prophet. Whatever he had done with Kumail Ibn Ziad, its legacy continued unabated till the end of Abbasid rule. God then decreed that with their cardinal sins; their rulership of the state must end.

Zaid Ibn Ali then stood up to save the residual Islam, but the hypocrites of Iraq abandoned him. As a result, not only was he slaughtered by the Syrians, but all his friends including everyone who had entered marital relationship with him, were also put to the sword.

When Umayyads had exceeded all limits of tyranny, God decided to an end their regime. He then placed Abu Muslim Khorasani upon their necks, who decided to be harsh with the Alawites and favoured the Abbasids. He abandoned piety and followed the coil of desire and sold his hereafter for the worldly glamour. He opened his chapter of crime with the murder of Abdullah Ibn Mu'awiyah Ibn Abdullah Ibn Ja'far Ibn Abi Talib. He appointed the devils of Khorasan, the Kharjites of Sajistan and the Kurds of Isfahan over the heads of Aali Abu Talib. They searched every corner of the state to find and kill the family members of Abu Talib. It was a miracle that his closest confidant, who superseded Abu Muslim,

killed him in a manner similar to how he had slaughtered his victims.

The prison cells of Abbasids were filled with the members of Ahl al-Bayt. The missing individuals of their kins were hunted and subsequently killed. Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Abdullah Hasani was murdered in the province of Sindh, in India. Still all this was small as compared to the crimes of Haroon Rashid.

The state of affair with the Abbasids was such that if a member of the Sayyid family had died there was nobody available to accompany his dead body, and nor was there anyone to bury his corpse. On the other hand, if someone subscribing to the state ideology died then all the dignitaries of the state were present to honour his funeral cortege and the mosque was full of grieving dignitaries. The state was even pleased with those whom they knew to be either atheists or agnostics, even while they were spreading their influence among local students and the intellectuals. However, if they found that someone was a Shi'a, it was legally permissible to shed his blood. They also murdered those people who named their children after Imam Ali.

It is sufficient to say that the Quraish poets, who used to write abusive poetry against Imam Ali (ʿa), were endorsed and promoted. Their works were sold at elevated prices in the cities and their biographies were published officially after their death. Historians like Wahab and Waqadi used to draw references from their couplets.

However, people like Kalbi, Ashraqi Ibn Qatami, Haisam Ibn Uday and Daab Ibn Al-Kanani, who wrote eulogies for the legate of the Prophet, and described the miracles of the Prophet in their poetry were capitulated and their tongues were slashed, and their books were shredded. Abdullah Ibn Ammar al-Barqi met the same fate. Similarly, the grave of Mansoor Ibn Alzaberqan was desecrated and Daabal Ibn Ali Al-Khazaee was tortured to death, although he was the companion of Marwan Ibn Abi Hafsa.

Haroon, Ja'far and Mutawakkal never granted favour to anyone, unless they were sure that the person in question was vocally abusive of the family of Abu Talib, and belonged to the religion of Khawaraj and Nawasib.

The readers must therefore, appreciate the difficulties through which the servants of Amir Al-Mu'minin had gone through. It is no less than a miracle that the religious scholars have been able to collect all the relevant information that was necessary for the survival of the Shi'a faith. This book under consideration is the work of our grand Master Shaykh Abu Ja'far, who prepared the text to counter the propaganda against Shi'a beliefs. I pray to the Almighty God that this translation will open the doors of wisdom for the inquisitive minds of the modern society.

I must thank my wife Tahira Safi, who provided me with every opportunity to complete this task without disruption.

Thanks are also due to Mir Zamir, Mir Rajab Ali, Malik Sajjad and their families, who extended financial

support to print this work.

Finally, if there are any suggestions to improve the translation of this work then your feedback will be highly appreciated.

Dr S. H. Safi

8th August 2011,

Birmingham, England

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Chapter 1: Shi'as' Point Of View On The Oneness Of God

In this chapter, the comprehension of the unity of God, Tawhid, in its being and attributes is discussed according to the Shi'a Imamiyyah Faith in the light of certain allegorical Verses of the Qur'an.

The author of this work, Shaykh Musa Ibn Babway Al-Qummi1, said that so far as the Oneness of Allah, the most gracious is concerned, the Shi'a point of view is that He is unique (ahad), and there is none that bears a resemblance to Him. He is unchanged since eternity and would remain the same until infinity.

He listens without ears and sees without eyes and encompasses everything. He is so judicious that He would not enter into any meaningless exercise. He is in full control of His domain and is free of any defects. He is dignified in His knowledge, and is so generous that everyone is a destitute before Him, but He is insolvent for none.

He is so incomparable that He could not be associated with any mathematical dimensions, because He is neither dense nor buoyant, neither stagnant nor in motion. Space and time could not circumvent Him. He is free of all the sordid qualities of His creatures. He is not bound by a likeness or a contrast. We could not negate Him of wisdom and knowledge and nor could we compare Him to His creatures in relation to those faculties.

In His being, He is an entity but not like those which are around us. He is inimitable, unique and self-sufficient. He had neither begotten anyone, who could claim succession to Him nor had He descended

from someone else with whom He could be associated with in person and or his attributes.

He is incomparable without a rival and there is none that resembles Him. He neither has a spouse nor a companion and therefore, He is exclusive and without an equal. In short, He is unique in all aspects of attributes and actions.

He is so subtle that eyes could not sense Him in both the worlds, but He could identify every angle of what the eyes visualize. He is so exalted that human thought could not reach His station, but He is always aware of the thoughts of His servants. He neither sleeps nor slumbers. He had created all things and only He is worthy of worship. To create and govern is His right.

***"Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep"* (*2:255*).**

All praise was for the Master of the Universe. Anyone who associates Him with His creatures in any aspect, is a polytheist (*Mushrik*). Anyone who ascribes attributes with respect to the Oneness of God (*Tawhid*) other than what had been described in the present work – to Shi'ites – is a liar who forges false accusations.

If any narration is found contradicting the aforementioned characteristics of Tawhid, then it should be termed false and fake, because the subject matter of any Hadith or a narration, which is in opposition to the Qur'an is evidently baseless and incorrect. If, a similar narration is found in the books of our scholars, it should be treated as *Muddalus* (a tradition whose forgery was cleverly concealed or an implanted text).

Those narrations that created doubts in the minds of ignorant and people of lesser intellect, in respect of God's resemblance with its creatures; its interpretation should be done in line with those Qur'anic Verses where such similarities arise. For example, it is mentioned in the Qur'an:

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَه

***"Everything has to expire except the face of God"* (*28:88*).**

Here the word *Wajh* i.e. face, must be interpreted as the religion of Islam or the one who is a mediator between God and His people. The mediator was one from whom awareness was sought to enhance one's personal attention towards Allah. This Verse would then mean that everything would perish other than the religion of Islam and the mediator.

Similarly, in another Verse, the Qur'an stated:

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ

***"The Day that the shin* (*Sa-qa*) *shall be laid bare, and they shall be summoned to bow in adoration, but they shall not be able"* (*68:42*).**

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَالِمُونَ

***"Humbled shall be their eyes, and abasement shall overspread them for they had been summoned to prostrate themselves while they were yet unhurt"* (*68:43*).**

If *Saa-qa* was translated as a shin/thigh, which was the general perception, then it would tantamount to admitting a corporal configuration for God. However, if it is interpreted to metaphorically represent the severity of matters on the Day of Judgment, when there would be disclosure of the hidden affairs, then this meaning would become quite plausible.

In another example, when a person said that he had committed neglect towards the flank of God (*Junbullah*), it would only mean that he had failed in his compliance to conform his conducts according to God's commands. Again, when God said:

وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي

***"He has made His spirit to breathe into the body* [*of Adam*]*"* (*15:29*).**

Then, the sentence – ***nafakhtu fi hi min Ruhi –*** would only mean the transmittance of a spirit exclusively created for Adam. God's reference to that spirit as His own was similar to those junctures when He had referred to the earth as His earth, His space and His paradise. The reference was only allegorical in such instances. Apart from these examples there were other instances such as in Surah Al-Maidah, when He said:

بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ

***"His both Hands are spread out"* (*5:64*).**

Here this only referred to His endless bounties scattered in both the World rather than His physical hands.

At another point in time, He said:

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ

***"We have built the heaven with Hands* (*might*)*"* (*51:47*).**

The hand here would mean an instrument of His authority. This idea was supplemented with another Verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُودَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ

***"Remember Our Servant David, a person with hands"* (*38:17*).**

It means that Prophet Daoud was a man of courageous action.

Mentioning the episode of Satan, the Qur'an stated that God addressed him as below,

يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِيَدَيَ

***"O Iblees, why have you not submitted to him, whom I have created with my both Hands"* (*38:75*).**

Here hands would simply mean command and strength.

Also, when the Qur'an stated:

وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

***"... And the whole earth shall be in His grip on the day of resurrection"* (*39:67*).**

it means that the earth would be solely a property of God and under His authority, without any partners showing up on the Day of Judgment, or:

وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ

***"...The Heavens will be folded back into His right Hand* [*on the Day of Judgment*]*"* (*39:67*).**

means that the Universe will be visibly seen within the control and supremacy of God. Or, when He said:

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

***"And your Lord comes and* (*also*) *the angels in ranks"* (*89:22*).**

'Coming of the Lord' here, means that God's decree would descend, or:

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ

***"Certainly, on that Day their Lord shall remain hidden from them"* (*83:15*).**

When it means that those people shall be deprived of the blessings of their Lord, or:

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَن يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْغَمَامِ

***"Do those people wait for their Lord to come under the shadow of the clouds"* (*2:210*).**

Here, the coming of the Lord under the shadow of the clouds meant the arrival of God's punishment. Or:

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ

***"Some faces on that Day will be radiant"* (*75:22*).**

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

***"Gazing towards their Lord"* (*75:23*).**

means that they would be waiting for the rewards of their Lord, or:

وَمَن يَحْلِلْ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبِي فَقَدْ هَوَىٰ

***"He who receives My wrath will perish"* (*20:81*).**

Here, the word (*Ghadhab*) or 'wrath' stands for God's punishment which was opposite to His Ridha, i.e. pleasure. Again, in the Holy Qur'an referring to Jesus' reply:

تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ

***"You know what is in my heart but I know not what is in Your Heart"* (*5:116*).**

Here, the mentioning of the word Nafs (heart or inner being) means the secrets. In other words, Jesus was replying to God that He knew the secrets of his heart or *Nafs* but he (Jesus) was unaware of God's secrets.

On another occasion, the Qur'an mentioned:

وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ

***"But Allah cautions you* [*o people*]*, of* [*retribution from*] *Himself"* (*3:28*).**

Here the words '*yuhazziru...nafsahu*' implies that God had warns people of His revenge and punishment. Or, when He said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ

***"God and His Angels send their salutation to His Messenger"* (*33:56*).**

The word *yu'salloona*, literally meant salat or prayer. When referred to God, it meant that He was publicizing His messenger's virtues or assets. The same word when used for general public would mean (dua) or prayer for enhancing the Prophet's station. Here He was asking people to follow and salute the Prophet (S).

Again, it was stated in another Qur'anic Verse:

وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

***"They plan* (*against Allah*) *and Allah plans* (*against them*)*, truly Allah is the best of the planners"* (*8:30*).**

Or:

يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ

***"They* (*think to*) *deceive God and believers but they deceive not but themselves"* (*2:9*).**

Or:

اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ

"God mocks them and prolongs their transgression" **(*2:15*).**

Or:

نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ

"They forgot God and He forgot them" **(*9:67*).**

Or:

سَخِرَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ

***"Allah will* (*throw back their*) *ridicule* (*on*) *them"* (*9:79*).**

In all these Verses, the literal meanings of the words such as *makr* (deceive), *khada* (to mislead), *istehza* (to make fun of) or *na'see* (to forget) is not applicable. All these expressions are related to the effects i.e. reward or punishment of their deeds. In reality God does not cheat or deceive or play joke or forget, since all such characteristics are vile attributes and His Being is free of such absurdities.

The Verses, which we have mentioned in this chapter, might have multi-faceted meaning. Such words could be found in Shi'a books that become opposition's target for ridicule. It is therefore suggested that the meanings of such words and expressions should be extracted in a similar manner, as we have shown for the above-mentioned Qur'anic Verses.

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1. The Right Beginning: It was a long-term desire of mine to write some detailed explanatory notes to this precious book of Shaykh As-Saduq, due to its comprehensive nature. However, the profusion of other religious duties always impeded the fulfilment of this desire.
Eventually on the insistence of many virtuous friends during the past years, I was compelled to find some time to initiate this religious work. Thus, with the support of Allah, the work on Ahsan Al-Fawaid Fi Sharh Al-Aqaid was commenced. We hope that the readers would appreciate our efforts.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 1

The Right Beginning

Due to its comprehensive nature, it was a long-term desire of mine to write some detailed explanatory notes to this precious book of Shaykh Saduq, but the profusion of other religious duties always impeded the fulfilment of this desire. However, due to the insistence of many virtuous friends during the previous years compelled me to find some time to initiate this religious work. Therefore, with the support of Allah Ah'san al-Fawa'id Fi Shahr al-Aqa'id was commenced. We hope that our efforts would be appreciated by the readers.

Is Belief In God Self-Evident Or Just A Concept?

Since the great master has treated the belief in God as an essential intrinsic phenomenon, he has therefore, abandoned the need to prove His existence. He has mentioned this in chapter eight of this book.

It should remain clear that there are three assertions on the self-evident nature of God.

1. The concept is so obvious that it does not need to be bound by a reason.

2. The idea is partly self-evident and partly conceptual or imaginative.

3. It is completely abstract and is subject to reason.

As it is said – *Khair al-A'mooro Au'satuha* – the middle approach seems more credible. The other two statements are not suitable on the basis of their imbalanced view. The middle approach means that the self-evidence of God, in its simplest form, is acceptable; and, that a knowledgeable Creator must exist to explain the survival of this Universe. However, full comprehension about whether the divine being is one or many; whether He is confined in space and time; the nature of His essence and composition; and whether or not He is visible to physical eyes, is definitely required.

The understanding of these issues is evidently subject to reason and argument. In this discussion, minor adjustments could be made between various Verses and traditions, which point towards the apparent or the conceptual aspects of His existence.

Acceptance Of God In Its Simplest View Is Self-Evident

As it is stated earlier, the acceptance of the Creator of the Universe, in its simplest form, is inherent, and

it is not subject to any argument or reason. The acceptance of the existence of God is part and parcel of human nature. Just as the sum is always bigger than its parts, or that it is impossible to implement two opposites in one system at the same place and at the same time, or that a dependent cannot also be self-sufficient at the same moment, or that the coolness and warmth are the accepted characteristics of ice and fire – in the same way this proposition also is self-evident that an effect cannot exist without a cause, or an imprint cannot make its mark without a printer or an act cannot be in existence without an actor, and a product cannot be realised without a maker, a building cannot exist without its base and life cannot initiate without its ingredients. This is why even the most famous of the polytheists did not have the strength to deny the Creator. This is why the Qur'an says:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

"And should you ask them, Who created the heavens and the earth? They would most certainly say: Allah" (***39:38***).

If there is doubt about the existence of the fundamental then how could the reality of anything else be proven?

The Qur'an says:

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

"Their messengers said: Is there doubt about Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth?" (***14:10***).

That is why a poet says that if a dazzling day is subject to an argument for its existence; then how could the existence of anything else be accepted in one's mind.

Scholars know that reason and its basis are required to be more lucid than the person for whom they are referred. Therefore, if God is subjected to a reason and argument, then it should be more articulate than God, which is basically wrong. Imam Al-Husayn (‘a), who said, highlighted this fact,

"How can we use an article to prove Your being, when it needed You for its existence? Is Your other, more conspicuous than Yourself that it may become thy apparent recognition? O God, when were You hidden that you were subjected to a reason. May that eye be blinded who does not see You as a guard on her?"

It is for this reason that the anthropologists have discussed the issue in detail that when man was in his most natural surroundings i.e. when knowledge, technology and civilisation, as we know today were absent, did he then initiate worship of idols or that of God? Besides the materialists, the majority of

researchers are convinced that man worshipped God first.

Therefore, Max Müller wrote in his book,

“Our ancestors bowed before God, when they were even unable to name Him.”

That is why since the advent of human history the concept of God was found in every part of the living world. Egyptians, Syrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Caledonians and Jews were all believers of God.

Plutarch says,

“There are many parts of the world where we may not find the signs of forts, erudition, industry, technology and politics but there is no place in the world where God is not mentioned.”

The external forces mostly dampen this inner recognition, and that is why God has warned about this trait of human behaviour on several occasions. His Messengers, whose main task was to invite people towards the oneness of God, wherever they saw evidence of such behaviour, i.e. where people were in doubt about the being of God, they always endorsed this aspect of human nature and addressed them in an astounding manner, asking, “Are you in doubt about the Creator of the Heaven and Earth?”

It is mentioned that famous researcher Dawwani decided to write a paper on the attestation of God’s existence. His maidservant asked him about the nature of his work and he replied that he intended to write a paper on the evidence of the existence of God. She then recited the same Verse of the Qur’an:

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْض

“… Is there doubt about Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth?” **(*14:10*).**

It is reported that Dawwani then abandoned his thought of writing such a document.

Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a), while elucidating on a lengthy Hadith about the unity of God states,

“All praise is for the God who taught His servants the ways of adoring and praising Him and created them with the (inborn) perception of His oneness.”

The fact of the matter is that the existence of God is much more evident and vivid than the allure of Sun and the Moon. It is not subject to any argument or reason. Nevertheless, due to external reasons this natural instinct is so suppressed that a simple reminder cannot refresh it. Therefore, God and His Messengers also dwelled into experimental and corporeal reasons of His existence. Some selected examples of these will be quoted in the following sections.

Since faith in God is so obvious, the Qur’an does not enter into detailed discussion of this subject. It relies only upon a few admonitions and brief gestures because it is illogical to spread discussions on a

topic – which is obvious and innate – thereby turning it into a difficult and intangible quagmire.

Anyhow, unless human nature has taken a complete nosedive and is absolutely jumbled, the question of the existence of God appears very clear and beyond all doubts, just as clear as our own being.

Removal Of A Doubt

On this issue a doubt is usually created by saying that if acknowledgement of God is so natural to the human, why is there then so much noise by those who deny and reject Him? This doubt can be addressed in three ways.

a. We have just mentioned in the previous section that this natural attachment sometimes can be suppressed by external factors, such as a flawed education, an excessive indulgence into materialism and a distorted social order. It is mentioned in a Hadith that every child is born on the nature of Islam, and later it is the parents who make him or her a Jew, a Christian or a Magian.

b. Sometimes the extreme exposure and clarity of an object become a reason for its vanishing from sight. The example of Sun and flying fox is quite appropriate. In some supplications, this notion is invoked about God when it is said, “O, the Being that is hidden from His creatures by an intense display.”

Moreover, the true value of a commodity can only be recognized by comparing it to its opposite. If there was no darkness, light could never be appreciated.

In a book called *The Innovative Tales,* a story is narrated (just to make a key point): All the small fish in a river went to a giant fish and asked her to show them the water about which they had heard a lot. The large fish replied that they should show her the place where there was no water, so that she might show them what water was?

The state of affairs between man and his Creator is very similar. A man had not yet taken one step into the realm of his life that the blessings of God began being showered upon him. When he entered into the domain of life, he found reflections of God in every aspect of his surroundings. The intensity of emanations of His light blinded his vision, and he started doubting His presence to the extent of denial, due to the presence of a veil of laxity. However, just a simple warning can awaken such people.

c. The majority of those who deny God, although they see the signs of His magnificence,

and feel that these extraordinary signs cannot come about without an All-Wise Creator, are so engrossed in the physical pleasures of the self that they are not willing to trade those for the rules and regulation of the heavenly law (the Sharia). However, as they are naturally disturbed by the thought of the hereafter and its subsequent punishment, they find refuge in various doubts and misgivings to invalidate their obvious trepidations to deny God, Who has described the state of affairs of such people in the following Verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ

***"And they do not* (*really*) *follow any associates, who call on others besides Allah; they do not follow* (*anything*) *but conjectures, and they only lie"* (*10:66*).**

On this basis the speeches of the champions of materialists, such as Lenin and Stalin, are on the record claiming that their prime objective was to eliminate religion, since it hindered their approach by restraining them from adopting worldly modes to acquire mundane assets and limiting the corporeal needs. This is the most dangerous group with whom examples, warnings and good tidings do not work.

Therefore, in view of the above facts, the author (Ibn Babway) and his contemporaries avoided discussing the subject relating to the confirmation of God, and instead continued their work with the acknowledgement of this reality. We would have followed their footsteps but the demands of the day compel us to shed some light on this subject.

Although from the dawn of the civilization there have always been some people who are either reluctant or very open in their denial of God, in the present era of scientific and material revolution – which is known as the golden age of new discoveries – society has plunged into spiritual and moral decay. This has resulted in a vicious attack on religious and moral values by the zealots and prompted atheism and materialism among the public by promoting dubious arguments, thus making them walk away from the faith.

However, for those, whose intellectual vision was not completely blocked, the modern scientific and technological achievements are bringing them back to the folds of religion, and strengthening the faith of those who were very ardent in their spiritual quest.

It is heartening to know that the entire scientific community of the world does not support the atheist view. In a recent publication "God is present" almost forty leading American scientists from various disciplines, unequivocally supported the existence of God. It is very important then that this wave of atheism is kept in check with modern scientific approach, so that those who want to live (spiritually), live

with a reason and those who die, die with a reason.

Philosophical Approach To God

One should know that there are various routes to prove the existence of God such as the path of the philosophers, religious people, spiritual people, theologians and saints. This present work does not have the capacity to include discussions from all these resources, but some effort would be made to include a little from each school of thought, to remove the veil of doubt from one's mind.

First Philosophical Argument

Philosophers say that anything that can be sensed by human brain is one of the three (categories). It could be either,

1. *Wajib al-Wujood*: That for which existence is essential and its extinction is not possible,

or,

2. *Mumtan al-Wujood*: That for which extinction is essential and existence is not possible,

or,

3. *Mumkin al-Wujood*: That for which may exist i.e. which is possible or probable

We experience that in the cradle of life, things appear, confirm their existence, stay for a time and then disappear to become extinct. This cycle is repeated over and over again in all domains of life. These things therefore, must belong to one of three categories stated above. They could either be *Wajib*, *Mumtana* or *Mumkin*.

They could not be *Wajib* or *Mumtana* since *Wajib* cannot be extinct and *Mumtana* can never exist. Naturally then, we have to accept that all of these belong to the third category. Once this possibility is established, the need of a Creator is automatically recognized because both existence and extinction are possible for the *Mumkin*. They can only come into play when there is a Creator.

There are now four possibilities about this Creator. It may be that –

1. *This Mumkin, as* a whole might have given itself the existence,

2. Its fraction gave it the dynamism.

3. *Mumtana* gave it the dress of reality.

4. *Wajib al-Wujood* was responsible for its physical existence.

The first possibility is naturally incorrect, because it necessitates the presence of a thing before its existence, and then only it can clad itself with a body. Similarly, the second possibility is also redundant because a part cannot be the originator of whole. This also entails the same discrepancy as outlined in the first postulate. The third possibility is also superfluous because irrespective of one being a believer or a non-believer, a logical person would accept that one could not provide to someone else a thing which he does not possess. Therefore, when *Mumtana* does not exist itself, how it can impart existence to something else?

When the first three assumptions are rejected then there is no escape but to accept the fourth postulate that only a Being, which is independent or *Wajib al-Wujood,* brought these things into existence. His existence is personal and the rest of the Universe is totally dependent on Him for its existence.

That is why in the Qur'an, God addresses the entire humanity,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

***"O Humans, you are but in need of Allah and Allah is free of* (*the need for*) *your praise"* (*35:15*).**

He is independent and eternal and there is no extinction for Him.

This argument has been put forward in different ways but we have tried to make it very simple. It has been augmented word by word as expressed by our eighth Imam [Imam Ar-Ridha'] ('a), when he answered a petitioner.

"*There was a time when you were a non-entity and then came into existence. You accept that you were not responsible for your own birth, and you are also sure that a person who is similar to you did not create you* (*Because he is also dependent on someone else for existence*). *Therefore, you have to accept that your creator is external to your genus, and He is Wajib al-Wujood*."

Second Philosophical Argument

The Universe is *Hadith* or mortal i.e. it has been created, and the created appears from the domain of non-existence. It is therefore, not eternal. Hence it depends on some outside source for its existence, and this external source is God.

The other aspect of this argument that whatever is created needs a cause, is self-evident, and does not require further logical elaborations. However, its first postulate that the universe is created or not, is definitely a subject of argument. Several logical opinions have been formulated on this issue, and we introduce a few in the following sections.

First Reason That The Universe Is A Creation

There is a continuous change going on in this Universe. The cycle of life and death is common. New stars and galaxies are forming and older stars are collapsing and exploding. Even our own Sun is destined to die within five billion years, and if the present rate of expansion of the Universe is maintained, the system as we know it, will die in the cold barren space. Who is not aware of the fact that there was a time when we were all shrouded by the veil of nothingness, and soon an era is due, which will take us to the same void of extinction.

Our earthly presence, bound by the two voids of nothingness is like the presence of sunlight is bordered by the darkness of previous and the subsequent nights. The glow of the Earth during daytime is calling upon us to note that this gleam is not earth's own feature but it is a borrowed asset. If it were her own intrinsic sparkle, it would never have vanished from the scene.

Similarly, the struggle between life and death, the continuous emergence and disappearance of things is a plain indication of the fact that the universe owes its existence to an external source, in the same way that we are indebted to someone else, whose existence is the reality in itself. The existence of His Being is as essential as it is for the Sun to be associated with radiation, heat with the temperature, numbers with (either being) even, odd or prime – like 4 must be even, 3 must be odd and 11 must be prime. The Muslims call this Being, whose existence is inherent as *Wajib al-Wujood* or God, the Almighty. The following Qur'anic Verse points to the same line of argument as discussed above.

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

"How do you deny Allah and you were dead and He gave you life? Again He will cause you to die and again bring you to life, then you shall be brought back to Him" (***2:28***).

Second Reason That The Universe Is A Creation

Observation and intellect are witness to the fact that everything within the Universe is finite. There is no place or time in the present domain, which has no beginning or end. Day, night, week, month, year, century and a millennium all have their beginning and a ultimate end. Similarly, every other location is also bound by dimension and space. Therefore, all the elements and the compounds in the Universe are finite.

This constraint, when applied to the elements is rational. The same argument can be applied to the compounds, since those are also made by reaction between the elements in varying proportions. If this is true, then the Universe must have its own limits. Hence it should have its beginning. Scientists have now calculated this time period, which is anything between thirteen to fifteen billion years from the present. Then how is it possible when the individual components of the Universe are finite and the Universe itself becomes limitless and eternal?

Third Reason That The Universe Is A Creation

It is logical to say that the second cannot exist before the first, the third before the second and the fourth before the third. You may presume the longest chain of numbers; it cannot continue without the first. If the first is extinct then the whole chain would collapse. Similarly, if the Universe has no beginning, then the whole chain of existence will crumble. The Qur'an points to the same logic,

وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا

"... and He encompasses what is with them and He records the number of all things" (***72:28***).

Fourth Reason That The Universe Is A Creation

This argument has a few preliminaries.

i. There are two types of things that exist in nature – *Johar*, are those which are self–supporting i.e. they do not require any aide to demonstrate their presence. They are visibly present e.g. trees, water, stones etc and *Arz* i.e. those things which are not self–evident but need other objects to manifest their presence, e.g. colour, smell and taste etc

ii. No *Johar* is without *Arz*, since all *Jawahars* (plural of *Johar*) possess some sort of form and dimension. Form and dimension are *Arz*. Also, all *Jawahars* have some kind of motion and this movement is *Arz*. Consequently, no *Johar* is free of *Arz*.

iii. Arz is *Hadith* – a created thing, because it becomes extinct after it is born.

iv. A thing, which cannot free itself from *Arz* must itself be *Hadith*, because if it is eternal (no beginning and no end), then *Arz* should also be eternal because two complimentary things that are indispensable of each other must have the same rules of compliance. If not, it will involve time differentials and this is impossible. As the mortality of *Arz* is already recognized, *Johar* must also be *Hadith*.

On the basis of these four preliminaries, we shall now argue that the Universe is not free from one of the two possibilities, i.e. it is either *Johar* or *Arz*. Since *Johar* and *Arz* are both *Hadith*, therefore, Universe must be *Hadith*. It has also been proven that for mortals, we must need a Creator and if that person is also mortal then we have to search for another one and this chain must end at the Being, which is *Wajib al-Wujood* or the Eternal One. And, that is God. Otherwise, we will be carrying on the search in an unending circle or seeking a continuous chain of events, which is impossible. Therefore, the first possibility is correct.

Many physicists, who are opposed to the concept of God, have now floated an idea that creation of the Universe does not require a cause. The champion of this ideology is Stephen Hawking, Professor of Physics, at the University of Cambridge. They borrowed the "Uncertainty Principle" from Heisenberg to advance their own hypothesis. This principle states that if we bounce a photon off a particle in order to establish its position, the impact will change the particle's momentum. Thus, an accurate measurement of both position and momentum simultaneously, is impossible.

From this they argue that there is nothing that ever had zero energy. So, the Universe could have come into existence spontaneously when its energy state momentarily flickered away from zero. Heisenberg himself pointed out that uncertainty in time measurements destroys common sense motion of cause and effect, which perhaps makes the idea of something appearing from nothing more plausible.

There are some inherent problems with this concept. It is true that the position and moment of an electron cannot be determined by us at the same time, because our senses have a limit. Therefore, we cannot develop mathematics for the quantum world in a manner we have treated Newtonian Physics. However, this uncertainty does not bind God, because He has the perfect knowledge of everything, even before its creation. He therefore, does not need the help of any rules of the science of probability to bail Him out.

Again, Hawking and his associates claim that the flickering of energy from zero had caused the Universe to come into being. Good lord! What was that then, whose energy had flickered when there was nothing present? Let me tell you; they believe that in the beginning, the Universe was present as a singularity,

which exploded as its energy flickered from zero to some other probable value. We have returned to the same point after having taken three hundred and sixty degrees turn to question that from where did this singularity came about, and what made that particular probability to initiate the Universe as we see it today? Their only answer to this query has been that it was an accident.

Again, to supplement his reasoning Hawking says that black holes must emit a form of radiation, which results from the apparently empty space gaining some energy under the Uncertainty Principle. This is converted into a pair of short-lived particles, one of ordinary matter and the other of antimatter that would annihilate each other in the moment after creation. Near the event horizon of the black hole however, one can float away while the other particle is swallowed up by the black hole. The gradual loss of energy carried by these particles will eventually lead to the complete evaporation of the black hole. This adds plausibility to the argument that the Universe created itself from nothing.

In this theory Hawking makes a supposition that the space is completely empty, which is a pure conjecture. I remember the saying of Amir Al-Mu'minin, which tells that every minute hole in the space is full of millions of God's creatures. Therefore, the interaction of some other particles presents in the so-called empty space that are hitherto undetected by the scientists, might lead to Hawking's Radiations. This is not a wishful thinking, as Physicists still believe in the presence of Higgs Boson, even though they have not found it yet, despite massive investment in the particle accelerators.

Moreover, the opportunity provided by the black holes to let one kind of particle to escape, while the other is absorbed might be a design by God for the management of the Universe. Otherwise, he should have told us why the black hole is selective about one kind of particle letting it escape, even though it is known that the drag of black hole is so great that even light cannot escape from its gravitational pull.

Secondly, Hawking claims that those radiations gain energy under the Uncertainty Principle, which is again a pure conjecture. I have already mentioned that the Uncertainty Principle applies to us, the observers, due to our lack of mathematical tools at the quantum level, and not to the Creator of those particles. One of the greatest twentieth century scientists, Einstein was very much against quantum mechanics due to this very reason.

Recently astronomers have found spiral galaxies that are too perfect, not fitting with the theories that had been put forward for the evolution of the Universe. These galaxies are called pristine galaxies, and according to the scientists they are situated at completely the wrong place. For cosmologists, they are therefore becoming kind of a mystery, because the true life-story of these galaxies eludes them. As a result, they have to start from scratch to develop new theories.

It is important for us to know how theoretical physicists' work. Information is provided by the astronomers about the galaxies and stars along with their positions in the sky. Mathematicians then develop a viable theoretical model to supplement their findings. This means that their mathematical models are only viable as long as no new information has reached them. Sometimes one set of new information can

destroy the work of a lifetime.

Jim Peebles, a theoretical physicist at the University of Princeton in America accepts that the standard model developed about the evolution of galaxies does not work for the pristine galaxies. It suggests that the galaxies are more complicated and cosmologists do not understand how they are formed. This proposes that the galactic past is inscrutably messy and there is lack of understanding about their formation.

Islam is not worried about the scientific discoveries, as it advocates no limits for human endeavours. However, I feel sorry when these great minds explore the wonders of the Universe but draw wrong conclusions from their discoveries and deny God. I ask them to tell me honestly that when even the perception of this Cosmos requires the highest degree of knowledge and a lifelong experience, how could its Creation come about on its own from barren matter, which is totally devoid of intelligence?

Logic tells us that it requires absolute intelligence to initiate such a task as Creation, and that intelligence is called God. Please read the following extract from the New Scientist (7th May, 2011) and enjoy,

"Even if we created a second genesis in the laboratory, it will not tell us how life began on Earth about 3.8 billion years ago"

If they cannot tell us what happened 3.8 billion years ago, then how they can enlighten us with certainty about an event that took place almost 13.7 billion years ago?

Fifth Reason That The Universe Is A Creation

All measurements and numbers are limited. The number of heavenly bodies and the fundamental particles of matter are confined within certain limits. Earth's orbit round the Sun is of a specific duration. The sequence of cause and effect is also inside explicit confines. Likewise, the other instruments of nature ought to have a beginning too, as it is unthinkable to backtrack its origins in an unending, limitless manner.

A Western philosopher writes on page 631 Volume 2 of his book, History of Modern Philosophy,

"Before the time when transformations started taking place, there must have been an Eternal Being who was not prone to change within His self and at that time His substance and personality were the same."

René Descartes says:

"I cannot imagine anyone other than God, whose substance is His Persona as a compulsion."

These are the opinions of the Western philosophers, and I wonder about certain Muslim scholars who, despite accepting Universe as a created being (*Hadith*) consider it as a timeless species and equate it with God, for perpetuity. Species, as an entity can only manifest itself in a form and that form is *Hadith*.

Therefore, to pronounce species as a perpetual entity is an illogical hypothesis.

Our Imams (‘a) have warned people, while refuting this ideology,

“How could God be the Creator of a thing that shared eternity with Him.”

Therefore, in the light of these facts an intellectual would agree without any squabble, the statement of our Imams,

“God existed and nothing shared His eternity with Him.”

Hence most intellectuals and learned scholars agree on the Universe being a created entity. Just as Shahrastani wrote in *Nihayat Al-Aqdam*, and many great minds before Islam like Plato, Aristotle, the Biblical prophets and many other Saints had concurred. Allama Al-Majlisi writes in *Risalat al-Itiqadia*,

“It is necessary to believe that the Universe is a created being (*Hadith*) and on this issue all nations and religions agree, and in this connection many reliable reports are available.”

However, for further satisfaction reference could be made to “*Kitab Irtibat Al-Insan*”, printed and published in Iran. It points out that when it has been proven that the Universe is *Hadith* then a Being whose substance is His Persona is required to initiate the entire process of existence of the Universe. This is the One, whom we name God.

Theological Approach To God

Although, theologians have applied different methodologies to address this issue, none is a better argument than referring to the application of principle of a cause and effect to the Creator and His creatures. This is such an irrefutable approach as it is appreciated by not only the intellectuals, but a person of average ability could also benefit from it due to its natural charm.

That is why when a Bedouin was asked as to how he recognised his Lord, he immediately replied that if the droppings of a camel or footprints of a person in a given direction can point to a camel or that a man having walked that way, then the space – full of constellations, and earth decorated with mountains and valleys must indicate to the presence of an all-Knowing Creator.

Commander of the Faithful offered the same argument with few alterations,

“Minor dropping of a camel, dung of a donkey and foot prints of man can point to these objects, then how come the subtlety of the space and density of the Earth cannot point to the presence of an all knowing and watchful God.”

It is the results of this approach that when the same question was asked to an old lady, who was spinning her wheel, as to how she recognised God, she immediately replied that her spinning wheel

turns only when she gives it a twirl and stops when she does not apply any force. If this is true for a spinning wheel that it cannot perform without a spinner, then how the whole Universe could work without a manager? When the Prophet heard about her approach, he was very happy. He asked his companions to follow the old lady's approach to religion i.e. accept it with a reason that is amazingly simple, like her reasoning.

Allama Al–Hilli says that it is the consensus of Shi'a school of thought that arbitrary belief in the principles of religion is not permissible. A logical understanding of matters such as the Being of God, His attributes, Prophethood, Imamate and Resurrection is required of all believers.

Qur'anic Approach Supporting The Theological Methodology

As logical interpretations and intellectual paradigms are not easy for a layman to appreciate, it is important that an approach is devised, which is easy for an average person to recognize. Just like the arguments presented in previous section are associated with instances that are of common occurrence, God has also adopted a similar methodology quite frequently in the Qur'an. We present few Verses from the Holy Book.

> إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

"Certainly, in the creation of Heaven and Earth and alternation of day and night, and those ships laden with goods that sail in the seas to benefit humanity, and water that was sent down from the space that revived the Earth after her death, and extended all kinds of animals and (life forms) on it and the movements of winds and the clouds, between Earth and the Sky, are numerous signs for the people who understand" **(*2:164*).**

In these Verses, the Architect of the Universe has mentioned various signs of His design. This was to give a push to the human mind whose strength is to be able to identify the cause of a major event by investigating the traces of its effects. If he could find the origins of a fire by examining the soot particle buried under tons of clay, or could describe a writer by looking at a specimen of his writing, then there is no reason why he would not be able to find the originator of the Universe by looking at the relevant signs of His creation.

If man – due to his observation and instinct – is convinced that a house cannot be constructed without a worker and a designer; a loaf of bread cannot bake itself without the necessary equipment and its operator, then how can the most complex system of the Universe, which contains millions of stars more massive than our Sun be functioning without an intelligent mind?

How did the variety of wildlife, whose study has produced huge scientific data that helped us mimic them for some great inventions, come to life itself from nowhere? The answer to this question will be “no – it cannot be” – for any rational minded person.

It is therefore, astonishing to note how the Lord of the Universe is disobeyed and refused, when millions of His signs are there to portray His presence. God addresses humanity through another Qur’anic Verse:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

“It is He* (*the same God*)*, who made the Sun as a source of light and the Moon as a reflector, and appointed stations for its orbit so that you might set the standards of time. God has created all these things with justification. He makes His signs lucid for those who understand”* (*10:5*)*.

Once again God has used His creation as evidence to acknowledge His presence. At another juncture He says:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ

“He is the same Lord, who raised the firmaments without any visible pillars. His authority then prevailed over the Empyrean* [*nerve centre of the Universe*] *and then constrained Sun and the Moon to perform for a given period. He plans the working* [*of the Universe*] *and clarifies His signs, so that you may firmly believe about your meeting with your Lord”* (*13:2*)*.

In this Verse, God again uses the signs of His creation to help recognize His Being. At another place He states:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“He is the one who has spread the Earth and then installed huge mountains and rivers on it and created fruits each of two types. He is the one who covers day with the night. In it are signs for those who contemplate”* (*13:3*)*.

In this Verse too, God has invited people to recognize Him through His creation. At another occasion He says:

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطَعٌ مُّتَجَاوِرَاتٌ وَجَنَّاتٌ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ يُسْقَىٰ بِمَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَنُفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الْأُكُلِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

"There are various portions of land side by side. The vineyards, cornfields and dates, all of them growing singularly or as a collection of trees from a solitary root, which are supplied with the same water, yet We give their fruits preference over each other. Certainly, in it are signs for the people of intellect" **(*13:4*).**

Here God the Almighty has shown another perfect example of His creativity that the land and the water are the same, yet the tastes of fruits growing in each other's environs taste differently, when the biology of the trees is not far apart. What is the answer for those who deny God? They can bring their arguments if they are truthful.

A Useful Tale

There is a lovely tale mentioned in various books giving a moral similar to that given in previous section. It is narrated that once a scholar requested God to give Him an argument against the philosophers, such that it could not be refuted by any of them. After this supplication, the scholar went to sleep and saw a person reciting the following Verse of the Qur'an in his dream.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا

"God has created two streams of water, one having the sweet and the other salty taste. Both of these stream flow side by side with a barrier in between, but they do not exceed each other" **(*25:53*).**

The physicists and naturalists should tell us why the saline water of seas does not mix with the fresh water of rivers against the laws of physics? Could it be anything, other than the resolve and will of God?

Further Reinforcement Of This Methodology Through Imams

Our Imams (‘a) also chose a similar approach to educate people about this issue owing to simplicity of the technique. Therefore, Imam Ali (‘a) said,

"Argument is presented about God on the basis of His creations and inventions, and the application of intellect and indulgence helps gaining faith in Him, while deliberation and pondering clarifies reasoning about Him. He is renowned for His signs and prominent for His radiant point of view."

Imam (‘a) further elaborates,

“When you look at the stars you will find them witness to His creation, because He has made them into stars in the first place?”

An atheist once asked Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) to give his rationale for God’s existence. Imam replied that all the natural objects point to a Creator.

“Don’t you deliberate, that when you see a beautifully constructed house, you accept that someone must have made it, although you might not be a witness to its construction. Who can dispute a simple fact that when an ordinary house needs an architect for its existence, then how the Universe with all its components, which has amazed the greatest minds of all times, can become a reality without a Maker?”

It is mentioned in Usul Al-Kafi and Bihar that once Abu Shakir Desani came to meet with Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) and requested him to guide him towards God. Imam enquired him about his name. Instead of answering the Imam, Desani left the meeting. His followers asked him the reason for not giving his name. He replied that had he given his true name Abdullah (meaning servant of God) to the Imam then he would have asked him about the God, whose Servant he was? What would he answer then? They said that he should go to him again with a condition that he did not ask his name. So, he went to the Imam again and stated his condition.

Imam asked him to sit down. Few minutes later, a child came with an egg in his hand. Imam asked the child to leave the egg with him. He took the egg and said,

“O Desani, this egg is like a hidden fort. It has a thick shell and underneath is a thin membrane, below that membrane are chambers of molten gold and silver and they do not intermix. The egg stays in the same state. No information is brought out from an insider to tell us as to what kind of transformational steps it has undergone inside the chambers nor has any infiltrator reached inside it to tell what kind of damage has been done inside. No one knows if a male or a female chick is inside. Suddenly it will burst open one day and a beautiful chicken will come out from within. What is your opinion then about the fact that it needed an organiser to do all that?”

Desani kept quiet for a moment. Then said that he would bear witness that there is no god but God, Who has no partners and that Muhammad is His Messenger, and declared that he is free from his previous faith.

A Strange Tale

In this respect, an extraordinary tale is recorded in various reliable books, which is being reproduced here due to its significance (tales are mostly used as a tool in the Eastern communities to make a key point for the readers to understand a phenomenon).

A king was lurking at the borderlines of belief and disbelief in God. He had a minister, who was wise, intelligent and God fearing. When he realized the state of mind of his King, he decided to help to bring

the King out of this dilemma.

After careful consideration, an excellent scheme came to his mind. He silently gathered a workforce of Cartesians and asked them to construct a palace in a desolate place away from the city. He created a network of canals and developed a charming garden around the palace. When the work was complete, he asked the workforce to leave the site. He then invited the King to visit the site.

When the King saw this palace erected in a desolate place along with its amenities, he wondered and asked the minister about the ownership of the palace. The minister grabbed the opportunity and said that it had been built on its own. The King in a convulsion of surprise asked the minister, did the house arrange its own construction? If so, how was it possible?

The minister with a breath of confidence replied that a strange wind blew, which gathered the bricks, while, the mortar was provided in a similar fashion. Then somehow a brick managed to lie on top of the other brick and the process gathered pace. Doors and windows came out of nowhere and managed to find their respective positions. Thus, the house was completed. The garden also appeared out of a similar chance, when with good fortune a seed arranged itself to arrive from some distant place and be seeded. The surface of earth smoothed itself to allow this seed to germinate while irrigated with the water coming from the canals.

The King became furious when he heard this answer. He asked the minister in a sharp tone that how dare he play a joke with him? The minister with utmost respect asked that if such an ordinary house cannot build itself, then how could the entire Universe come into existence without a maker? King's vision thus cleared. He willingly accepted the existence of God and thanked his minister.

Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (ʿa) has pointed to the same conclusion in one of his sermons recorded in Nahj al-Balagha,

"How is it possible for a house to be there without its designer or any living thing to exist without life?"

Imam Ali further says,

"I have recognized God from the breach of my resolve. I decide firmly (to do something) but my effort fails to mature. I have learnt from my experience that there is someone else, not me, Who manages my task"

On another occasion, he was asked a reason for believing in the existence of God. He gave very concise answer and said that three things convinced him of the existence of God,

- Variation in the state of things

- Organs deteriorating in living beings

- Breach of resolve

The summary of this discussion is that no right–minded person who sees an edifice, can deny its Creator, or no person who buys a book can say that it has no author and that the words have appeared from nowhere.

An Interesting Dialogue With An Atheist

Author of the paper "Religion and Sharia" has quoted his fascinating dialogue with an atheist. Since it is linked to our topic therefore, we relate it for our readers.

"Once (I was) talking to a person who had doubts about the existence of God, and who wanted to discuss the issue with me, I took a piece of paper out of my pocket and asked him that if I say that this piece of paper has words inscribed on it, which were not written by anyone; would you agree to my statement? He said that he would disagree with that statement.

I said that if I make the same statement about my watch or the fountain pen that it has not been manufactured by any craftsman or about a car, which is moving on the road that it has neither been designed nor assembled by anyone; nor its movements are controlled by any person; instead, it has come to exist on its own, would you then agree to this account? The gentleman replied that he would disagree with all the quotes.

I replied to him that he could understand the invalidity of the entire scenario that I had put forth to him, yet he failed to apply the same principles to the more complex structures that exist around us, such as the Sun, Moon and the Stars and even more – the structure of a human being, his heart, lungs, eyes and the brain.

Is it not a foregone conclusion to you that no writing could appear without a scriber, no pen can take shape without a designer and no car could exist without a manufacturer? By the same rationale, the thesis that the Universe along with its associates and various forms of life on the Earth and beyond has been fashioned by a Creator is a foregone conclusion as well. Therefore, further argument on this issue was a sign of flaw in one's vision and intellect."

Methodology Of Towering And Cognizant Personalities

If we go through the sermons and speeches of the Imams ('a), we would find that the approach adopted in the previous sections serves as a basic tutorial for the students of this category, which is mainly the

starting point of the Qur'an. This approach can put an end to the tone of the antagonists. It could convince the abjurers.

However, if one thinks that this approach could provide with the true taste of God's *ma'rifah* or understanding, and enhance the radiance of one's belief, then it is no more than puerile thinking.

A God whose proof of existence depends upon our reasoning would be subservient to His creature's arguments. He is way above this kind of approach. What a lacklustre approach it would be for a student who having spent his life in studying the basics of this subject, did not make an effort to reach the impervious stage, where he could understand that God Himself is a reason for Himself, or that God should be known only through God.

That is why the true guardians of religion always wanted their followers to advance stage by stage to the point where they themselves were standing in terms of God's *ma'rifah*. Their approach is to know God through God instead of making the creatures a sign of His recognition. They should identify the creation through their Lord. This is the way they have chosen to teach those aspiring for perfection in their *ma'rifah*.

Thus, Imam Ali ('a) says in Du'a as-Sabah,

"O! Ye the Magnificent, Who is witness to Himself, and completely free from any kind of likeness to His creatures."

The sophisticated statement of Imam Al-Husayn ('a) in Du'a Arafah is also a factual illustration of the reality. This has been quoted earlier and it tells us that how we can argue about the being of God through things that owe their existence to Him.

Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a) states in Du'a Abu Hamza Ath-Thumali,

"O! My Lord, guide me to Your identity. Had You not been present, I would not have known Yourself"

A study of historical treatise reveals that some of Imams' followers stood close in proximity to their station, as far as the true understanding of God was concerned. It has been mentioned on the authority of Mansoor Ibn Hazim in *Usul Al-Kafi* that he spoke to Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) regarding his debate with a group of opponents. He told the Imam that he had proposed to the opponents that the being of God is outside this statement that He should be identified through His subjects. On the contrary, it is the creatures that should get known through Him. Imam was delighted at this reply and said words of appreciation for him.

These exalted people wanted to take their followers to the heights of *ma'rifah* of God that had been stated by Imam Ali ('a). It is mentioned in *Usul Al-Kafi*:

Know your God through God, the Prophet from the acts of his Prophethood and Ul al-'Amr (people of

authority that are caretakers of the Prophetic legacy, such as Islamic legal, social and spiritual responsibility – who are appointed by God but may not necessarily be political leaders) from their promotion of good conduct.

The question of how this station can be achieved has been described by a number of religious scholars. This is beyond the scope of this commentary, but readers can refer to numerous books of *Ilm Al-Akhlaq* (character building) and enhance their experience.

Revocation Of Some Doubts Created By The Atheists

So far as belief of God is concerned, we have phrased materialistic and atheist ideology, which outlines it as an episode of uncertainty or chance. This is due to their lack of wisdom when exposed to a logical critique. God has revealed in the Qur'an,

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ إِلَّا ظَنًّا إِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا

"And most of them do not follow (anything) but conjecture; surely conjecture will not avail aught against the truth" **(*10:36*)**.

Although the verdict of Qur'an is the last word for those who are seeking truth, we have decided to rebut the arguments, which the atheists use to deny the existence of God. We shall first quote their objections and then invalidate those claims completely to conclude the discussion.

First Objection

This doubt is the cornerstone of the atheists' palace of misgivings. According to this idea, anything, which cannot be perceived through our five senses, does not actually exist. And, because God does not fit within the perception of these senses, He does not exist.

If a little thought is spent on this objection, the triviality of this line of argument can be shown. It does not require any philosophical approach to disprove this. It is an accepted principle of logic that the physical absence of something cannot be a piece of evidence for its non-existence. One does not have to go far to test this truth. Within human existence itself there are many testimonies to refute this argument. For example, spirit, intelligence, memory, taste, love, hatred, animosity, hunger and thirst can all be felt with inner senses only, instead of through external and physical sensations.

The nature of the senses, on which we depend so much, itself cannot be shown in the flesh. We are unable to say that this is sight or that is hunger, in material form. Yet, no sensible person would deny that they exist. That is why the Prophet said that whosoever recognised his own being had recognised God.

It is a pity that despite numerous scientific breakthroughs, the atheist community would always make an incorrect conclusion from the available facts. When they see great biological similarity between living things, instead of recognising that their Creator is one through such observation, they argue that species evolved from one into another under the influence of natural processes.

Recently a paper has been published in the New Scientist (9th April, 2005; page 27) claiming some great achievements of evolution, without any understanding of the process or its methodology:

"The methods of evolution are blind, brutish and aimless, yet it has fashioned some of the most exquisite machines in the known Universe. It stumbles across a truly stunning innovation that rewrites the rules of life."

This is an unwise statement from the great minds of the present scientific era, due to their lack of *ma'rifah* of God. It is an outcome of Christian ideology that had prevailed for at least two millennia, in which God was portrayed as a family entity. When they could not find an old bearded person sitting in a remote nebular laboratory chiselling out different creatures, it seemed easier to accept nature as their unnamed God who had done all this work for them.

This disregard and obliviousness of God had been reflected upon in the Qur'an, which says:

نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُم

"They have forsaken God and God has forsaken their being for them" (***9:67***)***.***

Had they perceived God through Islam, they would not have fallen in this trap. In the Islamic understanding there is no conflict between scientific exploration and religious beliefs, since God has invited humanity through the Qur'an to go and search how God initiated the Universe and spread life on Earth.

Moreover, God of Islam is not an inventor who needs experimentation to build His ability through trial and errors. The entire material and spiritual realm along with its limitations, is within His knowledge. He knew what elements had to be created and what kinds of laws were required to put the process in place. In other words, His instructions i.e. His will is embedded within every particle of matter that had appeared in the Universe. Each particle knew exactly what it was supposed to be doing.

This rationale makes the entire process of creation transparent to the inquisitive minds, without need for any unrealistic suppositions. At this stage the words evolution and creation are only semantics, since an invisible hand bound by certain laws guides each unseen process.

The fact of the matter is that human knowledge is limited in nature by its Creator. Therefore, many secrets of the great sea of the Universe are still hidden from him.

In any case, man has not discovered things that entered the premises of his understanding, in one go. It required a long process of observations and trials. Sometimes accidental events led to unearthing of those secrets. Consider for example the role of electrical forces in life process. Who would have known, before its discovery that a thing called electricity had a meaningful role in the Universe? Similarly, magnetism, due to its manifestation and characteristics is a real force but nobody ever saw magnetism in flesh and blood. Is there any rational person who could see the manifestations of these forces and still deny their existence? In the past when the idea of ether was floated, was there anyone who had claimed to have a visual appreciation of this entity?

Today when the science is making discoveries on new frontiers, the idea of dark energy has been proposed to explain the ever–accelerating expansion of the Universe. Who could claim to have seen this mysterious force? The answer is no one. Yet, we have accepted this idea because it offered a rationale to explain an ongoing process. Is it then not possible that in this Universe there might be many more things, which are presently not apparent to our senses, but actually exist? When we admit our inability in this respect then there is no rationale to deny the existence of God, as numerous signs of His existence are scattered around us.

The Second Objection

There was a considerable difference of opinion between the philosophers and the early advocates of atheism, who had their own views. They are now however, unanimous that the origin of all things on Earth and the Universe at large is due to two entities – matter and motion, both of which are eternal.

In the beginning, there was nothing physical as we see today. The space was full of material particles and a movement was initiated within it, which culminated in the formation of stars and galaxies, including various life forms on the earth. A description of this process is not the subject matter for this commentary; however, we can say that the proponents of this group claim matter to be the essence of Universe. So, they deny the existence of God. This way of thinking is unacceptable due to following reasons.

First Reason

Both philosophers and atheists agree that matter has neither consciousness nor intellect, nor feelings nor life. Our observations however, confirm that there are millions of things around us, which possess these attributes.

It is a confirmed understanding among the intellectuals that a being, which is devoid of an attribute, cannot pass that attribute to anything else. So, if matter is the essence of the Universe, which does not possess consciousness, intellect or motion, then what would the source of that consciousness and life in the creation itself? The scientists have made countless efforts to answer this question but they have failed yet to provide a convincing answer.

Second Reason

It is an established fact of Science that a stationary object cannot move, unless an external force is applied (Newton's first law of motion). Therefore, who was responsible for that initial motion which is proposed to be a source for creation as proposed by the materialistic school? They have recently proposed that at quantum level the happening of an event depends on its associated probability. The question that arises then is what trigger made that particular probability to start the event of creation?

Their only answer to this question is that it happened by chance. Their entire thesis that an event at quantum level is dependent on probability, is baseless for an all-wise Creator, who can visualise everything prior to its coming into existence at the quantum level. This is a major fault with this proposition as it they cannot provide a satisfactory answer to such a query. The Qur'an has already mentioned the state of mind of these people by announcing:

وَمَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا

"And they have no knowledge of it; they do not follow anything but conjecture, and surely conjecture does not avail against the truth at all" (***53:28***).

No verdict is acceptable without its proof. Therefore, the supporters of this view should come forward and verify the statements through an intellectual discourse that shows that matter by itself is eternal, it cannot be destroyed, it has the capacity to create ordinary life and then to fashion an intelligent being from it, on its own.

Do the atheists know its reality? The Qur'an says: no, they do not, and even the scientists supporting them cannot rescue them from this quagmire. What is left now with the atheists, is nothing but a fist full of conjectures and speculative thoughts, for which they cannot bring any viable proof until the Day of Judgment?

In view of these realities, we have to accept the presence of an eternal, living, powerful and all-knowing God, Whose attributes are not external to His being. The entire Universe is within His grasp, as He says:

تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

"Blessed is the God Who has command over all domains" (***7:54***).

This is why Islam states without any reservation or hesitation that Allah created life and death and its instruments. They obey His commands.

Third Reason

The basis of ambiguity with this proposition is that matter is considered to be eternal, but the irrefutable line of reasoning has confirmed that it is not so. In fact, it is a created entity like many other things around us. We provide a few arguments to support our case.

First Argument

Physicists and geologists both accept that the changes and variations seen in the material world are *Hadith* i.e. the existence of animal and botanical species had a beginning. They came to life after a considerable period following the beginning of the Cosmos.

If activity or motion within matter itself is a cause of these changes as suggested by this school of thought, then the effect i.e. animal and vegetable kingdoms should also be eternal. This break in the chain of cause and effect is intellectually impossible. How is it possible that the cause is eternal while the effect is time–bound?

If somebody made a case that a long waiting period was necessary for the effect to gain a potential or ability to manifest in material form, then an objection can be levelled against this proposal as well. This is to say that if the cause of the "capability" is also an external matter that had to pre–exist in order for the manifestation to appear in a material form, then why didn't this capability exist before the time of the matter's corporal existence in the Cosmos?

If this query is answered by saying that the time gap allowed matter to gain capability (an external entity) by the matter exercising its own will and desire, then one has to admit that matter had the consciousness and intellect to select a proper time for the entities to appear. If this premise is true, then it negates the entire thesis of materialist arguments which state that matter does not possess any consciousness or intellect.

This discussion can give only one meaningful answer that there was a time when there was no matter or its dependent variations or diversity. It was the One Omnipotent God who brought them out of the veils of non–existence into the realm of existence

Second Argument

There is no entity in the Cosmos, which is more prone to change than matter itself. It is a well–known fact that matter does not possess mind, jurisdiction or judgment. Therefore, it is not possible to call these changes as manifestations of its mind. Thus, we have to accept the presence of an eternal and all–knowing Being, who allows the changes to continually take place within the matter by His will and judgment. Thus, an entity, which undergoes variation, must be mortal, rather than eternal.

Third Argument

As a rule, we know that an entity, which is eternal in its being, is not susceptible to change. Change is caused by the admission of a foreign entity within a being. It is evident that such access cannot be available for an eternal being. By the same rationale, the matter that is noted to undergo plentiful change can only be *Hadith* (mortal). God has thus addressed the humanity through the Holy Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ

"O mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the Generous" (***82:6***).

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ

"Who created you, proportioned you, and balanced you?" (***82:7***).

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ

"In whatever form He willed has He assembled you" (***82:8***).

Fourth Argument

Man in this Universe is superior to all beings in awareness, consideration, intellect and technology. Yet, he cannot produce even a small live mosquito, bringing it to life by producing raw materials needed for this production, on his own. Here the example of Dolly (the cloned sheep) cannot be used because cloning is a natural process, which is more common in the plants. It involves growing the cells of a plant in a tissue culture. Then some pieces of the tissue are removed from the parent plant and transferred into a culture tube containing nutrient agar. The transferred cells divide and form explants, which can eventually be grown in compost.

Scientists have managed to copy and apply this natural process to the animal kingdom. They were able to produce an animal by placing processed tissue cells in the uterus of the animal so as to continue with the natural growth into the foetal form of sheep. This is not creation. This is copying of an already existing system after prolonged period of study and experimentation.

Anyhow, the creation of a mosquito is a far-fetched cry. Even the formation of a single cell of a primitive life form is beyond human capabilities. Some scientists have been heard to claim that they have prepared the blue prints of such a cell, but were their experiments successful? This has not yet been revealed. The long silence in their camps appears to be suggestive of failure.

If man with such superior faculties is unable to create a mosquito, then how can it be believed that dead and barren matter would be able give rise to a wide variety of life forms prevalent upon the earth. We, therefore, have to admit to the mortality and limited capabilities of matter. In this context, the Holy Qur'an has posed a question to the intellect of human community,

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ

"Do the people come into existence without a creator or are they the one who have created [the other modes of life]" (52:35).

Fifth Argument

The intellectuals agree that the feasible (*mumkin Al-Wujood*) is less significant when compared with eternal (*wajib Al-Wujood*). Therefore, *mumkin* must be less in quality, when evaluated against the features of *wajib*. However, if matter is accepted to be *wajib*, then the rule seems to be overturned because matter did not have a glimpse of consciousness and intent as compared to the various life forms scattered across the earth. Is it then possible to suggest that the creature is superior to the Creator or a beneficiary is greater than the munificent? Can intellect agree to such display of irrationality?

In the light of the above arguments, it has been proved beyond doubt that the notion of matter being eternal and the originator of the Universe is an absurd idea.

Surprise

Strangely, at this juncture the atheists have forgotten their long-loved principle that they would not accept any event unless they have witnessed it. They can be asked if they have witnessed the primordial matter and the movement that occurred within it?

If their answer to this query is that although they did not witness the primordial matter and inherent movement, they had observed the signatures of such events and deduced therefrom that Creation is the effect of this cause, then our response would be to say to them that by the same argument, through the observations of features of the creation that are beyond our comprehension, we have been induced to believe that their existence is due to presence of a Being which is all-encompassing in knowledge, intellect, wisdom, life and other superlative traits.

If, they declare, as many of the present-day atheists and their associates admit, that all these characteristics are present within the matter itself, then the whole discussion is concluded, since there is no gap between their and our thinking. The only difference is that of semantics. The one whom we call God, they call it matter.

Another Objection And Its Reply

When proving that the dead and barren matter cannot be responsible for creating such a wonderful universe tightens the net against the atheists, they come up with another cock and bull story (like a person who is drowning and would not hesitate to cling to a straw to save his life). They hypothesize that there is no initiator for this Cosmos, neither matter nor God, instead it has a fortuitous existence.

Listening to such a bizarre postulation reminds one Arabic proverb, which is quite befitting for them. It says – he ran away from the rain to find refuge under a waterfall. These people unfortunately abandoned their original approach in favour of something else, which had more problems than their previous conjectures. Their inference is unacceptable due to following reason:

Firstly, the idea is basically childish. It suggests that an act can be performed without an actor or an outcome can be observed without a cause. It is as impractical as a suggestion that one plus one is equal to three. Any person who has a little imagination would not accept such a suggestion.

Secondly, the word 'chance', if considered in its well-known form, means the accomplishment of an act or the result of an operation, which was carried out by its originator without any preconceived idea. Those who propose that the dead and senseless matter is responsible for the beginning of everything, initiate these meanings. Yet, when the above-mentioned objections are raised against them, they adopt the line that it all began by chance.

This last ditch-effort by them is also erroneous because an act performed by chance is basically chaotic and it is devoid of sophisticated formulations and intricate designs. However, the Universe is full of balance and complexity that can make greatest of philosophers and scientists wonder with awe. That is why many great thinkers and scientists, after examining the intricacies and sophistications of the intelligent world have converted to the belief in one Omnipotent God. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) has used this proportion and design in the Universe, as a reason for a knowledgeable God. Talking to one of his disciples Mufazzal, he said,

"The foremost argument, ahead of any other line of reasoning for the existence of God is the perfect balance and design in the Cosmos. If you give it a deep thought you would find that this world is like a house, which contains all the necessary ingredients for the well-being of its dwellers. The lofty sky is its roof; the earth is the floor, the shining stars are the lamps, the precious stones are its treasury and man is its owner and occupier. The animal and vegetation domain is a provision for his needs."

The process of its design contains all the clues that its creation, management, sustainability are all well-coordinated. Its Creator and Owner is all wise, who has made its various components interconnected. He is the true God, worthy of adoration and worship, and whatever atheists and polytheists say about him, He is beyond those remarks.

It is part of human nature that whenever he sees organisation and a plan in any structure, he

immediately acknowledges that an expert hand has orchestrated it. On the contrary if he observes irregularity and chaotic display of things, he assumes without hesitation that it might be a result of disorganization and some sort of accidental build–up.

This thought might not arise when he observes regular and well–proportioned things. Let me give an example. Take a couplet from the works of Ghalib, Iqbal or Shakespeare, break its rhythm and order of words, and then pass it on to an illiterate person. If he is asked to rearrange to the original form, it will be seen that due to lack of acquaintance with literature and poetry, he will not be able to reproduce the original couplet. On this basis, who in their right mind would believe that order and design could become manifest in the Universe on their own – from nowhere?

Likewise, the Qur'an has made an argument on the existence of a Creator:

مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ مِن تَفَاوُتٍ

"You see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent Allah; then look again, can you see any disorder?" (***67:3***).

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ

"Then turn back the eye again and again; your look shall come back to you confused while it is fatigued" (***67:4***).

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ

"Who hath created, and further, given order and proportion" (***87:2***).

وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَىٰ

"Who hath ordained laws. And granted guidance" (***87:3***).

Milton Edward, a Western scholar has said,

"Man is deeply astonished when he finds that in the presence of frequent natural marvels, there are individuals, who still proclaim that this world came about as a result of an accident or a chance. In other words, it can be said that the consequences of the properties of matter hold these hypothetical possibilities and intellectual ambiguities that are termed as the faculty of perceptions, which have completely been neutralised by the true knowledge. A physicist would never accept such an idea."

Herbert Spencer, a famous philosopher has said,

“When these mysteries, which are becoming more complicated by the day, are discussed frequently, they compel us to believe that there is an eternal superior power over man, who brought forward these objects.”

Professor Laney writes,

“God the Almighty appears with all His peculiar ingenuity before me in a manner that my eyes remain wide open, and I become bewildered. Everything, which might be a tiny speck, holds the wonders of His might, knowledge and invention.”

Sir Isaac Newton confesses,

“Despite abundant changes, in the numerous components of the Universe in terms of space and time, its arrangements and balance show that such a phenomenon is not possible without an eternal Almighty Being; that is Knowledgeable and holds full command.”

Camille Flamer Jean, a French philosopher says,

“All the professors fail to understand, how the things came into existence. That is why they have to accept the presence of such a Creator, who is effective and eternal.”[1]

What a strange coincidence, that after immense scientific innovations, the great philosophers and scientists still present the same arguments, which the Qur’an had illustrated beautifully fourteen hundred years ago.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

“Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day – there are indeed Signs for men of understanding” **(*3:190*).**

Professor Laney’s quote mentioned above, invites people to ponder on the creations of God, the more one examines its minor or major components, its Creator’s majesty is inscribed further onto his mind. That is why God has encouraged people to reflect more on His creation and its design for better *ma’rifah*.

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِم مَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ

“Have they not pondered upon themselves? Allah created not the heavens and the earth, and that which is between them, save with truth…” **(*30:8*).**

Or:

أَفَلَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ

"Will they not regard the camels, how they are created?" (***88:17***).

وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ

"And the heaven, how it is raised?" (***88:18***).

وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ

"And the hills, how they are set up?" (***88:19***).

وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ

"And the earth, how it is spread?" (***88:20***).

Or,

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَمْ أَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ

"Have they not looked at the Earth that how we brought forward many pairs of delectable plants?" (***26:7***).

Or:

أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ وَأَنْ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ قَدِ اقْتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمْ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ

"Have they not looked at the kingdom of Heavens and the Earth and all things that Allah has created; and that it may be that the end of their lives is near? In what message after this will they then believe?" (***7:185***).

That is why the Imams have asked us that whenever we intend to know the splendour of the Creator of the Universe, we must refer to His creation.

Miracles Of Human Body

Following is our commentary on a major creature living in this world. It is a well–known fact that amongst the multitude of life forms that exist, man is the foremost creature. Human body is a great exhibit of Allah's ingenuity. Our intellect surrenders before it.

Gynaecologists have described the initiation of life in the uterus, which shows cell division and then continual development of the foetus. The same stem cells are programmed to do different jobs, some develop veins, eyes, and nose and others perform the remaining tasks. It has never happened that some stem cells revolt and start changing hearts into ears and lungs into feet, as if a greater power, before which the entire machinery of the Universe has surrendered, is watching over their tasks to the microscopic detail.

Technology has advanced to the extent that men are striving to uncover the nature and its secrets. Among them are those who do not find any need for God, and believe that the cosmos is functioning without a Sovereign and the innovations in the creative process are coming into existence on their own.

There is nothing left to ask from the statuettes of obstinacy. If everything is happening on its own and there is no hidden eye to supervise this act, then why didn't cells in a mother's womb give one a shape other than that of a man? Why was the head not replaced by that of a donkey or a tail similar to that of a monkey, or a customised winged horse or a tortoise or even a frog developed out of human embryo? Why was it that a human body did not reproduce into a goat and a goat did not produce a hen?

If they have no answer available then let us look at what Qur'an has in answer to this why:

يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّن بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْك

"He makes you, in the wombs of your mothers, in stages, one after another, in three veils of darkness. such is Allah, your Lord and Cherisher: to Him belongs (***all***) ***dominion"*** (***39:6***).

A Minor Cosmos

If we visit a manufacturing facility, we will find it subdivided into various sections, based on the principles of production in engineering. A section would control the power supply and at another place raw material would be processed and the chemicals mixed. In another section quality control checks would be made. Finally, the finished goods would be packed and sent to the dispatch section.

Similar is the state of this world. Winds blow, the Sun transmits light energy, vegetation flourishes, water drops from the clouds at times as a drizzle and at other times as torrential downpour. Although the shop floor of nature shows different sections working independently, it has the same inimitable control room, which is that of God, the Almighty.

Now look at the human body, hair grows over the head, tears flow out from the eyes, the heart pumps blood to various parts of the body, and the brain remains in an assessment mode. The engine of the entire shop floor is the Spirit. What part of the factory does the Spirit occupy?

The answer to this question is that it resides in each drop of blood or root of every hair, but if you cut the entire body, you will not be able to see this driving force of human shop floor. Similarly, God is evident from every bit of the material world, but like the spirit it cannot be seen. In the same way, human body is a minor cosmos in which the spirit is doing that which God does for the functioning of the Universe.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) spoke about the mystifying creation of man in his sermon of Ahlulej. He said:

"I wonder about those individuals who say that God is hidden from His people, when He is apparent through the might of His mind-blowing architecture and the balance and stability of His creation."

What kind of technological successes have we achieved through the components of human body, such as hands, eyes and brain etc. The riddles of these limbs are still not within the reach of those who are experts in the field of anatomy. The Imam has revealed some secrets in a document known as the *Risala al-Tawhid al-Mufazzal,* in line with the mental approach of the petitioner.

Much has also been discussed on this topic in the book - Two Qur'ans.

This is why God has said:

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِّلْمُوقِنِينَ

"And in the earth there are signs for those who are sure" **(*51:20*).**

وَفِي أَنفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ

***"And in your own souls* (*too*)*; will you not then see?"* (*51:21*).**

Imam Ali ('a), in one of his poems has addressed humans;

"Do you think that you are a trivial carcass, when a major Universe is residing within you? You are that lucid book; whose words reveal the hidden secrets. Your illness is due to your own doing, which you realise not and its cure and medicine is also within you."

Now look at the creatures that are at the bottom of the list. Consider the examples of a mosquito or an ant, wherein, God has shown the flawlessness of His creativity that makes a human mind wonder. A mosquito contains everything that is present in the elephant and still it has two added limbs such as wings and two extra legs.

Similar is the constitution of an ant. Imam Ali (‘a), in one of his sermons has mentioned this,

“If those who deny God have looked at His might and blessings, they would have turned to Him in belief and would have feared the fire of hell. Alas, their hearts are sick and the eyes are confused. Don’t they see both ends of His creation; major and minor that how God made their body strong and assured, and how their skin, bones, ears and eyes were designed.

Look at an ant that is so negligible in her physique that she might not even be noticed, while in action on the land, searching for her food, to be stored in her voids for the coming seasons and even for her next day. God has undertaken the responsibility for her subsistence and she receives her daily ration even if it is within a hard rock. If you examine upper and lower sections of her mouth, her abdominal and rib structure, her ears and eyes position in the head, you will then be deeply amazed and would be tired in praise of its mechanism. How great is the God who created her alone, without any others assistance?

Pity is for the person who denies God, in the presence of such majestic evidence. These unfortunate individuals think that they (ants) have come to existence like a wild plant and no one is their creator and designer, who produced variation in their shapes. They have no tentative proof of their distorted theory. How is it possible for a house to be built without a builder and living things without life.”

How complete and brilliant is the line of argument. Truly the words of the Imam express in the best of styles. The things, which Imam has pointed out in his lecture, if converted into a scientific work would need pages after pages for its description, and this book could not withstand this endeavour. We therefore, settle for a brief presentation.

The sole purpose of the quotation from the Qur’an, which is mentioned below is to attract one’s attention to the universal signs and symbols of God’s awareness dispersed around us:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

“We will soon show them Our signs in the Universe and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not sufficient as regards your Lord that He is a witness over all things?” (***41:53***).

In the light of these facts, can any right-minded person believe that this cosmos has arisen accidentally from a dead senseless matter, without an All-Knowing God?

Third Objection

It has been made amply clear from arguments in the earlier section that a Universe, full of amazing and wonderful innovative designs, cannot arise from a dead inactive matter, just by virtue of a mistake. Even if we assume that such a absurd thought is somehow possible, the manifestation of everything in a

material form by random chance is impossible.

It is fact is a well-established fact that an act of accident cannot become a repetitive incident. Suppose a man who started digging a hole for water and found a hidden treasure by chance or a man who aimed his gun at a game bird and instead missed his target to hit a person, who was happened to be his enemy and killed him. These random events do not mean that whenever the person digs for water, he will always find a treasure or whenever the person aims at a bird, he would hit and kill his enemy. It can then be observed that since the creation of the Universe, a disturbance in its organized domain has not been noted. Every individual component of the Universe remains obediently busy in performing its assigned task, as pointed by the Qur'an:

وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ

"And the sun runs on to a term appointed for it; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing" **(*36:38*).**

وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَاهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ

"And* (*as for*) *the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch" **(*36:39*).**

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنبَغِي لَهَا أَن تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ

"Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in an orbit" **(*36:40*).**

And:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things" **(*67:1*).**

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُور

"Who created death and life that He may try you – which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving" **(*67:2*).**

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ مِن تَفَاوُتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ

"Who created the seven heavens one above another; you see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent Allah; then look again, can you see any disorder?" **(*67:3*).**

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ

"Then turn back the eye again and again; your look shall come back to you confused while it is fatigued" **(*67:4*).**

An intelligent being, after seeing the miracles of creation will be humbled to confess that certainly a mighty wise mind is engaged behind this show. Professor William McBride says,

"Can anyone seriously say that a complete balance in the components of the Universe is merely an accident? Is it possible for the rivers to flow towards the higher planes?"

Fourth Objection

When those who refute the existence of God realised that their ideas could not be defended with such weak arguments, a few modernists among them, such as Darwin, avoiding the inanity of their seniors, suggested a new concept. This was just as absurd as the arguments put forward by the predecessors. This theory, called the theory of evolution, was presented in his paper – 'Origin of the Species.'

According to this theory various forms of life that exist today were not created separately and specifically. Rather, these were simple species to begin with, and gradually transformed into different geneses under the laws of Natural Selection and Survival of the Fittest.

Man, according to this theory, had descended from ape and then slowly evolved into this present form. Both ape and man, in the distant past, had some other common ancestors. To summarise, it could be said that man was not created in his present form.

This theory made it possible to avoid the earlier objection about how dead and barren matter, devoid of consciousness, could give rise to an intelligent life. This concept of evolution, like the earlier suggestions could not be accepted due to various reasons. At best, it could be seen as a conjecture against intellectual and natural canons. The concept was opposite to the accepted principle of the atheists, where they would not agree to a phenomenon, unless it was observed when it was happening. It was on this basis that they denied the existence of God. We now ask them that if they did witness an ape having changed into a human.

For an affirmative answer, they should furnish its proof. If their answer is in negative, then how could

they agree to an event that they had not watched happening? If the belief in the unseen is a part of their atheistic culture, then it is lot better to accept the Islamic doctrine and recognize that God had created all species separately in their present forms.

In Islamic doctrine there are undeniable assertions that God had created all the habitants of the Earth in their present form specifically. On the contrary evolutionists do not have a similar indication; all they can present is a conjecture, a reflection of their distorted imagination.

First Argument Of The Theory Of Evolution

Atheists say that some body parts of a living being had been found in other animals, which are redundant. This suggests that every species had not been created specifically, otherwise it would comprise only the necessary parts. The presence of such appendages and organs which are redundant, they say, points to its previous history. Therefore, when a species evolved into a new one, most organs in previous form began to disappear but some were left behind as a signature of its prior existence.

To prove this, they submitted some pieces of skeletons and using which they suggested that man had evolved from the same lineage as apes.

However, their arguments are mostly conjectures. Such propositions have no meaning at all in matters of belief. This concept is only viable when no other possibility is available.

To answer this proposition of theory of evolution, one could say that the presence of these extra parts indicates that they had some useful tasks to play, which is hitherto unknown to scientists. This is similar to many examples that exist in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, as mentioned in the books of physiology, whose function and purpose are yet to be known. So, when it is accepted that when humans, despite their great leap in knowledge, still remain unaware of the purpose of so many things around us, then with what certainty could one say that these components had no other use apart from being evidence of evolution?

Secondly, the conclusion adopted by the evolutionists is imperfect, since a change in few parts of a species cannot be evidence that this rule is applicable to every species. This can at the most be treated as a minor misgiving in the prevailing concept, which is not very useful for the evolutionists.

Thirdly, if the evolution theory had any substance, then it was vital that some observable impressions of the process were to be found in all ages among the existing species. However, if we were to accept that a period of at least a hundred thousand or more years is required for a complete transformation of a species, then the present civilised world which has an estimated time of up to 25,000 thousand years must have some clear indications of a lower species gearing up for the next class. The same statement can be said about man, whose next progression in terms of a new species must be predicted and then physically presented.

In the textbooks of biology, a famous case of Galapagos finches was presented as a proof of evolution. Darwin visited a group of islands near the coast of South America. The animals and plants of those islands fascinated him. Darwin studied thirteen different varieties of finches. He suggested that they must have descended from birds that had flown to the islands, or been brought there by winds from the mainland.

He noticed differences in the beaks of the finches. They had different beaks for different diets. Some had thick beaks to crush seeds, while the others had slender beaks to catch insects. He suggested that the thick beak finches had come from the mainland but there was not enough food for all the birds so those with slightly different beaks were able to eat other type of food. These finches survived to pass on their adaptation to their offspring. This is what they presented as a proof.

If we accept Darwin's scenario, which is nothing but a pack of suppositions, the species genetically remained the same with only minor changes in its physical form. It is almost two hundred years now since Darwin first visited the islands, by now those finches would have gone much further in their evolutionary path and it would have been much easier for Darwin's followers to travel to those Islands and present the progress to the world.

However, their silence speaks for itself. They can travel to those islands a million years later, yet they will not find a species change in the finches. A finch will remain a finch and it will not become a tiger or an eagle.

The same is true for all other species. They remain similar to what they were thousands of years ago with matching limbs, similar behaviour and the same facial look. A recent paper published in the New Scientist served as a deathblow to a major Darwinian claim, which suggested that natural selection alone is responsible for species change. According to the new finding, natural selection on its own cannot account for this change. A big accident is needed every time when such a change is due.

If diet could cause a change in the shape of the beaks, I would suggest that the Darwinists must travel to India, where there is a mixed population of meat eaters and vegetarians. Some of those people whose generations can be traced from four to ten thousand years as vegetarians, their lineage must express at least a visible dental change and their carnivorous teeth should have disappeared and instead a soft chewing mechanism should have evolved.

This has not happened, which shows that Darwin's theory of evolution is merely a figment of imagination. Moreover, the supporters of the Darwin's theory had propagated a lot of fraud in terms of implanting different parts from different creatures in relation to ape and human skeletons[2].

Second Argument Of The Theory Of Evolution

The evolutionists also say that there is a definite resemblance in various aspects of man and monkey, which suggests that the origin of man is through the lineage of monkey. This argument is weak due to

certain reasons. If the suggestion is based merely on a similarity between the two species, then what if someone postulated that man is the stem and monkey is its leaf – what would be the Darwinian reply?

The Creator has set up a system of creation in such a way that some similarity is kept within the subsets of every species. And despite the differences in their basics and their apparent functions or characteristics, if the claim that "A" has evolved from "B" could be accepted to be true, simply on the basis of a minor external resemblance, then someone else could proclaim its opposite. Then who could stop it from being declared that a cypress tree has evolved from a palm tree or the olives from grapes or a cow has descended from buffalo or vice versa? And then who would be wise to agree to such tenacity? Can an intellectual mind accept such possibilities?

If it was true that man had developed from the lineage of a monkey in a gradual manner, then he should be the ultimate product of evolution. He should be ahead of monkeys in all faculties at all times. Actually, this is not true. Man's offspring is physically so fragile at birth that it is incapable of movement or any kind of decision-making. It does not even know how to suckle milk from its mother's breast. It takes a while for him to learn this trait. When he becomes capable of progress he develops into a great scientist or a philosopher and wins over the elements of nature with his God-given intellect, and brings the Sun and Moon into his sphere of influence.

On the other hand, a monkey at birth is more active like other animals. It contributes to tasks with his mother during the developing years, eats proper food and distinguishes between beneficial and unhealthy provisions. Hence in the beginning a monkey has a level of awareness, which is manifold compared to a human baby. This difference led to the conclusion that man has not evolved from a monkey, because if it was so then he would not be inferior in his abilities to a monkey at birth.

These were the reasons, which made many European thinkers to differ with Darwin. They accepted that the theory of evolution was not rooted on solid scientific facts. In fact, it can be deduced from credible arguments that man was perfect in his faculties right from the time of his creation and did not need a process of evolution from ape to live and function as they did.

Third Argument Of The Theory Of Evolution

The people who deny the Being of God, live amid a great disarray of thoughts and change their colours like a chameleon, due to their fickle-minded nature. They make one objection or the other, without a firm commitment to their point of view. Anyhow, when their previous objections do not seem to work, they propose something new, such as:

- There are some parts within human anatomy, which do not seem to play any role, e.g. nipples on men's chest and additional skin on the penis.

- Some creatures are harmful, such as snakes, scorpion etc. These and many other insects have no role. These insects are the remnants of matter's ability to create and there is no knowledgeable God.

These objections are not acceptable on the several grounds.

The author of *Risala al-Hamidia* compared those who believe and dispute the Being of God with the example of two people (referencing through Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq's document, *Risal al-Tawhid al-Muffazal*), who enter an elegant palace with strongly constructed rooms, floors covered with expensive carpets, comfortable seating arrangements and graceful decorations all around. Outside the palace are well-preserved gardens and neatly linked canals and fountains brimming with water. Any visitor who entered this palace would praise the enormous effort and the skills of its architect.

However, when the two proposed persons, after strolling in various parts of the palace, reach an area where there is a structure, whose utility is not obvious to them, then one of them could say that although the builder of this palace is not in their sight, the engineering incorporated in the design of the palace suggested that this structure also must have some meaning to its designer, which they are not able to appreciate at this moment.

The other visitor, after examining everything, might say that an expert engineer has not built this palace since he is not seen. This visitor would not be able understand the value of the structure whose purpose is not obvious. He may then point to a nearby mountain and say that the winds have blown for a long time and have made the stones and the soil roll down to a near the site. Rains and wind managed to make mortar out of the clay, the windows and doors were magically carved out of the wood gradually. And then, with the passage of time, the mud, the stones and the timber decided to join each other to construct this palace.

The decision now lies with the people of intellect to choose which of the two versions of visitors' statement is acceptable?

Is it not weird to find that the atheists consider all those who believe that the Cosmos has been created by a Knowledgeable Being as being duped, and themselves as all wise because of their supposition that intelligence has arisen out of dead senseless matter without any external intervention?

Although, the above-mentioned reasonings could be sufficient to satisfy an inquisitive mind, we make further suggestions here.

It is an established fact that ignorance about a thing does not imply that it does not exist. On the other hand, if we say that we have discovered the properties and benefits of most things in nature completely with their exquisite details in terms of complicated structures, then those configurations – which are yet

to be discovered and understood – must also have some purpose as nothing is meaningless in the world of nature. For this reason, we must strive to find its hidden secrets.

Although human knowledge is not complete enough to discover the meaning of everything in the Universe, with continuous efforts he can unearth much knowledge about unknown things. The logic of scientific research also dictates that failure to understand an enigma is to accept the limitation of one's knowledge rather than discarding the phenomenon itself.

With the grace of God, despite intellectual deficits, we are able to say that we are not that ignorant of the purpose of some redundant parts in human body, as claimed by the atheists. The advent of science, which has made many religions to tremble in their hearts, due to the demolition of their credence, is making Muslims blissful and joyous in their faith, since there is no conflict in Islam between appropriately oriented scientific research and their religion.

We now discuss some of the uses of the redundant parts of human body.

The Foreskin: The front end of human penis is very delicate and can invite bacterial growth. The child cannot receive necessary care in mother's womb; therefore, the Creator has provided the required protection for him in the uterus. After birth the skin has to be removed in order to prevent dangerous bacteria growing as some urine drops are retained within the space under the skin of the penis. Recent research has revealed that AIDS virus flourishes in non-circumcised penises. That is why thousands of African Christian children are circumcised every year in the continent.

A recent publication in the New Scientist (May, 2008) has shed some light on the possible uses of the so-called redundant parts of the human body.

Dangerous Insects: Similarly, scorpions, snakes and other poisonous insects can clean up the environment around us by absorbing harmful bacteria. Their poisons are also used to produce antibodies for certain diseases. Furthermore, they employ their poisons to stun their prey, which are mostly rats, lizards, frogs and other reptiles, whose spread can cause problems for human colonies.

Fourth Argument Of The Theory Of Evolution

Shibli had quoted Ibn Rushd, who said that all evil, which existed in the world, was not an original embodiment but it was subjected to some virtue. For example, anger was considered to be an iniquity but this feeling had been created out of the sense of self-defence. If this ability was absent then nobody would stand up against a murderer to save his life. Obscenity and lust were related to a function that was essential for human reproduction and his ultimate survival.

Fire could burn houses, grassy meadows, forests and even cities to ashes but without it the life on the planet would be difficult. Hence, the separation of iniquity from virtue was apparently impossible. It was not feasible to create a fire that could cook foods but fail to ignite if used to burn a Mosque or a Church.

Summary Of The Current Discussion

To summarise this discussion, we can say that whatever exists in the Universe is not devoid of the two states i.e. neither are they pure goodness nor are they with excessive share of undesirable quality.

There was nothing in the world, which was absolute evil or with disproportionate distribution of evil and good, such that evil is predominant. Consequently, no one could say that whatever ills we see in the world are really defects, when the total organization of Universe was not within our view. So, it is not possible for us to deny the quality and might of God, given that our knowledge was very limited, as certified by the Qur'an.

Summary Of The Previous Discussions

In view of the fulfilling statements and rewarding discussions presented earlier, it had been established that recognition of the Being of God is as natural and free of doubts as the presence of Sun on a clear day.

It was reported in a recent publication of the New Scientist (7th February, 2009) that belief in God was hard–wired into human brain. So, religion was part of human nature and our brains were primed for it.

The author wrote:

"While many institutions collapsed during the Great Depression that began in 1929, one kind did rather well. During the leanest of times, the strictest and most authoritarian churches saw a surge in attendance. This anomaly was documented in the early 1970s, and only now is science beginning to tell us why?

It turns out that human beings have a natural inclination for religious belief, especially during times of misfortune. Our brains effortlessly conjure up an imaginary world of spirit, gods and monsters. The more insecure we feel, the more difficult it is to resist the pull of this supernatural world. Thus, it seems that our minds are finely tuned to believe in gods."

Author Paul Bloom, a psychologist at Yale, continued and attributed this change to the evolutionary demand for the continuation of our species. Ignore the words such as gods and monsters, because the author was an atheist of Christian background, and it was expected from such authors that they will pollute unsoiled waters. However, the fact of the matter is that belief in God is a natural instinct of all humans. This research also whitewashed the work of earlier European philosophers, such as Bertrand Russell, who claimed that belief in God came through fear of natural phenomenon.

A Greek philosopher had said that recognition of God was one of those facts, which could be proven by a simple academic exercise.

Hakim Ibn Maskoyya said that no reports had been received on behalf of any philosopher that denied the existence of God or showed any reluctance in this regard. And, if anyone had other views in the matter, then the great masters did not count him among the wise. In fact, such a person was not worth being included among the astute, because Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) had defined wisdom in the following terms, “Wisdom is something through which worship of God is done and the Paradise is earned.”

Therefore, a person who not only defied the statement of the Imam but also negated God could not be counted among the judicious at all.

Argument Of Self Assurance

Wisdom demands that whenever a person is confronted with the possibility of a danger, a defensive approach is adopted. This requirement is even more vital when the hazard is real.

It was an observed fact that when a person informed a passerby about a beast on their way, who was on the lookout for a prey and would ravage anyone who walked that path leading to his death, then a person of even mediocre wisdom, would think twice before going in that direction. This would be so even if there were some doubts about the informer's credibility. This was so because there was an element of risk to his safety. Anyone with even a little common sense would not compromise his own security. This was in line with the natural inclination of human beings. Regrettably the atheists completely abandoned this approach relating to their own belief in God.

We have seen many true Prophets, their deputies and millions of their followers announce that God existed and that He has created another dominion beyond this world, which contained paradise and hell, where the people would dwell after their death as a favour or punishment. Should this scenario not appeal to an intelligent being when assessing the pros and cons of belief in God, with an objective mind?

If he contemplated on this, his mind would guide him to the fact that despite all the reasonings that existed in support of God, the state of affairs could not be devoid of two possibilities i.e. either there is a God or there is not. If there was no God the believers and non-believers would all be alike after death, since there will be no questioning, and no contention of paradise or hell for anyone. However, if the other possibility was true – that there was a God, then those who denied God would be in end in hell and the believers would be saved. This proved that it would be more prudent for one to believe in God, and the intellect guided us to this conclusion.

According to some researchers, the collective wisdom was as satisfying in the knowledge based on sensory perception as well as in matters for logical discourse. However, the warped minds remain uninfluenced by a great majority of indications and persist in their original rejection. Therefore, under the present circumstances, who would count them among the wise?

The Imams and the other spiritual leaders offered the same argument. The following is the translation of some couplets from a poem by Imam Ali (‘a).

“The astrologer and Hakim both said that corpses never rise

I answered them to remain silent, and be on their own

If by chance their statement was correct

Then I have lost nothing But if I was right

They will have no place to hide.”

A similar argument had also been reported from Imam As-Sadiq (‘a). An atheist approached him and criticised his acts of worship such as prayers, fasting and ablution etc as waste of valuable time, and suggested to him that he should spend these borrowed moments in some other blissful activity. Imam replied that if his act was private and personal, and that there was no God and no resurrection and trial after death, then there was no loss for him (Imam). However, if his (Imam’s) point of view were correct, where would these misjudgements take him (the Atheist)? Imam’s argument shook the atheist from his core and he immediately accepted Islam at the hands of Imam.

Let me quote you the impressions of a former believer who turned atheist and later converted to Islam, in his own words. He said: “I was reading a religious magazine and my attention was focussed on a statement quoted Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) in response to a question from an atheist. After finishing the reading of that text, the magazine fell down from my hands and my brain felt a jolt. I sensed, as if Imam was talking to me by saying that if he (Imam) was right, then what kind of future was awaiting me for my carefree attitude? My eyes were open, and I could not see anything but those lines. My ears were open but sound of the same sentence took the pleasure of sleep from eyes.

I was in a weird situation, my mouth was dry, body was shivering and the brain was repeating the same sentence... If he (Imam) was right, then what kind of future was awaiting for me with my carefree attitude? The same condition prevailed for seven to eight days. I feel greatly relieved today by saying that by the grace of fourteen Infallibles my brain solved that riddle, which had evaded me for so many years.”

A Question About God And Its Reply

Many intellectuals who lacked insight were confused, and asked the question that from where did God manifest Himself? To answer this question, we have to explore some fundamental avenues, a part of which had already been discussed in the previous sections.

Sayyid Mujtaba Musavi Lari wrote in his book – ‘**God and His Attributes’** that, “The principle of

causality is a general law for all human efforts. The scholars solve their problems with a belief that no phenomenon manifests itself without a cause. Restricted by the limitations of matter, we do not encounter anything in life by accident, and indeed, no one has ever encountered, in the history of the world, an incident that did not arise from a cause.

The relationship between cause and effect is the relationship between two existing things, in the sense that the existence of one of them is dependent on the existence of the other. Every effect has a relationship of affinity and harmony with its cause, since the effect draws its existence from the cause.

This specific relationship cannot be replaced or destroyed by another. However, a phenomenon that comes into being as a consequence of a cause would never lose its essential privation. It will always remain a being characterised by need. For this reason, the need of a phenomenon for a cause to be present for effect to be manifest is permanent and indissoluble.

If, however, the relationship can be disengaged, the existence of the phenomenon would immediately yield to non-existence, in a manner similar to when halting electricity generators would cause the connected glowing lamps to be plunged into darkness. Therefore, no phenomenon could manifest itself in the living world, until a certain power is bestowed on it by the one, whose essence is itself the very source from which the life gushes forth."

The followers of atheism paid much attention to the principle that God did not stand in need of a cause. They said that if we supposed the Creator to be the origin of the world and the one who bestowed existence upon it so that all phenomena derived their origination and continued existence from him, then what cause had freed him of the need for having the creator? What agent had caused him to come into being?

Lord Bertrand Russell, while addressing the London Atheist Society, said: "One day, when I was eighteen years of age, I was reading the autobiography of John Stuart Mill. One sentence in particular caught my attention. Mill wrote that he asked his father one day, who had brought him to existence, and his father was unable to answer."

The reason for this was that he immediately posed the question about who brought God into being. Russell then added: "I am still convinced that the simple sentence exposes the sophistry of the primary cause. For if everything must have a reason or a cause for its existence, the same must then apply to the existence of God. If, on the contrary, something can exist without reason or a cause, that thing might be either God or the world, and the whole discussion becomes meaningless."

Unfortunately, certain Western Philosophers, who accepted the existence of God, had been unable to solve this problem. Herbert Spencer, an English Philosopher said: "The problem is that on one hand human reason seeks a cause for everything and on the other hand refuses all circularity. It neither perceives nor comprehends a cause that itself has not been caused. When the priest tells a child that God has created the world, the child asks who has created God."

We could raise precisely the same objection against the materialists and ask them that if we had followed the chain of causality in reverse, we would have ultimately reached the primary cause, which was, say not God, then tell us who created that primary matter? In other words, on the basis of the law of causality what was the cause of matter? If you said that the source of all phenomena was matter–energy, then what was the cause of the matter–energy?

Naturally, this discussion would lead us to the supposition that the chain of causality could not extend to infinity and that matter was eternal and a timeless entity, for which no beginning could be appointed. It would lead to surmise that matter was not created, it had no beginning or end, and its having arisen from within its own nature.

This meant that the materialists did not accept the principle of eternity and non–origination. They believed that all things arose out of eternal matter and this creativity arose from within the very nature of matter without any need for a creator. Russell openly admits this belief in the above quoted lecture. He says: “There is no proof that the world ever had a beginning resulting from the poverty of our imagination.”

In just the same way that Russell regarded matter as eternal, believers in God attributed eternity to Allah. Belief in an eternal being was thus common to materialists and religious philosophers. Both believed that there was a primary cause, which was wise, all–knowing, omnipotent, and in possession of the power of decision and will. It was God according to the believers. It was non–conscious, unwise, unaware, with no capacity of decision–making, and virtually dead primordial matter, according to the materialists.

Therefore, the removal of God in no way solves the problem posed by eternal being. Moreover, matter is the locus for motion and change, and its motion is dynamic. It is situated within its own essence. However, essential motion is incompatible with eternity, and matter and essential stability are two mutually exclusive categories that could not be fused into a single locus. Whatever is stable and immutable in its essence could not accept movement and change within that essence.

When we speak of the first cause and simultaneously assert that God is free of all need for a cause, we do not mean that He generally share with created beings the need for a cause but was once, as it were, granted an exemption from the law of causality. God is not an effect in order that He might need a cause; He is not a phenomenon in order that He might need a creator. On the contrary, all manifestation and phenomena of existence derived from Him – the internal source of being. The law of causality applied uniquely to the sphere of those things whose non–existence preceded their existence.

Similarly, the meaning of the first cause is not that God originated Himself – that He was his own cause. The need of the effect for the cause lies in the type of existence of the former. It exists not because it is essentially existent but as a result of the derivative and dependent existence it acquires from the cause. But a being whose nature is subject to no condition and exhibits a complete absence of dependence and

connection is totally removed from the sphere which the law of causality applies.

If a being, by virtue of the perfection and independence from the need of its essence, stand in no need for a cause, it follows that no cause had fixed it at a given degree of being, and that no cause could intervene in it.

The chain of causality could not be extended indefinitely backwards, and an absence of connection is inherent in the very concept of the first cause. The question – "Whence did the first cause arise?" – therefore, did not arise. Such questions apply only to the origins of phenomena and their dependency.

Character Building Uses The Belief In God

After considering the above discussion, an informed reader would be convinced about the existence of God. This belief has its obvious benefits. These have been outlined below.

Firstly, this belief is the foundation of all virtues. When this concept is engulfed with doubts, man becomes complacent about the acts of piety. He could not keep equilibrium with truth and justice despite his best of intentions. Finally, he became a tool in the hands of Satan. This is because he has no faith on the questionings and punishments of the Day of Judgment, and therefore, there is no need for him to conform to any moral standards.

When there is no police to question and arrest a criminal, why wouldn't a person commit an illegal act, which has obvious benefits for him? Any affinity for moral acts that is found among the non-believers is due to their inner insecurity, since they valiantly showed their antipathy towards God and the Day of Judgment, but still hold a fear in some remote corner of their heart, lest there might be a God, who might question them after their death.

On the other hand, many believers are found in the quagmire of sin, because their belief in God is verbal and customary. They are in doubt about the existence of God even when prostrating in Salat (prayers). That is why, the Qur'an repeatedly refers to the manifestations of nature and asked them of their views as to whether it was all created for nothing or there is a purpose behind the creation? Whoever would cast an incisive look into nature, would automatically acknowledge their belief to be in conformity with Unity of God.

Secondly, belief in God broadens one's viewpoint to appreciate infinite limits of Allah. Doubts and denial make him visualise Allah as limited.

As a result of this thought they wander within the confines of truncated apparitions and capabilities to seek other benefactors. They then fear the strong and suppress the feeble. After believing in God, their vision expands to incorporate the Universe. Their measure of love and hate began to comply with the love of God. Therefore, a believer could not be a narrow-minded person.

Thirdly, belief in God confers a wealth of dignity and self-respect, which takes a man permanently out of the squalors of disrespect and insolence. Unless, a person had such a conviction, he would always be afraid of and submissive to the powerful and strong. Their desires and requirements would remain attached permanently to them.

However, when they accept God, they realise that all those whom they consider to be a benefactor or a patron, are in fact, no more than beggars and needy in front of God. It is He who grants success and subsistence and is in possession of the powers of benediction and impairment. As a matter of fact, He alone is the source of all might and majesty. Therefore, after having this faith, a man's head would never bow to any despot or a tyrant.

Fourthly, after believing in God, a man becomes free of base characters such as bigotry, arrogance and envy. Instead, the qualities, which are the epitome of a fine disposition, like self-respect, hospitality, kindness and humility take root. Man comes to understand that not only he himself, but also the entire world is in need of Him. God is the source of every happiness and blessing to him. His demeanour changes from arrogance to humility. It was for these people that God said in the Qur'an:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

"The pure servants of God are those, who walk gently on the earth, and when the ignorant speak to them impudently, they disengage themselves from them respectfully" (***25:63***).

Fifthly, belief in God creates a self-satisfying provision of assurance and hope, negating any despair and distrust within man. This is such because he now possesses an inexhaustible cache of trust, which remains with him, even if the apparent material support has abandoned him.

A believer knows that his Lord is kind and generous. As any thought of dejection against His favours is equivalent to denying Him, so he accepted that his Lord does not commit injustice and act with malice, He listened to the requests and pleas of His subjects, and is nearer to them than their own souls.

This trust and hope created within such a person, the grand qualities of patience and psychological pleasure that could not be undone by trials and tribulations. He now sincerely believed that if God is with him, no worldly power could subdue him, and any ordeal that befalls him, was within the great design of his Lord, and He alone could remove that distress.

Sixthly, belief in God remove fear and cowardice from the mind of a believer and qualities like bravery and generosity are developed in his character. Obviously, cowardice is fashioned by self-adoration and the love of wealth, which is instrumental in initiating the sense of apprehension and loss.

Belief in God could truncate these aspects from their roots. It is realised that wealth and other riches remain only for a brief period and love for these is also temporary. The focus now becomes something,

which is everlasting. Since all mundane objects are only temporary, one opts for permanence by embracing death, which is not a source of fear any more.

A believer trusts that material weapons do not have inherent destructive capabilities, except with the permission of God, and if He desires otherwise, then such weapons could become totally ineffective. The person now submits entirely to God and relinquishes his rights of life and death to Him.

Seventhly, this belief purifies the believers from vile characteristics such as greed and envy, which are replaced by contentment and sufficiency. When a believer accepts that God, who gives a needy in open measures, controlled livelihood, he would then not indulge in despicable activities to earn his living. Instead, he strives through equitable means and is satisfied with whatever he earns.

The believer knows that power and ignominy remain with God and accepts that disparities in wealth and status were heavenly designs that could not be changed by mortals. No matter how much one strives, these discrepancies would always exist in every society. However, the measures of affluence and paucity are different in different cultures.

Belief in God sanitizes the society in terms of moral purification and sense of responsibility, where laws are respected and all members appear as beads in a common thread.

Belief in God makes a man consider that there is no escape from His immeasurable kingdom. One becomes mindful of the minute details of their actions, are aware that these are not hidden from Him, when they had to appear before Him one day, where the appraisal and questioning would be very hard despite His compassion. The impact on his personality and moral fibre, thus, became self-evident.

It Is Not Possible To Know The Essence Of God

Whatever we have expressed so far was with the intent to prove that the Universe, with all its components came into existence only because there is God, belief in whom is only natural and logical. However, if someone asked us to show the nature of God's essence, then it was not possible.

Leading scholar Shaykh Bahai wrote in his research paper that a human approach to understand God's essence was not possible and the same was the opinion of Allama Al-Majlisi. It was such a critical matter, where even the Prophets and their successors were humbled. It is true that the human mind is too limited to indulge in such an effort. Imam Ali ('a), in his supplication known as Dua al-Mashlool said, "Glorious is He whose essence is not known to anyone."

The Holy Prophet (S) said, "God's essence is hidden from human intellect in a way the objects are veiled from one's sight. The heavenly bodies search for Him as you do on the earth."

Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) said, "All praise is reserved for the God alone, whose station of approbation cannot be reached by the worshippers nor can his favours be counted or His rights be repaid. Efforts of

a seeker cannot comprehend His position nor can the profundity of intellect and skill gauge His Essence. There are no limits for Him and no bounds for His praise. There are no time confines for His beginning or end."

Similarly, Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a) in his Dua al-Tahmeed said, "All praise is due to the Lord, who is that first, which cannot be preceded by anyone and that last, which cannot be followed by another one. He is so exalted and refined that sight cannot embrace Him and the extols of the eulogisers and their fantasies are well below his prominence." He further said in Dua al-Dushanbe, "Language is inadequate to express His Attributes and intellect is incapable to access His reality."

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) said. "Anyone who constructs God in his own mental mould must remember that God is something else, because a configuration, which is depicted in mind, is his own creation and that cannot be God as He is the Creator not a creation."

As-Sadiq Aali Muhammad (‘a) said, "How can I associate God with a concept, a state or a thing, since God Himself has created states that have manifested into shapes and through those we have recognised the notion of state? Therefore, how can a Creator and His creatures be coupled with same attributes?"

This was why Imam Ali (‘a) had warned us by saying that we should not let our intellect to ramble on this racing track, which can lead us to destruction. It was for this reason the religious guides i.e. Imams, have prohibited the believers from indulging in this exercise. Several traditions of this subject have been recorded in *Usul al-Kafi* and other authentic religious books.

Imam Al-Baqir (‘a) said that if people want to ponder about the essence of God, then they must view His majesty in His creation. He further emphasised that people could talk as much as they want about His creatures but should restrain themselves from entering His personal domain, which could only exacerbate the situation that could lead to mental chaos and ambiguity.

Similarly, it was narrated on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) that one should not discuss the essence of God and ask the questions about His physical aspects – in terms of shape and size, as issues like these would lead him off the course to wilderness of disbelief. Therefore, if discussion on a subject is expanded to discuss God, it would be wise to remain silent. This is so because it is sufficient to believe that He is the originator of the Universe, capable of every pinnacle of eminence, and free of any vile attributes. There is nothing in the Universe that resembles Him. He is unique and independent. Nothing had evolved from Him and vice versa and there is none bears likeness to Him.

Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) said that whosoever had recited Surah Ikhlas with an understanding had obtained the feel of monotheism. Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a) said that God Almighty had known that towards the end of time some people would discuss deeply the Person of God. This is why He revealed Surah Ikhlas and the first few Verses of Surah Al-Hadid. Thus, anyone who strive for more than what had already been said would be lost.

It was related from Hisham that an atheist asked Imam As-Sadiq (‘a) about the nature of God. Imam replied, “He is a thing different from all other things. When he labelled Him with the word thing, he meant that He is a thing in reality, as He is essential and all the other things are probable. He has no body or shape nor can He be perceived through outward and inward senses, including the five senses of sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. Nor can imagination embrace him, and He does not change with time.”

Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) was asked as to how much understanding of the God was required. He replied, “One should accept that there is no deity other than Him. He is unique and unlike any other thing. He is eternal and will remain forever and no one is similar to Him.”

Ibn Abil Hadid Mo’tazeli had depicted this idea in beautiful Verses. He wrote, “O, the wonder of the Cosmos, thoughts and intellect are meagre in Your presence. You have made the intellectuals and scholars dilapidated. When I sharpen my brain to advance an inch towards You, it goes on the back track by a mile and I do not see any way forward.”

Imam Ali (‘a) narrated a Hadith from the holy Prophet (S), which stated, “Anyone who enquires about the nature and essence of God is ignorant, and the one who answers that question is a Mushrik, and that who could not be acquainted with God within the set limits is an infidel.”

Shaykh Bahai wrote in relation to the above Hadith that what is needed from us is to acquire acquaintance with God’s attributes that fell within human endeavour. As far as the real understanding of God essence is concerned, we stand nowhere, since Angels and even the Prophets had no statements to make in that respect. So, we would end this discussion with the Prophet’s note, which stated: “O, God we have not acknowledged You in the befitting manner.”

Discussion Of The Factual Attributes As Being The Essence Of God

It is an established fact that one of the methods to understand a phenomenon is to investigate the characteristics of that being. In this manner the personality of the adored becomes plain by design.

If we adopt this approach to investigate God then a difficulty arises due to the fact that as far as it had been known, God’s real characteristics (*Sifat al-Haqiqia* excluding attributes of action) were His Essence and not additional to His Persona, just as Imam Ali had said in Nahj al-Balagha:

“The first loop of religious sequence (*Deen*) is to recognize God, and the stature of recognition is to confirm Him. The significance of confirmation is to believe in His oneness (*Tawhid*) and the pinnacle of *Tawhid* is to deny additional attributes, as every attribute is an indication of the fact that it is other than the proposed personality, and every icon is a witness to His partition from the imagined trait.

Therefore, whoever associated God with exterior traits (*Sifat al-Zahira*) he ascribed a companion to God

and who ascribed companionship, ascribed duality and who ascribed duality admitted to portioning of God, and who allowed segmenting of God, is actually uninformed and ignorant, and the one who is ignorant about Him thought that He is capable of being pointed to, and the one who adhered to this thought confined Him, and the one who confined Him to certain limits, made a count of Him, and the one who said; what enclosed Him, imagined that He is within an object, and the one who said that He is on an object supposed that other items are empty of him."

In the above statement of Imam Ali ('a), many aspects of Tawhid had been described and our purpose of including the above text at this juncture is to provide evidence to negate *Sifat al- Zahira*. However, the differentiation of attributes of Essence (*Sifat al-Zat*) and features of action would be made later in the second chapter, where the author Allama Al-Qummi had initiated the discussion.

This unification of person and attributes meant that for God there is no duality of essence and attributes, and He is one on both counts i.e. His Person and Attributes are the same. This is why this Personality on the basis of manifestation of Knowledge, Power, Life, and Hearing is called *Aalim*, *Qadir*, *Hayy* and *Sami'*.

There was no moment that could be imagined as empty of God's essence and His essential attributes. On the other hand, for those who possessed probable virtues, a time would come in their lives when they were devoid of knowledge, might, life, sight or even hearing. They may at a later date receive knowledge to become scholars and with the advent of subsequent phase acquire other capabilities. The being of God however, is beyond from such deficiencies.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said, "Our Lord was always knowledge before anything to be known has existed. He was *Sami'* and *Baseer* when there was nothing visible or audible. He was always mighty when there was no recipient of strength. Later on when He created things, objects manifested and his knowledge appeared in complete harmony with them and His attributes of *Sam*a, *Basarat* and *Qudrat* came to pass on relevant objects."

Our Muslim (Sunni) brothers have developed an alternative route. They are advocates of separation of His person and His attributes. Fazil Shahristani wrote in his book Al-*Milal Wan Nehal*, "Due to the attributes of knowledge, might, life, sight, will and hearing, God is *Aalim*, *mighty*, *Hayy*, *Baseer*, *Mureed* and *Sami'*."

The summary of this statement is that according to this school of thought the person and attributes of God are partitioned. Imams of Ithna 'Ashari School vehemently oppose this corrupted credence.

Hasan Ibn Khalid said that he had heard Imam Ar-Ridha saying, "Our Lord is *Aalim*, *Qadir*, *Hayy*, *Samee* and *Baseer* from eternity. I then asked, O, son of the Prophet, there are people who claim that God became *Aalim*, *Qadir*, *Hayy*, *Sami'* and *Baseer* through these faculties. Imam said all those who adhere to this view and claim it to be their religion, they have associated many deities with God, and they have no attendance with our Wilayat. He then repeated that God was always *Aalim, Qadir, Hayy,*

Sami' and *Baseer*. Whatever polytheists and their advocates say about God; He is way above those claims."

A brief rebuttal of this thesis was already present in sermons of Imam (‘a) but a little detail is presented in the following.

If God's attributes were considered as additional to His person or essence, then the situation would be either one of these two states. These attributes were either with Him from eternity or they were acquired at a later date. In the first case there would be multiple entities which are eternal and you have to assume as many eternals as there were the attributes, and they would share eternity with God, as opposed to the fact that the Eternal or *Qadeem* can be only one.

In the other scenario there would be two inconsistencies; firstly, His essence would become probable, and it was accepted that probable (*Hadith*) could not become essential (*Wajib*) and eternal. Secondly, we have to accept that before (acquiring) these virtues God was deficient in those qualities. Hence, He was neither *Aalim, Qadir, Hayy, Sami'* nor *Baseer*. This rendered the being of God incomplete and dependent on others for perfection. Hence such a personality could not be God.

On the basis of these arguments, we could say that all the eminent attributes of God were not partitioned from His person, instead those were His Essence. These attributes were His person. Therefore, these attributes could not be instrumental in knowing the reality of God. It is impossible for human approach on this subject to gain any ground.

Eminent Attributes Of God Are Infinite

From the above-mentioned discussion it had also been shown as a corollary that the lofty qualities of God were innumerable, because these were His Person or Essence, and His Essence was infinite. This could be proven in two other ways:

- The approval of these attributes was a reason for eminence and their denial was a deficiency. Since God is associated with prominence and freedom from any defects, God's attributes must also be infinite.

- If we examined this issue critically then *Sifat As-Sabootia* (qualities of confirmation) were echoed in the *Sifat as-Salbia* (qualities that could not be in God) as well. This was an agreed point of view of the great masters, including the author of this volume. It had just been mentioned that the secrets of God's personal attributes were as much of a mystery as His person. We could not identify its boundaries.

Our reasoning and intellect is limited in comprehending the nature of His life and other attributes. Our purpose to confirm *Sifat As-Sabootia*, is to deny the converse of those qualities. For example, when we said that God is knowledge, we mean to say that He could not be ignorant. Or, with His "might", we mean that he could not be weak and frail. Therefore, both segments of these attributes were infinite.

Most theological literature had named eight attributes of confirmation (*Sifat As-Sabootia*) as opposed to eight attributes of negation (*Sifat as-Salbia*). Mohaqiq al-Tusi first proposed this point of view in *Tajrid*. Allama Al-Hilli then seconded it in his book of theology, and from thereon it became a popular theme.

Why Only Eight Attributes?

There were two possible reasons for this approach. The scholars might have intended to concentrate on the real aspects of God's essence instead of other attributes such as Creator, Sustainer etc, which were additional and related to His actions. Upon contemplation, it would appear that all other attributes were basically mirrored in these eight fundamental attributes.

If further thought is given these eight could be reduced to two, which are Knowledge and Might. However, if further pruning is done then all the attributes are echoed in the term *Wajib Al-Wujood* (Essential), which was complemented by the works of Shaheed al-Thani, who said, "It is sufficient to say about God that He is Essential (*Wajib Al-Wujood*) Mighty and Knowledgeable."

The researchers and scholars have done exceptional work in this connection, especially Allama Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghita in his book Ad-Deen Al-Islam. I therefore, also submit humbly a few lines in relation to *Sifat as-Sabootia* and *Sifat as-Salbia*.

Attributes Of Confirmation (Sifat As-Sabootia)

First Attribute: God Is Mighty And Not Weak

There are a few logical and practical explanations for this attribute.

First Argument

God Himself had claimed that He was powerful over all things.

Second Argument

Frailty and weakness are flaws, whereas firmness and power are strength. Since God is free of all weakness and possesses every virtue at its pinnacle, He is obviously Firm and Powerful.

Third Argument

Is it possible to be the Creator of the Universe and its components, without being Omnipotent? Since it is

an established fact that the Universe exists, He must be powerful.

Fourth Argument

The mysterious Universe along with its mind-boggling laws and complexities demand the existence of an All Knowing and a Dominant God.

Fifth Argument

That He empowers others is a proof of His might, as the one who is deficient himself could not be a provider.

Sixth Argument

All the heavenly books, the Prophets and their heirs were unanimous that He was Omnipotent. These people were of exceptional character. Their statement confirmed the prevalence of God's grace. It clarified corrupted perceptions of those who claimed that a thing could give rise to a Creation.

Sanavia said that God was not capable of depravity, while Nizam asserted that God did not commit evil. Similarly, Balkhi and Hayaee clung to different notes. The first of these hypotheses was about *Mujib* and *Muzter* (compelled and constrained), which proposed that things were bound to their premises of action e.g. fire could only produce heat, or ice was constrained to cool things down. However, God is an all-powerful doer. So, the rules of compulsion and constraint are not applicable to Him.

Similarly, the repudiation of other false ideas is also evident. Since it was an established fact that when the claimer was present and its disclaimer was absent, then the claimer prevailed. Here, God was the claimer of His efficacy and potency, which was free of any discrepancy and all things had the capacity to accept the imprint of their Creator.

There was nothing to prevent the Creator to be dominant and powerful. However, it was another matter that despite possessing power and strength over all things, God did not do certain basal things.

Second Attribute: God Is Wise And Not Ignorant

His knowledge embraces everything. He is aware of every component and fraction of an entity. His knowledge remained unchanged before and after a creation. There are a few brief arguments on this issue.

First Evidence

It was mentioned in Qur'an that:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

"Allah – surely nothing is hidden from Him in the earth or in the heaven" **(*3:5*).**

Not a speck in the Universe was concealed from your Lord.

Second Evidence

Knowledge is a virtue of perfection and ignorance is a mark of deficiency. It is therefore important to believe in perfection and accept Him as all Knowing and wise.

Third Evidence

In His creation we found various capabilities and rationales, some of which were mentioned earlier. This is a sign of His excellence. An ignorant and deficient personality could not produce such firm and balanced creations.

Fourth Evidence

To be able to impart knowledge was a signal for Him being erudite.

Fifth Evidence

Because God was the Creator of everything, how was it possible that the Creator would remain unaware of His design? This argument also repudiated the claims of some philosophers who said that God was not aware of the components of His designs.

Third Attribute: God Is In Command And Is Not Constrained

God does an act, or declines one, in accordance with His will. He is not constrained in His actions in the same way as fire is forced to produce only heat, or the Sun is destined to radiate its energy, or a low viscosity substance is inclined to flow. We now present a few arguments to support this view.

First Line Of Reasoning

God said in the Qur'an,

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

***"Thy Lord does create and choose as He pleases: no choice have they* (*in the matter*)*: Glory to Allah! and far is He above the partners they ascribe* (*to Him*)*!"* (*28:68*).**

Second Line Of Reasoning

To be compelled and constrained is a defect and the Persona of God has no room for such a deficiency. In contrast, having absolute control was perfection. Therefore, God must be Independent and Potent as

He is the centrepiece of every excellence.

Third Line Of Reasoning

If we did not assign independence and potency to God's performance, and consider Him as an obliged and constrained executor, then one of the following flaws would emerge.

The outcome of a constrained doer would be associated with constraint, like heat was the constrained outcome of a fire. Or, we would have to consider the Universe as an eternal entity by itself. Or, God could only be a Probable unit of Creation, because He was effective in the cosmos, where the phenomena became manifest by chance or probability. Thus, its cause would be a probable too. Otherwise, there would be a separation of the ensuing entity from its ultimate cause. If these three postulates were unacceptable therefore, we must agree that the Creator was an Independent and Potent performer.

Fourth Line Of Reasoning

The arguments, which prevailed for His strength and power, must be applicable for His attribute of independence also because a constrained Creator could not be called Competent and Omnipotent.

Fourth Attribute: God Is Alive

He was alive from eternity and beyond. There was no end to him. We have presented a few explanations to elucidate this attribute.

First Evidence

He had Himself claimed that He was alive through various Qur'anic Verses.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

"Allah! There is no god but He,-the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Eternal" (***3:2***).

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

"All that is on earth will perish" (***55:26***).

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

"But will abide (***for ever***) ***the Face of thy Lord - full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour"*** (***55:27***).

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۚ لَهَ

"Everything will perish save His countenance" **(*28:88*).**

Second Evidence

When His Knowledge and Might are established, His life is then recognized as a corollary, because Might is subject to life, and without life these attributes are meaningless.

Third Evidence

A continuous change that is visible in the Universe, tells us that some Living Being is controlling the mechanism of the Universe. The Qur'an said:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things" **(*67:1*).**

Fourth Evidence

Death is severance of the relationship between matter and spirit. Since God is free from such material constraints, how could death prevail over Him?

Fifth Attribute: God is Mudrik

Idrak is the knowledge of those things, which could be discerned through senses. In other words, it is the knowledge of the constituents. The term knowledge is used in general sense and *Idrak* is more specific. That is why this attribute is separately mentioned. To explain this, we would give two reasons.

First Reason

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

"Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends* (*all*) *vision; and He is the Knower of subtleties, the Aware" **(*6:103*).**

Second Reason

When he has knowledge of everything, as proven earlier, then it shows that He must also have the knowledge of all those things, which are perceived by senses. This should include objects as a whole and their constituents.

Sixth Attribute: God Is Truthful And Does Not Lie

Every word and action of God is proper and candid. There is no blending of injustice and deceit with it. The following reasons are in support of this view.

First Reason

God had Himself claimed in the Qur'an that He does not break his promise.

وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا

"... (it is) a promise of Allah, true (indeed), and who is truer of word than Allah?" (4:122).

Second Reason

Telling lies is an abominable act and God's persona is free of such repulsive acts.

Third Reason

He had cursed liars in his book. If He himself did the same, then He would be under that curse too.

Fourth Reason

Lies are told either due to ignorance or weakness. Someone deceives, either because he is unaware of what he is saying or is compelled to do so to achieve hidden motives. God is neither ignorant nor constrained. Therefore, such an act is not expected from him.

Fifth Reason

Truth and candour are excellence, and God is perfect in all aspects. It is therefore, necessary to believe that God is Just and truthful.

Seventh Attribute: God Is Eternal Not Probable

He is Eternal and is without an end. He had always been in existence and would always remain in existence. He had no beginning and no end.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) was asked the question as to since when God existed? Imam replied that there was no 'when', when He did not exist. So how could one put a time limit on Him?

A brief discussion of this subject is given here.

First Rationale

God said in the Qur'an,

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

"He is first and He is the last. He is obvious and He is hidden, and He has knowledge over all things" **(*57:3*).**

Second Rationale

If He had a beginning, then there must be a time when He was not present. In that case He would need a source to bring Him into existence from the nothingness. Therefore, He would no longer remain Eternal, although He was Eternal.

Third Rationale

If He was not Eternal, He would depend on a Creator for His existence. He would then be Probable and therefore would not be God.

Fourth Rationale

It is an established fact that whoever is eternal would also be infinite. In other words, an Eternal entity would have no beginning and no end. A being dies or ends when its creative source is either eliminated or exhausted. And, for a being (whose existence) was not dependent on any cause, non-existence is not applicable and irrelevant.

Fifth Rationale

Eternal, by definition is an individual, whose being is personal and real. For such a person, non-existence is not a possibility. He would therefore be Eternal.

Eighth Attribute: God is Murid (decides with will) and is Not under Compulsion

Whatever God does is with His personal explicit approval, He is not under any compulsion to say and do anything. His actions are subject to His own Will. He likes his subjects to do upright things and keep away from evil deeds. The arguments, which had been presented for Him to be Omnipotent, was applicable for Him being *Murid*.

Warning: We include the aspect *Murid* among the attributes of the Essence of God, in line with common practices. In fact, according to our research this characteristic belongs to God's attributes of action. We shall discuss this issue in chapter six of this book.

Ninth Attribute: God is Mutakallim

God is *Mutakallim* (He speaks). Some views on God's *kalam* (speech) are:

- God had Himself pronounced that He spoke to Moses and the other prophets.
- All heavenly books including the Qur'an and the other holy revelations have confirmed that God spoke.
- Unless God Himself speaks, the reasons of the creation of the Cosmos would remain a mystery.

Speech is necessary for explaining a point of view. God, who is at the pinnacle of every excellence, needs to communicate, thus it would be essential that He speaks. However, when we refer to God in terms of speech, it does not mean that His mode of speech is the same as that of ours.

Speech is composed of words and sounds. Therefore, it is a function of *arz* – which is not self-evident, but is sensed through other objects e.g. colour, smell and taste etc. On this basis the expression of a report or a statement is a *Hadith* or Probable entity. Any thing that would be associated with it would also be a source of probable existence.

Now we know that a Probable existence could not be Essential existence or *Wajib al-Wujood* (for which existence is essential and extinction is not possible). Therefore, the interpretation of the term *Mutakallim* for God would be that He could create sound in whatever object He wishes. It would be as He spoke to Moses by creating a sound in the bush on Mount Sinai. One must appreciate that Kalam is Probable, and it is among one of the qualities of action.

Tenth Attribute: God is Sami' and Baseer

God is *Sami'* and *Baseer* (He hears and Sees)

He hears and sees everything without ears or eyes. Two reasons are briefly presented to support this view. He Himself proclaimed in the Qur'an,

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

***"There is nothing to resemble Him and He is Sami' and Baseer"* (42:11).**

Or:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

"Certainly, God is Sami' and Baseer" **(*22:75*).**

There is no doubt that His creatures have the capability to hear and speak. If the Creator did not possess these characteristics, then it would mean that the creatures are more perfect than their Creator.

Qur'an was witness to the dialogue of Abraham when He spoke to his uncle Aazar, against idolatry by saying:

يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنكَ شَيْئًا...

"O father **[*Uncle*]** ***why do you worship them who can neither listen nor see nor can benefit you"*** **(*19:42*).**

This told that God should be the one who could listen, see and be capable of bestowing benefits and punishing. If God had been incapable of seeing and hearing, Aazar would have negated Abraham by throwing the same argument at him. His silence on this issue proved that he (Aazar) knew that the God to whom Abraham was inviting did not have that flaw.

As stated earlier, sight and hearing do not require physical ears and eyes as otherwise it would mean that He had components. This would mean that He, as a compound entity, was Probable Existence and not Essential Existence. It was therefore, important to believe that God is *Sami'* and *Baseer*, without any dependence on physical parts such as ears or eyes.

Eleventh Attribute: God is Hakeem (Wise)

All His actions are based on wisdom. None of His decisions and pronouncements is without a purpose. A few comments on this subject are mentioned below:

God clearly said in the Qur'an:

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

"...then know that Allah is Mighty, Wise" **(*2:209*).**

وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

"... and Allah is Knowing, Wise" **(*8:71*).**

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

"What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us?" **(*23:115*).**

It is a flaw to do anything without a purpose and God is free from such absurdities. At the same time to do things with a purpose is a sign of excellence, which is essential for the Eternal one. Therefore, we had to recognise Him as Wise.

The presence of various wonders in the Universe require its Creator to be absolutely wise.

Twelfth Attribute: God is Adil (Just)

He never abandoned a righteous act or commits an evil one. He does not cause harm or commit injustice to anyone. Its justification is contained within the subject matter of the acts of His creatures, yet we have provided some concrete arguments on this subject.

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

"Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, and* (*so do*) *the angels and those possessed of knowledge, maintaining His creation with justice; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise" **(*3:18*).**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ

"Allah is never unjust in the least degree ..." **(*4:40*).**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا

"Surely Allah does not do any injustice to men ..." **(*10:44*).**

وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعِبَادِ

"...but Allah never wishes injustice to his Servants" **(*40:31*).**

God had ordered that justice must prevail among each other, and if His own acts contradicted this, He

would then be the target of his own proclamations such as:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ

***"Enjoin ye righteousness upon mankind while ye yourselves forget* (*to practise it*)*?"* (*2:44*).**

God is certainly above this kind of conduct. He had cursed the unjust, and if God was unjust Himself then He would be under the burden of His own curse.

Injustice and malice were despicable acts. God's sheath of magnificence is free of such blemishes, because if He committed disgraceful acts then such act would be among either one of these four possibilities.

First is that He is unaware of the wickedness of those acts. Second, He knows but is not able to refrain from such acts. Third, He is compelled by the desire to commit such acts. Fourth, He is capable of avoiding such acts and restraining Himself but still do so in vain.

All the four postulates are simply unsound, because in the first case He would apparently be an ignorant being. In the second state He would be incapable and weak. In the third scenario He would be reliant on others. In the fourth situation, He would be seen as committing meaningless acts. As none of these possibilities are likely to be in conformity with the discussions in the previous sections – that He is always Wise and erudite – this leads to an acceptance that He is Just.

Importantly, justice and fairness are distinctive qualities. It is important for the *Wajib al-Wujood* to possess these attributes.

Discussion Of Some Sifat As-Salbia (Prohibitive Attributes)

These were also called the attributes of *Jalal*, as opposed to *Sifat As-Sabootia*, which were also known as *Sifat al-Jamal*.

By *Sifat as-Salbia*, we mean those attributes that are beneath the dignity of God. These are deficiencies, which are not expected of the Supreme Being. These characteristics, like the positive attributes are numerous. We have summarised these below.

First Attribute: God Is Not A Compound

God does not have a physical body or organs such as hands, nose, head and eyes or the non-physical components (called *Jins* and *Fasl*), which mean gender and its principal or unique quality. As an example, human beings belonged to animal species, as male or female and speech is their principal characteristic (*Fasl*). The following argument is provided to support this view:

If He was considered to be a compound, then He would be dependent on His constituents. And, the one who is dependent could not be God, since His being is well above such speculations.

If He was supposed to be a compound entity, the situation would then not be free of two constraints. He is either essential or probable. Both of these situations are not applicable. If He was considered to be Essential, then He would not be a true compound, since in a true compound the constituents have to interact with each other, and this dependency is by definition against the concept of an Essential or *Wajib*.

If He is not dependent, then there would be no use for those constituents. If on the other hand He was Probable, then the combination of those components would also be probable, and could never be realized as the Essential, non-composite entity of God.

Every compound has a configuration, which needs to be balanced. If God was a compound, then He would have needed an arranger to formulate the compound. In such case, the whole definition of God would change, which is not possible.

If He was supposed to be a compound then His existence would have been only after the constituents had existed, since a compound is formed from the chemical bonding of its components. It had been proven in the section dealing with God's positive attributes that He was the initial one and nothing preceded Him. On the strength of these facts, we have to accept that He is not a compound but a wholesome Primary.

From these statements, it is also manifest that when God does not possess mental components i.e. species (*Jins*) and its unique characteristics (*Fasl*), therefore, its true definition is not possible, as final limits are drawn by the combination of *Jins* and the immediate *Fasl*.

Second Attribute: God Does Not Possess A Body

Just a few arguments on this attribute are presented below.

All the arguments which had been presented for God not being a compound entity, could be applied to prove that He does not possess a body. Every corporal form is compound in nature; this would also negate Him having a body.

Every physical form depends upon a particular material and shape. Therefore, a dependent entity cannot be *Wajib al-Wujood*. Every physical form in its essence depends upon space and time. This dependence is a deficiency and a mark of probability, which is against the essence of *Wajib al-Wujood*.

Several authentic religious traditions have categorically rejected the corporeal identity of God. It is said in *Usul al-Kafi* on the authority of Hamza Ibn Muhammad that he wrote to Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a) questioning about the corporeal existence of God. Imam replied, "Blessed is He, Who has no parallel

and He has no body or shape."

Third Attribute: God is neither Johar nor Arz

Johar is that which does not require any aid for its presence to become possible. In simple words, it is able to demonstrate itself without assistance. *Arz* is that which depends on something else for its manifestation e.g. colour or smell etc. The following reasons deny God being either *Johar* or *Arz*.

Johar and *Arz* are the attributes of Probable Existence while God is an Essential Existence. If He was associated either with *Johar* or *Arz*, then He would be considered as a Probable.

Johar at its pinnacle depends upon *Arz*. *Arz* for its manifestation needs *Johar.* This dependence is the attribute of a Probable Existence. Therefore, a dependent could never be Essential Existence or *Wajib al-Wujood*, because Essential as stated in the Qur'an, is a manifestation of independence.

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

"Surely, Allah is beyond any praise" **(*14:8*).**

Johar is always an entity with physical form. It had been proven that God had no physical dimension. *Arz* on the other hand, is essential aspect of a corporal being. Therefore, God could neither be *Johar* or *Arz*.

Shaykh As-Saduq quoted from a famous tradition, "God possessed neither body nor shape. He is neither *Johar* nor *Arz*, but instead He is the Creator of dimensions and shapes including *Jawahar* (*plural of Johar*) and *Aaraz*."

Fourth Attribute: God Is Not Subject To Events

This mean that God does not go through the mundane experiences like human beings do such as rest, motion, sleep, arousal, dreams, youthfulness or ageing. The following is a discussion on this issue.

All the above traits are associated with a physical being. Since God is not of corporal dimension, He is free of such features. So, He could not be subject to a cycle of events. To be so would be a sign of deficiency and weakness, and God is above any flaw.

All these events and occurrences are the work of God. And, a Creator could not be placed alongside His creatures. As all these traits are probable occurrences, we have to accept that they were absent at some point in time. If God had them, He would have lacked those qualities when they were non-existent. If they got associated with God after their coming into existence, then the situation would not be free from two possibilities. Either His association with those traits was a merit or a deficiency.

With both assumptions two iniquities arise. First is an assumption that there was a time when God did

not have those traits. So He would have been deficient at that moment. However, we know that all His acts of excellence were action bound and He was never devoid of His attributes. The second assumption that might have to be accepted is that He relied on someone else to acquire His attributes. The absurdity of this constraint is also evident. It is not possible to associate any acts that demean God to His being.

Fifth Attribute: Hulul

Hulul **(God Does Not Enter Into A Physical Dimension)**

God does not enter into an object, like water does when poured into a tumbler or a soul into a body. Such was the claim of some Christians and Sufis with regard to Jesus or certain saints. Some ideas in support of this attribute are described below.

Anything, which enters an object, leaves its original place, thus creating a vacant space. However, God is not space bound. Therefore, on intellectual grounds He is present everywhere.

Anything that undergoes a change has a decline. Thus, if *Hulul* was possible for God, then He would have changed places. His gradual annihilation would become a strong possibility. However, by definition, He is Eternal and permanent and His obliteration is not feasible. For Hulul, the subject must have either *Johar* or *Arz*, which is impossible for God to be such.

Sixth Attribute: God Is Not United With Anything

Many erroneous sects such as (some) Sufis have developed this idea to elevate the status of their spiritual leaders. They claimed that God had united with these personalities. They mention this in the couplets from the poems that they chanted:

Mun tu shudam

Tum mun shudi

Man tan shudam

Tu jaan shudi

Ta kus nagoyad Baad azin

Mun deegram

Tu deegri.

I am Thee

You are me

I am body

Thou spirit in me

So that nobody

should say after this

That I am another

And You are different

From me.

This doctrine is redundant due to certain reasons. Union, by definition, is an amalgamation of two things in a way that the bonding does not result in any difference in their volume. Such a union is logically not possible. Hence, how could such a scheme be feasible for God?

If somehow God united with something, then the other object would not free of two constraints. It would either be essential or probable. If it was essential then after uniting, there will be two *Wajib al-Wujoods* (Essentials), which would be incorrect. If it was Probable then, either the resultant was *Wajib* (Essential) or Probable. In the first scenario reversion of Probable towards Essential would take place, and for the other setting, reversion of Essential towards *Mumkin* (Probable) would proceed. This kind of reversion is logically incorrect and the idea that things could unite with God has to be abandoned.

If during a union both entities preserved their identity, then it could not be called a union. If both lost their individuality and a third entity emerged, then also it was not a union. If one component had retained its identity and the other had lost, even then a union had not been achieved. This showed that such a scheme was illogical and unacceptable.

We might consider union in an allegorical sense, when an entity transformed itself into another form by change of state, just as water could transform into vapour. However, such a union is also not admissible for God because such transformation would involve disintegration and formation, which would be against the nature of the Essential Existence.

Seventh Attribute: God Is Not Indigent

God in His person is not reliant upon anyone including time, space, dimensions, instruments, advisor or a deputy. Instead, the entire creation (*Alameen*) depends on Him. He is independent of all and is in need of no one in the cosmos. The following arguments are relevant to this subject.

He had said in the Qur'an,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

"It is ye that have need of Allah: but Allah is the One Free of all wants, worthy of all praise" **(*35:15*).**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

***"Most surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above* (*need of*) *the worlds"* (*29:6*).**

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

***"Allah is absolute independent* (*of anything*)*"* (*112:2*).**

Dependence is a characteristic of an entity with a probable existence. The (one with) Essential (existence) is the one who is absolute and sovereign. If it was not so, then the Essential would become a transient or a Probable, which is not possible. If He depended upon someone else then this other one would have greater right to be God. In this scenario He would have to cease being a deity. Besides, dependence implies a discrepancy and God is beyond such flaws.

Eighth Attribute: God Has No Specific Space Or Abode

God has no specific place. He is an entity independent of time and space. A few arguments to outline this attribute of God are presented below.

Someone who possesses a body or has physical dimensions needs space. Since He does not have a body, no accommodation (in space) is required. The need for space is a sign of a *Mumkin* (Probable) entity. The Essential is free of such constraints.

Anything that is surrounded by space and time has a state of rest and motion appended to it. We already have proven that these states are not applicable to God.

Reports from the office of Imams have categorically denied any place of abode for God. Ibn Baseer, on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said, "God cannot be associated with space, time, state of rest and motion, because He is the creator of those properties, and is far above what the prejudiced and ignorant people say about Him."

Ninth Attribute: God Has No Attribute Additional To His Essence

This condition had been discussed earlier in the text, and we do not intend to repeat it. Further explanation of this subject would be presented in the second chapter.

Tenth Attribute: There Is No Physical State Of Grief Or Enjoyment For God

It is a self-evident fact that an entity, which is free of a physical body, would be free from all related aspects that related to joy or suffering.

Eleventh Attribute: God Is Invisible

God is not visible. He could not be visualised apparently in this world and the hereafter, for the following reasons.

He had himself claimed in the Qur'an:

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

"Vision cannot grasp Him and He can grasp vision and He is all knowing and subtle" (***6:103***).

When Moses requested God to reveal Himself openly, on the insistence of his people then the answer given was:

قَالَ لَن تَرَانِي

"You can never see me" (***7:143***).

Linguists who understood Arabic could appreciate that the syntax used in the Verse applied to both worlds i.e. on this earth and in the hereafter.

There are six requirements to see something with a naked eye. It should be in front of the observer. It should have a shape. It should have a colour. It should occupy some space. It should not be too far from the observer. There should not be any impediment in the line of vision. The surrounding should be illuminated. So, it is evident that all these conditions apply an aspect that is of a physical nature. It had been proven in earlier sections that the Creator of the Universes has to be free of constraints of a material form. Therefore, it is not possible to see Him.

A thing that could be seen has definite limits. But God has no limits and He circumvents everything. Therefore, how could an object with limited vision assimilate in itself something that overwhelms and exceeds beyond its limits?

A man asked Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) if he had seen his Lord. Imam replied that he would not worship a God, whom he had not seen. The enquirer asked him the state in which he had seen Him. Imam replied: "Pity on you, the vision of the eyes cannot see Him. He cannot be seen except with the inner sight of a believing heart."

Twelfth Attribute: God Does Not Perform Any Illegitimate Or Evil Act

Some of the arguments about this attribute have been discussed in the section dealing with the Justice of God. One may refer to that section.

Thirteenth Attribute: God Is Unlike Anything, Nor Can An Example Of Him Be Given

Nothing in the universe could be similar to God. There are a few points of interest in regard to this attribute. God had claimed in Qur'an that nothing is similar to Him. It is an established fact that every designer is different from his design and every creator is different in all aspects, from what he creates. As every thing in the universe is a creation of God, He could not be similar to any of those.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) said, “Anything that one can imagine in his mind, God is beyond it, since anything that could be encased by imagination and intellect is a creation, and no creation is similar to its creator.”

It was narrated in a tradition that God is One that is unlike anything that could be imagined.

Clearing Of A Doubt

These facts also clear an impending doubt, which has been raised by some questioning minds as to how could one believe in a God, who is free of space and dimensions and could not be seen by the eyes.

Since the mind and intellect could not define His state, how is then it possible to reach the depth of His reality and how could He be associated with unsurpassable attributes? Although, such questions have been addressed in the earlier discussions, this objection has a degree of novelty attached to it. Therefore, it appears appropriate for us to tackle this concern here briefly.

When it had been accepted that there were signs of continuous creativity in this Cosmos, and that a created being could not take form without a Creator, an intellectual reasoning begs us to believe in the presence of a Creator that is free of the attributes of His creations. The name of such a creator is God.

We might not be able to reach an understanding of God's nature just by looking at His Creation. This is in the same way as by looking at a watch it can be concluded that there was someone who had manufactured it, and that he was the master of his trade. However, it might not be possible to deduce the personal attributes of its designer – those, which are not related to designing of the watch such as his facial tone, his height, his age, or his body shape etc.

A lack of answers to such questions does not create doubt about his capability as a designer of that watch. In a similar way, by looking at the complexities of this cosmos, a man is sure in his heart that there is an intelligent Being, free of mundane shackles, and sitting at the pinnacle of all capabilities. He is responsible for these wonders, even if we are at loss to understand His nature. The poet said, “In this

material domain, there are many things whose nature is not known to us including those, which are very near to us, such as intellect, understanding, spirit and our own being."

That is why the Prophet has said, "Whoever has understood his own being has understood God."

O, the one who questions the nature of God, (do you know) in which part of your body the spirit rests. Have you ever seen it, and observed how it progresses through you?

Discussion On The Oneness Of God

There is no one who is comparable to God in His essence, His attributes of Person or actions, including for the act of worship. He is unique in all aspects and this was the forte of Islam, since a general belief in a deity is common in all religions of the world, which still persisted today. That was why the Qur'an said:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّه

"If you ask them who has created Heavens and the Earth, they will definitely reply God" **(*39:38*).**

The only downside in their belief is about the oneness of God, which is either totally absent from their doctrine or if present, flawed. Some of them believe in the duality of God, some others are on a mind-boggling trinity track, and the rest involved in the worship of a huge number of gods. This is why their complete estrangement with Islam is on the very issue of pure *Tawhid*. The Qur'an pointed out to this fact in Surah Az-Zumar:

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

"And when Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter are repelled, and when those* (*whom they worship*) *beside Him are mentioned, behold! they are glad" **(*39:45*).**

In Makkah, the only crime of Prophet Muhammad (S) was that he wanted them to accept God without partners. It was revealed in the Qur'an:

وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَٰذَا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ

"... and the disbelievers say: This is an enchanter, a liar. What! makes he the gods a single Allah? A strange thing is this, to be sure!" **(*38:4*).**

أَجَعَلَ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَٰهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ

"What! makes he the gods a single Allah? A strange thing is this, to be sure!" **(*38:5*).**

Anyhow, the sparkling and clean-cut Tawhid that Islam has propagated had no parallel in other religions. Their concept of the monotheism lacked in all disciplines, including the unity of the Essence and Attributes (belonging to the Essence and actions) of God, as well as the unity in terms of Worship. According to the Qur'an, their Tawhid was flawed:

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ قَوْلُهُم بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَبْلُ

"Jews say that Ozair is the Son of God, while the Christians claim Jesus. They follow the footsteps of the earlier wrongdoers" **(*9:30*).**

The Magians believed in Yazdan and Ahraman as their two gods. The Aryan Samaj, though less than other Hindus, had claimed a new trinity by considering matter and spirit eternal with God. Islam on the other hand is so strict on *Tawhid* that it had made polytheism a cardinal sin, for which there is no reprieve. The Qur'an pronounced:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاء

"God will never pardon that anything should be associated to him, but the rest of the sins He might, as He desires" **(*4:48*).**

Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari related from the Prophet who said, "Anyone who died, while practicing polytheism, must find his place in Hell. Paradise is the chosen place for those who keep away from polytheistic views, because God has made the fire of Hell redundant for the followers of *Tawhid*."

Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) related a tradition from the Prophet, on the authority of his family that the Prophet had said, "The price of paradise is acceptance of the unity of God."

Allama Al-Majlisi narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas that the Prophet (S) said, "I swear by God, who sent me as a warner and a Messenger of good tidings, that He would never dispatch the followers of *Tawhid* into Hell, instead these people would intercede with God (with His permission) and He will accept their recommendations."

Explanation

Two points must be made clear here. The people, who have been recommended in this Hadith, were those who had their *Tawhid* based on the teachings of Imam ('a) of the Ahl al-Bayt and not those who had obtained *Tawhid* from *Iblis*. Ahmed Ghazali said, "Those who do receive Tawhid from *Iblis* are

Mulhids (who seeks partners with God) and *Zindiqs* (Magians)."

A mind must not infer from these *Ahadith* that the only requirement for entering Paradise is the acceptance of the unity of God, and the good deeds are superfluous in this regard. Instead, one should keep in view the narration of Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) in which, after declaring blessings of the statement of unity, he said that those blessings were tagged with certain terms and conditions, and one of the conditions was the acceptance of his Imamate and obedience. Anyhow compliance with Satan in matters of *Tawhid* was an opposite thing.

We would now discuss the summary of various forms of Tawhid below, with supporting facts.

The Oneness Of The Person Of God

The following are supporting arguments for this concept.

The manner, in which universe manifest the presence of its Creator, and the laws that govern this system, their permanence and interaction with each other, certainly point to its Creator and Manager being one and only one.

Just as the body parts that are numerous but their organization together constitute a man, the entire Universe from its far corners into the depths of the planet Earth is organized to work according to a plan, and this is a proof that its principal administrator is God alone. If there was more than one God then this balance would be impossible to be reached. Instead, differences and frictions would have been more evident.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) used this argument on the query of Hisham Ibn Al-Hakam. He said that if there were more than one God, the universe would be destroyed.

From Adam to the last Messenger, all the Prophets have been unanimously saying and preaching that the true God was one and no one shared power with Him. They suffered (from persecutions), but continued to advocate the same.

Qur'an, which is the last testament of God, had declared on various occasions that there is no god but God, and there was no deity worthy of worship other than Him. Although, affirmations of various Prophets were cited in the book, but to summarise, the Qur'an said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

"[***O Messenger***] ***And We did not send before you any messenger but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me, therefore serve Me"*** (***21:25***).

This is not just the Qur'anic argument which might be refuted by a disbeliever (of the Qur'an), but it is also a historical fact that every incoming Prophet conveyed the same message. The natural consequence of this discussion is that God is one and only one. If it was not so, then the representatives and messengers of other gods would also have claimed allegiance from the people.

Imam Ali ('a) said, "O My son Hasan, know that if there were partners with God, then their messengers would have also approached you, and you would have definitely seen some signatures of their kingdom, and you would have known about their attributes and qualities. Therefore, He is unique as He has described Himself, and no one shares power with Him."

If we assumed two Gods, then both of them would have to be equally powerful. However, it was possible that if one of them wanted to create something, the second one would be capable of opposing his efforts. The first God then – due to his weakness – would no longer be a contender for this job, and the other one would establish himself on the strength of his credentials. The same arguments would apply in the case of the second one challenging the first god, since independence and power are essential requirements for a god.

A Magian once approached Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) and asked him why it was not permissible to have more than one God? He replied that according to his (Magian) religion there were two gods. If this was true, then the state of affairs would not be free of three constraints: either both gods would be eternal and powerful, or both of them would be weak or one would be strong and the other, weak. Each of these possibilities was flawed.

If both were strong then why had not one of them exerted his full authority and secured the majesty alone. It was recognized that permanence and power were the pinnacles of a ruler's attributes. If both were weak then they would not be suitable to be classed as gods anyway. If the third scenario prevailed, then god would be only one – the one who was the strongest.

If there were two gods then both of them would be share the same desires and plans or contradict each other. This would give rise to the possibility of clash and conflict. However, when we cast a glance at the mechanism of the universe, we would find the possibility of only one God to be plausible and harmonious. The return of days and nights and the rising and setting of the Sun had been well measured. There is harmony and balance built in the system that convince that the control and management is of one and only one God.

Imam's arguments were undoubtedly strong and convincing but a disillusioned mind might raise a new objection that there might be two powerful gods, which had decided to work in full harmony and this balance in the universe might be due to their full cooperation. To answer this doubt, we would have to ask – was the resolve and power of both sufficient or was it inadequate for creating and running the universe, or was one capable and the other inept?

If the first option is accepted, then it would result in the stationing of two permanent causes (*illatain*) on a

single output (*malool*). This means that one impression results from two permanent effects, which is impossible.

Moreover, if one God was sufficient to run the universe, the presence or absence of the other God would be immaterial. Therefore, if one's presence or absence did not make any difference, then how could he be a god? The Essential is the one who had all subservient to Him while He himself is free of any dependence.

In the second argument, when two gods were bound to consult each other than this shortcoming would cause both to be classed as merely probable (existence) and not capable of being god. Therefore, we have to exercise a third option in which, God is one and He is not weak and powerless.

If two gods were assumed, then we had to explore another possibility as well. If, at a particular time, one god wanted to do a job e.g. it wants to create John and the other one wants to oppose it, then the state of affairs has three limitations. Both would achieve their desires, which is impossible, since two opposites could not unite. One would succeed and the other would fail.

Then god would be the one who had succeeded. Or else, both might continue to strive and struggle, in which case the entire management of the universe would suffer. When all these possibilities are proven to be wrong, then the assumption of more than one god, naturally collapses. This was expressed in Qur'an as:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

***"If there were any god besides Allah, then the Universe would be in disorder"* (*21:22*).**

The reality is that it is beyond all doubts that to be the sole manager of the affairs of the universe – independent of anyone – is the apex of superiority. To share power with someone else is a sign of weakness and deficiency. Since God is above all flaws, it is important to believe in an all–powerful God, exclusive master of the universe. That was why Qur'an said,

وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا

***"Anyone who associates others with God; commits a cardinal sin"* (*4:48*).**

As explained in an earlier argument that all Prophets and messengers – who claimed to represent God – brought a single message that there was one God, who did not share his realm with any other. This point of view had three aspects to it. Either the dispatcher of these Prophets i.e. God was truthful in this pledge and so were His representatives or, He was a liar. Further to this, His message would both qualify the rationale of *Tawhid* and lead to abandoning of the deities. Or, He would have told his

messengers that there were two gods, but his messengers changed the message and pronounced there to be one God instead of two.

In this line of argument there are two further complications. It is against the candour of prophethood, while their sinlessness is a universally accepted fact or God would be blamed that He supported liars with miracles, which is against His dignity. Therefore, when all the above suggestions are wrong, we have to admit that God is one.

If we accepted the "two-god theory", then the possibilities are that either each god needs the other, or each is independent of the other or one of them is independent of the other. As all three scenarios are false, we are left with no god. It is therefore proven that all those who associate others with God does not have any rational argument to support their statement other than mere conjectures, as described by the Qur'an.

Statement On The Oneness Of God And His Attributes

This means that the real attributes of God are not separate from His Essence. So there was no partition at any time between God's Essence and His attributes. All other beings, including the Prophets, Imams, angels and saints – their characteristics were 'in addition' to their persons. No one (other than God) is exception to this rule.

Some years ago, one of my articles titled "The Categories of *Tawhid*" was published in a number of national papers. It was then distributed as a pamphlet, wherein different aspects of *Tawhid* were discussed in some detail, a summary of which had been presented in the previous pages of this book. I had stated in the article that God's virtues are 'personal', whereas our characteristics are 'in addition' to our being. In other words, there is a partition between our essence and our attributes. There was a time when we did not have these traits, and when God granted us tools, we acquired those qualities, as mentioned in the Qur'an,

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

***"And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that haply ye might give thanks"* (*16:78*).**

Then after explaining a few of God's attributes, I wrote, "Therefore, no one shares this type of *Tawhid* with God, as the characteristics of every creature are acquired traits, including that of Prophet Muhammad (S), just as it was mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَن نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

***"And thus did We reveal to you an inspired book by Our command. You did not know what the Book was, nor* (*what*) *the faith* (*was*)*, but We made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our servants; and most surely you show the way to the right path"* (*42:52*).**

Some of the scholars inadvertently accused me that I had included the Prophet in the same league as pointed out by the former Qur'anic Verse:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

***"And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that haply ye might give thanks"* (*16:78*).**

And they quoted the previous Verse:

مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَان

***"You did not know what the Book was, nor* (*what*) *the faith* (*was*)*..."* (*42:52*).**

to prove their case against me. They were pointing out at my alleged mistake. They tried to correct the situation in their own way by proposing that there was a difference between personal attributes and exclusively personal attributes. They advocated that the Prophet's knowledge was his own specifically, in the same manner that an object possessed specific dimensions of length, width and height, or, like the radiation of light from the Sun, or the ability of fire to burn was additional to their own being, these traits cannot be separated from their essence.

They continued to argue that while the attributes of the Imams were external to their essence, they could not be separated from their being. They then quoted the above referenced Qur'anic Verse in support of their statement:

مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَان

***"You did not know what the Book was, nor* (*what*) *the faith* (*was*)*..."* (*42:52*).**

They proposed that it was an undefined proposition (*quzia al–Saleba*), which did not require the subject of the proposition to be specified. Its applicability was true even if the issue (principle) of the proposition was absent or undecided. For example, the statement "David is not standing" is true whether David is present or absent. Therefore, in the light of the given example the meaning of the Verse would have been: "(O, Prophet just as your body is our gift, similarly, faith and knowledge is our award to you, however, when you were not present) you did not know the nature of faith or the book."

Their argument is redundant due to certain reasons. They are not honest in reproducing my quote. I have never written explicitly or implicitly that the Qur'anic Verse:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that haply ye might give thanks" (***16:78***).

was meant for the Prophet. A statement to implicate this was a deliberate effort to mislead people against me. How could such a person who believed in the words of the Prophet when he said: "He was the Prophet when Adam was between water clay", be accused of this offence? Who would say that the above quoted Verse had included the Prophet among the ordinary?

Anyone who casted an ordinary look at my work would immediately recognise that the first Qur'anic Verse was for the ordinary people, whereas, the second Verse:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا

"And thus did We reveal to you an inspired book by Our command..." (***42:52***).

Was revealed to honour the Prophet.

Even if the difference – which exists between personal and exclusively personal attributes – was accepted, the knowledge of the Prophets could not be termed just as the knowledge of their own person or essence. This is invalid on the following grounds.

An attribute, which is part of one's nature is not subject to variation. Variation is possible only for the acquired knowledge of the revered (prophets), as mentioned in the books of logic.

According to *Silm al–'Uloom*, variation is neither a state nor an attachment, but it is when the people were wrapped in inconsistencies. That variation in the Prophet's knowledge happens is evident from the Qur'an, where it is said:

وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

"O, God enhance my knowledge" (***20:114***).

Books of *Ahadith* described in detail the changes in knowledge that took place with the advent of various prophets over a long period of time. Similarly, it could be said about Moses:

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَاسْتَوَىٰ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"***And when he*** **(*Moses*)** ***attained his maturity and became full grown, We granted him wisdom and knowledge…"*** **(*28:14*).**

For further information, reference could be made to *Tafsir al-Saafi* and *Majma' Al-Bayan*.

In Surah Yusuf, reference was made to the Prophet (S):

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِن كُنتَ مِن قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

"We narrate to you the best of narratives, by Our revealing to you this Qur'an, though before this you were certainly one of those who did not know" **(*12:3*).**

There are several other Verses in the Qur'an, where the difference between the Prophet's person and his attributes is evident, and on the basis of these facts, how could we make knowledge (*ilm*) as the integral part of his essence?

This *ilm* or knowledge was the consequence of Prophetic or Imamic spirit, which was called *Ruh Al-Qudus*. This spirit was not a personal attribute of the Prophets and Imams. It was granted to them after their creation, which was evident from multitude of *Ahadith*. Then how could the knowledge that was an offshoot from this, be integrated with their person or essence?

Again, it is true that an undefined proposition (*quzia saleba*) is applicable when the anticipated (object) is withdrawn or absent but it is also relevant when the subject is removed from its context. However, to decide whether these suggestions are valid, one has to look into the facets of the evidence provided.

The problem is not an intellectual exercise, but a practical proposition. A reference has to be made to the true interpreters of Qur'an to understand the nature of the problem at this point in time. By probing into the narrations of the Imams, it appears that there was a time that the person of the Prophet existed but he was not aware of the knowledge of the book[3].

It was related from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), in the interpretation of the Qur'anic Verse quoted above from Surah Yusuf, that there was a time when the Prophet did not have the knowledge of *'Ilm al-Kitab* and faith, until God granted him the Spirit, which was mentioned in this Verse. This cleared the air that there was a time when the Prophet was present but he was not aware of the things mentioned above.

It must be born in mind that this scenario was related to a time before the Prophet's apparent arrival in this world. Therefore, the statement that this was an undefined proposition minus the subject, was nothing but *tafseer bi' r-rai* or a personal interpretation of Qur'an.

Allama Sarsavi had written an authentic volume, titled *Kashf Al–Asrar*, on the predicaments of the Book and its Recitation, in which a detailed analysis of this Verse had been presented. He accepted that in between the spiritual creation of the Prophet and the bestowal of the Prophetic spirit, there was a period when he was not aware of the Book and wisdom.

It was insignificant to indulge into the duration of this period of not knowing or whether this phase was time or place bound. However, while staying within the precautionary limits, it is obvious from the Qur'anic Verse that there was a time with the Prophet, when the sequence of Prophetic revelations had not commenced with him. With this conclusion, we may now return to our original topic.

Discussion On The Unity Of Actions Or Deeds (Tawhid Al–Faali)

This refers to the acts of creation at which time, no human had a personal command or authority. Creation of life, provision of sustenance or providing relief from ailments and illnesses, causing death, or reviving the dead are specific to God alone. No one shares with Him in these acts. This view was supported by numerous Qur'anic Verses and Prophetic traditions.

We would discuss these issues, when we reach the theme of *ghulu* and *tafweez* i.e. exaggeration and delegation in the present book. Several Qur'anic Verses are quoted here to support this argument.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

"He is Allah, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names" **(*59:24*).**

This Verse proved that Only God was the Creator and Designer.

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا نَ

"Is it they who apportion thy Lord's mercy? We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world..." **(*43:32*).**

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَيْءٍ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

***"Allah is He Who created you and then sustained you, then causeth you to die, then giveth life to you again. Is there any of your* (*so-called*) *partners* (*of Allah*) *that doeth aught of that? Praised and Exalted be He above what they associate* (*with Him*)*!"* (*30:40*).**

أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

"Or they have appointed associates with God, who have created things similar to those created by God, which made identification of those things difficult for them. Say God is the creator of everything. He is the One Almighty" (***13:16***).

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ

"And your Lord creates and chooses whom He pleases..." (***28:68***).

أَمَّن يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ

"Is not He (***best***) ***Who produceth creation, then reproduceth it, and Who provideth for you from the heaven and the earth? Is there any Allah beside Allah?"*** (***27:64***).

وَإِن يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِن يَمْسَسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"If God casts you an affliction, then who is there to relieve you from it other than God or if He provides you with a blessing (***no one can take that away from you***). ***He has complete dominance over all things"*** (***6:17***).

This showed that only God could provide (blessing) for you or cause you harm.

قُلْ مَن يُنَجِّيكُم مِّن ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ تَدْعُونَهُ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً لَّئِنْ أَنجَانَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

"Say: Who is it that delivers you from the dangers of the land and the sea (***when***) ***you call upon Him*** (***openly***) ***humiliating yourselves, and in secret: If He delivers us from this, we should certainly be of the grateful ones."*** (***6:63***).

قُلِ اللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُم مِّنْهَا وَمِن كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ

"Say: Allah delivers you from them and from every distress, but again you set up others [***with Him***]***"*** (***6:64***).

أَمَّن يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ

"Who is He, who receives the indignant, when he cries to Him and removes the hurt and appoints you the caretaker of the Earth? Is their any other god besides God?" **(*27:62*).**

These Verses suggest that the Receiver and Responder for all supplications is God.

الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ

"Who created me, then He has shown me the way" **(*26:78*).**

وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ

"And He Who gives me to eat and gives me to drink" **(*26:79*).**

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

"And when I am sick, then He restores me to health" **(*26:80*).**

وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ

"And He Who will cause me to die, then give me life" **(*26:81*).**

This suggested that Creator, Sustainer and Curer was God, and no one else.

أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

"... surely His is the creation and the command: blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds" **(*7:54*).**

قُلْ أَفَاتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا

"Say: Do you take then besides Him guardians who do not control any profit or harm for themselves?" **(*13:16*).**

وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ

"And whatever favour* (*bestowed*) *on you it is from Allah..." **(*16:53*).**

وَاتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَّا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ

***"And they have taken besides Him gods, who do not create anything while they are themselves created..."* (*25:3*).**

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَّرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا

***"...it is He who created all things, and ordered them in due proportions"* (*25:2*).**

أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ مَّا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُنبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ

***"Who is the One, Who has created Heavens and Earth, and then sent water for you from the sky and then produced blooming gardens? It was not within your capacity to initiate those trees. Is there anyone else other than God? But these people are deviant from the truth"* (*27:60*).**

لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَفَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ

***"There is no god but He, so where are you wandering aimlessly?"* (*40:62*).**

This shows that the creator and sustainer is God.

لِّلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ يَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ إِنَاثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ الذُّكُورَ

***"The sovereignty of Heavens and the Earth rests with God. He creates whatever He desires. He bestows daughters to whom He wishes and gives boys to whom He desires"* (*42:49*).**

اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ

***"Gracious is Allah to His servants: He gives Sustenance to whom He pleases..."* (*42:19*).**

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Say O, God; Sovereign of the Universe, You award kingdom to anyone You desire, and remove the writ of leadership from anyone You wish. You promote honour and dignity of anyone You

choose, and defame whom You desire. All the approvals are in your possession and You are powerful over all things." (***3:26***).

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلرَّزَّاقُ ذُو ٱلۡقُوَّةِ ٱلۡمَتِينُ

"God is He; who gives all sustenance. Lord of power [***forever***]***"*** (***51:58***).

These Verses made it clear that the provider of sustenance is God and He is all-powerful.

This is such a sensitive moment in the chapter of *Tawhid*, where many people, in the love of their mentors, cross the defined boundaries and indulge in practices, which make them *mushriks*, instead of monotheists. Imams (‘a) had warned us of this danger and contested any assertions in which some of their followers claimed that they (the Imams) share those attributes which are exclusive for God.

There were so many *Ahadith* available on this subject and we would mention those in the chapter related to exaggeration and delegation. We only mentioned a couple of *Ahadith* here to clear the issue.

Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) used to supplicate in the following manner in his prayers, "O God, providence is thy character, and Thou have the honour to be worshipped. O God, curse those who have minimised thy magnificence, and also those, who like Christians, proposed corporal configurations for Thou.

O God, we are thy servants and the sons of those who were thy servants. We are, in our person, not capable, either of any gain or loss for ourselves, or having any control over life and death or life after death (of others).

O God, whoever believe that we are the providers and that we create, then we are displeased with them in the same way Jesus was with some of his (Christian) followers.

O God, whatever they speculate about us, we have not endorsed them on those matters. Therefore, Thou should not question us on those matters and forgive us for their conjectures."

Our present Imam had best described the station of these people as intermediaries between people and God. It was reported in *Ihtijaj al-Tabari* on the authority of Ahmed Ibn Dalal that once the discussion on the issue of "delegation of power" was pursued hotly among the Shi'as. Some people were advocating that God had delegated powers of creation, provision of sustenance, life and death to Muhammad (S) and his family, while the others opposed it.

One of the Shi'as told them that there was no point bickering among themselves, and that they should go and ask the representative of the last Imam and seek his opinion on that issue. They approached the Shaykh and the request was made to the Imam, and the following reply was received: "It is God Who has created people and He is responsible for their sustenance, since He is neither an object nor does He enter into any object, but He is All Hearing and All seeing. The Imams, on the other hand, request

God and he creates. They ask for subsistence and He allocates to honour their request."

Statement On The Observing Tawhid (Oneness Of God) In Worship

The meaning of this *tawhid* is that we should not associate anyone in the worship of God. The idiom, *La ilaha illa Allah* demands from us that there is no god but God. No one is worthy of being worshipped other than Him.

The idol worshippers were called *mushrikun* (polytheist), on the grounds that they used to worship and prostrate before man-made idols. Although they never called them gods, they believed that a mode of reverence towards them could bring them near to God.

Allah expressed their viewpoint in the following words:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

***"...and (as for) those who take guardians besides Him, (saying), We do not serve them save that they may make us nearer to Allah, surely Allah will judge between them in that in which they differ..."* (*39:3*).**

Despite their admission that they did not treat those idols as gods, still in the Islamic jurisprudence they were classed as *mushriks*:

أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ

***"Do you associate with God those who cannot create a thing, but instead they are themselves created by others"* (*7:191*).**

وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَلَا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ

***"They can neither help themselves nor the others"* (*7:192*).**

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَٰهًا وَاحِدًا لَّا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

***"... yet they were commanded to worship but One Allah: there is no god but He ..."* (*9:31*).**

It is clear that the worship of anyone other than God with whatever intentions, even a prostration out of

respect, is classified as *shirk* in worship. God had asked that He should be worshiped with purity. He further declared in Surah Al-Kahf:

فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

"Therefore, anyone who hopes to be in the presence of God (in the Hereafter), it is imperative for him to do pious deeds and not to include anyone else in His worship" (18:110).

At another place in Surah Al-Nun, it was declared:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا

"And serve Allah. Ascribe no thing as partner unto Him ..." (4:36).

God and His representatives did not allow (wish for) adoration, even if it was in the worship of God, where there is a degree of ostentation and element of show off or public display. God revealed in the Qur'an:

وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَىٰ يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

"... and when they stand up to prayer they stand up sluggishly; they do it only to be seen of men and do not remember Allah save a little" (4:142).

It was related in *Usul al-Kafi*, on the commentary of the Qur'anic Verse:

فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

"Therefore, anyone who hopes to be in the presence of God (in the Hereafter), it is imperative for him to do pious deeds and not to include anyone else in His worship" (18:110).

It was stated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), who said that if a man performed an act of piety, with intentions other than pleasing God, then that man had committed *shirk*. It was mentioned in various Prophetic traditions that hypocrisy and pretence in worship was shirk and such an act was not acceptable with God.

In the light of these statements, no doubt is left on the prayers and stipends of those people, who consider thought of their *murshid* or mentor to be essential during the worship of God. Is this not an obvious worship of their saints?

This is no different from the ignorance and wayward ways of those Shi'as, who found it necessary to concentrate on the persons of Imam Ali and other Imams, during their prayers and even claim that the person addressed by the Qur'anic Verse,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

We worship thee and seek thy help (***1:5***).

was Imam Ali.

We have learnt about these practices by referring to the speeches of various Shi'a speakers of Punjab, who were influenced by the views of preachers of *ghaali* and *mofawweza* (people who exaggerate and deliberate).

There are a few basic principles of monotheism and it is essential to stick to those rules, without which the faith is incomplete. Therefore, a true believer is the one who embraces the factual doctrine of i.e. oneness of God in the essence, oneness of God in attributes, oneness of God in submission and oneness of God in acts of worship.

Brief Discussion Of The Various Stages Of Tawhid

Apart from the types of *Tawhid* that we discussed in the preceding sections, there are other stages of *Tawhid* that are significant for enhancing the faith. One of those stages is *Tawhid fi Tawakkul*, which mean that all believers must have faith in God, in all affairs, as stated by the Qur'an:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

"In Allah let believers put their trust!" (***14:11***).

Or:

وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

"... and whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him..." (***65:3***).

In Maani al-Akhbar, a detailed Hadith was quoted, which explained the concept of confidence. The Prophet (S) said, "It is to believe that no creature can harm, benefit or impede anything from you. In fact, one has to disregard people completely to the extent of disappointment. At this stage any act of a servant is purely for the sake of God. He does not expect anything, but from God. He is not afraid of

anyone, but God, and he has expectations from none other than God."

Tawhid Fi Amr Wa An-Nahi

Real authority of permission or negation is with God. Prophets and their legatees simply came to implement commands of God. Therefore, where a conflict between submission to God and that to His subject arises, God's commands must be preferred. Imam Ali said, "Where disobedience to God is apparent, the obedience to people is not permissible. One should realise that harm or benefit could only come from God."

It is therefore, essential for believers not to be fearful of anyone other than God.

Tawhid Of Obedience

Those people whom God does not command to be followed, must not be complied with and they should not lead the nation. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa) said in this respect, "People have been commanded to seek our awareness, obey our orders and refer the matters to us. If they perform fasting, offer prayers, conform to the oneness of God, but still intend not to turn to us then they will be categorized as Mushrik."[4]

God spoke in the Surah Yusuf:

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُّشْرِكُونَ

***"Many people show their belief in God, while they are still committing shirk"* (*12:106*).**

It was mentioned in *Tafsir al-Saafi*, with reference from *Tafsir al-Ayyashi* that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq said that the above quoted Verse of Surah Yusuf was addressed to those people who said that if such and such person was not there, he would have died or he would have been in great trouble, or his family or tribe would have suffered. They did not realise that by making these statements, they included others in having the authority of God. The provision of sustenance and averting mishaps are purely the tasks of God. A person then suggested that it could be said, that if God had not helped him through that person, he would have died. Imam concurred with that reply.

A View Of Firqa Al-Mujassama (A Sect That Proposes A Body For God)

This sect is known as Firqa al-Mujassema wa Mushabba, which is an offshoot of Sunni group. The key assertion of this sect was that it suggests that God has a frame and body parts such as hands, feet and eyes etc.

This sect came into existence at the end of first century after Hijra. The founders of this sect were

Kehmish and Ahmed Hajemi. One of the exponents of this group Daud Zahari, who claimed that people should not ask him about the beard and sexual organs of God, but any other information was readily available for which he would gladly help.[5] There were several other books available, which shed further information about this sect, such as, Al–*Fasl Ibn Hazem* and Al–*Mazah al–Ashari*.

Our Imams (‘a) vehemently opposed their ideas and labelled them as *mushrikana* (polytheistic) thoughts. We quote a section of a very long Hadith here.

Yunus Ibn Zabyan quoted from Imam Ja’far As–Sadiq (‘a) that he questioned him regarding those people who proposed body parts for God. Imam was resting on a pillow and he suddenly sat upright and said, “Those who configure in their mind that God has a face are *mushrik* and one who thinks that He has body parts – like the creatures – is an infidel and you must neither accept their evidence nor eat animals their slaughter. God is way above such speculations, where it is attempted to establish a similarity between human beings and Him”.

The essence of this discussion is that anyone who proposes body parts for God is a *mushrik*.

Corrupt ideas of these people spread like wild fire among the simple Muslims, because there were some allegorical Verses in Qur’an, which could lead a lay person to draw incorrect inferences. Even some intellectuals, who are not capable of extracting the true interpretation, are unable to differentiate between the apparent and symbolic meanings of those words. Therefore, wherever these words appear, they are interpreted in the literal sense, which propose body parts for God. Thus, their *tawhid* is corrupted and their hereafter is ruined. It is therefore, necessary for us to talk about some of those allegorical Qur’anic Verses.

Meaning Of The Allegorical Verses

We are not discussing at this moment the reasons why these Ayats (Verses) are present in the Qur’an. We only want to express the importance of the subject matter of such Verses, and to indicate who can actually interpret these passages.

According to linguists, a text which is multidimensional in meaning and makes the reader confused about the intended meaning of the author, is called *Mutashabih*. Not everyone is qualified to give its true meanings. No one other than God Himself, Prophet (S) and his progeny can understand the meaning of such Verses.

Since an allegorical text has more than one meaning attached to it, not everyone is qualified to understand its true nature, however competent they may be in that language. Such a text can be truly interpreted only by the author or by the person whom has been informed by the author of its intended meaning. This is why it is mentioned in the Qur’an:

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ

***"The true interpretation of the* (*allegorical Verses*) *is either known to God, or those who are infused with Knowledge"* (*3:7*).**

These are the people who are direct recipient of knowledge from God or have been appointed to teach that knowledge. Obviously, such people could only be the Prophet himself and his progeny, who have been trained by him.

God has declared about the Prophet (S):

وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ

***"And that which We have revealed to you of the Book, that is the truth verifying that which is before it; most surely with respect to His servants Allah is Aware, Seeing"* (*35:31*).**

After referring to the Prophet God states about his progeny:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

***"Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants; but of them is he who makes his soul to suffer a loss, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness by Allah's permission; this is the great excellence"* (*35:32*).**

Major Arabic commentaries of the Qur'an, suggest that these chosen people are the family of the Prophet. On the basis of Hadith al-Thaqalayn it is essential for us to refer to the holy Prophet and his progeny for the interpretation of such Verses.

Since in the present volume the interpretations as provided by Muhammad (S) and *Aali* Muhammad ('a) has been used, it must be accepted that it is the intended meaning of God. If, however, someone else interprets these Verses in other ways, then it should be treated at par with *Tafsir Bi 'r-Rai* (personal thoughts), which is misguidance, and the proponent should prepare himself for the hell.

An Accepted Logical Methodology

It is an established principle that if the meaning of any text had become clear with a reasoning that is supported by Islamic legal (*Shariah*) arguments, then any lone account written contradicting such text would not be acceptable. Rather, it could be rejected outright.

However, if there is a Qur'anic Verse or an authentic tradition (*Hadith*), which is apparently in conflict with it, then its logical explanation must be sought, so that it there is no clash with the meaning established by logical reasoning and the Qur'anic text.

Muhaqqiq Shaykh Bahai, pointed out to this rule in his book Al–*Aitaqad al–Imamia*, "Usually we interpret the Qur'anic Verses by their apparent meaning, except those which are against an established logical principle. In such a case, its reinterpretation is sought. An example is the use of the word "*yad*" (hand), which needs an explanation."

On the basis of this principle, the meaning which the respected author has used in this volume is to be accepted. It has been established in earlier discussions that God is free of corporal attachments. His person is unsoiled with mundane debris and ailments. However, if the meaning of a Verse appears contrary to this logic, it is pertinent to look for those meanings that neutralise this contradiction, because in the Qur'an there is no conflict. God had pointed out:

وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

***"If this Qur'an was the word of someone else* (*other than God*)*, then certainly* (*you would have found*) *great contradictions in it"* (*4:82*).**

The absence of incongruity or inconsistency in the Qur'an is a proof that it is the word of God, especially when its meanings are backed by Arabic vocabulary. There is no reason why meanings of the allegorical Verses, as adopted by the author of this work should not be used, especially when these are further supported by Arabic language and Arabic proverbs.

To give an example, the meaning of the word "*Kashfe Saaq*" as adopted by the author was accurate using the Arabic proverbs as benchmark. It was customary among the Arabs to show the intensity of an act by the using of the expression "*Kashfe Saaq*". So, when they want to describe the peak of a battle they say, "*Qamatal harab alus saaq*." The battle reached the *Saaq* meant it had become very brutal. These meanings were so apparent that even the opponents of Shi'a thought agreed with the accuracy of this interpretation. Therefore, Deputy Nazir Ahmed Dehlavi, in his translation of the Qur'an said that the ordinary (literal) meaning of the Verse:

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ

***The Day that the shin shall be laid bare…* (*68:42*).**

Is – "the day when the thigh would be exposed". This is an Arabic proverb that points to a great calamity, and we have translated the Verse according to this view:

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ

***"On the day when there shall be a severe affliction..."* (*68:42*).**

Similarly, meanings of the word '*yad*' (*literally meaning "hand"*), which the Shaykh had done in the Verse –

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِيَدَيَّ

***"What stopped you from prostrating before him, whom I have created with My Hands* [*meaning power*] *..."* (*38:75*).**

There were two other possible meanings, one as a gift or a blessing. In this context the meaning of the Verse would be "***O Iblees, what made you to stop prostrating to him, whom I have created with My Hands* (*gifts of both worlds*)*?"***

Shaykh Al-Mufid preferred this meaning to the one, which as mentioned in the text, involved repetition because strength and authority had the same undertones.

Secondly, one meaning of *yad* is power and the other is grace. Therefore, in this situation the meanings of the Verse would be ***"whom I have created with My strength and grace."***

Similarly, the word *wajh* had two meanings, which were mentioned in the text. It is possible that it may represent the essence of God, because the mention of the word "face" was also applicable allegorically to the person itself. So the meaning of the same Verse 28:88 would be,

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ

***"Everything shall perish, except the Person or the Essence of God"* (*28:88*).**

Also, *wajh* corresponds to faith and religion because, just as face is the recognition of a person, similarly *deen* or religion represents the identity of a group. Some traditions pointed out that *Aaimma* were the manifestations of *wajh*. All these meanings were incorporated in many traditions that have descended from Ahl al-Bayt. We complemented this statement with some reports from the Ma'soomeen (Aali Muhammad).

Muhammad Ibn Muslim said that he asked Imam Al-Baqir ('a) about the Qur'anic Verse:

مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِيَدَيَّ

Ma man'aka an tasjuda lima khalaqtu biyadayi

***"What stopped you from prostrating before him, whom I have created with My Hands* (*power*)*..."* (*38:75*).**

He replied that *yad* is used in Arabic language to represent power, grace or favours such as to say that such and such person had "*Ayyadi Katheera*" plenty of favours on their selves. Muhammad Obadiah says that Imam Ar–Ridha (‘a) was asked about the Qur'anic Verse,

بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ

***"...Nay, but both His hands are spread out wide in bounty..."* (*5:64*).**

He replied that '*yad'* means with His power and grace. Abi Hamza said that he asked Imam Muhammad Al–Baqir about the Qur'anic Verse,

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ

***"...Everything will perish save His countenance"* (*28:88*).**

He replied that God's eminence is way above that He should be praised with reference to His face. The meaning of the Verse here is that everything would perish other then His *deen* or religion.

Abu Mogheera said that he was sitting with As–Sadiq al–Aali Muhammad, when a man approached him and asked him the meaning of the Verse,

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ

***"...Everything will perish save His countenance..."* (*28:88*).**

He replied that they were the external manifestations through which God was recognised.

To summarise, we could say that the meanings of the allegorical Verses of the Qur'an, which have been quoted by the respected author of this book were well supported by several traditions that were reported in *Bihar Al–Anwar* and *Tafsir al–Burhan*, where further information could be sought by the more demanding readers.

Those Qur'anic Verses, which used words, such as *makr* and *istehza* for God, were mentioned to counter the *makr* and *istehza* of infidels. Both Shi'a and Sunni scholars agreed that God's names are understood on the basis of its intended use or results and not as a source or foundation. For example,

God is *Rahman* and *Raheem*, where *rahmah* stands for kindness or compassion in the dictionary. It is a condition related to the heart, which demands sympathy and consideration. If we now used these names as a source then we would have to assume a physical heart for God. If heart was assumed, then a body frame would be necessary, which would not be possible. Therefore, we have to assume that He was *Rahman* as a consequence of His actions. The same is true for God's anger and displeasure.

It is the same state of affair with all other allegorical Verses, which had been discussed by the respected author in this volume. God was responding to those who in their capacity tried to deceive and make fun of God, in the same vein. Therefore, allegorically God had used the same terminology for Himself. This in linguistic terms is called *mashakla* or equivalence. For example, God said:

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا

"And the recompense of evil is punishment like it..." **(*42:40*).**

that is, to say that return of an evil was evil, whereas the punishment for an evil was not considered to be evil.

In Surah Al-Baqara it was said:

فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

"...whoever then acts aggressively against you, inflict injury on him according to the injury he has inflicted on you and be careful **[*of your duty*]** ***to Allah and know that Allah is with those who guard*** **[*against evil*]** ***"*** **(*2:194*).**

Similar maxims are frequent in the Arabic language. Scholars from Sunni School of thought also agreed with this approach of interpreting the given Verse. Readers could refer to *Tafsir al-Baidhavi* and Al-*Kashaaf* in this context.

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1. Ref: Shibli Al-Kalam.
2. See the work of famous Muslim Scientist Haroon Yahya.
3. See Usul al-Kafi, Tafseer al-Safi and Burhan.
4. It is important to respect all stages of Tawhid, because with a minor neglect, a man could become guilty of committing Shirk al-Khafi (veiled) or Jalli (perceptible).
5. Al-Milal wa an-Nahal, by Allama Shahrastani

Chapter 2: Attributes God's Essence And Actions

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that when we describe an attribute, which was related to the essence of God, our intention is to deny its opposite. For example, when we say that God is All–Hearing (*Sami*), All–Seeing (*Baseer*), Knowledgeable (*Aleem*), Wise (*Hakeem*), Honourable (*Aziz*), Powerful (*Qadir*), Living (*Hayy*) and Established (*Qayyum*) from eternity, we want to establish that there is nothing but the best attributed to Him, He has no associates with Him, and all this is linked to His Person or Essence.

We could not say that God was Creator and active from the infinity and His aspirations were always linked with His Creatures or He was pleased with all, and not irate with anyone, or He was continually providing sustenance and benevolence, or He was Creator of languages (speech) from eternity. All these attributes were related to His actions and were therefore, probable or (*Hadith*). Consequently, it would not be proper for us to associate God with these attributes since eternity.

[1] [1]
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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 2

In a simplistic way, it can be said that God's attributes are of three types:

a) always present as Essence of God,

b) always removed from His Essence, and

c) Sometimes present and at other times absent

The first category has always been present as the essence of God. These are called the Personal Attributes. These are also called *Sifat al–Kamalia*, *Sifat al–Jamalia*, *Sifat al–Haqiqiyya* and *Sifat al–Zatul Azafa*. These are popularly enumerated as eight (albeit His attributes were numerous). These related to – Power, Knowledge, Life, Intent, Perception, Eternal existence, Speech and Justice.

These aspects of God's attributes have been discussed in detail in the previous chapter, where it had been proven that since these attributes are exclusive to the Essence of God i.e. there is no separation between His Person and Attributes, the true understanding of these attributes is as much a mystery as is His Essence.

This was why the author stated that when we associated God with these attributes, then our real purpose was to deny the opposite in relation to God's Being. For example, when we say that God is Knowledgeable, we mean to say that He is not ignorant, and when it is said that He is Mighty, we mean to say that He was not powerless. Otherwise, we would be at a loss to understand the true nature of God's knowledge and might and we would not be able to comprehend His Essence and Personality.

The second category of attributes is called the Attributes of Negation (*Sifat as-Salbia*). These have also been discussed in detail, in the previous chapter.

The third category is called the Attributes of Actions or Special Attributes, because those were linked with God's actions and not with His Being. These were attributes such as Creator, Provider, Giver of life and death. There was a time when God did not perform these acts. Therefore, at that time He was not a Creator and a Giver of life and death. However, when He performed these jobs, he was called a Creator and Provider. This example clears the difference between His attributes of the Essence and those of His actions.

A necessary explanation of these majestic attributes would be that these are essential to His Essence and could not be equated to their opposites (as these would mean God is deficient). These are the Attributes of His Essence. These are related to Knowledge, Power, allocation of Life and Death. These attributes could not be associated with their opposites (Ignorance, Impotency and Death, at any moment of time), for the reasons explained earlier.

Those characteristics, which are not necessarily required to be with God all the time, and it might be possible to equate them with their opposites, without causing any distortion in (the majesty of) God, are called Attributes of Action, such as, Creation, Provision of Sustenance, handing over of life and death etc. It is true to say that there was a slot in time, when God was present, but due to the absence of acts of creation and sustenance, He was not a Sustainer and a Creator. This difference between Attributes of His Essence and Actions was in line with what Kulani had mentioned in Kafi and was mentioned by several other authors.

For further reference readers could refer to the treatise of Majmu'a al-Aasaar al-Qalami ath-Thiqat al-Islam.

[1] [1]
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Chapter 3: Religious Obligations

Shaykh Abu Ja'far had said that he believed that God had placed lesser burdens on people than their

capacity to bear[1]. God had claimed in the Qur'an:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

"Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability" **(*2:286*).**

The word *wus-'a* represents limitations below the full ability. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had said, "By God, Allah has tasked people (with obligations) to well below their strength. That is why in twenty-four hours He has prescribed five obligatory prayers, only a month of fast annually in Ramadhan, five Dirhams out of every two hundred dirhams in annual tax (zakat) and once in a lifetime pilgrimage to Makkah. People's ability in these matters is way above these obligations."

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1. Theologians have made great efforts to understand the true nature of the limits of religious routines. The reproduction of these is not beneficial for our readers. Religious definition of takleef is that God the Almighty has commanded His servants to perform or abstain from certain deeds, which cause a degree of burden, at the same time it also takes account of the promise of reward (for performing) and punishment (if they choose to go against the commands) for them.

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SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 3

The Measure Of Religious Obligations And Their Benefits

This responsibility for observing religion is of two types: intellectual obligations and legal obligations. We would now discuss these obligations in some detail. The significance of legal (*shariah*) requisites is not hidden from the people of knowledge. We could simply say that this is an obligation imposed by God. As described earlier, His commands are neither groundless nor ill-intended. Therefore, we have to accept that this decree is for a purpose. Otherwise, it would be a wasteful exercise, which is not possible (for commands) from God. However, its benefits are for His servants, since God was free of any need.

We will now describe a detailed reason in support of *shariah* impositions, with a view to admonish the forgetful and awaken the wise, so that they would visibly feel their benefits. Religiously decreed obligations (prohibitions and orders) are a gift from God, for they make a distinction between humans and the animals. If the capability of judging between right and wrong were withdrawn from human beings, then there would not be much left to discriminate between the two genera.

If we examine this attitude closely, and find a person engaging in habits that are uninhibited and devoid of principles and rules, then he would be lowering himself below the category of animals. God had declared:

لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

"... They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle- nay more misguided: for they are heedless [***of warning***]***"*** (***7:179***)***.***

This is because an animal could consume anything to satiate its hunger, irrespective of right or wrong. This would be pardonable due to its lack of thinking capacity. However, if such acts were to be performed by man, then the power of intellect would demand him to be demoted below the rank of animal genus. Man must thank his Lord, for this distinction.

Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin said in the first supplication of Sahifa Kamila: "All praise is for the Lord. If He had decided to keep humans ignorant of the perception of praise and gratitude for Him – despite His gifts and blessings – then they would have used those bounties without admiring (Him), and benefited from the provisions without thanking Him, and if they had done so, then they would have devalued themselves to the ranks of quadrupeds, in accordance with His declaration in the Qur'anic Verse above:

...أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ...

"... They are like cattle- nay more misguided ..." (***7:179***)***.***

Conditions For Religious Obligations

The All-Wise God does not impose His regulations on anyone without consideration. Therefore, when we cast a glance on the rules and regulations He imposed, we would realize the extent of kindness and generosity that He had exercised in our favour:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

"God has desired leniency and not severity for you [***in the religion***]***"*** (***2:185***)***.***

This attitude reveals the flexibility and proximity of Islam to nature in a lucid manner. For clarity, there are four types of religious obligations. Some are related to the imposer (*mukallif*), some for the entrusted (*mukallaf*), some for the person who are affected by the imposition and some for those who were linked

to the imposition itself and the act (*taklif*).

The conditions for type one are examined below and a summary for the other types of conditions are also presented.

Clearly, imposing regulations on someone who does not exist is a wasteful exercise. So, a *mukallaf* has to be in existence. He must be an adult and erudite, as ordinary regulations are not applicable for immature and mentally challenged people. He has to be able to understand the nature of the imposition (*taklif*), which should be explained to him.

The imposition must be practicable and not beyond the strength and capability of the entrusted. Burdening a person beyond his capacity would be injustice, and such an act is against God's grace and justice. For example, asking a person to create, and in case of failure (which was certain) to punish him for disobedience is irrational. This could not be expected from God. Muslims who believe that God burdens people as He wished, without considering their capacity, represent a distorted view.

Abu Hazeel Motazali, ridiculed such people by saying, "An Asha'iri's donkey is much more intelligent than Asha'iri, because if you take that donkey on a narrow parting he would jump that gap with minimum persuasion, but if you take him to the bank of a broad river, he will refuse to jump, whatever punishment you can unleash at him, because he understands where a jump is feasible and where it is not"

However, when someone does not understand the difference between 'capable' and 'incapable', and allows the stacking of burden on someone regardless of his potential ability to endure, they are committed to supporting grave injustice. God said about such individuals:

مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ

"They have not estimated Allah with the estimation that is due to Him..." **(*22:74*).**

لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا

"... They have hearts wherewith they understand not..." **(*7:179*).**

The obligation should be for a task, whose performance would yield a reward and abstention would result in punishment. Otherwise, right or wrong could not be distinguished when an obligation is imposed.

The imposition (*taklif*) should not be for an illegal act. If abandoning of an act is required then that task must not be essential or *wajib*. Or else, the imposition would not be correct with application of two opposing principles.

This clears the grounds as to when and where an obligation would be applicable. Otherwise, the whole science of creation would appear to be a wasteful exercise. That is why, God said:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

"What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us?" **(*23:115*).**

Or:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

"And We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between them in vain. That is the opinion of those who disbelieve" **(*38:27*).**

If God had not controlled human forces of anger, hate, jealousy and sexual desire by imposing certain controls on his behaviour; then He would have been accused of neglect and abandonment of responsibilities. However, He is well above such allegations.

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Chapter 4: Our View Of People's Actions

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our view of people's actions was that God had created them as a *taqdeeri*, and not as a predetermined (*takweeni*) creation.

From *taqdeeri* creation we meant that God had created functional body parts, but its use had been left to the individual choice. He has always been aware of people's acts of good and evil (as performed by those components) before or after those acts.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 4

In fact, this proposition was a part of another topic, related to Compulsion and Freedom of actions. It was a major issue in Islamic faith. It was contested bitterly by the scholars of the Ummah. However, if this issue is studied with fair–mindedness, then the problem is not too difficult to comprehend, as it had been thought.

When the author said that people's actions are empowered (by choice), and not predetermined creation of God, then he proposed that God had not invented those actions. Rather, He had the knowledge of those acts, even before the individuals committed them.

At this juncture, Shaykh Al–Mufid angrily criticised the author, by saying that the subject matter of his postulate was based on a solitary statement. However, several reports of this kind were present in *Bihar Al–Anwar*, and other books of Hadith. We have presented two narrations,

Imam Ja'far As–Sadiq ('a) said, "People's acts are empowered creation of God (as those are performed by the faculties provided to the human's), instead of predetermined (they must perform the assigned duty) creation, surely Allah is the creator of all things."

While, Imam Ar–Ridha ('a) said, "People's actions are creation of God. He has empowered them, and not predetermined their actions."

Let this distinction be made clear by giving an example. God had created all the body parts of human beings. An important part of this structure was brain. Every child that would be conceived could be a male or female, be of any descent, but must have a brain no matter where, he or she was born, irrespective of time constraints, today, tomorrow or a million years from now. This process of creation would not change i.e. every child will have a brain. This would be called *takveeni* creation.

Now what could he or she do with their brain? They could create wonders of the world or they might choose to carry out the largest bank robbery. This was called a *taqdeeri* creation i.e. a faculty was created by God but its function was not determined by Him. It is left to the choice of the person having it, even though He (already) knew what those individuals would proceed to do with that faculty.

After clearing the concepts with the above–mentioned example, we could say that God was not the Creator of our actions in a sense that He had compelled us to do a particular thing. Yet, He was aware of what we thought and did with the instruments that were created for us. Therefore, Shaykh Al–Mufid's criticism of Abu Ja'far, on the basis, that his conclusions were founded on a solitary narration, or that it was the derived from several narrations would be invalid. All the suggestions he made could be narrowed down to the variations of syntax.

In view of the significance of this issue, we would like to discuss aspects of this dilemma in some detail.

Distinction Between Predetermined And Acts That Fall Under The Religious Legal Code

Before we engage with the real topic, it would important for us to know, as a prologue that human acts are of two types. Some were predetermined or genetically controlled, such as height, colour and facial features etc. The others were *tashriya* acts like offering obligatory prayers, fasting in the month of Ramadan, not drinking alcohol or not committing adultery.

For the first category, the scholars of both sects agreed that human intervention is irrelevant and man was simply a recipient of what his genetic code had settled him for.

On the basis of how the second category of acts is performed, the ummah's obligations fall into three categories. Firstly, *jabr* performing acts under compulsion by the Will of God. He does things – good or bad – as directed, and he does not exercise free will with respect to these deeds. Second was, *tafweez,* whereby whatever is done, is done by man himself. God does not compel on him. The third category is of *al'amr bayn al–'amrayn.* Here, the truth lay between the two positions. In other words, man is free in some acts and under compulsion in the others.

This is the Shi'a point of view. We will discuss this concept further in the fifth chapter of this book in detail – to confirm our point of view. But here we shall quote some traditions – both conceptual and practical – to rebut the first two points of views, in favour of the third.

It had been narrated that a man asked Imam Ja'far As–Sadiq (‘a) about the issues of *jabr* and freedom. He replied, "An act for which you can reprimand a person is a human act, and for the one you cannot raise your finger at him, is an act of God.

On the Day of Judgement, God shall ask a man about why he had disobeyed Him – why he consumed alcohol, why he committed adultery and why he transgressed on the others' rights. But He would not ask him, why he was less tall, or why he was white and not black or why he fell ill (on certain occasions)? This would be so because these acts were acts of God."

This word of Imam should be sufficient for thinking and sensible people. Yet, we have quoted a few more logical arguments to substantiate our point of view.

Rebuttal Of The Idea Of Compulsion

The following are the reasons why people are set free (to choose) with regards to their actions.

To say that human beings are coerced to perform their routine tasks would be a fallacy. The difference

between a person's usual acts, such as eating, standing, sitting or walking and the involuntary acts such as the pulse beat, tremors or the motor symptoms in Parkinson's disease; or the difference between the movement of a person who fell accidentally from the roof of a house and one that walked down leisurely from the stairs of their own volition, is so lucid that it could not be denied by any reasonable person.

We now ask a question – did the noble acts of praying or fasting or the evil deeds of stealing and adultery belong to the person's freedom of choice or are these acts which volition is not involved? At this juncture, a person's own intuition and conscience would be a better judge to answer this question.

If human beings were constrained in their acts, and the real player was (actually) God, then it would be necessary that God is responsible for all the evils in this world. Punishing human beings for the sins and crimes – which He had ordained Himself – would then be a gross injustice.

If human beings were not free in their actions, then the coming of numerous Prophets and Messengers would have been a futile exercise. People could silence them by saying that if God was responsible for their acts, then why were they not placed in the category of the believers? Therefore, they would be asked to go to their God and ask Him to create the capacity of faith within them, and then they will turn towards Him?

What could the answer of the Prophets to such statements be, other than silence? To summarise, we could say that this postulate involves a commitment to perform acts of faith without having the necessary capacity and strength to follow.

If people were not free in their actions, then all the divine promise of Paradise and Hell, and the efforts of the Prophets would be meaningless. There would be no need for someone to perform any good deed or abstain from a bad one, while Qur'an is full of censure of infidels, polytheists and fornicators and praise of the virtuous. Who would then accept the validity of all those pledges that had been made for the righteous and the evildoers?

Logically, all human actions can only be either one of the three possibilities – that man had committed it, or, God had committed it, or both man and God had jointly committed. If the second scenario were accepted, then the punishment of a sinner would be a grave injustice, because with this approach all salutations or condemnations, punishment or reward would be for God.

The same predicament would be true with the third assumption. As man would be the weaker partner, it would be unfair to have all the punishment reserved for man alone. It would be a mockery of the justice and God is free of such lapses. Therefore, we would have to agree with the first proposition as being correct one. This was why man alone would be the recipient of punishment or reward at the end of the Day of Judgement.

If man had not been free in his acts and God had warranted all good and bad deeds, then, wherever the liars, aggressors and the sinners had been cursed by God in the Qur'an, it would imply that the curse

would mandatorily return to God, as well.

Shariah Arguments On This Issue

God had condemned the ideology of compulsion in the Qur'an due to various reasons.

There were numerous Verses in the Qur'an, where God clearly mentioned, by way of indication or clear narrations, that man has free will with regard to their actions. Few of those Verses have been mentioned here:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

"There is no compulsion in the religion ..." **(*2:256*).**

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا

***"We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful* (*rests on his will*)*"* (*76:3*).**

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِن وَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ

***"And say: The truth is from your Lord, so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve..."* (*18:29*).**

فَمَن شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا

***"... So, whoever pleases takes to his Lord a way"* (*76:29*).**

The intellectuals and erudite must pay attention to how nicely God had presented the justification of populace, being completely liberated in their endeavours. An act, whose performance or defiance is left to the will of individuals, would be called a task of choice and its operator would be called an autonomous player.

On the other hand, if a person opted allegorical signs by putting aside these firm Verses, then there would be no solution for their lack of intellect and neglectful manner. God had said in the Qur'an:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ

***"... then as for those in whose hearts there is perversity, they follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it* (*their own*) *..."* (*3:7*).**

There were numerous Verses in the Qur'an, whereby God clearly denied His acceptance of polytheism, corruption and injustice.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ

***"Allah does not carry out an atom weight of injustice..."* (*4:40*).**

وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَٰكِن ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ

***"And We did not do them injustice, but they were unjust to themselves..."* (*11:101*).**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

***"God commands you to do justice and munificence among each other..."* (*16:90*).**

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ

***"Say: My Lord has only prohibited indecencies...."* (*7:33*).**

وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

***"And when they commit an indecency, they say: We found our fathers doing this, and Allah has enjoined it on us. Say: Surely Allah does not enjoin indecency; do you say against Allah what you do not know?"* (*7:28*).**

We would now request our readers to be fair in their analysis and reflect upon the above quoted Verses to see, if these Verses reject (the idea of) compulsion in human actions and indicate free will, or do they promote (the idea of) *jabr* (compulsion) while negating freedom of choice.

There are clear Verses in the Qur'an, which plainly hold people responsible for their own deeds, and confirm that punishment for them was a result of those acts.

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ

“Shame is for them who write scripts with their own hands and then claim, it is from God...” **(*2:79*).**

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“So, this day no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and you shall not be rewarded aught but that which you did” **(*36:54*).**

وَتُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

“And every soul shall be paid in full what it has done, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly” **(*16:111*).**

ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

“...then every soul shall be paid back in full what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly” **(*2:281*).**

لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

“God has not changed the state of a nation, unless, it has decided to change itself” **(*13:11*).**

Then, there were Verses in which infidels were reprimanded for not accepting faith. It was revealed, that they had not been forced to remain infidels.

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا أَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا

“What kept men back from belief when Guidance came to them, was nothing but this: they said, "Has Allah sent a man (like us) to be (His) Messenger?” **(*17:94*).**

فَمَالِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا

“What’s the matter with these people that they do not make approach to understanding what is told (them)?” **(*4:78*).**

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

"... Why obstruct ye those who believe, from the path of Allah..." (***3:99***).

لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ

"Why do you blend truth with the falsehood? ..." (***3:71***).

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ

"What stopped you O! Satan to bow to him, whom I have created...?" (***38:75***).

These Verses of the Qur'an are clear negation of the concepts of compulsion, and repudiation of Al–Asha'irites philosophy because God had questioned them over the wisdom of their adoption of infidelity and *shirk*. If Al–Asha'irites's point of view was right, then they could say that it was He who had created polytheism and then compelled them to adopt that track, and now without any logical reason is reprimanding them for something which is not of their own making. Their silence on this issue indicate that the ideology of compulsion is totally false.

There are the Verses in which the infidels accept the responsibility for their *kufr*. For example, the Qur'an said:

فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

"In gardens, they shall ask each other" (***74:40***).

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

"About the guilty" (***74:41***).

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرَ

"What has brought you into hell?" (***74:42***).

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ

"They shall say: We were not of those who prayed" (***74:43***).

وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِينَ

"And we used not to feed the poor" (***74:44***).

كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ

"...Whenever a group is cast into it, its keeper shall ask them: Did there not come to you a warner?" (***67:8***).

قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ

"They shall say: Yea! indeed there came to us a warner, but we rejected (***him***) ***and said: Allah has not revealed anything..."*** (***67:9***).

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا ادَّارَكُوا فِيهَا جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرَاهُمْ لِأُولَاهُمْ رَبَّنَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَآتِهِمْ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ النَّارِ

"...Every time a nation entereth, it curseth its sister (***nation***) ***till, when they have all been made to follow one another thither, the last of them saith unto the first of them: Our Lord! These led us astray, so give them double torment of the Fire..."*** (***7:38***).

It is to be observed here that while the dwellers in hell accept their responsibility for their infidelity and sins, they hold their elders liable for their misconduct instead of God.

There are some Verses in the Qur'an, wherein, God refused any responsibility for people who were liable for misconduct and sins. In Surah At-Tawba, God says:

وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ

"And a proclamation from Allah and His messenger to all men on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage that Allah is free from obligation to the idolaters, and [***so is***] ***His messenger"*** (***9:3***).

It is evident that if God was responsible for the acts of the evildoers, and He had established the compulsion (of doing evil) within them then there would be no meaning for such a denial. Therefore, the author of *Tafsir Al-Mizan* quoted a tradition on the authority of Shaykh Al-Mufid that Imam Muhammad At-Taqi ('a) was asked, "Are people's acts created by God?" He replied that if God was responsible for human actions, He would have never shown any antipathy towards their acts, when He says:

أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

"He is disgusted with the polytheists" **(*9:3*).**

In this Verse Allah did not express any aversion with the personality of the polytheists but with their acts.

Rebuttal Of Tafweez

The meaning of this concept had been made clear in the previous discussion on Tawhid. A Probable entity, which depended on the Essential Being, could not remain aloof, even for a moment from gaining endorsement or approval of the Essential. In other words, if we were to say that man was totally independent of God in his acts, then it would be equivalent to declaring that he was independent of the Essential. This would be totally false.

This concept would make God redundant, which is against His Majesty. Hasan Ibn Wushleh said that he asked Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) if God had completely tendered human actions to their own hands? He replied that the Majesty of God was far above such a suggestion. Then he asked if God had compelled people to commit sins? Imam replied that God was absolutely just. He would not do such a thing.

When Muhammad Ibn Ajlan asked the same question from Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a), he replied that God was well above the suggestion that He should transfer all the rights to human beings completely.

Imam further elaborated that there were three groups on the issue of fate. One group claimed that God compelled people to commit sins. This group in their own judgement, considered God to be a compulsive oppressor. Therefore, this faction was *kafir*. The next group, which presumed that God had transferred all these affairs to humans, imagined God to be powerless in His Kingdom. These were therefore, *kafir* as well.

The third group believed that God had handed over responsibility to humans in those segments that were within their capabilities, and withheld those, which were beyond their capacity. This was the group that supplicated in obedience and adored God. They repented, and sought forgiveness and mercy, when they transgressed His limits. This group was truly *Muslim*.

Clarification Of Some Doubts

Advocates of compulsion and coercion used some logical but feeble doubts to defend their views. It is important that a summary of those views is presented along with its necessary clarification so that the issue is cleared in the readers’ minds.

God knew in advance from eternity, the things that were to happen (good or bad), and all that would not happen, in relation to human actions. When He knew that something was to happen, then it was an

obligation for that thing to happen. Anything whose occurrence or non–occurrence was known to God, its negation in either case would turn God's knowledge into ignorance. It was thus be necessary that that obligatory and prescribed acts would both have to be beyond human reach. Only then can they prove that all human acts are under compulsion.

Rebuttal

A simple answer to this misgiving would be that though God has knowledge about all things –due to His total command – the knowledge of something could not be the reason for its occurrence or non–occurrence. Instead, the knowledge (*'ilm*) remains subjective to its percept or find (*maloom*), and it could not be its cause. It is essential for a cause to precede its effect just as an object had to be followed by its subject.

We could consider the example of an astronomer, who after making his celestial calculation predicted the timings of a lunar and solar eclipse. No right–minded person could say that from then on, the Sun and Moon were under compulsion to appear as eclipsed at that particular time. Instead, every logical person would say that the laws of motion and geometrical configurations, as known to the scientists, govern the knowledge of astronomy. Yet the movements of celestial objects could not be attributed to the knowledge the scientists had.

In case of God, the only difference would be that God's Knowledge was perfect – as compared to human understanding. While our calculation could sometime render wrong results, it is not possible to be such with God. He knew what a soul would be doing in terms of good and bad. This knowledge of the events could not be rendered as a cause of their actions.

The people, who claim this thesis, would be considered to be so short on wisdom that they could not understand that having the knowledge of an incidence is different, from converting an imaginary incident into reality. God knows the acceptance of faith by a *mu'min* and its rejection by a *kafir*. But this is different from the statement that God's knowledge had made John a *Mu'min* (believer) and Michael, a *Kafir* (infidel).

If God knew that a thing would happen then its manifestation would be essential. If a thing whose non–existence was also in God's knowledge, then its existence would be impossible. Therefore, both possibilities remained external to His attribute of Power.

We could now ask a question – whether God knew in advance about an act that a person was about to perform? If the answer was negative then God's ignorance became apparent, and if the answer were in affirmative, then the person would lose the independence of his will.

Again, if this idea – that knowledge of something is the cause of its effect – was accepted, then even God's Independence and Power would have to be sacrificed. He would then become an afflicted subject, which is unacceptable in all Islamic schools of thought.

The reason for this statement is that God certainly knew His own actions in advance just as knew human actions in advance. Based on the above idea therefore, because of His knowledge He would then be compelled to act accordingly (and would have no freedom to do otherwise).

We could say as an example, that while He knew that He had to create Mathew in a certain year on calendar, the question arises whether He held the capability of not creating Mathew during that year. If the answer was positive, then His knowledge, according to 'Umar Khayyam, was commutable to ignorance. If the answer was negative, then He would be constrained and coerced, whereas in reality, He was Mighty and Independent.

If we critically analyse this concept of compulsion and control, we would find it to be the artifact of human fortitude and weakness. The very concept of compulsion was responsible for defaming Islam and the Muslims, when they attributed their failures and defeats as having been willed by God.

There are a few allegorical Verses in the Qur'an that are (used as) the basis for the theory of compulsion. These Verses use words such as Dhalla, Khatm and Taba', e.g.

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ

"Allah verily sendeth whom He will astray, and guideth whom He will..." (***35:8***).

وَمَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَاد

"... He whom Allah sendeth astray, for him there is no guide" (***13:33***).

خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ

"Allah has set a seal upon their hearts." (***2:7***).

وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

"... and whomsoever He causes to err, these are the losers" (***7:178***).

Apparently, these Verses show that God Himself had led people astray, and He was the one Who had sealed (closed) their hearts (away from truth). If it was so, then who could bring guidance to these people, who had their hearts sealed off by God?

Scholars and researchers both have agreed that these Verses were symbolic. When these are referred

to the place of belief or practice, then it became compulsory to describe them in a manner that they became aligned to those Verses with a definitive (*muhkam*) meaning. With this methodology, their apparent differences get resolved.

The Creator of the Universe condemned those, who followed (the literal meanings) the figurative Verses, in Surah Aali Imran. God has said:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ

***"...then as for those in whose hearts there is perversity, they follow the part of it which is allegorical..."* (*3:7*).**

This part of the Verse was followed by another part:

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ

"...Though, the true interpretation of these Verses is not known by anyone, other than God and those who are entrusted with the knowledge..." (3:7).

If we took the apparent meanings of these Verses, then the evils that were discussed in the previous sections with regard to rejection of the doctrine of compulsion and oppression would become more evident. In addition to this, another iniquity that would surface is that God – Who had in various Verses of the Qur'an made Satan responsible for leading people astray – would become a target of His own criticisms. There would then be no demarcation between God, Satan, Pharaoh and other evildoers. It therefore remains important that these Verses were understood and explained in a manner that is compatible with the lucid text of the Qur'an.

Readers should keep in mind that (the Arabic word) *adhlaal* had emerged for the word form of "*afaal"*, which is the root word of '*adhalla'* and '*yudhillu'*, used in the Arabic language to point to the aspects of an act, that are against truth and justice, or to imply waywardness and deviation within someone, or to indicate waste, annihilate or sending down of punishment.

It had been stated that in all the following Verses, the second meaning mentioned above, had been alluded to.

In Surah, Al–Feel:

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ

"Did God not make waste of their pretences and deceits" (***105:2***)***.***

In Surah, Al-Ra'd:

وَمَا دُعَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

"...and the prayer of the unbelievers is only in error" (***13:14***)***.***

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَاءً وَتَصْدِيَةً فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

"And their prayer before the House is nothing but whistling and clapping of hands; taste then the chastisement, for you disbelieved" (***8:35***)***.***

Or:

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"Those who disbelieve and turn (***men***) ***from the way of Allah, He rendereth their actions vain"*** (***47:1***)***.***

Similarly, opposed to *adhlal*, in Arabic language, is the word '*ahda'*, which was also used for three facets – to guide someone towards a candid act or, to initiate guidance within someone, or not to destroy and waste a thing, but to sanction reward and goodness. The following Qur'anic Verses were the applications of these connotations. God said in Surah Muhammad:

وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"And (***as for***) ***those who are slain in the way of Allah, He will by no means allow their deeds to perish"*** (***47:4***)***.***

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ

"He will guide them and improve their condition" (***47:5***)***.***

We now have to see, which of the meanings of '*dhalal*' and '*hadayat*' are proper, improper or impossible for God.

The first two meanings of *dhalal* are forbidden for God, because it would involve the iniquities that have

been discussed in the previous sections. Therefore, the third meaning would be more appropriate for God – that is, to punish, annihilate or to make their actions redundant. Hence, wherever *adhalla* or *yudhillu* had been used in God's context, it would mean that He could punish, annihilate or make actions to be fruitless.

In Surah Al-Baqarah, God has said:

فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ

"Then He will forgive whom He pleases and chastise whom He pleases" **(*2:284*).**

وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ

"... But He does not cause to err by it **(*any*)** ***except the transgressors"*** **(*2:26*).**

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"*(*As for*) ***those who disbelieve and turn away from Allah's way, He shall render their works ineffective" **(*47:1*).**

And, wherever the phrase '*huda*' or '*yahdi*' was mentioned for God in the Qur'an, it meant guidance towards a candid act, or to shower blessings on the pious. These meanings therefore, nullify the apparent meanings used by the advocates of compulsion, for the allegorical Verses of the Qur'an.

These figurative Verses of the Qur'an could also be understood in another way. As God had provided all the basic human faculties, and He had made people independent with regard to their use, this would include using their abilities to search for guidance or to defy it. Therefore, metaphorically speaking, we could refer those phrases towards receiving guidance from God or deviating away from Him. He however, did not award those faculties to use for disobedience and immorality. The desire of the Great Benefactor (God) would be that man use their abilities for His service.

The remaining Verses, where the phrase '*tabaa'* (stamped) and *khatm* (seal) are used, could also be explained in a similar manner. It is not an actual seal. What really is implied here is that the inner selves of these people had become so polluted with *kufr* and *shirk* that admission of faith in their hearts and mind would be difficult, in the same way that nothing could enter a sealed object. So, the use of the word *khatm* in these Verses was metaphoric.

When someone's *kufr* and *shirk* become deeply entrenched in the person's behaviour, then there is no chance of such a person to come to the right path. There might be a possibility that God might put a

special sign on his heart and mind, which could resemble a black dot, which could be identified by the Angels and the Prophets to know that this person would not be able to return towards God, so they would be cursed as a last resort.

This explanation is supported by many narrations, which stated that when a man commits a sin, a black spot appears in his heart. If he washes it with repentance then it is fine. However, if he continues sinning, it grows and blackens the whole heart. Consequently, the capability of returning to the faith is removed from him, which is the main theme of the Qur'anic Verse:

بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِم

***"Nay, but Allah set a seal upon them for their disbelief..."* (*4:155*).**

These Verses made it clear that the blackening of the heart would be done as a result of their own actions, and not as a compulsion from God. Therefore, in the following Verses, the phrases '*adhlal*' and '*zaga*' referred to God in the context when the offenders persist with evil deeds,

فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ

***"When they were themselves bent, God then twisted their hearts"* (*61:5*).**

There were certain narrations in the treatise of *hadith*, which mentioned that God created both good and evil. This allegation could be responded to in several ways.

Many authentic reports have suggested these narrations to be false and forgeries. Shaykh As-Saduq reported it in his book Kitab al-Tawhid, on the authority of Husayn Ibn Khalid that he asked Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) that people quoted some traditions, bearing the names of his elders, which authenticated the doctrine of compulsion from God. Imam replied: "Was the percentage of the traditions, which bore the name of his (Imam's) elders more than those, which were directly linked to the Prophet?"

The narrator answered that those *Ahadith*, which had direct chain of transmission from the Prophet (S) were more in numbers. Imam then reacted and asked, "Why did the people not refer to the Prophet in their claims?"

The narrator replied that the people considered those traditions to be false and fabricated, and none of those were true narrations from the Prophet. Listening to this answer, Imam replied that it was the same for the *Ahadith* that bore the name of his elders.

Such narrations have been against the principles held by the Sunni principles, and also the authentic words of our Imams. According to Shi'a practices, one of the rules is that any narration which is against

our accepted reports, but is in accord with the Sunni standards, and is weak in its chain of transmission, has to be treated as false and fabricated. If however, the chain of transmission is strong then the rule of *taqiyya* would apply. Such narrations are abundant in Sunni authentic texts.

Even if we set aside all the previous answers, and accepted these narrations to be authentic, and did not apply the rule *of taqiyya*, we could say that the viewpoint of the proponents of compulsion still could not be proven.

Dualists believed that there were two creators – *Yazdan*, the creator of useful things and *Ahraman*, the creator of harmful things. It could be argued that from the word *khair* (good), a harmless creature such as a cow, goat or a rabbit were referred to. Likewise, from *sharr* (evil), dangerous creatures such as snakes, crocodiles, wolves and scorpions etc were referred to. Our Imams, in any case had repudiated their claims by saying that it was God who had created all the things, which could be harmless or beneficial.

Even if we ignored the last explanation, and acquired the same meanings that were under discussion, then it could be argued that from the creation of *khair wa sharr* (good and evil) it could be meant the that *taqdeeri* or an empowered creation had been set forth instead of a *takweeni* or predetermined one. This conclusion had been aided by the fact that in some Ahadith, the phrase '*qaddarta ala yadet hayy al khair'* had been used instead of '*ajraita*'.

The difference between the empowered and predetermined creature was already explained in the previous section. These Verses still could not prove the point of view from a compulsion perspective. This could only make sense, if a predetermined creation was involved.

If it is said that man is fully empowered, then it made God powerless, because a *kafir* would want to choose the route of infidelity while God had willed him to accept the faith and he succeeded to remain infidel. In this way a *kafir* achieved what they wanted, while God's will failed to materialize. This indicated a weakness in the entity of God. Therefore, we have to believe that good and bad all came from God.

The answer to the doubt was that this uncertainty only arises if we assumed that God is not capable of converting an infidel with force to the pathway of faith. However, despite His power (to do so), He did not compel him to accept the faith. In view of the malevolence that surfaced due to the doctrine of compulsion, and a person adopted *kufr*, then how could the frailty of God be proven? It is revealed in Surah Yunus:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَآمَنَ مَن فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيعًا

"And if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together" **(*10:99*).**

It has been mentioned in some Ahadith, which are famous by the title of *teenat* (nature). These

somehow allegedly proved the doctrine of compulsion. Their subject matter stated that the nature of a *mu'min* (believer) was unsoiled, while, that of a kafir was polluted and filthy and at the time of creation these two natures were intermixed. So, it is said that if a believer commits a sin or an infidel performs an act of piety, it is the result of that mixing. This doubt can be addressed in the following discussion.

Many scholars have doubted the authenticity of such *Ahadith*. The answer was disputed, because so many traditions of this sort are there in the literature. Therefore, to discard all in this way is a daring and intrepid act. Some Scholars treat these narrations as ambiguous. They say that one must accept their limitations in understanding the true nature of those *Ahadith* and therefore, refer to the Imams for advice. Although, this answer is correct, it does not satisfy the critics.

Some scholars have recounted these traditions among similes or metaphoric texts. According to them, the creation of a believer and an infidel is from the same nature, but in accepting faith, the believer behaved in a conformist's manner, while a *kafir*, in performing evil acts, showed a filthy and tainted nature. This answer also remains uncertain, because in this context there are so many lucid *Ahadith*, which could not be termed metaphoric or emblematic.

God, the Almighty, is said to know from His own knowledge, before the creation, that *Mu'minin* (believers) would perform in a virtuous manner by their own choice, and the *kafirs* and *mushriks* would opt for infidelity and *shirk*. This is why the nature of a *mu'min* is associated with the eminent, and that of the infidels with those, who are held in captivity or in quarantine (as criminal).

God has created the spirits of all humans from the same essence, and impregnated it with the powers of desire and covet. He frees them to make their own choices in terms of performing a particular deed or refraining from one. When these spirits were put to the test in the spiritual realm, then some of them chose obedience and the others rebelled. Therefore, God adopted a nature, which best suited it. He then mixed the natures in accordance with the peculiarities for each of the souls.

Thus, a spirit that deserved kindness and benefaction was given due attention and the other, which needed to be restrained was provided with the deserving treatment. Leading Shi'a scholars have applauded this explanation as it conformed with the elucidations of our Imams.

Criticism Of Asha'irites's Ideology Of Kasb

When Asha'irites realised that their concept of compulsion was leading them into deep waters, they then invented another conjecture, better known as '*kasb*' to shield from criticism. This new concept was noted to be vague, and no standard definition was put forward.

Some of their spokesmen said that when a man desired to do an act, God created that act for him, and if he had no desire then the act was not created. The others said that the act was definitely created by God, as to whether it was good or bad was for the man to judge. Some said that *kasb* was a force,

which initiated a compulsive desire in man, but the act (to accomplish that desire) had been created for him by God.

It was also claimed by certain Asha'irites quarters that according to *kasb*, man was the source of submission (obedience to God) or resistance (sins). However, a few of them have surrendered and acknowledged since that they did not understand this hypothesis but had accepted it at face value.

Similarly, a number of scholars echoed that they failed to understand three things – *kasb*, *kalam al-Nafs* and the *haal* of philosophers.

We would not like to spend further time on these irrational concepts, and would simply ask our readers to analyse, whether such line of thinking could redeem mankind.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 5: Compulsion And Empowerment

We the Shi'as have the same belief about the concept of compulsion and empowerment[1], as was addressed by our Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), who said, "There is no absolute compulsion or empowerment, but the situation is a balance between the two states."

A person approached Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) and asked him what he meant by the balance between the two states? The Imam replied, "Its explanation is like this: If you see a man who is firm upon committing vice and you try to prevent him, and if he does not pay heed to you, then leave him to his own, until, he commits that vice. Just because he did not listen to your advice, and you left him on his own thereafter, did not mean that you had encouraged him to commit the sin."

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1. This predicament is very significant, but due to incompatible points of view of the Ummah, it has also become a dividing issue.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 5

Asha'irites made God completely powerful and without partners by making Him responsible for creating all human actions. Mu'tazilites, on the other hand, declared God to be free from any (role in) compulsion and oppression by allocating complete empowerment to the human beings. The truth is that both these judgments were against God's splendour.

The Asha'irites point of view made God an offender and oppressor. People become wronged and oppressed, which would be totally vile and against God's Majesty. However, according to the Mu'tazilites' concept, the Probable become independent of the Essential, thereby making God redundant.

This was why in many *Ahadith* the Qadriyya's (those who believed in full empowerment of man) were strongly condemned. According to one tradition of the Prophet almost seventy Prophets of God had cursed the Qadriyyas.

It had been mentioned in *Sherhe Maqasid* that a man from Iran came to meet the Prophet. The Prophet (S) asked him, what was the strangest thing that he had seen in his own land? He replied that he had seen a nation (Magian's) that married their mothers, sisters and daughters and when questioned about their behaviour they replied that God had preordained this for them.

After listening to him, the Prophet (S) said that a group would surface amongst his own Ummah, who would issue the same statement. They would be the Magians of his Ummah. There have been various traditions of this type in both Shi'a and Sunni sources, the irony being that both Asha'irites and Mu'tazilites considered each other the focal point of the above quoted tradition. The fact remained that both these sects were under the umbrella of Qadriyya. However, those who believe in compulsion were more of its target.

Allama Al-Majlisi said, "You would realise that both of the sects were wayward, and whatever they said about each other was lucid, as the reality was against both views, and the correct view was a balance in between the two concepts."

Our Imams have presented this view in the following words, "In religion (for human functions), there is neither compulsion nor empowerment, but the truth is in the middle."

In other words, man is neither under total compulsion nor completely free. There is a balance between these two extremes. This was such a wonderful philosophy that even some of the Asha'iri scholars were also convinced of its validity. Allama Fakhruddin Razi, wrote at the end of his long discussion on compulsion and empowerment that the reality of this concept was with those guardians of faith, who said that man was neither under total compulsion nor completely free, but his function lies between these two

extremes.

The significant point for our understanding would be the nature of this middle point. Several statements have been available on this issue. We have quoted a few below.

Shaykh Al-Mufid said: "*Jabr* (compulsion) in religion is a mode that coerces a man to do or not to do something, in a manner that his own capability of action is withdrawn completely. His desire and resolve have no bearing on it; whereas, *tafweez* (empowerment) is the exclusion of coercion and restrictions in humans' actions. They are completely free to do whatever they desire as the atheists and polytheists say.

The bridge between these two ideas was that God had given humans an ability to distinguish between good and bad, and then defined the limits of their freedom. A regime of punishment and reward as a result of their behaviour had also been introduced with respect to their limitations. The granting of this freedom did not mean that they were under any duress nor did it let them go free in absolute sense. This was what was meant by the middle position."

The statement by Mullah Muhammad Amin Asterabadi, which he adopted in some of his books, described the meaning of the middle route as a path where man was not an absolute sovereign who could do anything, but his every word and action rested on God's prevalent attitude at that time, which was related to non-interference (*takhliya*) or intrusion (*mana*) i.e. it was up to Him whether to intervene or to leave him alone (to make his own choice).

It was reported through many *Ahadith* that the effect of various medicines and magic depended upon *takhliya* i.e. on the permission of God. People's acts were conducted along the same pattern. The occurrence of every incidental act was related to God's permission in a manner just as an effect was related to certain conditions for its embodiment. This remained a good reasoning but its drawback was that it was not very credible.

It was related from Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) that anyone who said that God was the creator and propagator of their actions, and then He punished them, was an advocate of *Jabr.* To say that God had transferred powers of creation and provisions of sustenance to Imams, was to believe in *tafweez*. The adherent of *jabr* would be an infidel (*kafir*), while that of *tafweez* would be a *mushrik*.

The narrator then asked Imam about the middle route. He replied, one should conform to all those acts, which were permissible, and refrain from those that had been prohibited, and for which God had provided the necessary strength. This was a middle route.

The aspirant then asked him about God's will and resolve in these matters. He replied that interference with God's will and desire meant performing those acts for which non-conformity with His instructions or non-compliance was needed while He had provided humans with the necessary tools to act accordingly.

The narrator then asked that if God's will and desire had any role to play in this situation? He replied that the meanings of interference of His will and desire in those acts, that were permissible was that He ordered them to perform and aided them in their act of obedience, while they were in agreement with it. So far as sins and evil deeds were concerned, interference of His wish and resolve meant that He withdrew support when vile acts were performed.

The narrator asked, if destiny had any role to play in it? Imam replied that whatever people deserved due to their performance, was accordingly awarded in both worlds.

According to this school of thought, the view of *jabr* is the same that had been discussed above. For *tafweez* it had been said that man would have to be so steadfast and rigid in his act that even God would not be able to prevent Him from carrying it out.

And, about the middle route they argued that though God had made man independent in his actions, He is Omnipotent, and could withdraw this power from him, if He so desired. He could prevent him from doing that act, and could make him do, what he did not want to do. However, due to logical reasons, He does not behave like that.

Allama Al-Majlisi and Sayyid Abdullah Shabbar in *Bihar Al-Anwar* and *Masabih al-Anwar* respectively, had adopted this point of view. This view wis also congruent with the statements of our Imams, and it is easily acceptable to a logical mind.

The essence of this view is that it negates that kind of *jabr*, which is not in line with the Qur'anic text and the Prophetic traditions, but was propagated by the gruesome doctrine of the Asha'irites faith. It opposes *tafweez*, which had been proposed by Mu'tazilites. The middle route that was suggested, is to be achieved through God's guidance and His blessings, and accompanies all the virtuous deeds that are performed by the human beings, but it does not attain the level of compulsion.

Similarly, the view proposed a (divine) capacity to intervene and prevent disobedience and sins, but not to the level of compulsion and coercion. It is such an ecstatic problem that every human, would feel its presence within himself, under differing conditions.

Allama had explained this by giving an example. He said that a master could ask his servant to perform a job after providing him with full instructions as to how to carry out that task. He could also promise him some reward on successful completion of the task, and warn him of the penalty – in case of failure and disobedience.

Now, if he somehow found out that the servant would not abide by the instructions, and even if he did not elaborate or facilitate him further, in case of disobedience, in the event the servant was punished then no right-minded person would question his action or accuse him of deliberately coercing the servant to disobey him, or let him be lax in letting him do whatever he wanted to do.

In the above example, if the master further aided the servant, by appointing another person to remind him of his instructions, and the servant wilfully stuck to the orders given to him, then no right-minded person could accuse the master that he had forced obedience and compliance on the servant. The commentator had provided another example to elucidate the problem, but it was merely a repetition of the first example.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 6: God's Will And Desire

Our belief about God's will and desire was in line with the teachings of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a). He stated that God desired and willed but He did not like and agree.[1]

An explanation of these four phrases is like this. God's desire and will means that whatever was happening in the world would not occur without His knowledge. He did not like that He should be called One of the Trinity, and His disagreement denoted that He was not agreeable with people on *kufr*. Therefore, He said in the Qur'an:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

"Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases, and He knows best the followers of the right way" **(*28:56*).**

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

"Yet ye will not, unless Allah willeth..." **(*76:30; 81:29*).**

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَآمَنَ مَن فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيعًا أَفَأَنتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

"And if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together, wouldst thou* (*Muhammad*) *compel men until they are believers?" **(*10:99*).**

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

“It is not for any soul to believe save by the permission of Allah...” (***10:100***).

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

“Every soul shall taste of death” (***3:185***).

يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنفُسِهِم مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا قُل لَّوْ كُنتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ

“...They hide in their minds what they dare not reveal to thee. They say (***to themselves***)***: "If we had had anything to do with this affair, We should not have been in the slaughter here." Say: "Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death..."*** (***3:154***).

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ

“...If thy Lord willed, they would not do so; so leave them alone with their devising” (***6:112***).

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا

“Had Allah willed, they had not been idolatrous” (***6:107***).

And He says:

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَاهَا

“And if We had willed, We could have given every soul its guidance” (***32:13***).

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً

“And if thy Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation” (***11:118***).

فَمَن يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَن يُرِدْ أَن يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ

“If God desires about a person that he should be guided; He opens his heart, and whom He wants

to keep away from the faith, He squeezes his heart, as if he wants to climb up the Heavens" (***6:125***).

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

"Allah desires to explain to you, and to guide you into the ways of those before you, and to turn to you (***mercifully***)***, and Allah is Knowing, Wise"*** (***4:26***).

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِي الْآخِرَةِ

"... Allah intends that He should not give them any portion in the hereafter..." (***3:176***).

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ

"Allah desires that He should make light your burdens" (***4:28***).

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

"Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty" (***2:185***).

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا

"God desires to accept your apology, but those who follow their own desires, wants you to abandon your faith" (***4:27***).

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

"...and Allah does not desire injustice for (***His***) ***servants"*** (***4:31***).

This being the summary of our beliefs about God's will and desire, while opponents of Shi'as blame that it was God Who compel people to commit sin, and it was (thus) God's desire that Imam Al-Husayn should be martyred. We would not say like that.

In this respect our view would be that God did not wish that the defiance by the rebellious (servants) be equated with the support by the obedient (servants). Not only this, He did not want that evil should even be mentioned along with His name and He certainly knew about the sins of the people before they were

committed.

We would also say that it was His desire that the murder of Imam Al-Husayn be counted as disobedience against Him and (it would be treated) as the sin of those who wilfully disobeyed Him. We also say that the murder of Imam Al-Husayn was neither ordained nor annulled, and it became the reason for God's displeasure. Yes, it was God's will that He did not foil the act (of murder) caused by the overwhelming strength of Imam Husayn's enemies – an act, which He had prohibited through His statements. Therefore, if He had wanted to put a stop to it with compulsion (by the use of His unparalleled power), then certainly the Imam would not have been murdered, in the same way that He had ordered fire to be harmless to Abraham.

"O fire, be coolness and peace for Abraham" **(*21:69*).**

We would also say that God had been aware from the beginning that Imam Al-Husayn would be murdered and that he would achieve permanent glory through this martyrdom, and that his murderers would be marked with brutality and adversity.

Anyhow, it would remain our view that the occurrence or non-occurrence of events depended on God's will. Our views about God's will would remain free of those unintelligent and baseless accusations, which our opponents spread about us.

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1. Shaykh Al-Mufid has bitterly criticized Allama Shaykh As-Saduq by saying that whatever, the respected author has mentioned in this chapter, is of no use and it is strictly contradictory, and this is the result of following every Hadith without due care.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 6

Sheikh Al-Mufid has bitterly criticised Allama Sheikh As-Saduq by saying that whatever, the respected author has mentioned in this chapter, is of no use and it is strictly contradictory, and this is the result of following every Hadith without due care.

The truth of the matter on this issue is that God does not desire any other than virtuous acts and has not demanded other than pious acts. He has no intention for iniquity or vice, nor does He like immoral or proscribed acts. He therefore, says in the Qur'an:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

"... Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty..." (***2:185***).

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا

"God desires to accept your apology, but those who follow lust and corporal desires wants you to go away from the right path..." (***4:27***).

How clearly has God demonstrated that He does not like iniquity and vices? Instead, He prefers guidance and desires leniency and comfort for humans. On the other hand, if He desired evil then it would contradict His stated words, while there is no conflict between His will and desire.

Rebuttal Of Shaykh Al-Mufid's Criticism

We fail to understand as to where Shaykh Al-Mufid found contradictions in Shaykh Abu Ja'far's accounts, when all his text had been extracted from the *Ahadith* of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa). These were available in Shaykh Abu Ja'far's book, Al-Tawhid, on the evidence of Fazl Ibn Yasaar.

This Hadith was a bit complex and intricate. However, the noble author had mentioned no apparent conflict or contradiction in it. This work was basically designed to counter the beliefs of Asha'iriya school of thought, whose doctrine had been mentioned in the previous pages. It claimed God's will and desire to be the real perpetrator of all the things that happened in the Universe, including evil, the acceptance of faith by a believer, denial by a disbeliever and that He is in full agreement with it.

The summary of Imam's statement is that it is true that it is God's will and desire that all of what happens in the Universe must be within His Knowledge, because He knows what was to happen before it happened. But this does not mean that He should like it and be pleased with it. Plainly speaking, some of the resultant claims are such that God neither approves of, nor is He pleased with such things as the Doctrine of trinity adopted by the Christians. God Himself had reprimanded them for this concept, or condemned the disobedience and apostasy of the polytheists. In Surah Az-Zumar, He said:

وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ

"God is not pleased with the kufr and shirk of the people" (***39:7***).

It was said that God knew about an act before it happened, it would thus be essential that the event happened in accordance with His knowledge. Therefore, when God was aware of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn then Imam Husayn would be under a compulsion to die, and thereby his murderer would

also be under duress to kill him. This point of view had been effectively rebuffed in chapter four of this book. It had been proven with lucid arguments that *ilm* or knowledge was never a cause for the predicted outcome to materialize.

Explanatory Notes On Some Qur'anic Verses

Some of the Verses (3, 9 and 11), which were quoted in the text by the honourable author, had apparent meanings that advocate compulsion. Some irrational minds might latch onto these Verses for proving their point of view; therefore, we have provided some clarifications.

In Verse number three, *Mashiyyat* (Divine will), stands for *Mashiyyat al-Qahira* i.e. God, while declaring His immense Power. It stated that if He had wanted, then the entire population would have accepted faith. These meanings were justified by the tail end of this Verse,

أَفَأَنتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

***"...Wouldst thou* (*Muhammad*) *compel men until they are believers?"* (*10:99*).**

This Verse shows that if compulsion was the route to achieve faith, then who was better placed than God to accomplish it? This shows that this Verse was actually negating compulsion rather than favouring it. A person with even mediocre intelligence would appreciate that it did not employ God's negation for people's acceptance of faith by choice. If that was the situation, then sending the Prophets and revealing the Divine Books could become a wasteful exercise.

Verses number 9 and 10 have basically conveyed the same meaning. Chapter four of this book also contained some Verses similar to Verse number 11, where its full explanation had been given, and the readers could refer to those pages.

The summary of this discussion would be that the Verses under consideration, point to the true belief that had been explained in chapter five. Whoever was the recipient of God's favour, for him the acceptance of faith and to stay on course became easier, compared to the one, from whom God has withdrawn His favour. God says: ***"Those who strive for truth, We show them the way*[1]*, and those who stay confined to their Kufr, their hearts are sealed by God*[2]*".***

Tazneeb

There was an extensive debate, on the nature of God's design (*Irada*), among the scholars. Some proposed that '*Irada*' belonged to the attributes of Essence of God and the others suggested that it belonged to the Functional Attributes of God, so it was a Probable (*Hadith*).

Some scholars were adamant that it was Eternal and it belonged to the true Essence of God. Its related

aspects were renewable and probable. Some said that it was *Hadith*, and among the functional attributes of God that kept on changing by the emancipation of renewable impulsive formations.

Another group argued that *Irada* was an instigator and a reason for action, while some suggest that *ilm* and *irada* were two facets of the same thing. According to them, *irada* was meant to be knowledge with discretion, which became a preference for the creation of things.

Majority of theologians preferred first and the last approach i.e. *irada* was considered to be an attribute of the Essence of God and its meaning was knowledge with discretion. Whereas, majority of the *Ahadith* from the Imams supported the second view, which proposed that *irada* being a functional attribute of God, was a Probable (*Hadith*).

Sidqa al-Islam Shaykh Muhammad Yaqoob Kulaini had subscribed a full chapter on this issue in *Usul al-Kafi*. One of the narrations from his work said that Aasim Ibn Hameed had approached Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) and asked him whether God was always *Mureed* (one who desired). Imam replied, “He is not *Mureed*, but *Murad* is with Him, therefore, if *irada* was eternal, then the Universe must be eternal.” Imam further elaborated by saying that God was always powerful and knowledgeable. He desired later on and thus the creation began.

The second narration from Safwan Ibn Yehya said that he approached Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), and asked him the difference between the desire of a common man and that of the God. Imam first explained the *irada* of mankind and then said, “It is nothing but that He creates something in a person.”

Then after a short elaboration he spoke again and said that *irada* of God was nothing other than His action. These *Ahadith* clearly showed that *irada* was part of God's functional attributes.

Many theologians asked that we must embrace the basic belief that God was *Mureed* i.e. He desired for noble acts. And in being so, He did not aim for any evil acts. The rest should be left to the God Himself, without indulging into any critical debate. If any Qur'anic Verse appeared to be contradictory to this definition, then its further interpretation (*Ta'wil*) must be sought.

It had been made clear during this discussion that just as God's Essence remain beyond our intellect and so are His attributes. The acceptance of the basic idea is sufficient for our wellbeing.

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1. Reference to Verse 29:69.
2. Reference to Verses 2:6-7.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 7: Qadha And Qadr

The Shaykh, May God bless his soul, says that our belief in this respect was the same as that had been defined by our Imam at the request of Zarara. He said: “When the Almighty God would receive His servants on the Day of Judgement, He would ask them those questions, for which He had taken a covenant with them, and He will not ask them about anything that He had implemented through *Qadha wa Qadr*.” 1

People have been advised to remain silent about this subject by Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib. In response to a query. He said: “The question of destiny (*Qadha*) is an ocean of incomprehensible depths, in which one should not enter.”

The enquirer again repeated his question and the Imam replied, “It is a dark alley, so do not walk through it.”

When he asked the same question the third time, the Imam said, “It is a secret. Do not try to investigate it. Be careful, as it is one of the hidden secrets of God. It is a treasure amongst His riches, and hidden from His creatures by an elevated veil. God’s stamp is on it, and it is within God’s knowledge from the very beginning.

He had kept His servants oblivious to it, and it is way above their thoughts and intellect, because human beings could not find His reality, nor could they envisage His immense powers or His essence or the individuality of His authority, because this irate ocean is for Him. Its depth had the dimensions of the Universe and its width is from East to West, and it is dark as a black night. It is full of snakes and fish, which are in continuous motion. In its depth is a glowing Sun, and no one other than God, the Almighty is aware of it. Anyone, who would like to investigate its reality, would be disobeying God. It would a reason for instigating feud within His Kingdom. Such a person would be among those who want to lay bare or divulge God’s secrets.

بَاءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

***“He would be imprisoned by God’s wrath and would certainly find his place in the Hell, which is a terrible place of abode”* (*8:16*).**

Once Imam Ali (‘a) avoided a wall, which was about to fall. One of those who accompanied him asked whether he was running away from the destiny appointed by God. He replied that yes, he was avoiding the undetermined destiny of God.

Someone asked Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) whether a holy amulet could avoid God’s destiny. Imam

replied that these amulets were also among the tools of empowerment (*Qadr*).

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1. It is prohibited to think too deeply about qadha.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 7

Qadha (Destined) And Qadr (Empowerment)

It was not hidden from the intellectuals that the philosophy of *Qadha* and *Qadr* was one of the very complex subjects of the religion, whose true understanding was with none, other than those, whom God Himself had imparted this knowledge. Many people had become a victim of their own exuberance and apathy while counting on their intellect in this regard and earned a permanent demise.

Due to very complex nature of this subject, our Imams have specifically prohibited us from entering into lengthy debates on this issue. The restriction was applicable to all, including the *Ulamas* and scholars. However, the explanation, which Shaykh Al-Mufid provided for barring debate on this issue, suggested that the restriction was not for all people. Rather, it was particularly for those who were intellectually feeble.

We beg to differ with the Shaykh. In our humble opinion though the Shaykh's position was correct that these prohibitions should be maintained until the exponents of debate provided a reliable quotation from the Imams. Without this their premises could not be accepted.

Allama Al-Majlisi, after discussing Shaykh Al-Mufid's elucidation, said in *Bihar Al-Anwar*, "Anyone who indulges into the suspicious domain of *Jabr wa Ikhtiar* (compulsion and empowerment), will find why the Imams have prohibited to discuss these issues – because other than those who are protected, it is impossible for anyone to remain steady on this slippery ground."

No one knows the reality of Qadha and Qadr, other than those who possesses Godly knowledge. As this issue is related to God's management of the Universe, it would not be within our domain to enter it and neither have we been we asked to explore it.

It had been observed that an ordinary principal would develop an elaborate system to manage his estate that would not expose to all his subjects. Most countries keep the details of their security policy confined to certain members of their cabinet. The rest would simply be subjected to the conjectures of the fellow

analysts, whose interpretation of the facts is generally not very accurate. Under these circumstances, how could it be expected that people would be fully aware of the intricacies of God's management of the Universe?

Moreover, on the Day of Judgement, we shall not be questioned about it, and then what would be the need for us to enter into such a debate that is full of hazards. The truth of the matter is that this subject is so mysterious that no philosophical and logical mind could ever claim that he had the answer for (resolving) its complexity, nor would there be anyone in the future to make such a claim. Our Imams, after repeated insistence tried to make this issue explicable, but even their explanations were considered among the most complicated texts.

Simple Belief In Qadha Wa Qadr Is Sufficient

Many scholars have clearly mentioned that man must basically believe that God never desired for sins or committed evil, and concerning His will or desire we should remain silent, and this was a logical demand.

Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in his research paper, Risala al-Itiqadiyah that according to the instructions of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, there were so many complexities in this subject that we should exclude ourselves from entering into discussions on this subject. The more we penetrate this secret domain, the more we will find ourself in the realm of ambiguity.

There is no doubt that there are many valid reasons in each of God's acts, and those are not futile in any way. We would have no hesitation in accepting this fact. The only hesitation would be that man has intellectual limitations and could not have a real understanding of God's actions, as He said:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَاعِبِينَ

"And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in sport" (***44:38***).

مَا خَلَقْنَاهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"We did not create them both but with the truth, but most of them do not know" (***44:39***).

Further Elaboration

In this new era of Science and Technology, people have been used to the habit of seeking the reasons for everything that happens around us. They would hesitate to accept a fact, if explanations are not available. We could add a few more lines for the satisfaction of these people.

There could be no doubt that whatever happened in the Universe, happened with God's knowledge, and under the guidance of His Qadha wa Qadr, as detailed by Imam Zayn Al–'Abidin (ʻa). He said: ***"Glory is to the God, Whose Universe behaves the way He wants."***

Imam Ja'far As–Sadiq (ʻa) said that whenever, God decided to perform an act, then it had to go through six stages – Ilm (Knowledge), Mashiyyat (Will), Irada (Design), Qadr (Power), Qadha (Judgment) and Amza (Authorisation). He authorised only that which first comes into Qadha, and the one that comes into Qadha must pass through Qadr and so on.

However, this process does not involve Compulsion nor does it support what Asha'irites said about God being the Creator of all good and evil – whereby man is totally constrained.

As one of the many meanings of Qadha wa Qadr is to make decisions or to estimate. The decision making of God is different for His *takweeniya* (creation, sustenance, death, revival etc) from *tashriya* acts (obligatory practices such as prayers, fasting, modesty, abstaining from adultery and other restrictions). The purpose of acts of *takweeniya* is to signify His total independence in the affairs of the Universe. In this respect no one could intervene in His Design and its completion. In these acts, man is definitely constrained.

It had been mentioned in *Kitab al–Tawhid*, from Imam Muhammad Al–Baqir (ʻa), when he spoke to Abdullah Ibn Maimoon Al–Qadah on the authority of his father, who had learned it through his elders: "O, servant of God, did He create you when He wished or when you desired." He replied that He created him whenever He had desired. Imam then asked him: "Do you fall ill on your own initiative or He makes you ill?" He replied: whenever He wished. Imam then asked him: "Does He cure you according to His own wish, or on your desire?" He replied: Whenever He wished. Imam then asked him: "Does He appoint your state of existence or you decide on your own." He replied that He decides. After listening to his correct answers, Imam replied that if he had given any answer other than those, he would have then sentenced him.

We have been asked to be happy with His designs. It was therefore, mentioned in a Hadith Qudsi, "If anyone does not agree with My Qadha wa Qadr, and is not patient with My afflictions, and is not thankful for My benevolence, he should then abandon My Universe and seek another God for himself."

In *tashriya acts*, His role is that He ordered that obligatory deeds would be performed and that prohibited ones would be avoided. The compliance with the command is left to the free choice of man. However, He knew through His knowledge as to who would conform to those orders and who would not.

This prior knowledge of God, did not in any way, qualify as compulsion. Just as we have illustrated earlier that knowledge (*ilm*) did not contribute in any way to the embodiment of its find (*maloom*), but it came into existence due to its own causes and reasons. The knowledge of an erudite or the ignorance of an illiterate had no influence in something occurring or otherwise.

If we somehow knew that the Sun would rise tomorrow at a particular time or Imam Zaman (‘a) would come out of occultation, or the world would collapse tomorrow; then it would not mean that our knowledge plays a role in the rising of the Sun, or the end of occultation of the Imam or the emancipation of the Day of Judgment. Instead, knowledge is subject to its find and is a means to describe the presence of a reality.

If, however, we say that reality needed knowledge for its emergence, then it would result in an absurd cycle, which would be evidently wrong. Yes, the high point of knowledge is that it should be in line with its object. However, as our knowledge is imperfect and therefore our discoveries do not always equate with it. But this was not applicable to God because His knowledge is absolute.

Whatever is written here is not my own interpretation, but it was acquired from the teachings of the recipients of Revelations. This subject had been most elucidated by a Hadith, which was a narration by a Syrian, on the authority of Amir Al-Mu’minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a). This Hadith was available in most Shi’a and Sunni texts. It had been narrated through Asbegh Ibn Nabata that when Imam Ali (‘a) was returning to Kufa after the battle of Siffin, a Syrian among his companion asked him, “Please tell me, if our departure towards Siffin was with the Qadha wa Qadr of God?”

Imam Ali (‘a) said, “By God, we have not gone to any place or entered a valley, but with the Qadha wa Qadr of God. The Syrian then said, “This means that all the sufferings we have gone through in this journey had gone to waste, and all its rewards were also lost for we were under compulsion.” Imam Ali (‘a) said, “O Shaykh, don’t hesitate (in your conclusion). You were not constrained or forced to go there, because you accepted these sufferings with your own free will, therefore, you will be rewarded for that.” The Syrian said, “How is it possible that when we were under compulsion (by *Qadha wa Qadr*) to go there, that then we shall be rewarded?

Imam Ali (‘a) responded by saying, “May God help you. You thought – ‘this *Qadha wa Qadr* was absolute (that you were under duress)’. No, it was not like that, because if it were so then the whole mechanism of reward and punishment would have collapsed, and His obligations and restrictions would have gone astray. In that case, there will be no righteous to claim reward, and no criminal would suffer retribution. This ideology belonged to the Magians, Qadriyya of this ummah, enemies of God and the followers of Satan.

Whatever constraints God have appointed, there is a reward and punishment for their obedience and defiance respectively, and He has given us full freedom in this respect. For a little effort He grants us generously. He is not disobeyed because we are under oppression and overwhelmed, nor is He obeyed because He has compelled His creatures to do so. He has not created Heavens and the Earth as a wasteful exercise, nor has He sent His Messengers in a meaningless manner.”

In *Kitab al-Tawhid*, this dialogue ended in a manner that the Syrian Shaykh asked. “What was that Qadha wa Qadr, under which we have travelled to this destination?” Imam Ali (‘a) said. “It was under

God's command." Then to prove that *Qadha* stood for Commandment or order, the Imam quoted a Qur'anic Verse:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

***"It is commanded by your Lord to worship none other than Him and be respectful to your parents"* (*17:23*).**

Ihtijaj al-Tabrisi has concluded this dialogue in the following manner, where the Syrian Shaykh said, "What is that *Qadha wa Qadr*, which you are speaking about?" Imam Ali ('a) said. "The meaning of this Qadha wa Qadr is to obey (the Lord), and giving the capability to refrain from the forbidden acts, and engage in virtuous deeds, and leave the disobedient in their own state (of sin). In other words, the command is to encourage people for the Paradise and admonish them about the severity of Hell. All these efforts are to seek the nearness of God."

This narration is a proof that in legal acts, *Qadha wa Qadr* is meant to keep away from the forbidden, and be forthcoming in obedience. It also suggested that human beings had freedom in their functions, instead of being constrained.

Division Of Takweeni Qadha Wa Qadr

That *Qadha* which is related to the Takweeni acts is divided into two kinds:

- *Mubram-o-Mahtoom* or *Qadha al-Hatmi* (which is definite). Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) said about this Qadha, "Here matters are so linked to it that adopting safeguards against it could cause the destruction." When the Qadr (time) comes, the eyes turn blind.

- *Qadha al-Gair Mahtoom* (which could be put off). This could be put off by prayers, sacrifice and giving alms. It was mentioned in the Hadith, "Propitiatory offerings can repel tragedies and supplication can deter Qadha." Moreover, God says, "Tell them O Prophet, if they did not offer prayers, God would not have taken care of them."

However, it is hidden from the people as to which of the Qadha is definite and which is vague, so that their prayers and charitable acts could continue, and the link with the Lord might remain intact.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 8: Nature And Guidance

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that in this respect our belief was that God had created all human beings on the perception of Tawhid, as He said:

فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا

***"The nature* (*framed*) *of Allah, in which He hath created man..."* (*30:30*).**

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said after referring to God's proclamation, which stated:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ مَا يَتَّقُونَ

***"He does not withdraw His favour of resisting ignorance and misguidance from those, who accept faith, unless He clarifies those points about which they should be vigilant and fearful"* (*9:115*).**

That the meaning of the phrase – clarification by the God, was that He elucidated all those acts, which were reasons for His pleasure or displeasure, as a testimony.

Again, the same authority [Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a)], while elucidating a Verse of the Qur'an:

***"And* (*He*) *inspired it* (*with the consciousness of*) *what is wrong for it and what is right for it"* (*91:8*).**

[Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a)] stated:" God has identified the acts of indulgence and abstinence for all mankind, that is, God had publicized those acts, which should be observed, and marked those sins that should be avoided".

At another place (in the Qur'an) God had said:

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا

***"We have shown man the way* [*to rectitude*]*, and now it is up to him to be thankful or ungrateful"* (*76:3*).**

In the justification of this Verse Imam said, "God had made clear the virtuous and dire deeds, and now it was up to the man to conform or disobey."

In the clarification of this Verse, Imam said that God had made clear the difference between good and bad acts, and now it was up to man to proceed according to his free will. Once again God had said:

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ

"We showed the way to the people of Thamud, but they preferred deviation over guidance" (41:17).

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said in response to this Verse that people favoured digression over regulation, after recognising the facts. Yet again, a person asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) regarding God's statement that He had shown human beings both routes:

وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ

"And (did We not) guide him to the parting of the two mountain paths?" (90:10).

Imam replied that from 'routes', God had meant the way towards good and bad.

He further elaborated that knowledge of the specifics which God had withheld from people (was implemented in order to safeguard their wellbeing), thus, not burdening them.

God would rightly question them about any deviation from the clearly defined directives based on the orders that had been revealed and understood by the people.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 8

Explanation Of The Word "Nature"

Before the real topic is discussed, it is important to clarify the meaning of the word – *fitrat*, so that it might become easier to understand the purpose of discussion.

The Arabic dictionary explained the word *fitrat* to mean – "when a thing was left in its natural state, without its antagonist or an opposing force, then the state attained by that thing was its *fitrat* or real nature."

For example, when it is said that speaking truth is human nature, then it is meant that when none of its antagonists are present then the demand of human nature is to speak the truth. Or, when it is said that it is natural for a heavier object to fall to the ground, it means that if a strong repulsive force is not present to oppose it, the object would certainly fall to the ground.

This nature usually remains stable in its original state, but sometimes due to certain external reasons it might be subject to change. In the above example, it is said that human nature demands truthfulness, but sometime due to changing circumstance, a man might be compelled to lie. Again, a forty tonne Jumbo Jet, with all its human cargo would remain in the air as long as its engines are working, but the moment this force is removed and its engines are shut, it would fall to the ground.

After this preamble, a proposition might be made, "Does human nature require acceptance or denial of God?" This question had been addressed in detail in the first chapter of this book. Anyone who had the understanding of the matters that affect the human heart, the natural requirements of man, and had an understanding of his religious history, would be induced to accept that belief in God is a natural phenomenon for the humanity.

Human perception, the Qur'an, prophetic teachings and the general study of the physical universe have further reinforced this viewpoint. Many narrations of the Imams are available in various Islamic texts in the elucidation of the Qur'anic Verse

فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا

***"The nature* (*framed*) *of Allah, in which He hath created man..."* (*30:30*).**

These explained that '*Fatara'* stands for the unity of God.

Similarly, a Prophet's Hadith that was common among all schools of thought, stated –

"Every newborn arrives to the world on the faith of Unity of God (Tawheed), later on his parents give him a Jewish, Christian or Magian identity,"

This was further endorsed by observation that when a person, who had no preconceived ideas about who had created the Heavens and the Earth, was asked about the origin of Creation, their most spontaneous response was likely to be – "God". This behaviour was mentioned in the Qur'an in the following words:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

"O Prophet if you ask them* (*the infidels*)*, who has created Heavens and the Earth, they will

immediately say – God" **(*31:25*).**

Clarification Of A Misconception

Some academics objected to this thesis by saying that if Tawhid was a natural process, then the entire world should be a flag bearer of *Tawhid*, whereas we find lots of people denying God. This objection would not be valid on several grounds, because the basis of this objection was that 'nature' was structured within the genetic code of humans. This was not correct.

It had been made clear earlier that the meaning of the phrase – "nature of a thing" was, that if the forces opposing the entity were absent and other impediments were redundant, then its true nature would become apparent. In literary language it could be said that nature desires freedom from coercion and oppression, to be truly expressed. Therefore, the presence of obstacles could change the requirements of nature. The Prophet (S) elucidated that, "There were people in the world who denied God; they were either reflecting the influence of a bad society, or they were imprisoned by the charm of satanic forces, and the conjectures and speculations of corporeal desires."

God informed us about such people in the Holy Qur'an:

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ

***"Those* (*who deny God*) *say that there is no life other than the life of this world. We are now alive and after sometime we shall die, and no one makes us die other than the time and space* (*Dahr*) *itself. These assertions are not on the basis of knowledge or belief, but those are their plain conjectures"* (*45:24*).**

Statement On The Standard Of Truth And Islam As A Natural Way Of Life

The facts mentioned above indicated Islam to be the natural way of life (*deen*). All of its fundamental rules were natural, and so were its practices and other obligations. This was why the interpretation of the Verse:

فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا

***"The nature* (*framed*) *of Allah, in which He hath created man..."* (*30:30*).**

Could be explained with reference to Islam.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that *'fitrat'* (nature) was another phrase for Islam. A simple explanation of this statement is this – every religion in the world was an exponent of its own truth, believing that those

following it were the chosen for the preferred creed of God, and the others were wrong and flawed. However, if one looked at the discrepancy and incongruity between their fundamental beliefs and their practices, then one could easily assume that these religions could not all be correct. Intellectual prudence demand that there must be a standard, which could help us differentiate between these religions.

Various standards of intellectual awareness, nationality, race and geographical preference are all disputable. We must have a standard that is feasible and acceptable to all, without their stated limitations. If we critically explore these avenues, we would find that the most compatible and perfect standard must be nature-oriented in its ideal form i.e. one whose fundamentals and practices are all bound to nature.

Proof That Islam Is A Natural Way Of Life

It could now be proven, without bias that Islam is the only religion – among several – that is eligible to claim to be the religion of nature. The rest do not fit the standard that had been set a moment ago. We could prove this statement in various ways.

It had been accepted by various quarters that man is more than just the physical body. The body is a composition of various compounds that increase and decrease over time, and finally vanish from view, as claimed by the materialists.

The body also contains a lighter and a delicate component, which is the essence of life and is called spirit or soul, whose composition and properties are different from the material constituents, and it has no end to its existence. The purpose of this discussion is to propose that man had two identities. Therefore, a true religion must be the one that takes care of both of these aspects.

In this respect there is no religion other than Islam, which could fulfil these demands. Other religions are either too much material-oriented or spiritually biased and therefore, fail to strike an amicable balance between man's spiritual and material requirements. Islam help its followers in all aspects of life. It names the corporeal existence as tilling ground for the hereafter, and abandonment of the worldly life is not encouraged. Imam (ʿa) said, "He is not among us, who denies material bliss for the sake of hereafter, and hereafter for the sake of worldly enjoyments."

In other words, material and spiritual requirements of an individual are (both) dually considered and safeguarded in Islam. One could say that Islam was such an amalgamation of faith and practices that it cast a lasting impression on this life and the hereafter. Just as every compound has its constituents in different proportions, so does Islam. Its ingredients require some prayers, few days of fasting, some routines of Pilgrimage (Hajj), charity for the poor and needy and a few articles of administrative law, which matured in the heat of pleasing traits and elegant fundamentals.

The faith and practices of Islam stood witness for it being a natural religion i.e. it was congruent with

human nature. The other religions were opposed to it. Several examples could be cited in this respect, the details of which have been avoided. Some such examples were divorcing the corporeal delights, priesthood and physical castigations etc. In Islam these practices were outmoded, and the pleasures of life, with the relevant rules and regulations have been permitted.

Besides this, the religion of Islam moved along with the time and its rulings were reinterpreted to suit the current requirements, and this was its exclusivity and distinction. This view had been echoed in the Qur'an:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

"Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty" (***2:185***).

Moreover, there is no practice or a principle in Islam, which could be rejected by a wise mind or fair nature. All of its rules, including its permissions and prohibitions bear definite benefits for its followers. That was why, with the advent of knowledge the roots of other religions became increasingly fragile, whereas Islam stood firm.

Islam placed great emphasis on two things. One, that man should – after his rigorous efforts – submit his hope to God and must trust Him for successful outcome. Second, He should develop a peaceful and workable relationship with the rest of the humanity.

The basis of Salvation in Islam rests upon sincerity of faith and the quality of reverent deeds. Without a proper faith, no matter how much good deeds one might accumulate, it would not be adequate for Salvation. Similarly, however strong the faith might be, it would not sufficient for deliverance, if good deeds were absent.

This was why in the Holy Qur'an, wherever a promise of deliverance is made to a group, it is linked to their performance of noble deeds along with correct faith. Most of the other religions place salvation on the faith alone. In Buddhism and Jainism, there is much emphasis on deeds, but the faith is almost redundant. Similarly, in Judaism and Christianity personal endeavour is ignored to the extent that the Pope could give a note of deliverance to the individuals for monetary gains. God, thus spoke in the Qur'an, saying:

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter, he shall be one of the losers" (***3:85***).

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Chapter 9: Human Capacity For Actions

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that on this issue our belief was the same as Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a) had said in reply to a visitor who had asked him, “O Son of the Prophet, is there any proof for the people having a capacity and empowerment (to do whatever they want)?” Imam replied, “Yes, he becomes capable if he fulfils four conditions. Firstly, there should not be any impediments in his way. Secondly, he should not be physically handicapped i.e. he should be physically fit. Thirdly, his body parts should be in a functioning order. Fourthly, he should possess a special favour from God”.

When all of these conditions were fulfilled, then a person is declared capable (*Mustatee*). For example, a free man who had no restrictions and his body parts were fighting fit, desired to commit adultery, he could not do it unless he found a woman. Suppose he found a woman, he could avoid the intercourse, with God's help as Joseph had done, when Zulaikha incited him. Or, he would commit adultery with the woman in solitude. He was therefore, not under any compulsion to obey God, nor did he have to overpower God to commit that sin.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) had said in response to God's directive,

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَالِمُونَ

***“Their eyes will be cast down – ignominy will cover them; seeing that they had been summoned aforetime to bow in adoration, while they were whole* [*and had refused*]*”* (*68:43*).**

that people were only assessed (in their tasks) when they were fully capable of carrying out His instructions in the acts of obedience and prohibitions.

Our fifth Imam had said that it was written in the Torah, “After creating you, I have chosen you among the people and guided you to obey My Commandments, and told you to keep way from the prohibitions. If you now obey Me, I shall help you. Otherwise, my help will be withdrawn. In acts of obedience, my facilitations are a gesture of kindness, and in disobedience (I shall send) a sign (warning) to remind you.”

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SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 9

Brief Account Of The Differences Between Various Islamic Schools On This Issue

Like many other issues, differences persisted among various Muslim schools of thought on the subject of *Istataat* (potential or capacity to perform). This subject was actually an offshoot of *Jabr wa Ikhtiar* (compulsion and empowerment). There were some people, who totally rejected any strength and capacity for human beings in committing their actions. Some accepted that men had the potential, while they were in action, but they absolutely refused having any such powers before the commencement of the acts.

It had been reported by Auf Ibn Abdul Azdi in *Kitab al Tawhid*, on the authority of his uncle that he enquired Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) about the subject of potentiality. Imam replied with astonishment, "Have they started a quarrel over this issue as well?" Azdi replied that some of them conjured that the capability (to do or not to do) was with them, while they were in action, but not before the act was committed. Imam heard him and said that such people were *mushriks.*

Shi'a Point Of View

Shi'a point of view on this issue was that the capability (of committing or avoiding an act) was always available within every man – before as well as, during the activity, as stated in Kitab al-Tawhid on the authority of Hisham. When he had spoken to Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) about this, the Imam had said, "God has not asked His people to do or abandon an act, unless He had bestowed that potential (of saying yes or no) with them."

Therefore, a man would not perform or abandon an act until he possessed that potential, which would be with him before the advent of the task. However, it would be true to say that this strength did not essentially belong to a person as his own act of creation, but was a gift from God.

Imam Ali ('a) had asked a person, who was discussing the issue of *Qadha wa Qadr*, "Are you capable (of carrying out an act or abandoning it) through the assistance of God, or are you a partner with Him, and then claim this potential independently." He replied that his potential was due to God. Imam then said, "If you had given any other answer, I would have punished you." He elaborated further and said that this potential was provided after fulfilling the contents of the Hadith that had been mentioned earlier. There were several other traditions, which supported this point of view.

Anyhow, the correct approach on this issue is the same as that adopted in case of *Qadha wa Qadr*. This is more in line with the rational view, which had been appreciated by some of the leading scholars of the

opposite school. Allama Fakhruddin Razi wrote, after discussing the issue of *Jabr wa Ikhtiar*, “The truth, in this debate lies with the statements of the Imams from the progeny of the Prophet, who advocated that there was no total compulsion or freedom in human actions, but a delicate balance between the two states.”

Clearing A Doubt

There were certain traditions in the literature (*Usul al-Kafi*), which negated human potential. The simple answer to these reports is that all those traditions negated the potentiality in the essence of man, simply because man is a being who is not independent. This idea has been adequately dealt with in the previous chapters.

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Chapter 10: The Ideology Of Bida (Amend)

Shaykh Abu Ja’far said that the Jews were of the opinion that God is now dormant after completing so many tasks, but our view about this issue is that God had always been engaged in one or other tasks, which do not interfere with His performance.

كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

“Every day He exerciseth (universal) power” (55:29).

God gave life and He took life. He created and provided sustenance. He did whatever he liked. He granted existence to some, and made others to vanish (from the scene), depending upon His approval or disapproval, as He had the Umm al-Kitab (absolute knowledge).

يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ

“Allah effaceth what He will, and establisheth (what He will), and with Him is the Mother of the Book (ummul-kitab)” (13:39).

He made those things – which had existed before – to become extinct, and brought those – which were not present earlier – into existence.

This was not the type of *Bida* (amending), which Jews and their followers had advocated. They proposed their own version as being our view. Following their footsteps, people of other outlook – including our opponents – also started to make untrue allegations against us.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that God had not sent any Prophet unless He had their approval for three things – that they accepted God as their Master, they detested those who proposed partners for Him, and believed that God could swap anything i.e. He could bring forward one thing and delay the other. This was why the Shariah of our Prophet (S) made all the previous constitutions redundant, and the Qur'an overruled all previous revealed books.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that he was perturbed with a person who had the belief that God, after amending a thing today or prior to it, was unaware of it. He further said that if someone had the belief that God felt guilty after creating an object, then such a person was an atheist. He said that God never had the same *Bida*, which He had about my son Isma'il. This meant that no one had observed the same expediency of God, as was observed regarding Isma'il. He made him die during the Imam's lifetime to show the Ummah that he was not His deputy (Imam) after Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq's ('a) death

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 10

The Significance Of Bida And The Role Of Semantics In Its Misinterpretation

Bida – being one of the major Islamic issues – had been a ground for conflict amongst both the major sects. Our Sunni brothers, in their own delusion, considered *Bida* as an exclusively Shi'a issue, and therefore adopted a sarcastic attitude towards us. This showed that they had either not tried to understand the subject or due to some other malicious aspirations, deliberately spinned the matter to make it a controversial debating subject.

The same situation prevailed upon other issues across the board. However, if we remove the personal prejudice for a moment and try to reach the depth of the problem – with a little indulgence – then it would become apparent that any difference that existed between the two schools is no more than the semantics.

In fact, this matter was one of the most distinguished chapters of Islamic beliefs. Its approval was the recognition of an illustrious attribute of God, namely *irada* or desire. Belief in *Bida* actually negated

Jewish ideology that God had accomplished whatever He had set out to do, and now His pen had dried out, and no change could take place in His script. Some, on the other hand, claimed that God had transferred His powers to a selected few from among His creatures, and He is now resting in peace.

This doctrine of *Bida* also undid the work of many philosophers, who claimed that God had only created the initial mind and then His creativity had been exhausted. This original mind then replicated itself until its tenth residue created the universe. There were other similar ideologies, which suggested break in God's performance.

Hence the concept of *Bida* was a splendid tool to eradicate such malignant views. This concept entailed that all authority rested with God, and His blessings and sanctions were continuous and ongoing. He gave preference to whichever commandment He approved of, and delayed any event He liked. He took life and gave life. He placed illness upon someone and set another on the path of recovery. He boosted and reduced people's sustenance. He put someone on the seat of authority and dethroned another. He prolonged one's life due to his acts of compassion and reduced another's life or sustenance, due to his malicious behaviour, infidelity and repeated sinning.

It is said that God is in fresh elegance and with renewed grandeur every day. He made extinct whatever He wished to and provided a dress of reality to anything He liked, because He possessed the Supreme Knowledge (Umm al–Kitab). It is entirely within His authority to create and command.

Reasons For The Misconception About Bida

What made this issue more complicated was the ordinary meaning of the word *Bida*, in Arabic. It was generally used for discarding an old concept in the light of modern discoveries. In this sense this could not be applied to God at all, because it pointed to His ignorance. In view of this literal connotation, the opportunists used it as a pretext to spread lies about the straight faction, just to make ordinary Muslims move away from them, by accusing that God, according to their ideology is an ignorant being.

They also disseminated their evil propaganda by decorating the vocabulary in their own colours and said that Shi'as believed in a God, who started an act today, and then abandoned it when the folly of His work was realized, and He started to move in the opposite direction. Glory be to Him, no believer could have such a distorted concept of God.

People of intellect and understanding know that a phrase could not always give same meaning at every usage, in fact, its sense changes with the change of object. Allama Jalaluddin, in his book *Eiqan,* gave seven meanings for the Qur'anic phrase,

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

"Show us the straight path" **(*1:6*).**

If a person were not fully guided, then the phrase would mean,

"Show us the right path",

If the person were a guided one then it would mean,

"Keep us on the straight path",

and, if he had both of these qualities then the Verse would mean,

"Enhance our station of guidance and perception even more"

If we applied the similar rulings to the word – *Bida*, then its intended meaning would not correspond with its literal meaning, and it would then mean that God manifested an event, which was beyond human imagination, just as He has declared in the Qur'an,

وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ

"... And there will appear unto them, from their Lord, that wherewith they never reckoned" **(*39:47*).**

The phrase *Bada' Allaha* (God experienced *Bida*) would now mean (*Bida min Allah*), i.e. "it appeared to people, from God." and not as they presumed – "It appeared to God." Therefore, the Arabic letter '*L*' (pronounced as *Lam*) in Allah, should be considered *Min*, and this technique was well known among the grammarians. It was mentioned in *Mughni ul-Labeeb* that the 14th meaning of (*Lam*) was Min.

Bida Does Not Happen With God Due To Ignorance

It was established through the previous work that *Bida* did not happen with God, due to ignorance. The statements of the Imams have supplemented this. They further elaborated that, "God knows the event before *Bida*".

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) cursed those people who proclaimed *Bida* in terms of God's ignorance. It was related by Mansoor Ibn Hazim that he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), "Is it possible that an event might happen that is not in God's knowledge?" Imam replied, "No, this is not possible. If someone claimed like this then God might annihilate him"

Mansoor again asked, "My lord, is it true that whatever has happened or will happen before the Day of Judgement is all in God's knowledge?" Imam replied, "Yes, God knew the behaviour of things in advance, even before their advent. There is nothing in the Heavens and the Earth, which is hidden from God."

What a shameful behaviour it is then, of those who tried to smudge the Shi'a ideology using the pretext of *Bida*. If they were still determined in their ignorance, they should provide us with any statement from any of our Imams, to support their claim. Several everyday examples such as, wealth followed by poverty and poverty pursued by wealth, the restoration of health and sickness, substitution of honour with disgrace, life ending in death, could all be cited as manifestation of *Bida* in our day-to-day life.

The Derived Meanings Of Bida

We shall now discuss the derived meanings of *Bid*a. It had been known that God had two types of systems in place. *Tashreeyi* – dealt with the legal and social aspects such as, prayers, fasting, division of heritage etc. *Takweeni* was concerned with life, death, sustenance etc.

In the *Tashreeyi* system, the word *naskh* meant to replace and implement one legal order with another. Its equivalent in the Takweeni system was called *Bida*, which means to change man from one state into another state. In *naskh,* the change of space, time and personality resulted in the alteration of the applied regulations. This was an established fact among all Muslims and the Qur'an echoed it as well:

مَا نَنسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا

***"When We abrogate a sign or cause it to be forgotten, We substitute it with something better or similar"* (*2:106*).**

In *Bida* the same philosophy prevails. God varied people's states, for different reasons. This was such a vivid reality that no wise man could deny it. It did not reflect God's ignorance or a deficiency on His part. Rather, it mirrored His Sovereignty, Might and wide-ranging Authority.

Our Imams said that God had not been worshipped with any other form (of supplication), unlike in *Bida*. According to the narration of Hisham Ibn Saalim, Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had said; "No other act could display the splendour of God in the manner that *Bida* enunciated His magnificence."

It is strange to see that people believed in *naskh* in the legal matters of Islamic Shariah, but declined to accept *Bida* in Takweeni matters, when the nature of both was the same.

Our interpretation of *Bida* had been based on the works of Shaykh Al-Mufid and Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Damad, and it appeared that Shaykh At-Tusi also followed the same approach. Whatever, objection we could raise about *Bida*, the same could be formulated against *naskh*.

Bida Happens In God's Guarded Knowledge

It is evident from several authentic traditions from the Imams that there are two types of God's knowledge – *Makhshuf* (Perceptible) and *Makhzun* (Guarded). The later knowledge is exclusive to God

and He does not share it with any of His Messengers and Trustees, whereas, the former type is shared with His appointees.

It had been mentioned that *Bida* happened within His Guarded knowledge, because if it happened within the domain of His perceptible knowledge, it would result in the contradiction of His messengers. God does not like His messengers to be refuted.

It was related from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) and Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a), who said, “God had two types of knowledge, and one of those was guarded knowledge, which was not shared with any of His representatives. He educated His Messengers and Angels with the other knowledge. Whatever he shared with them must happen, as He would not let down His Messengers. He altered and amended His guarded knowledge as He desired.”

Clarification Of Doubt

It became evident from the above discussion that *Bida* did not happen in relation to the news that had been given to the Prophets. History however revealed a few incidents where *Bida* had happened with the Prophets.

It was written in *Masabih al-Anwar* on the authority of Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) that God revealed to Prophet (S), asking him to inform a King that He intended to kill him at such and such time. When the King was informed, he panicked and cried to the Lord for respite until the time that his son would grow up to take over his responsibilities.

The Lord told the Prophet that he should inform the King that his life had been prolonged for further fifteen years. The Prophet then asked God that He knew that he had never lied in his life, so how could he now go and inform the King of the change in His decision? God replied that as Prophet, he had been appointed to deliver His message, so he should obey and follow His instructions.

In the same book, it had been mentioned with reference to *Usul Al-Kafi* that once a Jew went to the Prophet (S) and gave his greetings in a manner that meant that God might kill him. The Prophet (S) replied to him in his usual manner. The companions asked the Prophet, why was he so polite with him, while he had cursed him. The Prophet (S) replied, “This man is going to collect wood from the jungle, where he will be bitten by a deadly black snake and he would die.”

After sometime the man returned from the jungle, safe and sound. The companions asked the Prophet (S) about the reason for his safe return. The Prophet (S) asked the Jew to unpack the wood and they found a black snake curled up within the bundle of wood. The Prophet (S) asked the Jew, if he had done any virtuous deed that day. The Jew replied that he had two pieces of bread with him. He had eaten one and given the other in charity. Listening to his reply the Prophet (S) said that it was this charity that saved him from this calamity. He then reiterated that charity (*Sadaqa*) could repel the ugliest of deaths.

A similar incident had also been mentioned about Jesus in some books. It was said that he informed a woodcutter about his death but he had evaded it.

There were several answers to this doubt regarding *Bida*. We would keep to the two short answers. Firstly, the news that was given to the Prophets was of two types – certain and probable. *Bida* could happen to the probable occurrences but not to the certain ones. Just as Imam Ali (‘a) while pointing to the future events of 70th Hijra had said, “God can abrogate whatever He wishes and establish whatever He desires, because He has the supreme knowledge.”

Secondly, the reason that was given in these traditions to explain that *Bida* could not take place in the news sent to the Prophets and the Messengers, because their truth could not be compromised. If *Bida* did take place in those events then the intentions were made clear to the Messengers immediately. This did not put doubt on their truthfulness in anyway. In fact, it vindicated their reliability. So, there could be no harm for *Bida* to take place in relation to such events too.

Further Explanation Of This Effect And Mention Of The Tablet Of Existence And Extinction

The Qur’anic Verses and the statements of the Imams (‘a) suggested that God had two Tablets (allegorical description of presentation). One of these was the Guarded Tablet (*Lawh al-Mahfooz*). All that happened in the Universe was recorded here in detail. No change could take place in its script.

The second one was called the Tablet of Existence and Extinction. This was subject to modifications because some events are linked to fulfilment of certain conditions. Therefore, if any of those conditions were altered then their results would also be modified.

Say for example, it was written in the Tablet of Existence and Extinction that a certain man would live up to an age of fifty years. Then if he did not do anything detrimental that could affect the duration of his life, his acts of compassion and charity could prolong the span of life from fifty to sixty or even seventy years. If on the other hand, he would show indifference, then his age could be reduced to forty years or even less. In the Guarded Tablet however, this result was accurately described.

There were few other examples of this type mentioned in the notes, which have been omitted here to save time and effort.

Definite And Indefinite Destiny

It has been identified that destiny was of two kinds. One was restricted and the other was unrestricted. The later was also called *Ajlum Musamma*. The conditional destiny changed with its associated restrictions. This could vary the outcome. However, with the unconditional or unrestricted destiny, no alterations could take place, as described in Surah Al-Fatir:

وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِن مُّعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

"... And no one whose life is lengthened has his life lengthened, nor is aught diminished of one's life, but it is all in a book; surely this is easy to Allah" (***35:11***).

Similarly, the statement of Prophet Noah was recorded in the Qur'an as follows:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا

"Then I (***Noah***) ***said, Ask forgiveness of your Lord, surely He is the most Forgiving..."*** (***71:10***).

يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُم مِّدْرَارًا

"He will send down upon you the cloud, pouring down abundance of rain" (***71:11***).

وَيُمْدِدْكُم بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ أَنْهَارًا

"And help you with wealth and sons, and make for you gardens, and make for you rivers" (***71:12***).

The people however, due to their folly, had not acted upon his advice. So they were destroyed and eliminated from existence. This verified that if a nation would pay heed to His instructions, they could be saved from this eternal destruction.

In Surah Al–'Araf, God said:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ

"And if the people of the towns (***kibbutz***) ***had believed and guarded*** (***against evil***) ***We would certainly have opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth..."*** (***7:96***).

They however did not choose to obey. Therefore, they remained dispossessed. That was why it was mentioned in the Qur'an that if there were no cry for mercy from the people, then God would not care for them.

Answer To A Query

A question that arose here was that when a final decision was endorsed in the Guarded Tablet, then what was the purpose of placing it in the Tablet of existence and extinction, and then amending or

changing it? This question could be answered in several ways.

As this command was related to the divine destiny and management of the universe, therefore, it would not be advisable for us to interfere with it. In fact, we could not understand the depth of this matter. Logically speaking, the ignorance of a matter does not invalidate its significance.

It could be said that knowledge of all things belonged to God. However, it was possible that by appointing Angels to make amendments or change in the Tablet of existence and extinction, God wanted to show His grace and love for His servants, and demonstrate how they could face good and bad effects of their behaviour even before the Day of Judgment, so that they could continue the process of retribution (of deeds).

It is possible that He just wanted to show to the people through His Messengers that good and bad actions could play a significant role in the correction and detriment of their acts respectively. In this manner they would be encouraged to perform good deeds with a sense of pleasure and try to avoid transgression, because everything that is mentioned in the Guarded Tablet is an outcome of their conduct.

It is equally possible that in view of the possibility of alterations in the Tablet of Existence and Extinction, people would hasten to supplicate more eagerly for redemption, which is itself an act of worship as explained in the Qur'an:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

"Supplicate to Me, I shall answer you, and those who show arrogance to supplicate will be sent to the Hell" (***40:60***).

In this Verse the phrase *Ibadati* refers to supplication. Moreover, charitable acts that help the poor and needy are the best of the deeds. Therefore, if this possibility of alteration and amendment was not available, then acts of charity would disappear and the people would suffer from a lack of God's blessings that they continued to benefit from.

Narrations From The Sunni Texts In Support Of Bida

Allama Zamakhshari wrote in Al–*Kashaf* that an explanation of this Verse:

وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِن مُّعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

"... And no one whose life is lengthened has his life lengthened, nor is aught diminished of one's life, but it is all in a book; surely this is easy to Allah" (***35:11***).

was that it had been mentioned in the Tablet of Existence and Extinction that if a certain person had just performed Hajj or strived in the way of God, then his life would be forty years, but if he combined the two tasks, then he would live for sixty years. Thus, if he would attain this target, then his life would actually extend. However, if he relied on one of the acts and his life did not exceed forty, then in fact, his life span had been reduced. On the basis of this fact, the Prophet of God declared that performing charitable acts enhanced one's life and made cities to grow."

Allama Baidhavi wrote in *Anwar at-Tanzil* that the process of extinction and survival was continuous in all things, as indicated by the wording of the Verse:

اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ

***"Allah amplifies and straitens the means of subsistence for whom He pleases..."* (*13:26*).**

The same was true for life and death, love and animosity and faith and infidelity, as alterations did not occur in these events.

This view was stated by Umro Ibn Masud, a famous Sunni scholar. The believers of this doctrine cried and supplicated a lot in the presence of God, so that He would make them virtuous rather than a cruel and ill-fated person. This interpretation was narrated by Jaber Ibn Abdullah Ansari on the authority of the Prophet (S). He then copied the statement below: "This act of preservation or annihilation is on the subject of sustenance or trials and tribulations. Initially these matters are entered in the Tablet, and then these are deleted by charitable deeds or supplication. The whole purpose of this exercise is to invite people to the attendance of God, by encouraging (noble acts) among them."

This was the same as the concept of *Bida*, which Shi'as believed in. The odd thing is that after mentioning all these facts in his exegesis, he wrote a strange note of disapproval saying that Rawafiz approved of *Bida* for God.

Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti wrote in *Durr al-Manthur* on the authority of Ibn Abbas, from *Mustadrak* of Hakim that he had said, "Fear and alarm cannot save you from the destiny, it is only supplication to God that can change the fate."

Ibn Abbas, in his supplication used to say, "O, God, if You have counted me among the virtuous, then confirm me in that group, and if You have considered me among the ghastly then remove my name from that faction, as You can eliminate whatever You want, since You have the Supreme Knowledge (and authority)."

He also quoted Kaab's discussion with 'Umar, when he said to him, "If that Verse was not contained in the Qur'an, he would have told him all the incidents that would have occurred until the Day of Judgement."

‘Umar asked Kaab to tell him about the Verse, and he read the Verse,

يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ

***“Allah makes to pass away and establishes what He pleases, and with Him is the basis of the Book”* (*13:39*).**

These examples have amply clarified that the concept of *Bida* was a common one between both groups of Muslims.

For other references one could refer to *Kitab an-Nihaya* of Ibn Kathir and *Anwar al-Lughat*, part one under chapter *‘Ba’*.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 11: Heated And Aggressive Debates About God

Shaykh As-Saduq has said that belligerent debates, illogical arguments and pedantic talks about God were strictly prohibited in our religion, because such erroneous discussions could lead to detrimental positions, where things which were incompatible with the Glory of God could be said.

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) said, while explaining the revealed text:

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ

***“And that thy Lord, He is the goal”* (*53:42*).**

“When a discussion is initiated about God, the best line of action is to keep quiet.”

Imam further elaborated, “O son of Adam, your heart (metaphoric definition of brain) is so tiny that if a wild bird wanted to eat it, it would not satisfy its hunger. Your eye is so tiny that if an object the size of a pinhole were placed in it, its vision would be disturbed. Do you want to portray the knowledge of the Universe on the strength of these two faculties? If you are true in your claim, then cast a naked eye towards the Sun, a radiant creation of God, and if you succeeded in doing so, then your claims would then be justified.”

Imam Ali (‘a) said, “Anyone who likes to spread his religious doctrine by force will end up being an atheist or a heretic.”

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) had said that those who simply entered into futile discussions about God were on their wrong foot towards their end. And, those who bowed their heads were delivered, as these people were pious and distinguished.

However, to refer to the Qur’an and reason from the statements of the Prophet and the Imams, is allowed for those who are fully conversant with these sources. It is unlawful for those who do not possess this capability, to enter into such a discussion.

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) used to say to his companions that they should argue with atheists on the basis of his teachings, and if they were defeated in the discussion then he [Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a)] would be the loser instead of them. He further said that a gentler attitude with the opponents on permissible topics was a better tool for discussions.

It was reported that once Abu Hazeel Allaf offered to debate with Hisham that if he was defeated, he would accept Hisham’s religion. Otherwise Hisham had to accept his religion. Hisham replied to Abu Hazeel and said, “You are not fair in setting the terms of the debate, because I am prepared to debate with you on the condition that if I dominate the discussion then you would accept my religion. If, on the other hand, you win, then I would refer the questions raised in the debate to my Imam for guidance.”

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 11

In this chapter Allama Sheikh Abu Ja’far has stressed on two things.

1. It is prohibited to discuss the nature of God, because discussions on this issue lead to detriment instead of benefit.

2. Those who are fully aware of the teachings of the Qur’an and that of Imams, and discuss the matter in an amicable way, can defend their point of view against the opponents, are encouraged to participate in such debates, but those who are not capable they are advised to keep away from such encounters.

Since understanding God’s essence and nature is beyond our capabilities, therefore, God had not placed the burden of knowing Him, on our shoulders. This was clear from one of the narrations of *Usul al-Kafi*, in which the honourable Mr Sahl made a written request to Imam Al-’Askari (‘a) about the nature and essence of God.

Imam replied, “You have asked about the nature of God. You must know that you are free of this obligation. It is sufficient for you to believe that He is unique in His attributes and essence. He has no progeny nor is He the offspring of any other being.

He is a Creator not the creature. He can fashion as many corporeal or non-corporeal beings as He wishes. He can create shapes, but does not possess any shape for Himself. His Person is far beyond this status that He should be in configuration of something else. It is His individuality that nothing resembles Him. He hears and He sees.”

Clarification Of Doubt

If further probing and debates would have to be avoided in matters of Tawhid by adopting the attitude as indicated above, then it would become necessary to adopt *Taqlid* (obedience of someone else’s edicts and decisions without questioning him) about this issue while keeping the fundamental views on the sideline.

A question that arose in this context is whether *Taqlid* is permissible on the fundamental issues of the religion or not?

The answer to this misgiving would be that the problem under consideration is not Tawhid or the arguments about the existence of the Creator of the Universe. The conflict is about bringing the essence of God into the arena of quibbling and debate. We are not burdened to know about this. Therefore, there is no question of invoking *Ijtihad* (reinterpretation) or *Taqlid* (replication) in this matter, because these terms are only applicable when there are legal obligations for the people.

Warning

In the above text there was a mention of the terms and conditions of a debate between Abu Hazeel Allaf and Hisham. This provided guidelines for those engaging in modern debates.

It would be incorrect to change the conditions of religion on the basis of personal debates. This should be avoided completely, because only those who had doubt about their own religion made such stipulations.

A person who had confidence and faith in his religion would not alter his religion upon being defeated by his opponent. The maximum he would do was to refer the questions raised in the debate to some higher authority of his denomination.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 12: Pen And The Tablet

Shaykh Ibn Babway has said that our belief about the Pen and the Tablet was that they were two Angels.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 12

Most famous view that has been supported among various sects of Islam, and by numerous Ahadith was that – Lawh (Tablet) – was a thing, which contained the documentation of all events of the Universe that would take place from the beginning until the Day of Judgement. Qalam (Pen) was an instrument of writing, whose nature could be anything.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) was quoted in Tafsir al-Qummi, where he had said that God initially created the Pen, which was then ordained to write. The Pen wrote, whatever had happened up to that time and then it scribed about the future events until the Day of Judgement.

Shaykh As-Saduq's opinion was also that Pen and the Tablet were two Angels. It was based on a narration that was presented in his book *Kitab al-Mani*. However, this was a solitary statement, which could not be relied upon.

Shaykh Al-Mufid's Criticism

Allama Shaykh Al-Mufid wrote that, "Those who believed that the Pen and the Tablet were two Angels were far from the reality, because nomenclature for Angels was different. Also, no Arabic language dictionary had ever described any Angel with those names."

Reconciliation Between These Two Ideas

The difference between these two ideas was due to the nature of their meanings. The common concept was based upon the apparent meanings of the phrase, whereas Shaykh Babway's denotation was based upon the veiled meanings of the term Pen and the Tablet. It has been said that any Qur'anic text had at least seven levels of understanding, and all these levels were not known to anyone other than the Prophet (S) and his progeny.

Allama Al-Majlisi had speculated that Pen and the Tablet might be the two Angels created specially to do the specific task. Or, it might be that these terms referred to the apparent function that two Angels were responsible to carry out.

The Final Decision

Allama Al-Majlisi said that for such symbolic terms, the apparent meaning should be taken for use rather than using personal imaginations, unless there was a clear indication provided by the Qur'an, the Prophet (S) or his Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 13: The Chair

Shaykh As-Saduq said that the Chair (*Kursi*) was a mighty object, which contained all the Creation, including Heavens and the Earth[1]. The Chair was also given the meaning of Knowledge. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that in the Qur'anic Verse:

...وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ...

***"...[God's] His Chair [Kursi] encompasses Heavens and the Earth..."* (*2:255*).**

The term *Kursi* stood for God's Knowledge."

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1. Whatever Shaykh As-Saduq said about the Kursi, was complemented by a large number of traditions originating from the Imams.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 13

Whatever Shaykh As-Saduq has said about the Kursi, is complemented by a large number of traditions

originating from the Imams. We present a few *Ahadith* from Kitab Al-Tawhid here.

Fadheel Ibn Yasaar said that when he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) about the *Kursi*, as mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, Imam replied that *Kursi* contained everything that existed between Heavens and the Earth.

Zarara said that he had asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) about the meaning of the Verse:

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

***“God's Kursi encompasses Heavens and the Earth...”* (*2:255*).**

He asked if it indicated that the Universe encompassed the Chair?

Imam (‘a) replied, that the opposite was true. The Chair included the Heavens and the Earth. There were several traditions in the literature to support this meaning. It also included another meaning of knowledge as well.

Further Evidence From The Dictionary

The work of other great linguists, apart from the traditions of the Imams substantiated the meaning of the word *Kursi* in Arabic language included Knowledge. The author of *Qamus Al-Muhit* said that *Kursi* stood for knowledge. The author of *Lisan-al-Arab* also said that in Arabic the term – *Kursi* - portrayed Knowledge.

In fact, the two meanings of Kursi, as introduced by the Shaykh were not very different.

The lay person used the literal meaning of the word Chair i.e. a place where God was seated. That He sat there to extend His legs like a (monarch), were senseless depictions.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 14: Arsh (The Throne)

Shaykh Abu Ja'farsaid that our view of the ‘Throne’ was that it was another name for the collection of all things (spiritual or material) in the Universe, as created by God. Again, God's Knowledge was also linked with the ‘Throne’.

While explaining the Qur'anic text:

الرَّحْمٰنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

"The Beneficent One, Who is established on the Throne" **(*20:5*).**

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq was asked to elucidate about this term.

He replied, "God had proportionately the same distance from His entire creation. One could not say that He is nearer to the one and further away from the other. This 'Throne' was lifted up by eight Angels"

These might be eight different forces that were required to balance the Throne. Each of the Angel had eight eyes and each eye was so big that it could overlap over the entire world. One of these Angels had a human form which asked for sustenance for the descendants of Adam, from God. Another one was for the animal kingdom. The third angel asked for sustenance for the beasts and the next one sought sustenance for the birds. These Angels could assume the form of the creatures they were asking the sustenance for. At this moment these were the Angels upon whom the 'Throne' rested, but they would become eight on the Day of Judgement.

However, the term *Arsh*, which meant – Knowledge – was balanced by eight persons. Four of these persons were from the early humans and the remaining four were from the later generations. The four from the former generations were – Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The remaining four were – Muhammad al-Mustafa (S), Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a), Imam Al-Hasan ('a) and Imam Husayn ('a). This was the summary of the news that had been received from the Imams regarding the Throne and its bearers.

The reason why these distinguished people depicted Throne as the body of Knowledge of God was due to the fact that before the descent of Prophet Muhammad (S) all the Messengers had received their share of knowledge through it. The other Prophets such as Noah, Ibraham, Moses and Jesus benefitted from it. Similarly, the Knowledge of God had passed through Prophet Muhammad (S), Imam Ali ('a), Imam Hasan ('a) and Imam Husayn ('a) to the reach the rest of the Imams.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 14

The Reason For The Muslims Not To Understand The True Meaning Of Arsh

According to the dictionary, *Arsh* meant – 'Seat of the Kings'. This was why a vast majority of the people got confused and moved away from the truth. Therefore, the sects like *Mujassama* (corporal) and *Qashireen* further developed this view, where God was presented as a heavy- weighted Monarch, seated on a glittering Throne that squeaked like a saddle, under the weight of the one seated aboard.

However, it was made clear earlier with a logical and practical reasoning that God is free of corporal attributes. Therefore, such ideas had no significance at all for an inquisitive mind. So, the symbolism and the meanings that had been used in the Shariah for the term – Throne – are described below.

The author of this work suggested that one meaning for the term – Throne - was the entire creation of God. Arabic dictionary suggested that throne also had meanings such as a State or a Country. The statements and narrations from the family of the Prophet (S) favoured this explanation.

Honourable Sudair narrated that he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) about the meaning of the term - Throne and the Chair. Imam replied that Arsh stood for several different connotations and wherever it had been used in the Qur'an, its meaning was dictated by the implications for its use. Therefore, in the Verse:

وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

"...and He is Lord of the Tremendous Throne" (***9:129***).

it was meant that God was the owner of a mighty Universe.

Similarly, in the Verse:

الرَّحْمَٰنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

"The Beneficent One, Who is established on the Throne" (***20:5***).

it was meant that God dominated the mighty Universe.

We could however, investigate why the Universe was labelled as *Arsh*. On the surface, it could be seen that the centre of a State's Authority was considered to be its Capital, which could be further narrowed down to the Royal throne. The situation is precisely similar when we look at every speck of the Universe, which bears witness to its Creator's ingenuity and splendour. The evidence is so immense that its circumvention is impossible. This is why the entire collection of all the components of the Universe is

referred to as the Throne.

Apart from the meaning conveyed earlier by the author of this text when investigating the meaning of term – '***alal 'arshi stawa –*** another important inference could be drawn is that God is dominant over the entire Universe.

The *Mujassema* sect stumbled on the wrong sense of this phrase and deduced its meaning to be – 'sitting in straight position'. They never gave it a thought that such associations were below God's dignity. In Arabic language, the phrase, '*ustawa'* also stood for dominance. When Baees, an Arabic poet, expressed in a couplet – "*qad ustawa basharan alal Iraq*", he meant that a man had dominated over Iraq, without bloodshed or swordsmanship.

The other meaning of the *Arsh* was the matter that had been created by God around the edges of the Universe. It did not seem clear whether it circumvented the Chair or the Chair enveloped it. There were several different narrations about this, which have been quoted in Chapter Thirteen.

Allama Al–Majlisi's study suggested that *Arsh* was predominant over the Chair. This view was supported by the work of other scholars also. They speculated that the Chair prevailed up to the eighth Heaven, whereas, the *Arsh* extended its influence up to the ninth Heaven. However, the narrations of the Infallibles (another title for the Twelve Imams, the Prophet and Lady Fatimah – daughter of the Prophet) did not correspond with this point of view.

Anyhow *Arsh* was a mighty installation that had been created before the initiation of the Universe. It contained some kind of liquid substance in itself within a spaceless environment. It was composed of various energy levels of different colours and its dimensions were now beyond the imaginative Cosmos. Its numerous stability stations were so far apart from each other that the fastest flying object would take tens of thousands of light years to reach only one of its stations. Each station was full of Angels, whose numbers were only known to God, busy in the praise of their Lord.

What Is Within The Throne Of God?

God only truly knew and had the knowledge of what was contained within the Throne. There were a few *Ahadith* available on this issue but their contents were not reliable. It has been stated that virtual image of whatever was present in the Universe was found in the Throne. This was stated on the narration of Imam Ja'far As–Sadiq ('a).

Allama Al–Majlisi wrote in Bihar on the authority of Imam Zayn Al–'Abidin ('a) that Arsh contained the real time virtual image of all the things present in the Universe. It was reported from the Prophet (S), who had said, while elucidating a Verse from the Qur'an, that all acts of human behaviour performed on the earth, were replicated at the same time on the Arsh. It has also been reported that good acts of human beings were freely available for the heavenly creatures to see, while their bad acts were made to hide by

the grace of God.

A third meaning of *Arsh* stood for knowledge. It was reported in *Kitab at-Tawhid*, on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), that whatever, was present in the Universe was contained in the Chair and *Arsh* depicted that Knowledge of God, which no one could comprehend. Since understanding of God was achieved on the basis of knowledge attained by His creatures, *Arsh* could be symbolised with knowledge. The bedrock of *Arsh* (knowledge) was some of the prophets prior to Prophet Muhammad (S), and the rest were fourteen Infallibles.

The fourth allegorical meaning of *Arsh* was the heart of a believer, as described by the Hadith Qudsi, which stated that nothing could contain God, but the heart of a believer. It was important to know that all those meanings that had been described for the *Throne* also included the Chair. The only controversy was about the magnitude of these objects.

The Pronouncement Of Reality

Some of the traditions were related to the resting of the Throne upon eight Angels, who resembled some of the living creatures of this world, in their shape and form. We would agree to the criticism levelled by Shaykh Al-Mufid, who said that all these statements were solitary assertions, therefore, their subject matter could not be relied upon. Thus, care must be exercised about these proclamations.

Allama Al-Majlisi further, reiterated that some of the bearers of the Throne resembled the species proposed by Plato and Aristotle in outline. However, what the recipients of the revelations had said about them was totally different. This was not hidden from the people of faith.

The names of the Prophets that came to surface as being the foundation of the Throne were all Grand Prophets and Heads of the Institution of Prophethood. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that these Prophets (who were the pivot of revelations) were – Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. They were the recipients of Shariah, as indicated in the Qur'an.

However, Prophet Muhammad (S) was on a higher level in comparison to them, since the Shariah of Muhammad (S) had replaced their Shariahs. It would continue until the Day of Judgment. After the Prophet, this status was transferred to Imam Ali ('a) and the other Imams, as they were the Legatees of the Knowledge, attributes of all the Prophets, and God's reason upon the Cosmos.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 15: Spirit And Nafs

Shaykh Ja'far, may Allah elevate his soul, said that our belief about *Nafs* (being) was that *Nafoos* (plural of *Nafs*) were those spirits upon whom human life and its establishment depended[1].

These were the first creatures of God, as indicated by the Prophet. He said that God had created the pious *nafoos* (beings) and took an oath of allegiance from them about His unity, and then He fashioned rest of the Creation. We also believe that all Nafoos had been created for permanence, and not for destruction. Prophet (S) had confirmed this – "You have not been created for annihilation but your creation is permanent.

However, you will be transferred from one place of abode to another. These Nafoos and Spirits were temporary travellers on the earth and prisoners within their bodies. This was also our belief that when these Spirits abandoned their cadaver, they either remain blessed or under a sentence, and finally they will be returned to their original bodies. Jesus had said to his companions, 'I am telling you the truth that only that thing escapes to the heavens that has descended from the heavens.'"

God said in the Qur'an that He might have elevated (*Balam Baoor*) due to His signs, but he followed his *Nafs* and bowed to the corporal desires.

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ

***"And had We willed We would have raised him by their means* (*that is, by signs*)*, but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust"* (*7:176*).**

Therefore, everything that does not go to the spiritual kingdom was directed towards the fire of Hell, which was divided into various sub sectors like the Paradise.

God said that:

تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ

"***The angels and the Spirit ascend unto Him"* (*70:4*).**

i.e. they find their proper abode. He also said that the Godfearing and abstinent will be in the best places of the Paradise with their Lord.

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ

***“Lo! the righteous will dwell among gardens and rivers”* (*54:54*).**

فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِيكٍ مُقْتَدِرٍ

***“Firmly established in the favour of a Mighty King”* (*54:55*).**

He also said, at another place (in His book) that those who laid down their lives in His Path were not dead but they were alive and received sustenance from their Lord, and they were happy with whatever, their Lord had granted them.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ

***“Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah, as dead. Nay, they are living”* (*3:169*).**

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ

***“With their Lord they provision. Jubilant* (*are they*)*”* (*3: 170*).**

At another place (in the Qur’an), the Lord said:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَشْعُرُونَ

***“And say not of those who are slain in the way of Allah: "They are dead." Nay, they are living, though ye perceive* (*it*) *not”* (*2:154*).**

The Prophet of God said that, “Spirits were divided into groups; therefore, those who befriended each other (in the spiritual domain) were together here on the earth, and those who had shunned each other, remained separated here in their earthly abode.”

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) had said that God set up a harmonious relationship between certain spirits in the spiritual domain, almost two thousand (cosmic) years before the creation of their cadaver (bodies). When the time of Qa’im Aali Muhammad (‘a) would come, then those who had met each other in the spiritual realm, will be made Legatees of each other, and the blood brothers would be deprived of this distinction.

It is also reported from the same Imam that spirits met in the space and discussed things after recognising each other. When a new spirit met them after leaving the earth, these spirits would say that the new arrival should be left alone as it had come out of a terrible experience. They then would enquire

about its well–being and ask about their friends. If the new arrival replied that he was fine and well, they would then say that one day he would meet us, but if he was dead and had vanished, they would feel sad about him.

God has said:

وَمَنْ يَحْلِلْ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبِي فَقَدْ هَوَىٰ

"And he on whom my wrath cometh is lost indeed" (***20:81***).

فَأَمَّا مَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ

"Then as for him whose measure of good deeds is heavy" (***101:6***).

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ

"He shall live a pleasant life" (***101:7***).

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ

"And as for him whose measure of good deeds is light" (***101:8***).

فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ

"His abode shall be the Hawiah (***abyss***)***"*** (***101:9***).

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَهْ

"And what will make you know what it is?" (***101:10***).

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ

"A superheated fire" (***101:11***).

Luqman said to his son, "O, son this world is like an ocean, where many generations have perished. You should make faith as your boat, piety and abstinence as your luggage, and absolute faith on God as

your sails, even then if you reached the shoreline, it will be but with the grace of God, and if you died and perished in it then this destruction will be the result of your sins and not the act of God."

Three occasions were the most difficult and cumbersome junctures for the Sons of Adam. These were – the day he was born, the day he would die, and the day he would rise from his grave. These were the three occasions for which, Prophet Yahya (John the Baptist) had been granted amnesty, as declared in the Qur'an:

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

***"Peace is for him* (*Yahya*) *on the day he was born, the day he will die and the day he will be raised from his grave"* (*19:15*).**

Prophet 'Isa (Jesus) has also been declared in peace for these occasions. He himself claimed that there was amnesty for him on the day of his birth, the day he would die and the day he would be raised from the dead.

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

***"Peace on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive!"* (*19:33*).**

About the Spirit, we believed that it was not a material being. It was a totally different kind of creation, as proclaimed by God:

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ

***"And* [*towards the end*] *We fashioned him* (*man*) *with something new"* (*23:14*).**

It is also believed that Prophets and Imams had five types of spirits. These were – *Ruh Al–Qudus* (an elevated Spirit), *Ruh al–Eiman* (the Spirit of Faith), *Ruh al–Quwaat* (the Spirit of strength), *Ruh al–Shahwat* (the Spirit of Desire) and *Ruh al–Mudraj* (the Spirit of sense and movement)

Further to this, the people of faith (Mu'minin) had four types of spirits, as stated above, with the exception of *Ruh Al–Qudus*, but the infidels and the quadruples had only three types of spirits, as they lack the first two.

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

***"They will ask thee concerning the Spirit* (*ruh*). *Say: the Spirit is an affair of my Lord"* (*17:85*).**

The Prophet (S) was commanded by God to tell the people who were concerned and wanted to know about the nature of the spirit, that the Spirit was a commandment of God. The word *Ruh*, as mentioned in the Qur'an, stands for a special creation, which was more elevated in status than Gabriel and Michael. It stayed with the Prophets and the Imams. This Spirit belonged to the class of Angels.

In the end, the author would wish to write a book, which would explain these concepts in more detail.

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1. In this Chapter, the learned scholar invited our attention to some important subjects, such as – what was the reality of Nafs and Rooh (Being and Spirit), the creation of Rooh (Spirit) before the design of material structures, the survival of Spirits after the demise of bodies, the pronouncement of Tawhid in the spiritual realm, the repudiation of transmigration.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 15

In this chapter the learned scholar has invited our attention to some important subjects:

1. What is the reality of Nafs and Ruh? (Being and Spirit)

2. The creation of Ruh (Spirit) before the design of material structures.

3. The Survival of Spirits after the demise of bodies.

4. The pronouncement of Tawhid in the spiritual realm.

5. The repudiation of transmigration.

It Is Difficult To Find The Essence Of Nafs And Ruh

It was universally accepted that there were certain phrases, which, we used when we said about something within ourself, like, 'this is my book' or 'this is my hand', or 'I have done my best', or 'this pen is mine'. The thing to which the words – my, mine, whose or I were applied to was called the *Ruh* (Spirit) and *Nafs al-Natiqa* (a being that could speak).

This being was the foundation of humanity. This being was the one on whom the legal sanctions were applied. This was the one that would be liable for punishment or reward. However, the nature or the

essence of this *Nafs* and *Ruh*, always escaped the logic and philosophy of thinkers of all times.

This was why people were given an abstract answer when they posed this question to the Prophets. They knew that they did not hold the capability to understand its nature. This is the reason why Prophet Muhammad (S) replied to the query of a Jew, who asked him about the nature of spirit, in simple words. He said that the Spirit was one of the commandments of God.

The Qur'an had described this incident in these words:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

***"They ask you* (*O, Prophet*) *about the Spirit; tell them that this is one of the commandments of My Lord"* (*17:85*).**

And then, God provided the reason for this short reply:

وَمَا أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

***"... And you are not given aught of knowledge but a little* [*therefore you are unable to understand its nature*]*"* (*17:85*).**

This reply along with a statement of the Prophet (S) that, "Whoever, has understood the essence of his being has understood his Lord," sheds some light on the complexity of this subject.

It has been suggested that just as it was difficult to comprehend the Essence of God, so it was impossible for us to appreciate the nature of the *Nafs* and that of the Spirit. Man had been awarded an inquisitive nature as proven by the rapid technological changes around us. His desire to unravel the secrets of nature compelled him to unravel the heavens in such a manner that some distant objects came within his reach. He was now daring to say that he had unwound the knot of creation. Yet, his knowledge of the spirit was negligible, and as usual he tended to deny its presence within the spectre of life.

Philosophers and parapsychologists have done some work to understand this phenomenon, but their difference was still no less than their initial counterparts. A summary of their differences has been presented below. Their basic difference was about the nature of Spirit. The second difference is on its *Hudus wa Qudum* (whether, it is a created being or it is eternal). They differed about whether it would die or live forever. It was not clear what would happen to it after death.[1]

Applicability Of The Meanings Of Ruh

Ruh belonged to the Arabic language and different meanings were applicable at different times. A few of these have been presented below.

In the Qur'an, God said:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا

"***And thus, have We inspired in thee*** (***Muhammad***) ***a Spirit of Our command*** [***with our commandment, We have revealed the Qur'an on to you in this manner***]" (***42:52***).

God has said about *Ruh* in the context of His revelations:

يُنَزِّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ

"He sends down the angels with the inspiration by His commandment on whom He pleases of His servants" (***16:2***).

Regarding faith, it has been mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ

"...God helped them with their faith..." (***58:22***).

It has been used in relation to the light of Faith (Iman):

Imam As-Sadiq (***'a***) ***said: "Kharaja minhu Ruh il-Iman, "The light of faith has been withdrawn from them"***[2].

Ruh was used for Gabriel, when God said:

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ

"Say (***O Prophet***), ***The Holy spirit*** (***Gabriel***) ***has revealed it from your Lord with the truth"*** (***16:102***).

Ruh was used to signify an angel, which was mightier than Gabriel and Michael.

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا

*"[**During the night of Qadr**] **the Angels and Ruh descends to the earth..."* (***97:4***).

It was used to imply blessings, when it was said

يُنَزِّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ

"God sends with His commands the Angels with blessings" (***16:2***).

It was applicable to Jesus, when it was said

وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ

"...and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him..." (***4:171***).

Four Important Statements On The Spirit

There were four important statements to bear in mind regarding the spirit. Firstly, a spirit was that state, which was created after an appropriate composition of its ingredients, had been attained. The Physicians of the East referred to this state as its *Mizaj* (Humour). Secondly, the spirit and the body were one and the same thing. In other words, spirit was another name for a body. Thirdly, the spirit was a sensitive essence that motivated a body. Lastly, its cessation from a body was called death. It then became free of the implications of the material ingredients of the body.

Spirit was a sensitive essence and it had a delicate electronic bulk that streamed continuously through the body like the flow of water in a rose flower, or oil in the seeds of a plant or the heat in a fire or the movement of electric charge in an electrical circuit. Its detachment from a body caused its (body's) death.

The first statement belonged to Physicians and Hakims. The second account related to the views of Atheists, the third assertion was that of Eastern Philosophers, Theologians and majority of the Shi'a Scholars. Finally, the fourth affirmation was that of some Shi'a researchers and devoutly spiritual people.

Rebuttal Of The First Statement

Mizaj was variable in its nature. We could see that a person was in a higher state of energy on one day and on another, he was lethargic and lacking energy. This was due to the change in composition of the body ingredients. The spirit did not have such variations and its sensitivity remained the same. This suggested that spirit and the *mizaj* were two different things.

If *Ruh* and *mizaj* were the same entities, then their likes and dislikes should be the same. Often it has

been noticed that spiritual demand was different from the humour (*mizaj*) of a person e.g. human disposition was that if he was standing at a height, he would like to come down, unlike the spirit, which always liked to ascend greater heights to elevate a person.

Similarly, *mizaj* sought tranquillity. Its composition was material oriented. So, a person moved when his spirit desired. A person who is suffering from Parkinson's disease would experience tremors at physical level but his spirit would wish for composure and ease. Given that these requirements were diverse for the two aspects of human beings, then how could the two be considered to be a single entity?

In the present age, it was possible to practically show that a spirit's nature was different from the material structure of a living being and its disposition. Therefore, the work of parapsychologists convinced many who rejected the concept, to accept the presence of a soul, and some were reverted to a belief in God.

Rebuttal Of The Second Statement

A human body was prone to change. Sometimes it would be strong and at other occasions it would be eroded by disease. However, the soul stayed constant in itself. This proved that the body and soul were two different entities.

Everyone referred to their body parts by identifying them with their soul and *Nafs*. They would say that these were my feet, my hands and my body. Evidently, the referee and the object that was being referred to were two different things. Thus, body and spirit could not be the one and the same thing under any circumstance.

All human beings were alike so far as the chemistry of their body was concerned. Yet there was something that differentiated between Tom, Dick and Harry. What was that thing, which made them different? It was called '*ana*' in Arabic, '*mun*' in Persian, '*main*' in Urdu and '*I*' in English. This was otherwise known as '*Nafs al-natiqa*' or the soul.

It was clear that man was not in the same state when he was alive or was dead. He spoke, he felt and pondered when he was alive, but all of these faculties became redundant when he was dead. This showed that in life there was something extra to his body that was responsible for those functions, which was missing from his dead body. This was what is called *Nafs al-natiqa* or the spirit.

Reasoning For The Uniqueness Of Soul

Soul was independent of matter in its actions, and its exploits were to attain knowledge. Once it had acquired the knowledge of its essence, then it became totally independent of the body. It was therefore, natural to assume that soul was a unique and exclusive (lonely) entity.

If soul were a material being, it would then alter with the change in the state of the body. It has been seen however that body might become weak and reduced in size due to malnutrition, yet the soul would

become stronger and stronger. This was witnessed particularly in people who went through intense spiritual exercise. After completing their sacred task for spiritual development, they would feel enhanced spiritually. The perceptive ability of thus weakened body would become increased and manifold. On the other hand, those who had lavish indulgence with food would appear to have inflated bodies but their spirit would find itself at its lowest point.

A material body drained out more and became exhausted as it worked harder. However, a spirit's strength would improve with stern exercises. This again suggested that the basis of soul was totally different from that of a material body.

Matter on its own could not evaluate itself, because it was devoid of intuition. On the other hand, a soul was always aware of itself. This suggested that soul was a different entity in as to the matter.

Functions of a material being and its related tools were limited. Soul, however, possessed indefinite perceptions, so it was different from corporeal arrangements.

Removal Of A Perplexity

If we accepted spirit (soul) as *mujarrad* (exclusive), then certain Islamic Schools would object to this claim by saying that it was tantamount to committing shirk, because, according to them only God was *Mujarrad* (unique). By considering a soul to be *mujarrad* as well, a commonality was suggested to exist between God and the spirit. This was *shirk*. Thus, it was an extremely weak postulation due to several reasons.

Equating the soul with God impinged upon the non-permissible attributes (*sifat al-salbia*) of God. It was proven earlier that an equation in these attributes did not make the two entities similar, because if it were so then many different realities and natures would become one and the same thing.

To give an example, a donkey and a lion were two different species, and both of them had a common attribute that they were different from man i.e. they did not walk on two feet, or man had a superior intellect, which both the donkey and lion lacked. Thus, a lion and a donkey shared several common non-permissible attributes when compared to a third entity, yet nobody could claim that lion and a donkey were of the same species. They would always belong to two different categories. It was therefore, proven that a resemblance in non-permissible attributes of any two or more species did not demand that they should be classed into a single entity.

If we accepted the spirit to be *mujarrad* (unique), then it did not in any way constitute *shirk*, just because we have differed in the meaning of some other attributes that were common between God and His Creation – man, such as listening, hearing, knowledge and authority etc. We all agreed that the sense in which God was all Hearing, all Seeing and all Mighty, His creatures were not. Therefore, it was possible that in terms of exclusivity, any similarity between the two might be totally different in its essence.

Therefore, resemblance of syntax shouldn't lead it to shirk.

Summarily, we could not outrightly reject this third statement, however, the fourth statement about the souls was more convincing and acceptable

Fourth Statement: Soul Possessed A Delicate Light Like Body

Most of us have known that anything that could be addressed by – I, me, my or mine – was related to the attributes of a body. Just like when we said that – I am standing or I am going – it related to the function of the physical body. Therefore, everything that was connected to the features of a mass and volume must itself be matter.

Soul could sense a thing both as a whole and in its parts. For example, it could sense that fire was hot and water was cold, but this sense of hot and cold was only appreciated through the sensory mechanisms that were inherently material. Therefore, soul needed a body, however, delicate it might be.

The fourth statement was in line with the information that had reached us through the Qur'anic revelations and the statements (of the Prophet and the Imams), and all of those indicated that soul had some sort of corpuscular attachment that possessed a light like structure. It was mentioned in *Ihtijaj al-Tabrasi*, a tradition, on the authority of Hisham Ibn Hakam that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), while replying to a heretic, said, "Soul is a delicate body, which is enveloped by a thick carcass (our own structure)."

At another place, the same Imam has said, "Example of the soul of a believer is like that of jewels kept in a box, and when those jewels are removed, the box is then abandoned (as a waste)."

This tradition suggested that soul was contained within the body and not outside it, and it directed the body for its active duties.

These traditions related that souls were created almost two thousand cosmic years before the creation of its material form, and that the soul survived after the demise of the body. For example, it was said that the soul stayed close to its dead carcass and then it was either sent to Paradise or to Hell. *Ahadith* suggested that the characteristics of souls were reserved for corporeal things. Similarly, the Qur'anic Verses:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

"O soul that art at rest!" (***89:27***).

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

"Return to your Lord, well-pleased (with him), well-pleasing (Him)" (89:28).

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي

"So, enter among My servants" (89:29).

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي

"And enter into My garden" (89:30).

Here, soul was directly addressed and was advised to enter the Paradise with the servants of God. Similarly, Verses that related to the captivity of spirits also suggested a three- dimensional (bodily) structure of the souls.

Anyhow, all of these reports suggested that spirit was not entirely *mujjarad* (singular) and it possessed some sort of delicate corpuscular structure. For this reason, many Orientalists, religious scholars and godly people showed their inclination to this definition of the soul. Allama Sayyid Murtaza 'Ilm al-Hoda was an adherent of this postulate, and so was Allama Fakhruddin Razi, who mentioned this view in *Tafsir al-Kabir*. He said: "This religion (Islam) is very particular regarding spirit, and it is essential to ponder about it, because this account is very congruent with those statements that have been made for the conditions of life and death."

Allama Al-Majlisi discussed this subject in great detail in the fourteenth volume of his *Bihar Al-Anwar*. He said: "After listening to various opinions of different groups, regarding the nature of soul, the reality would have dawned upon you that there is no real argument available that could suggest against the *mujarrad* and material features of the soul."

On the other hand, the Qur'anic Verses and prophetic narrations, all proposed material facets of soul, although some of those are subject to interpretation. The arguments put forward by those who believed in the singularity of soul, were not very convincing, although there might be a slight hint in their favour. Therefore, the edicts of *kufr* that were posted on these people were totally out of place, especially, when a group of very learned Shi'a Ulamas (scholars) held this view.

On the other hand, the stringent belief of those who believed in the exclusivity of soul was also based on unconvincing arguments, especially when the apparent meanings of the Qur'anic Verses were against this approach. This was also an act of revulsion.

However, the reality was not free of two possibilities i.e. soul was either a delicately fine object that entered a body. It was taken captive by the Angels at the time of death. Thereafter it remained blessed or under a sentence in its original form, or had a virtual body during the period of *Barzakh* (time between

death and the day of resurrection), as many of the narrations suggested. Or, it was left untouched until the day of resurrection.

There was nothing illogical about the view why God could not keep a refined object alive for a long time. This is particularly so as the Muslims believed in the same proposition regarding Angels and the Jinns. The sophisticated entity of soul could become manifest, by its Lord's permission either in its original form or as a virtual image to some people. Or, it could stay out of sight. Or, this soul being *mujarrad*, would develop a relationship with a virtual body after its dissociation from its physical form. Thus, the activity of a liberated soul or its presence near the gullet, at the time of death were allegorical manifestations of the separation of a soul from a body. Instead of any real meaning, and the rules of a spirit in air form (a material soul) were symbolically placed on this *Ruh al-mujarrad*.

Allama Sayyid Naimatullah Jazairi writes in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah,* "In fairness we can say that the reality of soul is hidden from us. The majority of the scholars while, interpreting the meaning of the Prophet's Hadith, "*Min arafa nafsuha faqad arafa Rabbahu",* have said, that just as it was impossible to understand the Essence of God, so was gauging the perception of the nature of a spirit. However, what had been passed down to us from the heavenly scriptures and the sayings of the Prophet was close to the fourth postulate for the spirit i.e. a soul was an extremely refined entity that was in continuous presence all through the body and was not *mujarrad*."

Allama Jazairi also wrote in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah*:

"It was known about Shaykh Al-Mufid that he was originally convinced of the singularity (*mujarrad*) of a soul, and then he repented to God and affirmed that reality had dawned upon him that no one other than the Lord was really singular or unique in its essence."

In view of these facts, it had been now profusely clear that though the third postulation could not be all-together refuted, but the massive evidence favoured the fourth proposition.

Allama Sayyid Ali Khan wrote in the elucidation of Sahifa As-Sajjadiya, "Some of the later *Ulama's* have expressed that whatever, they had learnt from the narrations of the Imams, the hard work of researchers and the efforts of the thinkers that a soul was a virtual body on the pattern of our corporeal carcass. It was not totally material (in composition) or a complete intellectual entity, but it was between these two extremes."

Discussion On The Eternal Or The Probable Basis Of The Spirits

As the author of this book had pointed out towards this topic, the discussion on the subject would remain incomplete unless illuminated further. There has been a huge difference of opinion on the issue whether a soul was eternal or probable.

If it was probable, was it then created with or before the fashioning of the body? The Greeks and Hindus

being the advocates of transmigration of soul, accepted soul to be eternal. However, Greek philosophers and scholars of other nations were unanimous that it was a created being, since no one other than God could claim eternity.

However, these philosophers differed about the time of its creation i.e. whether it was created with or before the advent of the body? Muslim thinkers accepted that it was created before the arrival of the body, though some equated its timing to when the cadaver was formed. Still there was no reason to discuss *Hudus* in relation to creation of a soul, because Muslims of all factions were unanimous on this issue. Hence mind could be focussed on its another facet.

Statement On The Creation Of The Spirit Before The Creation Of The Body

It must be appreciated that majority of Islamic sects believed in the creation of spirits before the creation of material objects. This belief was based upon the intellectual and logical arguments of the scholars and the *Hadith* of the Prophet, which stated, "God has created souls almost two thousand years (May be cosmic) before the advent of the bodies."

One should remember that the word "bodies" that was quoted in the Hadith, referred to the construct of entire species and it could be justified by the creation of even one member of that species – like the creation of just Hazrat Adam alone. If the span of two thousand years were applied to each and every individual who was to appear on the Earth, then it would result in a time scale that could prevail over millions of years.

The reports that peg the time scale of creation of spirit, as two thousand years have been numerous, as suggested by Allama Nematullah Jazairi in his book *Al–Anwar An–Nu'maniyah,* and their authority was unquestionable. Allama Al–Majlisi collected some of these reports in the 14th volume of Bihar. We have quoted a few of those reports to enhance the faith of the believers.

It was reported that once a man went to Imam Ali ('a) and expressed that by God he adored him a lot. Imam replied that by God he was not considering him (Imam Ali) as his friend. The man was upset and asked whether the Imam was telling him the state of his heart (feelings)? Imam replied that God had created spirits two thousand years before their physical frame and the spirits that had become friendly in the initial domain remained friends on earth as well, and those who remained aloof, failed to develop an attraction between each other upon arrival to their earthly lives, and he (Imam Ali) had not met that person him in the realm of spirits.

Many a time people asked various Imams about the state of their mind, when their family members or they went into depressive moods, without any apparent reasons. They received the same answer that some spirits were friendly with each other in their original domicile, therefore, when anyone of those believers was under the weather, the other soul felt concern and were disturbed about him.

A Brief Discussion On The Realm Of Dhurr And The Original Covenant With God

The acceptance of God's Sovereignty and the Prophethood of Muhammad (S) along with the *wilayat* of Imams was the pillar of Islamic belief. This is well known as mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَٰذَا غَافِلِينَ

"When your Lord drew forth from the loins of the children of Adam, their progeny, so that they might be witnesses on themselves and (asked them) – Am I not your Lord? They replied in affirmative – we do testify! This is because they may not say on the Day of Judgement that they were not aware" **(*7:172*).**

In the elucidation of this Verse, it was mentioned in *Tafsir al-Safi* that once God had extracted from Adam's seed all his descendants – both male and female, He took a covenant from them on Him being their Lord and the Muhammad (S) being their Prophet. Some souls agreed to this, a few hesitated and a number of them declined.

Denial Of The Happening Of Dhurr And Primacy Of The Soul By Some Quarters And Their Rebuttal

It has been a matter of great concern that some of our grand Ulama including Shaykh Al-Mufid, Sayyid Murtaza 'Ilm al-Hoda and Allama Tabrisi have categorically denied the primacy of the soul and the incidence of *Dhurr*. The word *Dhurr* was derived from *Dhurriyat*, which meant progeny. These scholars explained the narrations that had reached them in a far-fetched manner.

It was distressing in many ways when the basis of their rejection was examined. In their view, the acceptance of the primacy of spirits precipitated the acceptance of the ideology of transmigration of souls, which was a wrong concept. The reason for their denial of the happening of Dhurr was based upon the view that if such an incident had happened in the past, we would have some recollection of its occurrence, when in fact we were totally ignorant about it. This proved, according to them, that no such incident had ever happened. They also reinterpreted the Prophet's Hadith that timed the creation of the spirits almost two thousand years before the advent of the human race by saying that the *Arwah* or Spirits were a metaphor for Angels who had been created two thousand years before the human beings.

So far as the other bit of the Qur'anic Verse, which spoke of a covenant with God was concerned, they said that in view of man's notional creation and God's absolute knowledge of everything, this Verse referred to His questioning them (in an intellectual environment), if He was not their Creator and they

(humans) with their sublime nature, had replied in an affirmative that He was definitely their Lord.

Rejecting Imam's Statements On The Pretext Of Complexity Is Contemptuous

The grand status of these *Ulama* had forced us to keep quiet. Otherwise, it was a bitter reality and a painful thing to say that such simple doubts could be used to deny or reinterpret the authentic proclamations of the Prophet and his progeny, without any reasonable logic. It was an act of transgression, when hefty affirmations of Imams were available on this subject. These proclaimed the sanctity of their statements in the following words, "Our statements are very complex and these can only be endured by the Angels, prophets or tried and trusted faithful."

Usul al-Kafi devoted a chapter on this issue. In view of the complexity, our Imams had taught us a golden rule, which stated: "When our statements reach you and you understand their gist, then thank your Lord. Otherwise, return it to the people of understanding so that they might make you visualise the true meanings of those statements. Beware! Do not try to repudiate or deny those, because their denial is kufr."

The cautious scholars always observed this stipulation that if they understood the gist of their assertion, they were pleased. Or else, a brief apparent view was sufficient for their satisfaction.

We would now refer to their objections and try to answer their disapproval of the concept of the primacy of spirits. Their initial doubt was that if the spirits were supposed to be present before the creation of human species, it was then tantamount to accepting the concept of transmigration of soul. This doubt had arisen due to a misperception of the idea of transmigration.

True Meaning Of Transmigration

The true meaning of transmigration, according to the philosophers was that human soul was transferred from one frame to another frame, in order to award punishment or reward. Therefore, a spirit that had been created earlier and then was infused into a subsequently created body was not transmigration by any standard of imagination.

The Real Reasons For Repudiating Transmigration

Though, transmigration of souls was logically possible, Islam disapproved of it for two reasons.

Firstly, it negated the concept of the Day of Judgement, because the followers of transmigration denied the rising up of the dead on a particular day. They satisfied the condition for punishment or reward being fulfilled by migration of souls between physical frames chosen in accordance to their deeds.

The author of the present text also provided the same reason for refuting transmigration in Chapter Eighteen of this book by saying, “Muslims advocate that souls were created beings (*Hadith*), and in another world they would join the bodies, whereas, the followers of transmigration considered souls to be eternal and offered their migration between different bodies within this world itself. Thus, they denied the concept of Paradise and Hell. This is why they are deemed as *kafirs*.

The second reason paved the way for the matter and soul both to be eternal, which resulted in the acceptance of the Universe to be perpetual as well. Therefore, Shaykh Bahauddin Ameli, said, “Our reasons for calling these people as *kafir* was not on the basis that they believed in moving of spirits from one frame to another, like the returning to the bodies (*Ma’ad al-Jismani*), which according to the majority of the Muslims was also a similar concept. Our rejection of their ideology and the reasons for their *kufr* was that they considered matter and spirits to be eternal and they said that spirits moved from body to body, and that the Day of Judgement had no meaning in their concept.

They also proclaimed that they were alive (today) and they would die (someday) and this process would be carried out by the time itself. God on the other hand has said that they follow conjectures and they had no solid reasons to prove their concept. It was evident that both of these concepts were against the spirit of Islam. This was the reason for their *kufr*, and that is why Islam had so strongly rejected this corrupt ideology.

It was also clear that the theory of the primacy of souls did not include any of these defects because according to the common traditions this time span was not more than two thousand years, and it would not have made any difference, if this time span was extended to millions of years, the spirit would still be considered *Hadith* (created), and not *Qadeem* (eternal). Also, this theory did not invoke the negation of the Day of Judgement.”

The explanation that Shaykh Al-Mufid provided in respect of the primacy of souls was at the best his personal opinion, unless strong evidence was provided in its support. It appeared that the great master was in immense confusion, and changed his goal post very often. This was a clear proof of his dissatisfaction. Allama Al-Majlisi viewed Shaykh’s explanation as a far-fetched thought.

The second doubt that had been projected by these great masters against the *Hadith of Dhurr* (pronounced on the scale of ‘*Hur*’) was that if this incidence had ever to with us, we would have some recollection of that moment. Allama Al-Majlisi answered this objection in *Bihar Al-Anwar* by saying, “To say that we must have some recollection of the incident, if it had ever happened with us, was unacceptable on the following grounds.

- There was a longer time lapse, which might have affected the memory

- The transition from a pure spiritual existence to the material life had lots of barriers such as fertilisation, embryo and foetus.

– There might have been some possible gains for us in forgetting this act.

– We have forgotten many important chapters of our near life, and so to forget an incident that took place several millennia ago is not something that could not be understood."

Apart from Allama Al–Majlisi's approach there were two other explanations.

Since, this incident took place with the pure spirit that was devoid of body, therefore, when it came into material confinements, it forgot the previous incidents due to this turbid environment. If someone wanted to remember his forgotten experience then they should ignore their material envelope and fuel their spiritual faith by sacred exercises, and then look for the forgotten incident.

This was the reason that past, present and future were equivalent in the sight of those who had treaded this route. They were familiar with, what was present and what was to come. No barriers could hide anything from them and they would remember the covenant of Dhurr.

Shaykh Abdul Wahab Sherani wrote in his book, "Imam Ali ('a) used to say that he remembered that covenant which he made with his God. He could even recognise those men who were standing on his either side."

A similar incident is quoted in *Tafsir Al–Bayan*. The second answer to this doubt was that – at most, this covenant was logically tedious to understand, but it could not become a reason for denying an established Qur'anic principle.

The third point of difference regarding the soul was an enquiry, i.e. whether a soul survived death and continued its existence or was it annihilated with the demise of the body. In case of the first postulate, a further question was posed as to know, if it could ever die.

One should know that atheists, who considered body and soul as the same entity, were of the opinion that soul was destroyed with the termination of body. However, those who considered *Nafs* as a delicate, light–like entity, believed that soul survived the experience of death and continued its existence.

Both Greek Philosophers and Islamic theologians were in agreement with this view, but their concepts were poles apart. Greek Philosophers, considered soul to be eternal, therefore, its demise was impossible. Muslim Theologians considered it to be prone to death, depending upon the will of God. Muslims also believe that a soul, either in its original form or in manifested its virtual body, lived on during the period of *Barzakh*, in a state of blessing or castigation, until the Day of Judgement.

Allama Al–Majlisi said, "Survival of souls after demise of their bodies had always been the concept of various philosophers and thinkers, other than a few who considered spirit as a disposition (*mizaj*), no other group had disputed this thought, and there was no value attached to their divergence."

Shaykh Bahai had adopted this concept in his book – *Arbaeen*. He said: "And on the Day of Judgement

God will return this soul, with His immense powers to its original body, where it will be evaluated and then it will be rewarded or punished. The proof of this thesis is that according to the Islamic philosophy, man has not been created in vain but he is bound by certain religious constraints, both theoretical and practical.

The Qur'an said that Jinns and humans were created for the worship of their Lord. Therefore, it was a demand of God's justice that He should punish or reward them for the nonconformity or non-compliance with His commands, otherwise religious restrictions would be deemed senseless, which was logically incorrect.

Therefore, if we adopt a view that souls were destroyed with the death of the body, then above rational demand would be denied. God, however, does not oppose a logical claim. Therefore, we have to accept that soul was not annihilated with the demise of its body, but would remain alive to pay for its deeds.

Punishment could be awarded in two ways – one, by transmigration and the other, through evaluation on the Day of Judgment. As transmigration was proven to be wrong therefore, souls had to survive till the Day of Judgement."

Prophet's famous Hadith that humanity had been created for survival and not for annihilation, was a document to support this theory. The author of this book had used this hadith to support the concept. Shaykh Al-Mufid subjected this to an unfair criticism, by saying:

"Whatever Shaykh As-Saduq has reiterated is the view of many faithless heretics and atheists, who say that soul is beyond destruction and death is only for the body. This is very corrupt concept and it is far removed from any correct interpretation."

However, we were once again unable to support Shaykh Al-Mufid's point of view, because this view, under no circumstances aids and abates atheistic ideas. The purpose of this Hadith was to remind people that they were not created to live lavishly for a few years and then be completely wiped out forever, without having to answer for any of the deed that they had performed. This idea was similar to atheistic approach that had been mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ

"And they say: There is nothing but our life in this world; we live and die and nothing destroys us but time…." **(*45:24*).**

In other words, they denied the existence of a Creator and the associated charter that was advanced through religion. This Hadith served as an important link in this chain. If this were not the case then there would be no disparity left between a man and a donkey. That is why the meaning of this tradition was to remind people that their spirits were not destroyed but those were returned to another domain, where

they would be rewarded according to their deeds.

The Philosophers argued that spirits were indestructible. Shaykh As-Saduq and other Muslim scholars however also did say that spirits would not be destroyed but they did not proclaim that they could not be destroyed. God, in His wisdom was fully capable of destroying them. However, if their destruction did not serve any purpose, then those would not be destroyed. This point of view was miles apart from that of the philosophers.

Allama Al-Majlisi said that in *Barzakh*, the punishment or reward was reserved for the spirits either in their pure self or while they were kept within a virtual body.

Last Word About The Classification Of The Spirits

It should not remain hidden from our readers that the spirit, we have so far talked about, belonged to human beings. There was one in each person and then those were further subdivided. These subdivisions that were mentioned in the *Ahadith*, were actually various faculties within human form that were metaphorically referred to as spirits.

It was also important to know that in this world the spirit of each species was different from that of the other. For example – human beings, rabbits and mice shared many aspects with each other, that is they possessed a body or they were alive. However, an individual human would not belong to the family of a horse, nor would a donkey belong to the human species. Therefore, we must ponder, as to what was that special thing which made man as a man, and a donkey as a donkey.

If we explored this question deeply, we would find that the spirits of each species were made different from each other. This influenced their food, their habitat and their style of living. If one tried to alter this balance, it would bring destruction.

Some States Of A Spirit

Different states of a Spirit have been mentioned in the *Ahadith*. It was related from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) that there were six states of a spirit, viz. health, disease, life, death, sleep, awakening, doubt and faith.

Its sleep was forgetfulness, and awakening was remembrance. Therefore, a wise person was the one who cared about these states and protected his self from those states, which caused damage to the spirit.

Addition

The presence of *Ruh Al-Qudus* did not change the species of the Prophets and Imams, just as spirit of

faith did not alter the genus of a believer.

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1. Note from the Author: Allama Shaykh Al-Mufid has rigorously criticised the author of this book. I therefore, attempted to tackle those issues with God's help. It would be injustice on my part if I did not acknowledge the help of dozens of books that I consulted during this work, including, Bihar ul Anwar, Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah and Risala al-Abtal al-Tanasukh etc.
2. Al-Hidayah, Shaykh as-Saduq, p.189.

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Chapter 16: The Reality Of Death

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that a man approached Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) and asked him to explain the reality of death. Imam replied, "You have asked this question from a man who is fully aware of the (nature) of death. When death reaches a person, it carries essentially, one of the three things with it i.e. news of eternal bliss or the information of permanent chastisement or a great fear (for the prospective deceased), where he finds his future blurred, and he does not know the category he belonged to.

However, the one who is our friend and compliant to our instructions receives the news of permanent bliss and our enemy or the one who defies our instructions is given the news of permanent chastisement, and the individual whose position is uncertain but his principles of faith are correct, who has troubled his soul by disobeying God, does not know what would be his final destiny. Such a man receives imprecise news of an atrocious ending.

God will never merge this man with our enemies and will take him out of the punishment of hell due to our intercession. He then advised his followers to continue with virtuous deeds and obey the guided leaders (Imams) and don't let wishful thinking and novel desires to overpower them. Do not play with God's punishment because some persons would undergo punishment of hundreds of thousands of years, before they received our intercession."

Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) was asked a question about death, for which people lacked understanding. Imam replied, "For a believer, death is greatest pleasure, because it is due to death that he finally escaped the mundane pains and dilemmas and moved into perpetual delights of God's blessings, but for the disbelievers the same death is an immense calamity, because it is a conduit, which takes them away from the comforts of this world into the non-extinguishable fire of the Hell."

On the Day of Ashura, when Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) was in a grand trial, some of his friends talked with

each other about Imam in the thick of the battle. They said that his demeanour was different from other people, particularly, when the battle had intensified. Some people had showed a degree of anxiety on their faces, while, Imam and some of his other companions were calm with a gleam on their faces, a relaxed body and satisfied hearts. At that instance, Imam's friends were conversing with each other, about how carefree Imam was about the death. Listening to their conversation Imam (‘a) replied:

“O The Progeny of the Noble people! be patient, death is like a bridge that will take you away from these adversities into the bliss of eternal Paradise. Who is among you that doesn't want to be freed from this prison and relax in the comfortable palaces of the Paradise? The example of your enemies is like a man who has exchanged his cozy residence with a narrow prison and horrifying retribution. My father has told me the Hadith of the Prophet that world is like a prison for a believer and paradise for an unbeliever. Death is an overpass for the believers and unbelievers to enter Paradise and Hell respectively. Neither me nor my father ever told a lie (means this Hadith is true).”

Somebody asked Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a) about death. He replied that death was like a man who had removed his dress filled with parasites or a person whose neck had been released from his metal chains and then he had redressed himself with scented cloths, and rode a speedy vehicle, to live in comfortable palaces. On the contrary for a kafir, it was like a man whose expensive clothes have been exchanged with a rotten dress, and then expelled from his luxurious apartment into a horrible confine, and then subjected to hideous punishment.

Our fifth Imam, Al-Baqir (‘a) was asked the same question. He replied, “Death is like a sleep, which overcomes you every night, but its duration is very long and its subject will not open his eyes before the Day of Judgement. Many of you see beautiful things in your dreams, which please you more than your expectations and the others see horrible things that make them sad and grieving, beyond their anticipation. You must imagine now how that person will feel (state of his happiness or sorrow) when he faces those things in reality at the time of his death? This is death and you must prepare yourself for it.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) replied to a similar question, “For a Mu'min (faithful) death is like a pleasing fragrance that makes him sleep and allays his tiredness completely. For an unbeliever death is like a person who has been bitten by snakes and scorpions or even more.”

Some people approached Imam As-Sadiq (‘a) and said that they had heard that sensation of death was like a person whose body is being dissected with scissors or pulverized with stones or the eyes are used as a pivot for a grinder. Imam replied in affirmative and said that some people observe their state of punishment and it makes it worst in comparison to the mundane sentence.

Imam was asked to explain the reasons for death to become effortless for some unbelievers and they die happily, while talking to their friends and relatives, and the same happens with some faithful as well. Contrary to this some believers (Mu'minin) and unbelievers, undergo very painful experience at the time of their death. Imam replied that those believers who feel relaxed at the time of their death, their reward

starts earlier from this world and those who suffer their distress is to pay for their last sins, so that they may reach their Lord nice and clean on the Day of Judgement to receive their eternal recompense, without any hindrance.

This ease, which is sometimes provided to the kafirs at the time of their death was to reward (from the Just God) them for their good deeds that they have performed in this world, so that there should be nothing for them, other than punishment on the Day of Judgement for their wrong beliefs and ill deeds. Similarly, the unbelievers who suffer at the time of their death are those whose punishment has started from this world, and their good deeds (if any) have already been paid in this life. This was because God did not do injustice to anyone.

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a) went to see a person who was undergoing death, and was sweating with the signs of his demise. He was not answering the queries of those who addressed him. Some of the attendants asked Imam to find out his state of affairs at the instant of death. Imam replied, "Death is a cleaner for the believers for their sins, and this is the last pain they will ever undergo, and it is a repayment for their previous short comings. At the same time, it empties unbelievers from their intrinsic worth, and a little pleasure which they receive at the moment of death, is the final settlement of their previous good deeds."

He then said, "Your friend is now free of sins; the way sins should be rightfully moped. He is now liberated from the leftover dirt and grime of his sin in the same way that soiled clothes are washed. He is now capable of residing with us in the everlasting abode of Paradise."

Once a companion of our eighth Imam, Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) fell ill. He went to find out his welfare and asked him how he felt? He replied that he had nearly died and faced a horrific time. Imam said that what he had faced was not death, but it was a state to remind him about death, and then explained few more things about that condition. He then said, "There are two types of men – those who find peace and tranquillity in death and there are others, whose death provides comfort for the others. You should now renew your covenant by accepting the Unity of God, Prophethood of (Muhammad) and our Wilayat, so that you may be soothed. He followed the instructions and..." This was a long tradition and we have reported only a part of it in this discussion.

It was mentioned to Imam Muhammad At-Taqi ('a) about what had happened to those Muslims who disliked death. Imam replied, "These people dislike death because they are unaware of the true nature of it. Had they known the reality of death, while they were true friends of God, they would have definitely liked it, and lived in the certainty that hereafter was better than the life of this world."

Imam asked (one of his companions sitting with him), why children and mentally sick people refused to take medicine, while they were ill, when it relieved them from the ailments of the body? The companion replied that because they were unaware of the benefits of the medicine. Imam replied that he swore by Almighty God, Who sent Muhammad (S) as His messenger, that if a man was prepared and ready for

death then it would prove it to be more beneficial than any medicine that was recommended for a patient, and they would be more forthcoming in accepting death like a patient, who vies for medicine.

Imam At–Taqi (‘a) went to one of his companions who was crying at the horrible sight of death. Imam addressed him and said, “O servant of God! you are only crying at the prospect of death, because you are not aware of its reality. What is your feeling when a dress that gets badly soiled, and its filth causes boils and pimples on the body by continuous scratching of the skin, while you had the knowledge that a shower in the bathroom could relieve you from all those troubles? Would you not prefer (the recommendation) that you should go to the bathroom and clean up yourself, and would you not abhor remaining away from the bathroom and continuing to suffer from the pain of the ailment?

He replied that he would prefer to wash himself. Imam replied that death was like a washroom of last resort, wherein one goes and gets remainder of sins cleaned up. And, when one reached its embankment and went across it, they would find freedom from all kind of adversities and a place of abode, which is full of perpetual enjoyment and tranquillity ahead of them. Listening to the words of Imam, his fear of death vanished and he felt a moment of relief and closed his eyes to embrace death.

Imam Hasan Al–’Askari (‘a) was asked about the state of death. He replied, “Death is related to confirm the presence of those things, which have not yet happened.” He said that his father has told him a Hadith of Imam Ja’far As–Sadiq (‘a) on the authority of his elders. The Imam said, “When a faithful (Mu’min) dies, he is in fact not a dead corpse, whereas, a Kafir is a corpse as described in the Qur’an that Allah is the one who creates life from dead and an inert thing from a living object i.e. He brings forth a faithful from the (family of) Kafirs and identifies a Kafir among the faithful.”

وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ

***“Thou bringest the living out of the dead and Thou bringest the dead out of the living”* (*3:27; 6:95; 10:31; 30:19*).**

The same Imam – Hasan Al–’Askari (‘a) also said that a man approached the holy Prophet and asked him the reasons for him not liking death. The Prophet replied by asking him if he owned any wealth. He replied, yes. The Prophet asked him if he had sent any of his wealth to the next world. He said: no. The Prophet then said, “This is the reason, you do not appreciate death. Go and spend something in the way of God and transfer its credit to the next world, you will then start loving death.”

It is also related from the same Imam that someone approached Abu Dharr Al–Ghifari and asked him, why people do not appreciate death? He replied that they have decorated their world and destroyed their hereafter, and they did not like to abandon the glamour of cities to the peace of graves. Another person asked, “What would we feel when we are presented to God”. Abu Dharr replied that an abstinent would feel like a wayfarer, who had reached his family with joy, but corrupt and wicked would be presented like

a vagrant slave who reached his master in a fearful state.

The group listening to Abu Dharr asked about their own condition in front of God. Abu Dharr replied that they should present their acts to the Qur'an, as God had said that the virtuous would enjoy a pleasurable life under the shadow of God's blessing, while the immoral and sinful would be detained in the Hell.

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ

"Surely amid delights shall the righteous dwell" (***82:13***).

وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ

"And verily the impure in Hell-fire" (***82:14***).

Someone asked him where God's grace would be? Abu Dharr replied, shadowing the blessed.

إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Verily the mercy of Allah is closer to the righteous" (***7:56***).

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 16

A careful study of death as a physical command which was opposed to life, revealed the view that was supported by the Qur'an:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ

"It is God Who has created death and life..." (***67:2***).

Since the phrase "created" has been used by the Qur'an for death, therefore, it must have a physical reality because emptiness or a void was not a pure creation1. However, the other scholars called it a decree by default (*Amr al-Adami*) because according to them the absence of life was called death.

The word “definition” had two facets to its meaning – Real and Literal. The real definition of a thing was derived from an object that gave immediate meaning to identify it, and differentiated it from the rest. The literal definition, on the other hand, was to elucidate the object and distinguish it from others, which could also be achieved by showing the signs and essentialities of a thing. The learned author defined death from its signs and that was its literal definition. Therefore, objection could not be raised against the author that he titled his discussion as being the reality of death, but ended up expressing its signs only. It was because the author was not writing a book of logic to remain within those limits to express the principles of his religion.

Discussion On The Philosophy Of Life And Death

After this simple beginning, it was appropriate to express some views on the philosophy of life and death. It was evident that the Creator of the universe had shackled all His creatures in the cycle of life and death, in a manner that they were under compulsion to live or die, and they had no right to choose their beginning or end. Amir Al-Mu’minin (‘a) asked what did a man have to do with pride and greatness, when his beginning was from a drop of an unclean liquid, and he was so weak and fragile that he could not exercise his right to begin or end his life or to revive himself after death.

The question, which we have to address now was to find the secrets about why this chain of life and death was initiated? The first reply to this query was that when we had already concluded that the Creator and the administrator of the universe was the holder of absolute knowledge and we also knew, as a fact, that a judicious being could not commit anything illogical, therefore, we must conclude that there must be a reason behind this demonstration, although we did not understand its motives now.

The second answer to this question could be that life and death was not that complicated problem that human mind could not reach its depths. Humans already knew some of advantages of this process, which were aided by the word of God and the statements of the Imams.

Second Reason Of The Chain Of Life And Death

Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) says that death was an ornament for the sons of Adam just as a necklace adorned a woman. This showed that in order to enhance human characteristics, the exposure to death was essential.

We did not appreciate the value of death because we had not observed or experienced the problems of the longevity of life in this domain. An Ummah of a Prophet, had committed this mistake. We needed to ask them what price they had to pay for this request. The story was like this – people asked their Prophet to request God to halt the process of death for them. The Prophet made that request to God, and his supplication was acknowledged, and death was suspended for them.

After some time, every other person was amid his earlier generations, where the elders were lying like

infants. They could neither talk nor walk to the toilet to answer the call of nature. Their relatives were busy caring for them and their working routine was shattered. This permanence of life proved to be a calamity for them and they regretted their original request. They went to their Prophet again and requested him to ask God for the reversal of their original plea. There was no value of life for a man, once he became redundant and useless.

Third Reason

If death was not there in the world, its charm and appeal would have vanished, because all of its hustle and bustle were due to the fact that people were confident of their departure, therefore, they wanted to achieve maximum in this limited time. On the contrary, longevity of life made people lazy, because they saw plenty of time at their disposal to accomplish their routine acts.

Fourth Reason

With the concept of death, one would find great assistance in acquiring the reasons for his presence in the world. It also helped to remove ills of bigotry and self-praise from his mind. A moral desire sprang forth that made him bow before his Lord. It was our observation that the greatest despots, rebels and avengers shuddered when faced the question of their own death. This showed that death was an instrument, which helped bringing people to the path of God and refrain them from disobeying the Lord. This was what was called *Lutf* (Grace) in the idiom of theologians. This was why the true guides suggested that death should be remembered more often.

Benefits Of Frequent Remembrance Of Death

The Prophet has said, "It is important for you to remember death to seek admonition and reproach."

Amir al-Mu'minin said, "Remember death – it helps wipe out pleasures and delights of life as frequently as you can do so."

Shaykh As-Saduq quoted Imam 'Ali ('a) in his book Al-Khisal, "If you frequently remember the day of resurrection and standing in front of God, then you can easily battle with trials and tribulations of this life."

Abu Daud narrated that he asked Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) to teach him something that should be beneficial for him. Imam replied, "O Abu Obadiah! anyone who remembers death more often, he would become free of worldly appeal."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) has said, "Remembrance of death destroys worldly desires (of the self), deracinates negligence, strengthens heart with divine promises, softens mind, lowers the flags of desire and greed, extinguishes the fire of voracity and lust, and belittles the life of this world."

It was mentioned in the books of Hadith that when the dark clouds of felony start shadowing your body and the world commenced to attract you with its thrills and glamour, then go to the graveyard and seek wisdom and insight to disperse the clouds of felony and wrongdoing (from your life). This would save you from the treachery and duplicity of life.

The Standard Of Truthfulness Is To Desire Death

The persistence of death taught us that this world was not our final destination. Rather, it was a bridge for us to cross to reach our destination. God said:

وَمَا هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

"And this life of the world is nothing but a sport and a play; and as for the next abode, that most surely is the life – did they but know!" (***29:64***).

That is why the Prophet had said, "World is a prison for a believer and a paradise for the unbelievers."

As a sanction of nature, man would want to be liberated from the prison and would strive to reach its destination. That is why to test one's assertions of faith and belief, God made the desire of death a test for the people. This was also the reason that those who had the faith in the allure and charm of the hereafter, played with death instead of being afraid of it, and so often did not use any protection in the battles. It had been said that when Imam Ali (ʻa) decided to enter the battle of Siffin, without wearing the protective armour, one of his companions then said that it was not the right approach to go into the battlefield without any bodily protection. Listening to his advice, the Imam said, "By God, the son of Abu Talib is more intimate with the death than a child is friendlier with the breast of his mother."

This was the precise reason that when his wretched assassin struck him with the sword, the first sentence that he uttered (which remained preserved on the pages of history) was, "I swear by the God of Kaaba that I have succeeded".

Imam Ali was a graceful old man, who had experienced the lows and highs of this life, but history remained witness to the fact that the children of this family preferred death more than a mouthful of honey.

Reasons For The Ordinary People To Fear Death

The reasons for those amongst us who feared death, were the same as that described by Abu Dharr earlier in the text of this book i.e., we have cultivated our world and corrupted our hereafter. It is for this reason that it was difficult to journey from populace to the unknown of the hereafter.

Imam Al-Husayn (ʻa) gave a better and more refined answer to one of his companions, when he asked

him why the Imam was happy with death, while they were afraid of it? Imam replied that its reason was that the people had cultivated their worldly targets but had demolished their final abode. That is why they were not prepared to abandon their flourishing earthly habitat with the ruined territory of the hereafter. They (Ahl al-Bayt), on the other hand, had transferred all of their assets to the house of the hereafter. In this way, they had dented their worldly abode but promoted their hereafter. This was the reason why they preferred to go to the thriving gardens of the hereafter, rather than remain in the ruins of this world.

How Capacity And Agreement Can Be Developed For Death

We pray that God might give us strength and readiness to face death. This attitude cannot be developed without putting some efforts. Imam Ali was asked about how one could build this capacity. Imam replied, "By fulfilling religious duties, keeping away from the prohibitions and developing a sound character. When these three stages are attained, then one must not care that either he stepped on death or death stepped onto him."

The Way To Supplicate For A Longer Life

From these realities, we learned that it was not good to pray for a longer life. This should only be done, if we had to devote our life for noble causes and in service of religion. Such supplications were conditional to the moment and until God's help was available for one to perform righteous deeds. If God's assistance was withdrawn and man was at the brink of God's wrath, then one should request God to take him away from this world.

Our Imams have shown us the way; how to supplicate for this ending in front of God. Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a) prayed to the Lord,

"My God keep me alive, till my life is available for your service and don't let me breathe, if my life becomes a grazing ground for the Satan, before I deserve your wrath."

On the other hand, there were some Qur'anic Verses and Prophetic narrations that were apparently conflicting. Some indicated for the request of death and to be in the presence of God, while others were recommended against calling for death. The explanation for this conflict was that if someone took life as a means of worldly enjoyment and hated death as a hideous entity then such was an abominable act, but if this was asked to be in the service of God and to seek His pleasure, and to collect as much resources for the hereafter then such appeals for a longer life were an act of submission.

Clarification Of A Common Misconception

It was important to clear a common misconception that existed among all ranks of people that it was better to die with a quick and sudden disease, without pain, instead of suffering with a prolonged excruciating disease. This concept was wrong and against the teachings of Imams. It was reported that

a disease was also a blessing in disguise, due to the following reasons:

Many a time, even sensible people would become negligent about God. When someone fell ill, God's remembrance was revived and he got a chance to seek His forgiveness. That is why in the Hadith of the Prophet, illness was termed as an ambassador of death.

During his healthy days man was usually careless or slack about making his will, when it was important to write a will, in order to balance his credit and debit account with the community, as well as money that was due to God for public services. There was much stress in religion to write a will. Mohaddas Jazairi quoted a Hadith of the Prophet in his book *Rawdhat Al-Wahidin*. It said, "Anyone who dies without writing a will has died a death of ignorance." The Prophet also said, "It was imperative for a Muslim to sleep at night with his will kept under his pillow."

Illness was also considered a compensation for one's sins and a reason to enhance his station with God. It was related from the Prophet (S) that an illness of a day (of a believer) was considered to be the compensation for his whole year sins. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) said that illness of a day for a believer was counted equivalent to his prayers of one year. This blessing was multiplied many folds with the length of his suffering. Naturally a person who died suddenly was deprived of this asset.

As a result of illness, the people who visited a patient were also rewarded by God. It was related from the Prophet (S), who said, "When a person left his house to ask the wellbeing of a sick believer, thousands of virtues were credited to his account and numerous misdeeds are wiped out from his register of performance. A sudden death (of a person) deprived people from this graceful act."

A New Kind Of Benefit

It was reported that diseases were not present up to the time of Prophet Abraham. People used to die with a sudden death. Abraham supplicated to the God and asked him to send a sign through which the people who were departing could benefit and their families could also profit. As a result of it the illness was sent to the mankind.

This suggested that illness was sought by the Prophets for the believers and they should not be afraid of it and nor should they complain to the God, instead they should bear it with patience. God would wish to send every faithful to the Paradise but his soul might be soiled with the sins. Therefore, illness could become a compensation for those sins. If sins were excessive, then clutching of the grave was their compensation, or suffering in *Barzakh* may account for that. If, however, sins were even beyond the cleansing of *Barzakh*, then intercession of the Prophet and Imams would pay for the rest of the sins to clear him for the paradise.

Similarity Between Sleep And Death

In order for us not to be afraid of death, the Prophets and Imams made the understanding of death easier for us. There were several examples quoted in the text of this book, but suggestion of Imam Baqir (‘a) of comparing death with deep sleep was very famous.

According to that tradition, spirit had a dual relationship with the body, one that of sensation and the other that of planning and execution. In sleep, the relationship of sensation was terminated, therefore, brain was freed of the perception of happenings in his surroundings. However, its other relationship remained sound and the spirit was busy with the continuation of its job of servicing and promoting body functions. In death, both of these connections were terminated and therefore, at this moment neither any kind of sensation nor activity was left with the body. God had described this situation in the following words:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“God captures souls at the time of their death, and those upon whom death has not been imposed are detained in the sleep. Those spirits whose death is ordained are confined and the rest are released to continue their function for the appointed time. There are signs in it for the people who ponder” (***39:42***).

At another place in the Qur’an it is said,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى

“He is God, Who captures your (***souls***) ***in the sleep and knows what you do during the day, and then awakens you*** (***during the day***) ***so that the appointed time may pass”*** (***6:60***).

Difference Between The Death Of A Kafir And A Mu’min

The difference between the death of a believer and that of a Kafir was described by Imam Al-Hasan (‘a), which was well in line with the Qur’anic description. The time of death was a moment of great crisis, particularly for an unbeliever, who would see his complete past life facing him with the veil of negligence being torn apart. The Qur’an described this state:

كَلَّا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ التَّرَاقِيَ

***"When* [*the soul*] *will come to the collar bone"* (*75:26*).**

وَقِيلَ مَنْ ۜ رَاقٍ

***"And it will be asked; who is there to make an effort to save you* [*from this death*]*"* (*75:27*).**

وَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ الْفِرَاقُ

***"He will then realise that this is the time of departure"* (*75:28*).**

وَالْتَفَّتِ السَّاقُ بِالسَّاقِ

***"A thigh will slip on to a thigh"* (*75:29*).**

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَسَاقُ

***"And that will be the instance when you are herded towards your Lord"* (*75:30*).**

The description of the death of evil people was given in the following words in the Qur'an:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا أَنفُسَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

***"...If you can see the wicked in the thick of the severity of death, while, the Angels will be calling them with open arms, to handover their souls. This day you will receive a degrading chastisement for the statements you had made about God, and prided against His signs"* (*6:93*).**

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَادَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُم مَّا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ

***"You have now returned to Him bear and alone, as We have created you for the first time, and all the wealth that We had given you is now left behind..."* (*6:94*).**

Again, it was mentioned in Surah Al-Anfal:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

"If you could only see the state when Angels capture the souls of infidels, when they are hitting them on their backs and faces and tell them to taste the punishment" (***8:50***).

ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ

"As it is a return of their deeds. God does not do injustice to His servants" (***8:51***).

The description of the state of death of the virtuous was totally different. God said,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

"Those who said that God is their Lord and they remained steadfast (***with this covenant***)***, the Angels are sent down on them and they will be telling them; do not be afraid or nervous. We give you the good tiding of Paradise that had been promised for you"*** (***41:30***).

At another place in the Qur'an it was said:

فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلْقُومَ

"So, when soul has reached the throat" (***56:83***).

وَأَنتُمْ حِينَئِذٍ تَنظُرُونَ

"And you [***helplessly***] ***witness that state"*** (***56:84***).

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنكُمْ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُبْصِرُونَ

"We are nearer to the [***deceased***] ***than you but you cannot visualise"*** (***56:85***).

فَلَوْلَا إِن كُنتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ

"If you were not controlled by anyone" (***56:86***).

تَرْجِعُونَهَا إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

"Then return the soul to the body of the deceased" (***56:87***).

فَأَمَّا إِن كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ

"If the deceased is one of those who are nearer to God [***Muqarrabeen***]***"*** (***56:88***).

فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٍ

"Then luxury and comfort from the scented gardens of Paradise is for him" (***56:89***).

وَأَمَّا إِن كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ

"Or if he belonged to the people of right" (***56:90***).

فَسَلَامٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ

"Then greetings and salutations of the people of right would be sent to him" (***56:91***).

This was the reason why a believer happily embraced death.

Warning To Awaken

In the beginning of this chapter, Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a)'s statement was an assertion to shake those people out of their state of negligence, who showed their respect for the religion and Imams, verbally – without any practical demonstration, and believed that this was sufficient for their salvation in the hereafter.

He divided people into three groups – one, who were given good tidings, second, who were handed over terrible news of permanent punishment and finally, who had an uncertain end. Imam then cleared the ambiguity that for good tidings two things were essential (apart from the unity of God and the Prophethood of Muhammad (S) – the Wilayat of Ahl al-Bayt and obedience to their commands.

If we dug deep, we would find that the two things were incompatible with each other. One could not become an admirer of Ahl al-Bayt, if his deeds were not in line with their instructions. Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) also said this explicitly that those, who were the enemies of Ahl al-Bayt, would be subject to a ghastly punishment and there was no possibility of their salvation.

In the same way Imam had warned the day dreamers and self-deceived friends of the Ahl al-Bayt, who did not strive to follow their Imams, but wanted to go to Paradise with the empty chants of Ali...Ali. Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) clearly mentioned that the difference between these two was that the enemy of Ahl al-Bayt would be the fodder of Hell forever, but their inactive friends would be pardoned after paying for

their sins, following the intercession of Ahl al-Bayt, and some of these sinners would suffer up to three hundred thousand years.

These issues would be further discussed in the section dealing with the intercession. However, it is time that such abysmal friends of Ahl al-Bayt took heed from these warnings, because faith could not be completed without the fellowship of actions. That is why in the Qur'an, wherever good tidings were given to the believers, it was followed by suggestions to continue with the virtuous deeds. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) said that the Shi'as were those who followed Ahl al-Bayt's path and did not disobey them.

Presence Of Prophet And Imams At The Time Of Death

This was also a Shi'a concept that for every person, who may be Muslim or a non-Muslim, practicing or inert, saw Prophet Muhammad and his Ahl al-Bayt at the time of their death. This made death comfortable for a devotee and a source of chastisement for the unbeliever. There were lots of traditions in this respect, which are collected by Allama Al-Majlisi, in *Bihar Al-Anwar*, whose alternative explanation other than what had been stated above was not permissible.

The issue which could be discussed was whether, Imams and Ma'sumin were actually present at their appointed station with the dying person or every dying person just thought that they were with him. This was in the same way that the Sun was felt to be directed towards every person who was in its presence, when in actual fact, it was continuing its journey on its appointed course.

The Imams could be present with the dying man, in their original physical form or in a virtual body. We need not spend too much effort in this respect. Only a simple belief of their presence was sufficient, as suggested by Allama Al-Majlisi. He said: "It is mandatory for us to believe in the appearance of Prophet Muhammad (S) and Imams at the bedside of a dying person, who might have any belief. These personalities help relieve the pain of death from a believer and cause aggravation to a faithless soul.

This was sufficient basis for us to believe in the matter and a further investigation of this issue was not required, particularly about the nature of their presence i.e. whether they were present in their original bodies or in virtual frames. Any other explanation such as the dying person imagined their presence, or anything else was strictly prohibited. This resulted in the twisting and transposition of established religious principles.

Natural And Unnatural Death

There were two types of deaths,

- Natural, which arrived as a consequence of natural mechanisms such as through ailments.

- Unnatural, which came through abnormal and aberrant modes e.g. execution by a dictator or an atrocious enemy or through murder in a minor struggle.

Evidently, the first type of death was ordained by God. The other one, while its knowledge was definitely with the God, it was not sanctioned by Him. In fact, the murderer was taking life against God's command that is why he was liable for punishment. Nothing however, could be definitively said in answer to the question that if the murderer had spared the victim – how long that person would have survived,

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1. There were differing views about death i.e. whether it was a physical command or a decree by default.

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Chapter 17: Our Belief On The Issues Related To The Grave

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief regarding the interrogation in the grave was authentic and it had to take place. Anyone, who answered those questions rightly, would receive comfort, happiness and fragrance in his grave and a Paradise full of delights in the hereafter. And, the one who failed to answer correctly would find his grave to be filled with fire and on the Day of Judgement he would be thrown in the Hell.

فَنُزُلٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ

"Feast of boiling water" (***Qur'an 56:93***).

Mostly, punishment of the grave was caused by backbiting, austerity of conduct and considering the urinal filth as a minor thing, and not caring about it. For a believer, maximum punishment of grave would be equivalent to the shivering of an eye or a minor incision and this would be the atonement for his sins that were left after his mundane ailments and pain of the cessation of life.

When ladies had ritually washed the body of Fatimah Bint Asad (the wife of Abu Talib and mother of Hazrat Ali [ʿa]), the Prophet shrouded her with his own shirt and then lifted her body on his shoulders before laying her down in the grave to rest. He personally examined the comfort of her grave and then

laid her down with his own hands. After this he bent over her body for a long time and after speaking very softly repeated twice the phrase “your son… your son” and then came out of the grave to place earth over the grave and levelled it. He then bowed towards the grave again. People heard that he was addressing God,

“There is no god but God. O! My Lord, I am committing Fatimah to you.”

When he returned from the burial, his companions asked about what they had seen him perform – an act, which they had not observed before. The Prophet replied,

“Today I have lost the blessing and favours of my uncle Abu Talib. Fatimah was so kind to me that she preferred me over herself and her own children. I spoke to her once about the Day of Judgement that people will be raised exposed from the dead on the Day of Judgement. She in a moment of worry said that to be raised in a naked state might be a cause of disgrace and shame. I comforted her and said that God would raise her in full dress.

Once, I mentioned to her about the compression in the grave. She said that she was a weak woman, then I guaranteed her that God would save her from this sentence, that is why I shrouded her in my shirt and physically tested her grave by lying down in it. I bent towards her corpse to tell her a few things that she might be asked in the grave.

Therefore, when she was asked, who her creator was, she replied that God was her creator. When question was asked about her Prophet, she replied that Muhammad (S) was her Prophet, and when it was asked who was her Wali and Imam so she kept quiet for a moment with modesty. I told her to reply to the Angels that her son Ali was her Imam and Wali. When she answered this the Angels left her saying that they had no compulsion on her. She could now sleep just as a bride slept in her wedding suite.” Death then prevailed on her. This was confirmed by the Qur’an,

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَتَّنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَىٰ خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ

“[The residents of Hell will] say: O God! You have given us death twice and revived us twice. We accept our sins. Is there any way to escape [the punishment of the Hell]?” **(*40:11*).**

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 17

All Muslims agree on the questioning in the grave by angels called, Nakirain, compression by the grave and the period of atonement (Barzakh), with the exception of atheists and polytheists, who deny it altogether, and say that we are alive and we shall die, none other than time causes us to expire. Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) says in one of his couplets:

"If it was so that we are to be left alone after death, then death might have been a pleasurable entity for all living people, but it is not like that; when we die, we will be revived in the grave, and then there will be a session of question answer with Nakirain."

There was no doubt that the moment of death was very critical but the stages that were to follow death were even more critical and dangerous. Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) said:

"O, the servants of God - remember a person who has not been pardoned. The thing that follows death is more atrocious than the death itself. The first stage (of this journey) is the grave; beware of its constriction and darkness. Grave, calls and says that she is a house of isolation, fear and perplexity. She is the abode of insects and bacteria. Remember, grave was either a garden among the Gardens of Paradise or a ditch among the troughs of the Hell."

The Period Of Atonement And Its Associated Difficulties

In the linguistic approach, any boundary that existed between two objects was called Barzakh. God had said in Surah Al-Rahman:

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ

"He has made the two seas to flow freely (so that) they meet together" (55:19).

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيَانِ

"Between them is a barrier which they cannot pass" (55:20).

In similar context, the time period between this life and the hereafter was called Barzakh, or the phase of atonement. People had given various names to this chapter of life such as *Aalam al-Zalal* (obscure phase), *Aalam al-Ashbah* (period of objects) and *Aalam al-Misal* (period of virtual reality) and this stage of life is very troublesome.

Our Imams have warned us about the severity of this time, and asked us to store up as much of good deeds as we could in this life. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said, "I only worry about Barzakh regarding you, but when the Day of Judgement will be established, and the situation is in our control, we are then the best intercessors for you."

There was another tradition in *Usul Al-Kafi*. A narrator said that he had heard Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) saying that all of their Shi'as would go to paradise, irrespective of their deeds and he asked him to validate the statement. Imam replied that he had definitely said that. The narrator said, "O Master, how is it possible, when many of your followers had committed grave sins"? Imam replied, "So far as Qiyamah (Day of Judgement) was concerned you will all go to Paradise due to the intercession of the Prophet and his appointed successors. Yes, if I had any worry, it was about the period of Barzakh". The narrator asked, "What is Barzakh? Imam replied, "It was the time period between death and the Day of Judgement".

What Happens In Barzakh?

This being a wide-ranging topic, a summary from the statements of the Imams has been provided here. It was said that when a soul left its earthly abode, it stayed with the corpse. It was then readmitted into the body at burial. The length to which it penetrated the body was questionable, but one thing was certain that the corpse could not answer any query unless soul had entered its body.

Two Angels called Munkir and Nakeer, whose sound was sharper than electrical energy, entered the grave with very stern looks to question the deceased. There were certain traditions, which suggested that the Angels, which entered the grave of a practicing believer were different from Nakirain, and their names were Mobusher and Bashir. They possessed very melodious voices. They gave good tiding to the deceased, about his place in the Gardens of Paradise.

On the other hand, all those who failed to answer their questions were punished with metal hammers. They then departed and the person was once again dead. His body now stayed in the grave, but his soul departed to the dominion of Barzakh, where it was either blessed or condemned.

There was debate among the scholars about whether this punishment or blessing was awarded to the pure soul or to its virtual body. Most reliable reports suggest that it was the virtual body that went through this routine. It was reported that the spirits of the believers resided in the valley of Salam, in Iraq and that of the sinners in the valley of Barhoot, a place in Yemen. Compression of the grave (*fishar al-Qabr*) was other than this.

Why There Had To Be Questioning By The Nakirain Despite

God's Knowledge?

In the above discussion, there were certain points which need further elucidation.

When God was fully aware of human deeds, why was there a need to appoint Angels for questioning?

The answer to this query was that God undoubtedly knew the behaviour of every particle in the universe. Therefore, He had not introduced this system to upgrade His knowledge, but He had appointed this as an act of worship for certain Angels, just as *Karam-ul-Katibeen* were advised to inscribe the deeds of the people and some were appointed to protect humans. There were certain Angels, who were chosen just to praise Him and some of them remained in the bowing and prostration modes forever. This was His system and He could distribute the responsibilities the way He wanted.

There was no doubt that the answer to the questions of Nakirain was one of the fundamentals of our religion. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that whoever denied these three things, he was not one of us. These were – the physical Ascension of the Prophet to the Heavens (Mi'raj), questioning in the grave and the intercession of the Prophet and the Imams.

Another important thing was to know whether the questioning in the grave was done with everyone, or with a few select ones, and the rest were spared on the whole. The information that reached us from the Ma'sumin stated that the interrogation was done with pure Mu'mins and pure hypocrites, including the Nasbis and Kharjites. The remainder together with the children and middle group of Muslims were altogether spared. They would remain untouched, as if they are in a deep sleep in Barzakh. That is why when on the Day of Judgement, they would be raised from their graves they would call out, "who has disturbed us in our place of sleep?" The one who was better among them would say that they had remained in the period of Barzakh only for a day or two.

There were a few narrations available on this topic. Some of those were quoted in the following text. Abu Bakr Hazrami quoted from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), who said, "No one will be questioned in the grave other than those who are pure Mu'mins or a pure Kafirs."

The narrator asked, what would the state of those, who were in between these groups of people. Imam replied that they would be left in an indeterminate state. Similarly, Abdullah Ibn Sanan narrated from Imam As-Sadiq (‘a) who said, "Only those will be questioned in the grave who are either pure Mu'mins or absolute infidels, and the rest will be ignored."

Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in Bihar, "Whatever we have learned from numerous reports is that after death the *Nafs* remained alive, either in the state of bliss or punishment according to his status of faith. If he is among the weak, then he is completely ignored."

Allama Shaykh Al-Mufid has also favoured this approach but he tried to prove that the souls of this frail faction were destroyed. However, none of the traditions from the Imams have proved this point of view.

Mohaddas Jazairi said this fragile group was mostly composed of mentally handicapped, unwise, geriatric and the people who had lived in the period between two Prophets. However, on the Day of Judgement, they would be mentally corrected and then subjected to the trial by asking them to walk through a burning fire. If they walked through in obedience, then the fire would be turned into a blooming garden of Paradise, as it was earlier done for Abraham, and if they refused then they would be pushed into it. Allama Al-Majlisi preferred this approach.

It was also important to know the nature of the topics that would be questioned from the people in their graves. According to the reports, questioning would be done on issues related to the principles of the faith and some of its practices. There was a long narration from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, and we present here a summary of that recount. Imam said, "The Angels ask the deceased, who is your Lord, what is your religion, who is your Prophet and who is your Imam? If the person replies correctly then the Angels open a door of Paradise towards his grave on the other hand, if he failed then they sternly open a door of Hell in the grave and leave. Although, proper return will be given on the Day of Judgement but the chain of events has commenced from the grave. So far as practices were concerned the questions might be on Salat, Fasting, Hajj, Zakat and the love of Ahl al-Bayt."

It was reported from Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a) that apart from the standard questions, the deceased would also be asked about the pattern of life, accumulation of wealth, its sources and the modes of its expenditure. It was also reported that when a believer (Mu'min) died, six images also entered the grave with him. All of these were beautiful but one was exceptionally stunning. They surrounded the Mu'min from all sides, and if compression of the grave started, they would try to prevent it.

When this situation was over, the one which was the most beautiful figure asked the others for their introduction. The shape that was standing on the right-hand side of the deceased would say that she was his Salat, the left side figure would say that she was his Zakat, the one in front of him would introduce herself as his Fasting and the rear one would say that she was his Hajj or Umra, the one facing his feet would say that she was his Akhlaq (good behaviour) with friends and relations. When all of them would have introduced themselves, then they would ask the one which was most beautiful, to present her credentials as well. She would reply that she was the Wilayat of Aali Muhammad.

It should not remain without notice that this narration argued for the materialisation of deeds, and we shall discuss this in the chapter reserved for the Day of Judgement. It must be remembered that Wilayat al-Aali Muhammad was there to rectify some of the shortcomings that were left in one's deeds, but alone it could not become a replacement for other essential acts. Moreover, Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) had said, "Our friend is the one who is a friend of God, and the one who disobeys God cannot be our friend."

All the topics, including compression of the grave that were related to the period of Barzakh, belonged to the section of *Iman bi 'l-Ghaib*, or to the belief of the unseen, which was an essential part of our faith, as suggested by the Qur'an in Surah Al-Baqara,

يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ

"[***They***] ***believe in the unseen…"*** (***2:3***).

All Muslims submitted to this command. The elucidator of Al-Maqasid said, "All Muslims agree on the questioning by the Nakirain and punishment of some sinners in the grave." This being a very difficult stage and we would pray that God might save all believers from this test, because on paper, only a few will remain untouched from this check.

It was narrated by Abu Baseer that he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa) if anyone could be spared from the compression of the grave. Imam replied, "We seek God's protection, only a handful might be spared." There was no logical hindrance for the believers to dispute this issue, especially when the true reporters (Prophet and the Imams) had confirmed its authenticity, and if anyone still had some reservations on the subject, then that might be classed as their infirmity in the religion. Mohaqiq At-Tusi also used the same argument in support of this subject.

Criticism Of The Attitude Of Westernised Muslims

It was extremely sad to note that today among Muslims, a group of people have evolved who think, visualize and hear things through western speculations. They say that they were free people, but in practice they were enslaved to the western values. Evidently, they would oppose all other freedom models, as long as they were shackled to these western values. May God help Muslims to free them from this mental slavery. Today their proviso was such that whenever they heard about these concepts, they tried to reinterpret it, even if their explanation was absurd.

Although, a group influenced by the Greek Philosophy was always active among Muslims, whose key efforts were to redefine basic Islamic teachings, but today it had become a fashion to refuse such salient features of religion that were related to sensitive issue of unseen, under the guise of progress and modernization.

We would admit that if a scientific idea that had leaped from theoretical concepts and progressed to the experimental stage, and it was supported by some legal religious precursors then there was no reason to defy it, but to enter a blind alley under the pretext of science was dangerous, particularly when we all knew that scientific ideas changed very quickly and scientists were not loyal to their hypothesis. If we made scientific results as a yardstick of our religious norms then entire Shariah would have defaced long ago. It was the grace of God that during all times, we had people, who with their knowledge and expertise, had defended Islamic principles and saved Shariah from collapsing in front of this pseudo rational innuendo.

Rebuttal Of Some Objections Raised By The Western Minds In Connection With Our Belief Of Fishar Al-Qabr

First Objection

Bodies have been exhumed and no change was observed in their position and there was no sign of any interrogation being carried out, or the happening of *Fishar al-Qabr*. This question could be addressed in the following manner

● It was only a conjecture that had been presented, and on the basis of conjectures we could not deny issues that had been addressed by the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet.

● Another state of existence started after death, and its parameters could not be determined by material components. We need to enter the relevant domain to recognize it. The same was true for the period of Barzakh.

● This problem could also be addressed in the following manner. Suppose a few people were sitting somewhere together, and one of them was fast asleep. He, in his dream saw a horrible view and felt that he was burning in a fire or just going to be swallowed by a fierce dragon. He cried and shouted for help but his friends who were sitting close to him, were completely inattentive. They did not see any signs of fire or a dragon around them. When the individual concerned awoke and mentioned his experience to his friends, they showed no inclination to accept his verdict.

The same could be applied to explain the state of grave and Barzakh. We might not have the sense to recognize what the deceased was experiencing in their burial place. Therefore, the ignorance showed by the people at large on this subject, was not unusual for us to understand. This example had been given only to comprehend the problem; one must not assume that the events of grave and Barzakh were all in the state of dream.

Mohaqiq Shaykh Bahai wrote in his book Arbaeen, "The thing that is compulsory for us is to believe in the overall concept that Barzakh is definite before the Day of Judgment, and its description is not required for us to know, and nor our minds can evaluate its reality"

Second Objection

Sometimes a person did not get a chance to be buried. He would either be a victim of a carnivore or would drown in a river or at sea. How could such a person be affected by the compression of the grave? This was a superficial objection and it was a contraption of a mind, which had no understanding of the grave and the capabilities of the Creator of the universe.

Those who believed in the Omnipotence of God knew that grave was a place where one's body rested

after death. It might be in the air, or in a river or a belly of a carnivore. A similar question was once asked from Imam Ar–Ridha (‘a). A person named Yunus asked the Imam, “Does a person who is hanged or crucified suffer from the compression of the grave?

Imam replied, “Yes, God commands the air to perform the task of *fishar*.”

It was known through these realities that graves were actually the realm of Barzakh, and it was not a specific name given to the pit in which a corpse was laid down. This was supplemented by the Qur’anic Verse:

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِي الْقُبُورِ

“…God will resurrect all those who are in the graves” **(*22:7*).**

As this was the field of Barzakh, therefore it resembled the dominion at hand and the realm of hereafter, therefore, its punishment and reward had some similarity with the retribution and recompense of the hereafter.

Qur’anic Evidence Of Barzakh

Before the major Qiyamah, good and evil souls were rewarded or punished according to their deeds. It was reported about the hypocrites,

سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ

“We shall punish them twice and then they would be returned to the foremost chastisement” **(*9:101*).**

Evidently, the foremost chastisement was the punishment of Hell, which would be after Qiyamah and the two punishments that have preceded it, could be referred to the mundane castigations and Barzakh. Regarding the family of Pharaoh, the Qur’an said:

وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ

“…The punishment has reverted on the family of Pharaohs” **(*40:45*).**

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ

"They are presented to a fire during every morning and evening, and when Qiyamah will be established, it will be said that Aali Fir'awn must be sent to even tougher punishment" **(*40:46*).**

It was said about the Ummah of Noah ('a):

مِّمَّا خَطِيئَاتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنصَارًا

"Because of their wrongs they were drowned, then made to enter fire, so they did not find any helpers besides Allah" **(*71:25*).**

In Arabic language, the phrase '*Fa*' was used when there was no periodic gap. This showed that the Nation of Noah was sent to the fire of Barzakh immediately after drowning. These Qur'anic Verses showed that evil doers and sinners would be given the taste of a minor punishment (of Barzakh) before the Qiyamah. Similarly, pure believers will also be provided with the taste of God's blessing before their final abode in the Paradise. The Qur'an thus spoke about the martyrs:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

"Do not consider them dead, who have laid down their lives in the path of God. They are alive, and receive their sustenance from their Lord" **(*3:169*).**

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِم مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

"They are happy and they are hopeful about those, who have not yet joined them that they will also not suffer any pain and distress" **(*3:170*).**

If a man possessed the wealth of faith, he could visualize all these events with his inner sight.

What Sins Are Responsible For Fishar Al-Qabr

The author illustrated some points that were responsible for *Fishar al-Qabr* (constriction of the grave), which were supported by several other narrations. It was recorded in Bihar on the authority of Ibn Abbas, who said,

"There are three shares of *Fishar al-Qabr*. One share is for useless complaining (about friends and relations), the second share is for spitefulness or backbiting and the third is for not caring about cleanliness after urination."

Some reports suggested that ill treatment of the family also becomes a reason for *fishar*. The incident of

Saad Ibn Maaz was famous in the Islamic history. The summary of the event was that at his burial, the Prophet of God, especially arranged washing and shrouding of his body in his presence. When the coffin was moved to the site of his burial, the Prophet accompanied the procession bare footed and shouldered the coffin sequentially from all four sides, and then personally laid him in the grave and placed soil over his grave.

At this moment Saad's mother addressed his son that paradise might greet him, the Prophet censured her and said, "With what certainty you can confirm Paradise for your son. Don't you realize that your son is going through the compression of grave at this moment." When the Prophet returned, companions asked him that the way he had treated Saad, especially when he removed his shoes while accompanying the procession, had not been observed when in his behaviour related to any other companion. The Prophet replied that the Angels who escorted the convoy were bare footed, so he had opted to be barefoot too.

They asked that they noticed him holding the coffin sometimes from the left and sometimes from the right – what was the reason for this change of sides? The Prophet replied that he followed Gabriel in that routine.

They asked him again that when he had personally washed his body, shrouded him individually and performed his last prayers, then why should the compression of grave be there for him? The Prophet replied that it was because he was ill tempered and harsh with his family.

In this moment, we must take heed and realize that how lowly it was to be indecorous in our behaviour. This minor slip could throw a person from the height of excellence to the depths of disgrace and infamy that even the favours of Prophets could not save him from the punishment of God. It was also known from various other reports that if a believer (he or she) died on Thursday night or Friday morning, God spared him or her from Fishar al-Qabr.

It was narrated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (ʿa) that the Prophet of God said,

"Any believer who dies during Thursday night or Friday morning is spared from the punishment of grave (*fishar*)."

Some of these narrations also included the time beyond Friday morning i.e. up to afternoon. Similarly, some other reports also suggest that burial in sacred places also relieve people from compression of the grave.

The State Of Souls In The Realm Of Barzakh

Whatever, we have mentioned so far, happens with the body and the soul together. After this point in time the soul departed from the body and the corpse was left in the grave.

On the Day of Judgement, the same body would be resurrected with its soul (to answer for his or her deeds). The thing that sought attention now was to find the state of spirits in the period that was to follow the grave i.e. *Barzakh*, whose span extended to the Day of Judgement, where souls were either recompensed or punished. One would like to know, whether this punishment or award was given alone to the soul or to its virtual frame that has been discussed earlier.

There were two points of view. The author of this book seemed to prefer the first scenario but his conclusions were not very clear, although Shaykh Mufeed, after accepting the two possibilities declared his preference for the first set-up. Some of the authentic reports of Ma'sumin and the findings of researchers have concluded that soul would enter into a virtual body and then would soar to the realm of spirits.

If the spirit belonged to a Mu'min, it would find its place in the Valley of Salam, near Najaf, in Iraq or in certain cases would remain close to its place of burial or move to the closest gardens of paradise. If it belonged to a non-believer then it would depart for the valley of Barhoot. There were many reports on this topic. We have presented here a few reports to enhance our reader's belief (in God).

It was reported from Imam As-Sadiq ('a) that he asked one of his companions, Yunus about people's opinion regarding spirits of the believers. He replied that people thought that they lived in the abdomens of green birds, under the chandeliers of the throne of God. Imam replied, Glory be to God. A believer was much dearer to God than that He would keep his soul in the belly of a bird. He then continued,

"When a believer is at the point of departing, he is approached by the five Holy personalities and the Angels of highest ranks. When his soul is withdrawn then God transfers it to a body that is very similar to his mundane frame. If a newly deceased person reaches him, he can identify him by his face accurately. It is also stated that spirits ask the new arrival about the well-being of their dependents. If the newcomer replies that they are still alive, then they say that they will meet them soon with the permission of God, after their death. And, if He says: they are dead then they feel sorry about them and say – since they had not reached us, they must be under the punishment of God."

Allama Jazairi says that there were several authentic reports about the dwellings of Barzakh. Allama Al-Majlisi summed up this discussion when he wrote,

"After the interrogation of grave, souls are transferred into virtual bodies, which are delicate like the body frames of Angels and Jinns, but very similar to their appearance on the earth. Any punishment or reward that is to be given to the souls is given through these bodies. Individual spirits can fly with these frames, without any difficulty and travel to distant places within a blink of an eye."

Allama Al-Majlisi was also of the opinion that spirits use this virtual frame in dreams to travel from place to place, and such a relationship was not impossible.

Answering Doubts On The Hypothesis Of Virtual Body

Some doubts have been cast on this subject and its negation is essential.

The idea crosses boundary with the concept of transmigration of soul (*Tanasukh*), which was not acceptable in Islam. The answer to this objection would be that we have misunderstood the concept of *Tanasukh*.

The objectors remembered correctly that transmigration of soul required migration of soul from one body to another, but they completely ignored that there are some other important considerations as well. The transfer needed to take place in the present material realm. It also needed to take place for the purpose of recompense or retribution. Allama Shaykh Bahai answered this doubt by saying, "This misgiving is baseless, because Muslims are unanimous in the futility of such a *Tanasukh*, which envisaged the transfer of soul from one body to another, after the corruption of original body in this material confine, but this concept that in Barzakh these souls is relocated in a virtual body until the Day of Judgement and then returned to the same body with the permission of their Lord on the Day of Qiyamah is by no means *Tanasukh*, as we speak of it."

It was therefore, proven that for *Tanasukh*, an alternative body was required in this world and not in any another domain. However, as we all know Barzakh was totally different from the present realm and the virtual body was totally different in composition from a material corpse.

Spirit had done good and evil in the existing body, therefore, punishment or return should be given to this body instead of a virtual frame, which had not performed any act of defiance or submission. Such an approach was against God's justice. This question could be addressed in several ways.

The initial reply would be that these virtual bodies were exact replicas of the existing outline and had some linkage with their counterparts in the present time frame, as suggested by Allama Al-Majlisi. Therefore, objectively it was not out of place to carry out a punishment or recompense through the virtual bodies.

A second reply would be that it was possible that these virtual bodies might have been created from some of the material components that were the constituents of our existing bodies, and that might equate the process of reward or punishment. This suggestion was in line with the Qur'anic text which stated:

كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا

"When coverings of the residents of Hell will deteriorate, We shall replace those with new skins" (***4:56***).

The third reply would be that it was possible that in the realm of Barzakh, souls itself might materialize in the form of a virtual body, and this answer became even more feasible when we studied the concept of soul also having some sort of a material component. If it was true then the original objection would be removed. The writer of *Khazinat ul–Jawahar* also provided some examples in support of this view, which neutralised every possible objection against the virtual frame.

Final Word

The narration that was quoted above by the author regarding the burial of Fatimah Bint Asad suggested that all people would be resurrected naked. While, there were some narrations in support of this view, there were a number of reports that suggested that people would be raised in their shrouds. For this reason, it was also highly recommended in these reports that we must cover the dead in expensive cloaks. These narrations were apparently contradictory and so our great masters tried to reconcile the narrations on the following basis.

- It was possible that the difference might be due to differentials in the state of their belief i.e. those who were Mu'mins would be resurrected in the shrouds and the infidels would be raised naked. Since the percentage of the Mu'minin was far less than the disbelievers therefore, due to statistical reasons, the phrase that all the people will be resurrected naked was used.

- It was possible that on the Day of Judgement people might be in different state of affairs at different places. They might be shrouded at one place and naked at another. It was stated that a single day of Qiyamah would be equivalent to one thousand earthly years. Therefore, shrouds might dissolve due to corrosion of the threaded material.

- It was possible that people might be treated according to their standards of modesty i.e. all those who were humble in front of their Lord would remain clothed while, others would be naked. Also, on the Day of Judgement, everyone would be so engrossed in their own affairs that they would have no time to gaze at the others.

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SHARES

Chapter 18: The Return (Raj'ah)

We have believed that the notion of Raj'ah was a true concept, as God had described in His book:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ

"Have you not considered those who went forth from their homes, for fear of death, and they were thousands, then Allah said to them, Die; again He gave them life; most surely Allah is Gracious to people, but most people are not grateful" (***2:243***).

They belonged to a colony of seventy thousand houses and used to suffer from plague every year. The rich, on the strength of their wealth were capable of departing from the city, while, the poor were left in their squalid houses to die (with plague), due to their poverty. Those who survived among them used to wish that had they got some resources they too would have left the city. Whereas, the rich proclaimed that if they had not left, they too would have suffered like the others who had stayed behind. One day they all agreed that this time they would leave the city before the plague struck. They followed the timetable of the plague and left the city to settle somewhere else. At that juncture, God commanded them all to die and so they died.

With the passage of time, the travelling routes to various cities altered and their site was lost from the trekkers. So, they were forgotten for a period determined by the will of God. One day a Prophet of God, named Armiah or Ozair happened to pass by that ruin. They requested God to resurrect those people, if He wished, so that they could inhabit the cities and enhance its population, and worship Him along with their other flock.

God then sent His revelation to Armiah stating that if he wished, He would revive them. The Prophet confirmed his request and God restored them to life and let them accompany him. Thus, the dead were revived and returned to the same world and then continued to complete their appointed time. Similarly, at another place in the Qur'an God spoke:

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّىٰ يُحْيِي هَٰذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Or the like of him (***Uzair***) ***who passed by a town, and it had fallen down upon its roofs; he said: When will Allah give it life after its death? So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then***

raised him to life. He said: How long have you tarried? He said: I have tarried a day, or a part of a day. Said He: Nay! you have tarried a hundred years; then look at your food and drink – years have not passed over it; and look at your ass; and that We may make you a sign to men, and look at the bones, how We set them together, then clothed them with flesh; so when it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allah has power over all things" (***2:259***).

The man, who was dead for one hundred years and then returned to this life to complete his appointed time, was reported to be either Armiah or Ozair, as suggested by various narrations.

In the Qur'an, God told the story of some individuals of Bani Isra'il, the nation of Moses (ʻa), who were selected to have a meeting with God upon their insistence. They died with a flash from His Majesty. They were then restored to life after the supplication of Moses, so that they might thank Him.

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"Then We raised you up after your death that you may give thanks" (***2:56***).

The story was like this – when the people of Moses heard the word of God, they said that the validity of His message would not be acceptable to them unless they saw the Lord with their own eyes. This squabble led them to be killed by the flash of heavenly lightening. When they were all dead Moses asked God about how he would face his nation, if he returned alone.

Almighty God then, revived them again to live in this world, in a manner that they married and had their offspring, and then died at the appointed time. God addressed Jesus (ʻa):

يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ.... تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي

"Oh Isa Ibn Mariyam ... you have revived the dead with My permission" (***5:110***).

This proved that those people who were resurrected by God through the hands of Jesus (ʻa), all returned to this world and then they died at their allotted times. Similarly, Ashab al-Kahf (The Companions of Kahf) remained dead for three hundred and nine years in the cave, and then they were returned to the world, so that they might ask each other about their ordeal. The episode of Ashab al-Kahf was very famous. If someone objected about their death by saying that God, while addressing Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ

"[O My dearly loved Prophet], you might think that they [Ashab al-Kahf] were awake; in fact, they

were in deep sleep" **(*18:18*).**

Therefore, their awakening was not Raj'ah.

The answer to their doubt was quoted in the Qur'an, in a speech by those who died, but when resurrected on the Day of Judgement, said:

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا مَن بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَا

"Alas, who made us awaken in our bedrooms from our sleep..." **(*36:52*).**

It will be said in their reply

هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ

"...This is the same Day of Resurrection, which you were given the promise by the Prophets and the merciful God" **(*36:52*).**

If the statement that infidels would be revived from their death (which they referred to as sleep), was accepted, then it could be said that the companions of Kahf were also in the same state i.e. they were dead and then resurrected. The essence of this discussion was that just as graves were symbolically called bedrooms, likewise the death of Ashab al-Kahf was also figuratively called sleep.

The similarity between sleep and death was also explained in various other Qur'anic Verses. It was therefore, proven that Raj'ah had taken place in the previous nations. The Prophet (S) had also said that many of the happenings of the previous nations would be repeated for his Ummah in a manner similar to the matching of a left pair of shoes with the right, or like one arrow pairs with another.

Our opponents had also narrated this tradition that Jesus will return from the Heavens and pray behind Imam Al-Mahdi ('a). This return of Jesus on the earth would be after his death as stated in the Qur'an:

يَا عِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ

"O Jesus **(*'a*)** ***I am about to seize you, and raise you to Myself..."*** **(*3:55*).**

At another place in the Qur'an God said:

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا

"On the day when Allah will raise them up all together..." **(*58:6*).**

and at a different place it was said,

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا مِّمَّن يُكَذِّبُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ

"And on the day when We will gather from every nation a party from among those who rejected Our communications, then they shall be formed into groups" **(*27:83*).**

This showed that this was a different day when all the people will be resurrected unlike the day when only a few would be raised. God said that they invoked His name robustly that He will not revive the dead, but God's promise was true (that He would revive them), but many people did not understand. The revival here was the revival of Raj'ah, because immediately after this statement God said:

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ بَلَىٰ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"And they swear by Allah with the most energetic of their oaths: Allah will not raise up him who dies. Yea! it is a promise binding on Him, quite true, but most people do not know" **(*16:38*).**

لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ

"So that He might make manifest to them that about which they differ..." **(*16:39*).**

Evidently the result of this clarification must be shown in this world instead of the hereafter. I would write an enduring book about the subject of Raj'ah, which would include its status and all the arguments of its happening with strong supporting arguments. The concept of *Tanasukh* was wrong and whosoever believed in this concept was an infidel, because it rejected the belief of Paradise and Hell.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 18

Although the author has a useful discussion on the topic, which is sufficient for fact finders, but we add a bit more substance to enhance believer's faith in this subject and answer some of the questions raised by its opponents.

Determination Of Raj'ah's Meaning And Its Role In The Region

The functional meaning of Raj'ah was that when Imam Al-Mahdi (‘a) would make his appearance, Prophet Muhammad (S) and some of the other Prophets, Imams Ma'sumin, ideal believers along with some of the hard-core hypocrites and infidels will also be returned to the planet so that the household of the Prophet could rule the world, and take revenge from the murderers of the Prophets and Imams. Therefore, God said in the Qur'an,

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ

***"We shall make these people to taste a slight castigation before the major punishment* [*of the hereafter*]*"* (*32:21*).**

Believers would feel blissful at the sight of these despots and murderers of Imams being punished and tormented. This thought was among the essential concepts of the Shiism, and its denier would be excommunicated from the faith, as emphasized by strong narrations issued on the authority of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, which stated that the one who had disbelieved their return was not among them.

Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in his *Risala al-Itiqadiyah*, "It is essential that you should have faith in the concept of Raj'ah, as it is among the key principles of Shi'a faith that are derived from the practices of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, as recognised by the Sunni School of thought. It is narrated from our Imams that anyone who denies Raj'ah is not from one of us."

The Proof Of Raj'ah

Apart from the unanimity of Shi'a school of Islamic thought, many Ahadith, the Qur'anic Verses and authentic traditions provided a reliable proof for its existence. Opponents of Shi'a school used this concept to ridicule Shi'a faith without a basis.

The concept of Raj'ah had no ambiguity by any standard of logic and practicality. It would happen because the happening was rationally possible and within God's potential. If this was denied then by the same quirk of reasoning, the existence of Day of Judgement would have to be denied. The strongest argument in its favour was that this phenomenon had taken place with previous nations and the news of its future occurrence had been provided by the truthful reporters (*Mukhbareen as-Sadiq*) i.e. Prophets and Imams. So, there was no ground left for anyone to deny it.

The Proof Of Raj'ah In The Light Of Qur'an

Several Qur'anic Verses could be quoted in support of Raj'ah. Five or six Verses had already been cited by the author with reasons for their mention. Although, much more can be said about those Verses, but

in view of conserving time we quote few more Qur'anic Verses to prove the concept of Raj'ah.

First Qur'anic Verse

God said in Surah At-Tawbah:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

"He is the God, Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and true religion so that it overpowers the other creeds, even if polytheists might dislike it" **(*9:33*).**

It was clear that so far, the promised triumph had not been achieved. However, no Muslim could have any doubt about the accuracy of Qur'anic message. Therefore, a time would necessarily come, when Islam would have a definite prevalence over the other religions. This was the time of Raj'ah that had been mentioned by many Sunni commentators, who clearly wrote, "This promise will be discharged at the time of the appearance of Imam Al-Mahdi (ʿa) and descending of Jesus (ʿa) from the Heavens. Follower of every other religion will accept the message of Islam."[1]

This explanation cleared that the prevalence, which was talked about in this Verse did not simply mean the apparent majesty of Islam, but it meant complete demolition of all other religions in physical terms and not as a philosophical argument.

Second Qur'anic Verse

God said in the Surah Aali Imran,

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُم مِّن كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنصُرُنَّهُ

"Remember the time, when God took a covenant from Prophets* (*and said*)*, I give you the book and knowledge* (*on the condition*) *that when a Messenger reaches you, who confirms what you hold with you, then you must accept him and support him" **(*3:81*).**

He subsequently asked them, if they had agreed to it and accepted the responsibility of His burden. All of them unanimously affirmed it. God then said, let all of you witness (this covenant) and He would be a witness too.

It is a fact that the covenant, which God took from the Prophets had not yet materialized. All other Prophets had neither helped the Prophet nor apparently showed their faith in him, although the fulfilment of this covenant remained a must for them. Otherwise, their trustworthiness or even their Prophethood would be at risk. The explanation of this Verse had been provided by the Prophet. It told us that this

promise would be accomplished on the day of Raj'ah. Jesus ('a), in the company of all other Prophets, as their representative, will fulfil these two responsibilities by helping the true legate of the Prophet[2].

Third Qur'anic Verse

God spoke in Surah Al-Qasas,

وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ

"We desire to favour those who have been undermined in the world that We make them leaders and recipient (of power in the world)" (28:5).

Humanity has known no one other than our Imams, who have been most undermined in this world. However, the promise that God made with them to be the leaders of the world has yet to be materialized. Therefore, there must be a time to comply with that promise. The traditions from the Imams would tell us that this promise will be fulfilled during the period of Raj'ah.

Fourth Qur'anic Verse

It is God's command in Surah Al-Noor,

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them rulers in the earth as He made rulers those before them, and that He will most certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will most certainly, after their fear, give them security in exchange; they shall serve Me, not associating aught with Me; and whoever is ungrateful after this, these it is who are the. Transgressors" (24:55).

It remained a fact that this promise had not yet been delivered. It was narrated by Mofazzal that he told Imam As-Sadiq ('a) that enemies of Imam Ali ('a) said, that this Qur'anic Verse was revealed for such and such persons. Imam listened to his words and said, "God may not steer the hearts of Imam Ali's enemies, when during their time God's appointed religion did not attain that promised majesty, such that peace and tranquillity had prevailed throughout the Islamic domain, or fear and doubts had disappeared among them. We have seen that they continued with warfare throughout the period of their rule"[3]. The promise that has been made with some selected personalities would require considerable time to happen and that period was the period of Raj'ah.

Fifth Qur'anic Verse

God had said in Surah Al-Anbiya,

وَحَرَامٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ

***"And there is a ban upon any community which We have destroyed: that they shall not return"* (*21:95*).**

This Verse could not be applied to the Day of Judgement because on that day everyone would be resurrected, even if they had died naturally, or as a result of punishment as mentioned in the Qur'an,

وَحَشَرْنَاهُمْ فَلَمْ نُغَادِرْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا

***"...and We will gather them and leave not any one of them behind"* (*18:47*).**

This returning of the dead must be for some other time, and that would be for the period of Raj'ah.

Raj'ah According To The Ahadith Of Ma'sumin

A number of *Ahadith* on Raj'ah have been reported. Allama Naimatullah Jazairi wrote in *Anwar al-Naumania*, "There are many authentic Ahadith about the return of Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) and Hazrat Ali (‘a) and same is true for the rest of the Imams".

Our great scholars such as Allama Al-Majlisi, mentioned almost two hundred narrations offered by at least forty Mohaddasin that had been collected from at least fifty authentic books, including *Bihar Al-Anwar*. Allama Shabbar's – *Haqq Al-Yaqin* had devoted more than forty pages to cover a single Hadith.

Admission Of Simple Belief On Raj'ah Is Sufficient

As far as the details of the Hadith were concerned, either all of the Ma'sumin, including the Prophet (S) would return or some of them would return. The subsequent facts associated to the period of their governance were varied. In view of these differences, scholars have suggested that a simple belief in the phenomenon of Raj'ah was sufficient, while leaving the details of the process to Imams and Ma'sumin.

Allama Shabbar wrote in *Haqq Al-Yaqin*, as a word of caution, "From the literature, you would have learnt that the notion of Raj'ah is correct and there is no doubt in its happening, and the one who contradicts it is excommunicated from the religion, because this concept is one of the essentials of Shi'a Faith".

Traditions that were available on the subjects of *Sirat*, *Mizan*, and other concepts of hereafter were no more in numbers and authenticity than those that were available for Raj'ah. The difference in the features of Raj'ah did not in any way affect the significance of this ideology, just as the differences in the issues of Mizan and Sirat did not alter the importance of these subjects.

A simple belief in Raj'ah stated that some of the pure believers and hardened infidels and hypocrites would return to witness God's promise on an appointed day before the Day of Resurrection. The rest of the details was left to the Ma'sumin Imams. The return of Imams and its relevant details should also be left to them."

Clarification Of Some Doubts

First Doubt And Its Reply

What is the use of the concept of Raj'ah? Why should we believe in it?

The biggest benefit outlined in this concept would be that the rule of Muhammad and Aali Muhammad (‘a) would be established in accordance with the terms of God's design for this world.

Infidelity, polytheism and atheism would be eliminated. Islam would be the predominant religion, and the eyes of Shi'a would be pleased to see the grandeur of their Imams. Apart from humans, jinns and Angels would be included their victorious army.

Love would prevail instead of animosity, all through the living domain. Earth would bring forth its treasures. It would rain regularly and the food shortage would be eliminated. People would have ample resources and it would be difficult to find those who required charity.

Friends of Muhammad and Aali Muhammad (‘a) would find their senses enhanced and the earth would be filled with Justice and equity. Jesus Christ would descend from the Heavens to aide and help the Imam and offer his prayer behind him.

Second Doubt And Its Reply

It was possible that infidels and hypocrites might seek forgiveness for their past sins. How could they then be avenged?

Raj'ah was a minor form of Qiyamah, so the chapter of repentance would be closed and their appeals for forgiveness would not be heard. This was in line with the Qur'anic text:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِن قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا

"...On the day when some of the signs of your Lord shall come, its faith shall not profit a soul which did not believe before, or earn good through its faith" **(*6:158*).**

The interpretation of this Verse was related to the event of Raj'ah.

People would not be resurrected during Raj'ah to be entrusted to perform in accordance with the Shariah of Islam, but they would be raised to receive punishment. Therefore, their acts of remorse would have no meaning.

Repentance was never accepted at the verge of punishment, as seen in the case of Pharaoh and Qaroon.

It was just possible that their inner animosity with God and His religion might be so strong that after coming to life again, they might not be allowed to seek pardon. God had told us about such people in the Qur'an. After seeing the punishment], they will request to be sent to the world again, so that they could do equitable deeds, but (they are told) that they would do the same, what they have done earlier[4].

It was mentioned about such people that Satan would influence them and make them believe that they were born free and they were not subject to any outside conditions. So, they would not repent.

Third Doubt And Its Reply

The ultimate result of Raj'ah was transmigration of soul. Therefore, this notion of return was unacceptable. The answer to this doubt had adequately been provided in the previous pages.

During his arguments on Raj'ah, the inference that the learned author took about Jesus ('a) from the Qur'anic Verse, pointed to his death, which was against the established belief of Muslim Ummah. A vast majority of scholars on both sides (Shi'a and Sunni) were of the opinion that Jesus was alive with God's commands in the heavens and he would return to earth during the period of Raj'ah, and then he would die his natural death. The narrations in this respect were numerous and in the category of *Tawatur* (with continuous chain of authority), except one odd recount, which informed that he had died. This report was superfluous on logical grounds, which suggested that the odd report was a redundant postulation.

The life and death of Jesus in the past was never given any significance, until a local prophet of Punjab, and his followers gave it undue importance and made it a hotly debated issue. In our opinion, any discussion on this topic would be a wasteful exercise, because life and death of Jesus had nothing to do with the Prophethood of another claimant.

If we accepted Jesus as being alive or dead, he would certainly be sent to the earth alive and well, and it had nothing to do with the home-grown prophethood of Punjab. The necessary methodology for the recognition of a prophet would be discussed when we discuss the topic of the seal of Prophethood. Anyhow, Muslims should be aware of the deceptions of this new group.

To prove a thesis, three essential lines of argument were needed i.e. its relevance, a supportive argument or an obligatory need for it. Qadiyanis ought to tell which one of the three routes proved the Prophethood of Mirza Sahib? The life or death of a person could not be a ground for another person's prophethood – standards for such claims were totally different.

Rebuttal Of The Reasoning Given To Justify Jesus' Death

Those who advocated Jesus' death, use the Qur'anic Verse,

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

"And when Allah said: O Isa, I am going to terminate the period of your stay (***on earth***) ***and cause you to ascend unto Me and purify you of those who disbelieve"*** (***3:55***).

They translated the word '*Mutawaffa'* as death. So, the translation read like this: ***"O! Jesus I am about to make you die and raise you to Myself, so as to purify you from those who committed infidelity".***

First Reply

The word '*Tawafa'* was the root of *Bab al–Tafaul.* The word *Bab* meant door or entrance and in Arabic language various words were derived from different *Bab* or entrances whose base or foundation was – *Wafa*, which meant to complete, just as the meaning of *'eefa'* was to fulfil a commitment. Therefore, all words derived from this root would carry this basic meaning. It may be *wafi*, *yuwafi*, *tawaffaita* or *tawafa*, *yatawaffa* and *towaffiyun*. They would all bear the same meaning – "To take or to give complete control." For example, in Surah Al–Maryam it was said,

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

"Those who persevere will be given full reward" (***39:10***).

On this basis, the meaning of '*Tawafa'* would be "to take complete control". Jews thought that they had crucified Jesus, his body would remain here, and the maximum that could happen now was that his soul might be uplifted. Therefore, God, in order to make His Prophet unruffled said that he would be lifted completely. In the light of this clarification by the Qur'an, it was a matter of great defiance to consider Jesus as dead.

Second Reply

It was just mentioned in the previous section that the meaning of "*Tawafa"* was either complete takeover

or handover, therefore on this basis the meaning of the Verse could be, ***"I shall raise you and make you die at the appointed time."***

Therefore, at this moment God was fulfilling His promise of continuing his life and then make him die after his descent from the heavens at the appointed time. Therefore, all the Christians and Jews who would be present at that time would revert to him in truth, as the Qur'anic Verse said,

وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ

***"There will be no one among the people of the book that has not reverted to him* (*Jesus*) *before his death"* (*4:159*).**

Third Reply

Another meaning of 'Tawafa' was sleep. It was therefore, mentioned in the Qur'an,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ

***"He is the same God, Who provides you with sleep during the night and knows what you do during the day"* (*6:60*).**

That is why it was said that sleep was a sister of death. Therefore, in the light of this meaning, the Verse related to Jesus could be translated as, ***"O Jesus! I shall make you asleep, and then raise you* (*to the heavens*) *in that state."***

It was mentioned in various traditions that Jesus ('a) was lifted to the heavens, while he was asleep.

Fourth Reason

Keeping aside the meanings quoted above, if for a moment we assumed that the meaning of '*tawafa'* was death, even then it did not prove the death of Jesus, because in the Verse – "*Mutawaffika wa rafiuka*" – according to the grammarians the connective '*wa*' did not keep one to one relationship with its connection.

For example, when it was said, "*Jaa-a Zaid wa Umar*" – Zaid and 'Umar came, then it did not mean that Zaid came first and 'Umar came later. There was a possibility that this might be true and there was also an equal possibility that it might not have happened like that, and both could have arrived at the same time or 'Umar could have come first and Zaid came later. In this case all three possibilities had to be considered equally. Therefore, the implication of this rule might be that Jesus' ascension to the heavens had taken place initially and his death might take place after that. Anyone who studied these answers

carefully would be in a strong position to refute arguments given in favour of Jesus' death.

Rebuttal Of The Theory Of Transmigration Of Souls

Although, in chapter fifteen the definition of transmigration of souls had been mentioned, it is repeated here once again. According to the specialists, *Tanasukh* stood for the movement of soul from one body to another body, in this world, as a result of a punishment or a reward. There were three other terms that had been derived from *Tanasukh*, and those who had a cursory view of things could not differentiate between these terms.

- *Tanasukh* was migration of human soul into animal species.
- *Tarasukh* was migration of human soul into any mineral body.
- *Tafasukh* was migration of human soul into any botanical species.

Anyhow, this concept of transmigration of soul, which was the mainstay of Hindu, Aarya Samaj and some other thinkers, was totally against Islamic teachings. This was so because it involved the concepts of eternity of soul and negation of the Day of Judgement. There were several grounds to reject this idea. A few arguments are presented here to rebut this concept.

First Argument

The centrepiece of *tanasukh* was the denial of the Day of Judgement and eternity of the soul. When it had been proved with irrefutable arguments that the Day of Judgement was definite, then its negation automatically annulled the idea of Transmigration of souls.

Second Argument

Tanasukh involved the eternity of soul. We knew that apart from God, everything else was probable. Therefore, *tanasukh* was a wrong concept.

Third Argument

For those people, who had accepted the idea of transmigration, it was the only way for them through which a soul could be punished or rewarded for its deeds. However, it would be reasonable to say that a person who was punished or rewarded should have its full qualifications or knowledge of his past deeds, otherwise the retribution or recompense would be considered a meaningless act.

However, no one until now had felt within themselves that they were going through the punishment or reward of some particular acts of their past life. If all of them could not remember, then at least there should have be a minor percentage of the total, who would at least be aware of their past deeds that had resulted in their present state of punishment or reward. This told that transmigration of souls was a wrong concept.

Fourth Argument

If *tanasukh* was an appropriate mechanism then the rate of birth must equal the rate of deaths, but the observations were against this view. Often due to disasters, death was more predominant as compared to births and vice versa. In the first case, when many souls were uselessly available and in other case new souls were essentially created, which was against the principle of transmigration of souls.

Fifth Argument

If the concept of *tanasukh* was correct then it was essential that millions of humans who were dead earlier must come to life every day because the proponents of *tanasukh* had no mechanism to tell whether a dead soul must occupy only a newly created body. We were therefore right to assume that according to the postulates of *tanasukh*, a man who died today must come to life in a dead monkey or a dog according to his deeds and that dead animal must become active and vibrant. Nothing like this had ever been noticed.

Sixth Argument

We have learnt through exhaustive studies that human soul at its birth was devoid of intelligence, but as the body progressed then its sensitivity to its surroundings increased and his intelligence improved and gradually reached its pinnacle. That was why philosophers had divided process of human learning into four stages – images, understanding, practical activity and useful acumen.

When man was a child he learnt through images, when he grew a bit, he then learnt to decipher those images and made a sense of it. During the third stage his memory bank had progressed so that he was fully aware of his capabilities and in the fourth stage he could contribute to the development of his surroundings. We could now say that a soul, which had reached the fourth stage would have to start from the initial stage if he or she had to go through *tanasukh.* In reality however, the reversal of the learning stages mentioned earlier had not been witnessed in the physical world.

Seventh Argument

The circle of *tanasukh* had no definite beginning. For a man, it was essential that he should first belong to an inorganic world and then reach the animal stage while, it was essential for the animal and vegetable species to be human first, because *tanasukh* was based on a progression ladder i.e. it progressed to higher levels for performing good deeds and reverted to lower life for committing evil

deeds, and this was an open circle and that was logically impossible.

Eighth Argument

If we accepted *tanasukh,* then we must accept its circle to be eternal and everlasting as well, and if this circle was perpetual then we would have to admit that those bodies, through which these souls were transmigrating, were also endless or eternal. This rule would then be applicable to the system, in which these souls and bodies were operating, and the universe would be then eternal as well, but scientific discoveries have revealed that this universe was not eternal. It had been created at a certain instant of time.

Ninth Argument

If the next life was a result of our bad deeds, as it was said, the fruit of evil was always bad, then its repetition could not manifest in any form other than malevolence and immorality. This way a soul was bound to degrade further and further down the track, and we could not expect it to elevate itself. This meant that it was possible for a man to become a beast but it was impossible for an animal to become man.

A question that now arose was – what were those good deeds that made this human population to grow, and where had they come from? Is there anyone who could solve this human puzzle?

Tenth Argument

There was no doubt that the concept of *tanasukh* was better than the model, which suggested that death was end of the road for humanity, since in this concept there was at least a hope that evil would be punished and good would be rewarded.

However, a belief that was against logic and wisdom, and opposed human development could not grip people's mind indefinitely. It lost its intellectual value due to its final consequence, because once it was known that the circle of *tanasukh* was on the move, like an automatic machine, then it would produce expected results for given deeds. Therefore, there was no room left for repentance and remorse.

Hence a person would be entangled in an unending circle of evil. So, if he decided that as he was destined for a lower form of life, why should he not enjoy the present human stature to the maximum, without caring for its legal implications or its effects on the society? Who could negate such a proposal.

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1. Tafsir al–Fath al–Bayan and Ibn Kathir.
2. Tafsir al–Safi.
3. Tafsir al–Safi.
4. Refer to Verse 35:37.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 19: Return (Ba'th) After Death

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said, "We believe in resurrection after death."[1]

The Prophet of God had said, "O, the sons of Abdul Muttalib, a person who identifies appropriate objectives, never lies to his own family. I swear by God the Almighty, Who sent me as his Messenger in truth that you will certainly die, as you do in sleep, and then you will be definitely revived just as you wake up after sleep, and there is no place other than Paradise or Hell after death. The creation of life and then to repeat it for all (humanity) is identical to the creation of one man for the God."

God said in the Qur'an,

مَّا خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

"Your creation and then your revival (after death) are very similar to the resurrection of one person" (31:28).

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1. Maad i.e. major Resurrection – its meaning in Islamic Shariah is that day, when the souls of people would be returned to their original bodies and they would be resurrected in order to answer their deeds, which they had committed in the past life.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 19

The Legal Interpretation Of Qiyamah And The Proof Of Its Physicality

Resurrection was illustrated in the Qur'an through the following Verses,

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ

"All those who have existed at the beginning and at the end" **(*56:49*).**

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ

"Shall be assembled on an appointed date" **(*56:50*).**

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ جَمَعْنَاكُمْ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ

"This is the day of decision that is why, We have collected you all" **(*77:38*).**

Entire Muslim Ummah and the member of other revealed religions were unanimous on this concept. Its deniers had no place in the Islamic faith, since this concept was one of the essentials of Islam.

However, atheists and polytheists, including Hindus and Arya Samaj did not conform to this philosophy. The former, due to their rejection of faith would not agree to any such binding in which they were subject to any inquest on the basis of their past deeds. The others could satisfy their minds by subjecting themselves to the dogma of *tanasukh*.

However, among the believers of *Ma'ad*, there was a difference in its presentation i.e. was it physical, spiritual or both?

From physical *Ma'ad*, we meant that after death soul was not subjected to any reward or punishment, but on the Day of Judgement, it would be returned to the original body to begin the process of recompense or castigation, depending upon its deeds. Whereas in Spiritual *Ma'ad*, we meant that the spirit enjoyed the recompense or chastisement, and this was its reward or punishment and the body would not be revived at any stage.

These definitions could make understanding of the third possibility an easy possibility. Majority of Muslim theologians conformed to this third category. Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in his book *Haqq Al-Yaqin* – "This philosophy is more appealing than the rest. There is no contradiction in the receipt of spiritual and body pleasures, and *Ahadith* also reinforce this point of view."

Similarly, Allama Shabbar also wrote in his book – "I say that the concept of body and soul's resurrection is the best option and it is strengthened by Ahadith from the Prophet (S) and Imams and Ma'sumin."

Anyhow, there were two assertions – one was the need for Ma'ad and its proof, and the other was resurrection of the body and soul together. We would prove the validity of these two concepts with definite arguments and clear illustrations.

Proof For The Necessity Of Qiyamah

There were several attestations available on the validity of the Day of Resurrection. We have only presented a few to prove our point of view, so that honest minded people could feel confident that the happening of Qiyamah was essential, otherwise all religious mechanisms would become ineffective for its followers.

First Argument On Ma'ad

Just as every wise, equitable and kind would establish law for the betterment of his people, and then implement justice, so that law breakers could be punished. In this way justice would be established between the victim and his oppressor at an appointed time. This was done by fulfilling all the legal requirements and then by announcing the punishment for the guilty.

In the same way, the true Judge and Master of the universe had sent the Prophets and Messengers for the betterment of His servants, to let them know that a day of reckoning was in waiting, when they would be judged and rewarded according to their deeds.

To enhance this system, He sent the books of law and those who could interpret and enforce it. The last of these was the greatest of the Prophets – Muhammad (S). He was supplemented by a complete code of law that had cleared all essentials of the heavenly decrees. Therefore, such a day was vital, where the people were held accountable to their deeds and the munificent were rewarded for their acts of godliness, and the evil were punished for their wickedness. Such a day in the terminology of religion was called the Day of Qiyamah or the Day of Judgement.

Second Argument On Ma'ad

The responsibilities that had been handed down by the Lord on His subjects had divided people into two groups. On the basis of their conformity to the tasks He assigned them to, some were obedient and others were defiant. It was now a demand of the Heavenly Justice that dutiful were rewarded and the disobedient punished, so that evil and pious could be differentiated.

It had been an observed fact that disobedient people did not necessarily receive appropriate punishment for their crimes in the world. Many submissive and pious people suffered all their lives and passed away quietly, without being rewarded, while millions of tyrants and rebels left the world unscathed. It was a natural demand of mundane intellect that there must be an adequate structure to settle between these two groups, otherwise virtuous and evil would be at par and righteous deeds would lose their meaning.

However, such an arrangement, where righteousness was not rewarded would be beyond the dignity of God the Almighty. Therefore, the demand for a Day of Judgement became essential. That is why God said in the Qur'an,

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ

"Shall We then treat the People of Faith like the People of Sin?" (***68:35***).

At another place, the Qur'an raised the same issue,

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

"Nay! do those who have wrought evil deeds think that We will make them like those who believe and do good – that their life and their death shall be equal? Evil it is that they judge" (***45:21***).

However, when it was seen with an open vision that outcomes of human material actions were clear and visible in this world, but the result of his spiritual and moral acts were not perceived in this domain, then human intellect inferred that there must be another life beyond the present domain, where all acts of moral and spiritual realm – good or bad must be accounted for, and the people would be rewarded according to their performance.

Third Argument On Ma'ad

God had promised His subjects a befitting recompense for the acts of good deeds. Therefore, there had to be a day of reimbursement, otherwise, it would turn out to be the work of a deceit that posed antagonism towards His creatures. God was free of such inadequacies. He declared in the Qur'an that ***God is not unjust towards His subjects nor does He back away from His promises***[1].

Similarly, warnings had been issued to those who floundered with His rulings. It was evident that this goal had not been achieved in this world, as there were many tyrants and dictators who had prevailed over the believers and countless men of faith had perished in an oppressed state. Therefore, if there were no arrangements installed for such criminals to be brought to justice, then all the grand promises that had been made would become meaningless and appear to be the acts of betrayal towards His subjects. Such a thesis was beyond imagination in respect to God. Therefore, need for the Day of Judgement was essential.

The Religion of Islam had its fundamental based on absolute justice, and the appointment of a day of reckoning was another aspect of its legal postulate, as stated in the Qur'an, there will be no excess committed to anyone on that day. All those who have performed an atom weight of goodness will find its pleasure in the hereafter, and an evil doer will taste the retribution of his acts on the Day of Judgement[2].

Fourth Argument On Ma'ad

This much was accepted by all of us that man had been sent to this world to undergo a trial. Since he

was subject to certain legal bindings, it was essential to include a mechanism for punishing and rewarding his acts. This could be achieved by two methods – either through transmigration of souls or as advised by the Prophet of Islam and previous prophets, namely – the Day of Judgement.

However, *tanasukh* or transmigration of souls was a faulty concept, and we have dedicated discussion to invalidate its concept, including the argument that one must be aware of the reasons that had resulted in a particular punishment being awarded to an individual, and if he was ignorant of this fact then punishing or rewarding an individual would become a meaningless act.

Evidently, this was not realised in the process of transmigration as illustrated in the following example. Suppose that a man was born in a Royal family and eventually succeeded to become a king, and spent his life in total luxury, he would never know that on what ground he had been awarded this Royalty, similarly a cat or a monkey would never realize the misdeeds he or she had committed in the previous life to deserve this punishment.

This, if transmigration was a flawed concept, then the only alternative was the acceptance of a Day of Judgement for every soul.

Fifth Argument On Ma'ad

This fact was beyond doubt that there was no supreme other than God the Almighty in this universe, and He was unique in Attributes and the Essence of His Person. Similarly, this reality was also irrefutable that man was way ahead of His other creatures. Then, what should be awarded to him, if he entered the domain of disobedience or submission to His laws?

It was widely accepted that retribution was made in accordance with the subject's status. This was well presented through a simple example which had been presented in *Risala al-Abtal al-Tanasukh*. It was said that Alexander the great was pleased with a person and asked him to demand any reward from him. He asked Alexander to give him one penny. Alexander replied that such a meagre sum was way below his dignity. He then asked Alexander to give him his seat of authority. Alexander replied that this demand was above his status. It was therefore, concluded that punishment or reward given had to be appropriate with the rank of the concerned. It was therefore, important that such a standard had to be observed by the Creator in relation to the impunity or reward for His subjects.

Readers could now make an honest judgement of their own in relation to the two systems that were proposed for retribution and reward. Who could deny that worldly pleasures and sorrows were both temporary and insignificant? Neither happiness nor grief was permanent. A man was a Royal today but could be a drifter tomorrow. Poverty, richness, heath and disease can all alternate all the time. This was not life but a kind of diversion. God declared,

وَمَا هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

"The life in this world is like a play time activity; however, the real life is in the hereafter, if you understand" (***29:64***).

How was it possible that the King of kings, who was eternal and ceaseless, would grant such a baseless commodity as a prize or penalty to humans? Logic demanded that there should be other means of retribution and gifting, where the sentence could be awarded in view of the status of the executor and the receiver in mind.

All praise was for the God – validity of the Day of Judgement being proven logically, no wise person could deny its necessity while Islamic Shariah was full of its legitimacy. There was hardly a Surah in the Holy Qur'an, where *Ma'ad* or resurrection was not mentioned, either comprehensively or in brief God said,

وَمَا مِن دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِن شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

"And there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings but (***they are***) ***genera like yourselves; We have not neglected anything in the Book, then to their Lord shall they be gathered"*** (***6:38***).

وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِي الْقُبُورِ

"And because the hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and because Allah shall raise up those who are in the graves" (***22:7***).

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ ۘ وَالْمَوْتَىٰ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ

"...and (***as to***) ***the dead, Allah will raise them, then to Him they shall be returned"*** (***6:36***).

زَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَن لَّن يُبْعَثُوا قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

"Infidels claim that they will not be raised again. O! Prophet, tell them that by God they will be raised again and then they will be shown their deeds that they had performed" (***64:7***).

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ

"So, he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it (***on the day of judgement***)***"*** (***99:7***).

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

"And whoso doeth ill an atom's weight will see it then" **(*99:8*).**

وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا

"And because the hour is coming, there is no doubt about it..." **(*22:7*).**

فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَن يُعِيدُنَا قُلِ الَّذِي فَطَرَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ

"Soon they will ask you, who will revive them **(*from dead*).** ***Tell them, the One who has created them in the first place"*** **(*17:51*).**

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

"And He it is Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and it is easy to Him; and His are the most exalted attributes in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise" **(*30:27*).**

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ

"Everyone has to return to their Lord and this is a true promise of God. He has certainly created beings in the first place and he will revive them again **(*after death*)** ***so that those who accepted faith and performed well should be rewarded adequately..."*** **(*10:4*).**

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ

"We have not created things that exist between heavens and the earth as a futile **(*exercise*).** ***These are the presumptions of the infidels"*** **(*38:27*).**

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

"What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us?" **(*23:115*).**

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ

"Shall We treat those who believe and do good like the mischief-makers in the earth? Or shall We make those who guard (against evil) like the wicked?" **(*38:28*).**

لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا

"So that they should see that God's promise was accurate, and they should also understand that the coming of Qiyamah is without any doubt..." **(*18:21*).**

"The day of Qiyamah is bound to come but I shall conceal it so that everyone should perform so as to be rewarded accordingly"[3]**.**

These Verses of the Holy Qur'an would be sufficient for those who ponder.

Moral Benefits Of The Concept Of Resurrection

Whatever we wrote so far proved the necessity of the Day of Judgement logically and now we would consider the role of resurrection in developing social aspects of human life. The one, who had an eye on human historical development, and had insight to think, would agree that no other concept had moulded human behaviour in the positive sense than the concept of hereafter.

This was why Islam had made this concept the corner stone of its moral and legal framework. It promoted God-fearing and desertion of moral corruption by logical steps. It affirmed punishment for evil deeds and encouraged pious and virtuous work. It was a matter of common observation that immorality prospered in those societies that denied the idea of return to God after death, because rejection of the hereafter completely altered the standards of the human moral charter. It thereby changed the criterion to distinguish good and bad completely.

The plight of a person, who did not conform to the concept of hereafter, was not free from two constraints:

- Circumstances in life might not favour him. So, he would become depressed by the wastage of his good work in the world, which would further diminish his positive attitude, when he saw the criminals and malicious prosper around him. He would then conclude that evil had to flourish and truth and justice was destined for decline.

- Or, if the circumstances around him favoured him then his philosophy would drive him to extract maximum happiness without considering the legitimacy of his actions and he would not feel any restrictions or bindings to revisit his views. His only consideration would

be to avoid the law of the land, thereby establishing his moral position on selfishness and egoism. Every virtue or vice would be measured on the scale of worldly success or loss. Such an ideology has no place in a civilized society.

Answer To A Query

It had been said that all the gains that could be derived from the concept of hereafter, could also be acquired through the law of the land and its executing machinery. We said that law of the land and its penal codes affected the behaviour of a person i.e. wherever one found that government machinery was on watch, they would be careful to avoid any crime to escape corporal punishment. On all other occasions, they would try to reap maximum gains by their acts, even though it would be against the law of the land.

If caught, they would provide every false proof to establish his innocence, including bribery to the court officials and the police. However, belief in the hereafter provided safeguard for one's conscience and mind. For such a person, the apparent and unseen were all the same for they believed that they could not escape the watchful eyes of *Karamun Katibeen* (Angels appointed by God to document people's deeds) nor could he bribe his way through the court of God.

It was a matter of fact that all those who truly believed in God and the Day of Judgement not only kept away from evil deeds but they also maintained their thoughts in total purity. It was this belief, which hampered a being from committing sin, even in complete solitude, where there was no apparent witness to his actions and no government agencies were spying on him.

This was why the concept was frequently used in the Qur'an to enhance moral values. God has said,

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

"And fear Allah, to Whom ye shall be gathered back" **(*5:96*).**

Resistance against difficult odds was promoted by reminding humans that the blaze of Hell was stronger than the worldly fires in Surah At-Tawbah.

Similarly, charity was promoted by saying,

الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى لَّهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

"Those who spend their wealth for the cause of Allah and afterward make not reproach and injury to follow that which they have spent; their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve" (***2:262***).

Seeking interest on money loaned to needy people was discouraged by saying,

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ

"Be fearful of the day when you have to return to Him" (***2:281***).

Proof Of Spiritual And Physical Resurrection

After completing our arguments (with the help of God) on the two previous statements, we would like to return to prove our next assertion that resurrection will be both spiritual and physical.

First Concise Argument

In the previous chapters, all arguments on the survival, and then rewarding or punishing a soul during the period of purgation should be considered our first argument for the above statement. Those arguments opposed the corporeal existence of a body in Barzakh, while the present argument would contest the resurrection of the soul alone on the Day of Judgement.

Second Concise Argument

There was no doubt that human activities (good and bad) are influenced by both body and the soul, therefore, it was a pre-requisite for a just system to punish or reward both, and it was only possible if both were revived in the hereafter.

Third Concise Argument

Those sects which accepted the notion of resurrection agreed that man would be revived on the Day of Judgement. Since humans were neither singularly matter nor just the soul, it was essential to believe that his resurrection would be both in body and soul.

God had said,

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعْدًا عَلَيْنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

"On the day when We will roll up heaven like the rolling up of the scroll for writings, as We originated the first creation, (***so***) ***We shall reproduce it; a promise*** (***binding on Us***)***; surely We will***

bring it about" **(*21:104*).**

Fourth Concise Argument

If it was said that man would be resurrected in spirit only, we shall then ask was it due to the fact that human body was not able to exist on the Day of Judgement, or God was incapable of creating such a body? Whatever argument one would give in reply, this proposition would remain counterproductive, since God had power over all things (*'ala kulli sha'in Qadeer*).

God further reiterated,

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

"What! do they not consider how Allah originates the creation, then reproduces it? Surely that is easy to Allah" **(*29:19*).**

Naturally, a body that came into being from nothing would be easy to resurrect from the available contents. The Qur'an said about this query,

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَن يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ

"...Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten?" **(*36:78*).**

قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ

"Say* (*O Prophet*)*: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation" **(*36:79*).**

A Usually Weak Doubt About Resurrection

All those who denied resurrection could not provide any strong argument in favour of their denial except a doubt, which was stated in the Qur'an,

قَوْلُهُمْ أَإِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا أَإِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ

"They say that when we shall perish in the dust, shall we encounter another creation?" **(*13:5*).**

أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَدِينُونَ

"When we shall die and disintegrate into decomposed bones, (***how it is possible then***) ***that we shall be punished or compensated*** (***in that state***)***?"*** (***37:53***).

قَالَ مَن يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ

"They say who will revive these decomposed bones" (***36:78***).

أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ذَٰلِكَ رَجْعٌ بَعِيدٌ

"Shall we be raised from the decomposed dust? This is a far-fetched concept" (***50:3***).

Reply

Evidently, such a doubt could be raised only by a person who did not believe in the supremacy of God. To repudiate such people God had said, ***"If they ask, how their body ingredients that were combined with other matter, would be separated and recollected. Then answer them – by the Lord Who has power over all things.***[4]***"***

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَن يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ

"And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten?" (***36:78***).

قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ

"Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation" (***36:79***).

أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

"Or have they set up with Allah associates who have created creation like His, so that what is created became confused to them? Say: Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Supreme" (***13:16***).

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَعْيَ بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَىٰ أَن يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ بَلَىٰ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Have they not considered that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not tired by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Aye! He has surely power over all things" (***46:33***).

At another place in Surah Qaf, God addressed the same question:

أَفَعَيِينَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْأَوَّلِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ

"Were We then fatigued with the first creation? Yet are they in doubt with regard to a new creation" (***50: 15***).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ

"And He it is Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and it is easy to Him" (***30:27***).

Few More Doubts And Their Reply

First Doubt

This doubt was based on the conception that resurfacing of something that had been annihilated would be impossible.

Islamic scholars have answered this objection in the following way. According to their view, there were two connotation of the word extinction – either the subject had completely vanished without a trace or its constituents had remained intact, while its overall configuration had changed. For example, if a tree was truncated and then crushed, it would become extinct but its constituents were still present in the powder for or its remaining slurry.

With this example in mind, religious scholar argued that human annihilation was of the second kind. People who would be resurrected on the Day of Judgement were not completely obliterated but their essentials remained intact, although they were apparently scattered. Therefore, the collection and restoring to life of these constituents was not a difficult task for the Creator.

When a man could resurrect a house after demolishing it, using the same components, then it was a minor thing for God to revive a being when He had originally created him from nothing. That was why God had said,

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِير

"See they not how Allah originates creation, then repeats it: truly that is easy for Allah" (***29:19***).

It was stated at another place in the Qur'an,

مَّا خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

"Your creation and your raising (***from the dead***) ***are only as*** (***the creation and the raising of***) ***a single soul…"*** (***31:28***).

God had warned those who denied resurrection in an extraordinary way,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ

"If you are in doubt about your resurrection then remember We have created you from this clay (***why can't We then create you again from the same material?***)***"*** (***22:5***).

Second Reply

Let us consider proposition, which contemplated complete annihilation of the body. Even with this view one could not provide a reason against resurrection, because the One who had created all things from nothing must have the power to revive His original conception. God had addressed this issue in the following Verses, saying that He will revive them, whom He had created initially, when they were a non–entity.

مَن يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ ...

"…Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten?" (***36:78***).

...قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ

"Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first…" (***36:79***).

Rectification Of Another Doubt

Some of the cynics of the idea of resurrection claimed that restoration was impossible because one had to revive the time and space in which one had existed along with their body. This was not impossible. To address this doubt, we could say that time and space were not the essential ingredients of a body that they should be returned.

It was said that a student of Shaykh Abu Ali Seena was discussing resurrection with him and he was adamant that time and space were part and parcel of a material frame. Shaykh said that it was not necessary for him to give answer to his proposition. The student asked Shaykh – Why? Shaykh replied that (according to your thesis) I am not the same man that entered into discussion with someone who was not you (due to time lapse). The student understood the folly of his argument and kept quiet. This showed that time and space could not be associated with a corporeal entity, otherwise, a change in space and time would necessarily result in the change of that entity as well.

Enigma Of Consumer And The Consumed

Sometimes, it would happen that beasts or birds of prey consumed the human body. The question then raised as to how the bodies of such people would be revived? This dilemma was further obscured when the concept of cannibalism was invoked, because in this case the ingredients of the consumed would become a part of the consumer's frame.

If such a man was revived, then the situation was not free from two possible limitations. He would either be revived in the body of the consumer – in this case the ingredients of the consumed would be eliminated, and then somehow, he would be raised. Or, the consumed would be resurrected within his own frame, As the constituents of the consumer are thereby lost, he would not be capable of resurrection. This was called the enigma of consumer and the consumed.

First Implicit Answer

God had mentioned in the Qur'an that He has the knowledge over all things.

Nothing was obscure, as far as God was concerned. He knew the essence of everything that He had created, therefore, anonymity of the ingredients of consumer and the consumed poses no problem to Him. He could identify individual genes from a pool of ambiguity, without any difficulty with a single command. Today the parentage of a child from his DNA could be found, so could the identity of a criminal from a simple DNA finger printing, be recognized. Then distinguishing between the configuration of two individuals by their Creator was a minor task for Him.

We could further elaborate our reply. Every person, even if he was a consumer or consumed had two kinds of constituents – essential, that were part of his true frame. These would stay with him until his last breath and the other called additional constituents were not part of his essential make up and kept on changing with his physical condition. Therefore, when a beast, a bird of prey or a cannibal ate a man then the essential ingredients of the consumed were discharged from the body of its consumer. Thus, essentials of both consumer and the consumed were protected, and were within God's knowledge, which could be revived separately on the Day of Judgement. He had categorically stated in the Qur'an,

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنسَانُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ

"This is not factual; We can even mend their finger joints" **(*75:3*).**

بَلَىٰ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَن نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ

"Do Humans imply that We cannot collect their bones?" **(*75:4*).**

Second Explicit Answer

It was a principle of logic that if there was doubt on the probability or improbability of a thing then its happening sent a strong signal for it being probable. On this basis, we would say that denial of Resurrection by its cynics, calling it to be an impossible act was wrong, when such an incident had taken place in the past. God said in Surah Al–Baqara,

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّىٰ يُحْيِي هَٰذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Or the like of him who passed by a town, and it had fallen down upon its roofs; he said: When will Allah give it life after its death? So, Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him to life. He said: How long have you tarried? He said: I have tarried a day, or a part of a day. Said He: Nay! you have tarried a hundred years; then look at your food and drink – years have not passed over it; and look at your ass; and that We may make you a sign to men, and look at the bones, how We set them together, then clothed them with flesh; so when it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allah has power over all things" **(*2:259*).**

This Qur'anic Verse was related to prophet Armiah ('a) or on account of another tradition prophet Ozair, who saw the dead bodies of these villagers near the embankment of a river, where animals and birds of prey were eating their flesh. When he showed his astonishment, as to how God would revive these people on the Day of Judgement, God made him to die for almost a century and then resurrected him to show His power of creation.

Similarly, Prophet Abraham had once seen a corpse that was being eaten by the land and water–based carnivores, which were also attacking each other. Abraham ('a), on account of what he saw requested God to show him, how He would revive the dead on the Day of Judgement. God asked Abraham, if he was in doubt about that act. Abraham ('a) replied that he had the faith but he wanted to satisfy his heart. God asked Abraham ('a) to get four different birds and cut them into pieces and mince their flesh, and then place a portion of that mixture on top of each cliff and call them in turn. They would come running to you.

It was mentioned in various traditions that Abraham (‘a) selected four birds (hen, pigeon, peacock and a crow) and did what God have asked him to do. He picked up the severed head of each bird and called those birds by name one after the other, immediately various components of those birds came flying from different directions and they became alive and flew away.

Allama Al-Majlisi, after quoting this tradition from Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a), wrote that Abraham’s question was to satisfy the minds of people who doubted the resurrection on the Day of Judgement. Therefore, if such incidents had taken place in this world, and God had shown the signs of His Majesty, then for men with a logical mind, no reasoning was left to deny the final resurrection on the Day of Judgement.

Second Explicit Reply

Scientific developments in the present era have made this objection obsolete. We could now perform delicate experiments to isolate minute constituents from small amounts of mixtures of chemicals, identify hitherto unknown phases in metals and alloys and could create completely new type of materials. If God’s creatures could perform to that degree of sophistication, then it should be an easy task for God to revive creatures on the Day of Judgement.

Logical Possibility Of The Annihilation Of Greater Cosmos

After discussing the nature of physical resurrection, and providing clarifications to those who denied this concept in the previous sections, it would be appropriate to discuss the possible destruction of this cosmos, since there were some people who denied this possibility. It was not hidden from anyone that the process of death and birth of individuals was continuous. Similarly, nations came and disappeared, as they underwent natural rise and fall from a time unknown to us, but it did not affect the natural mechanism of the management of this cosmos.

The question under consideration was this – was there any possibility of a time when this cosmos was to end, including all life forms and be replaced by another system, which was called in the language of religion – the Day of Judgement?

Scholars and intellectuals have answered this question in affirmative. They said just as the chains of birth and death were continuous, similarly a day would come when all the cosmos would be in the grip of death. The philosophers and scientists agreed to this postulation, but physicists and cosmologists were a step ahead of the others to even formulate a time frame when this universe was supposedly going to end.

Our own solar system, which was bound with the gravity of the Sun, was also undergoing subtle changes. The Sun was getting hotter, so more of its fuel was being consumed. As a result, a time would come when the fuel in its core would be exhausted and its outer layers would expand to great distances.

It was estimated that it would consume the inner planets like Mercury and Venice, and its boundary could reach near the Earth. The Sun at this stage would look like a red ball of fire and becomes a Red giant.

The heat of the Sun would then scorch the earth; the oceans would come to boil. The landscape on the planet would be timber dry. On the other hand, the inner core of the Sun would shrink under its own gravity until it became a white dwarf and gradually our solar system would enter a phase of total darkness, devoid of all forms of life.

Our own galaxy (the Milky Way) was moving towards another galaxy called Andromeda, and if the present movement continued at the same rate, the scientists expect that the two galaxies would collide around five billion years with lots of destruction. The survival of our own solar system depended upon the side of Milky Way that we might be at the time of collision. Our system could escape if we were on the opposite side of the galaxy. We would be then thrown away in the outer space to some unknown distances or completely annihilated.

There were several theories put forward about the future of the universe – such as a steady state or contracting and expanding universe. It was now widely believed that our universe was expanding at an enormous rate. It was projected that a day could come when the whole Cosmos would be lost in the vastness of the space and total darkness.

The present expansion of the universe could not be explained by the amount of total visible matter, therefore, to satisfy the mathematical theories the concept of dark matter, which had not been not hitherto found, was put forward. Experiments were in the pipeline to find some definite answers. However, it had to be emphasized that the scientific theories were a way of explaining the available facts, and as the facts changed so did the theories. However, we could state with reasonable certainty that the scientific community was unanimous in saying that the present universe will end one day sometimes in the distant future.

The Scene Of Qiyamah, Resurrection And The Judgement

According to whatever, we had learnt from the Ahadith of the Prophet, we could conclude with confidence that when God would decide to end this Cosmos He would ask Isra'fil (an Angel) to sound a Trumpet or a Horn on the Earth. This would be done twice.

The Trumpet or *Soor*, as described in Arabic language was a huge instrument that was not material in origin. It would have two branches (perhaps to give a stereo effect) and one intake point. Isra'fil would sound this instrument in *Baitul Muqqadas*, pointing it towards Makkah. The lower end of the Trumpet that points towards the Earth would cause all living forms on Earth to die. When the sound would emanate from the other branch that was pointing towards the sky, all inhabitants of the space would also pass away. God would then command Isra'fil to breathe his last. He too would die.

The Qur'an had depicted this instance in several places:

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ

"When the great event comes to pass" **(*56:1*).**

لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ

"There is no belying its coming to pass" **(*56:2*).**

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ

"Abasing **(*one party*), *exalting*** **(*the other*)*"*** **(*56:3*).**

إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًّا

"When the earth shall be shaken with a **(*severe*)** ***shaking"*** **(*56:4*).**

وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا

"And the mountains shall be made to crumble with **(*an awful*)** ***crumbling"*** **(*56:5*).**

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا

"When the Earth is violently shaken" **(*99:1*).**

وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا

"It will throw out its impenetrable materials" **(*99:2*).**

وَقَالَ الْإِنسَانُ مَا لَهَا

"Man will ask; what has happened to it" **(*99:3*).**

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا

"On that day the Earth will speak about the incidents (of its entire history)" (99:4).

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

"On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth, and the heavens (as well), and they shall come forth before Allah, the One, the Supreme" (14:48).

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا

"On that day when the land and mountain are shaken, mounts will look like mounds of sand" (73:14).

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انفَطَرَتْ

"When the heaven becomes cleft asunder" (82:1).

وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انتَثَرَتْ

"And when the stars become dispersed" (82:2).

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ

"And when the seas are made to flow forth" (82:3).

وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ

"And when the graves are laid open" (82:4).

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ

"Every soul shall know what it has sent before and held back" (82:5).

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ

“When the light from the Sun will be folded up” **(*81:1*).**

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انكَدَرَتْ

“And the stars fall” **(*81:2*).**

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ

“And the mountains are moved” **(*81:3*).**

الْقَارِعَةُ

“The day of noise and clamour” **(*101:1*).**

مَا الْقَارِعَةُ

“What is the **(*Day*)** ***of noise and clamour?”*** **(*101:2*).**

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ

“What do you know the Day of noise and clamour is?” **(*101:3*).**

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ

“It is a day whereon men will be like scattered moths” **(*101:4*).**

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنفُوشِ

“And the mountains will be like carded wool” **(*101:5*).**

This day would come in an instant, as spoken by God in Surah Al–’Araf,

لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً

***"Only, all of a sudden will it* (*Qiyamah*) *come to you"* (*7:187*).**

The Prophet of God while elaborating on this Verse said that people would be busy in their routine, someone would be involved in tilling the soil, the other active in market trading and another might be cleaning his swimming pool. God would ask on that day,

لِّمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ

***"To whom the Kingdom of* (*Heavens and the earth*) *belongs"* (*40:16*).**

There will be no one to answer back. God would then answer His own query with the statement,

لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

***"The Kingdom belongs to the Mighty God"* (*40:16*).**

The status quo would continue as long as God wanted. When God would decide to revive the dead, it would rain for forty days. This was meant to collect the dispersed ingredients of all living creatures. Another sound from the heavenly Horn would follow and the creatures of the Heaven and Earth would become alive. The Qur'anic Verse thus stated for elucidation,

وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِي الْقُبُورِ

***"And because the hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and because Allah shall raise up those who are in the graves"* (*22:7*).**

It had been related from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that once the Prophet (S) asked Gabriel to show him how God was to revive people on the Day of Judgement. Gabriel went to the graveyard of Bani Saada and stopped by a grave and asked the occupant of that grave to rise in the name of God. Suddenly a man came out of the grave shaking soil from his head. Gabriel asked him to re-enter the grave.

He then went to another grave and repeated the same command. Immediately a young man rose from the grave, chanting the words – there was no god but God, Muhammad (S) was the Messenger of God and there was no doubt in the arrival of that hour, certainly God will resurrect everyone from their graves. Gabriel said that people would be revived in the same manner on the Day of Judgement. (*Tafsir al-Saafi*)

There was a similar account in Surah Al-Qamar and other Verses:

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ

"Their eyes cast down, going forth from their graves as if they were scattered locusts" (***54:7***).

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ

"Truly the quake of the last day is an immense happening and you will witness the view" (***22:1***).

يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ وَمَا هُم بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

"Every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling baby and every pregnant female shall drop her load. You will see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk; but dreadful will be the wrath of your Lord" (***22:2***).

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ

"And there will come forth every soul and with each will be accompanied by a guide and a witness" (***50:21***).

General Belief On The Details Of The Day Of Resurrection Is Sufficient

So far as the details of the Day of Judgement were concerned, in respect of what would be the common state of people, what would be their general appearance and what kind of difficulties were going to be encountered, the scholars have advised us to have a normal faith on the event and any other details were not essential. Allama Al–Majlisi wrote in Bihar, "I say whatever has been told to us regarding resurrection of the body and soul and its related aspects are sufficient for us to believe and the rest is not required from us, since undue deliberations can lead us to the perception that is not factual, and moreover, we are not burdened by the religion to know these details".

We could conclude this chapter by saying that since hereafter had not been physically witnessed by us, therefore, it appeared to us as a bizarre event. It was difficult for a common man to envisage. It was very similar to telling a child who was not yet born, that he was about to come into another world where there were immensely extended grounds, vast oceans, dazzling Sun and twinkling stars, where airplanes flew etc. If by any miracle we made him to understand what we were saying, his faith would still be shaky, because his own environment was not more than a few cubic feet of space within his mother's womb.

Similar was the condition of all living beings, since this world was similar to a mother's womb compared to vastness of the hereafter. However, as a child managed to understand these facts gradually after birth, similarly we would come to understand all that had been told to us in this world by our guides, when we would enter the domain of hereafter.

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1. Refer to Verses: 3:182; 4:40; 5:60 among others.
2. Refer to Verses: 18:49; 21:47; 82:10–12; 99:7–8.
3. Refer to Verses: 7:187; 29:53; 33:63.
4. Refer to Verses: 36:78–79; 75:3–4.

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Chapter 20: Our Belief Regarding The Spring Of Kawthar

Hazrat Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our concept regarding the Spring of Kawthar was that it was a lake that had the width that equalled the distance between Sanaa (in Yemen) and Aela (in Egypt).[1]

It specially belonged to Prophet Muhammad (S). It had drinking glasses that matching the number of stars in our galaxy and Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) would be its cup-bearer. He would quench the thirst of his Shi'as and friends and remove his enemies away from it. The one who took a single drop of its water would never feel thirsty again.

The Prophet of God said that a group of his companions would be arrested and removed from the lake, while they would be struggling to reach him to satisfy their thirst. He would then call out to God that they were his companions. He would be answered that these people had initiated lots of vices and illegal acts after his departure.

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1. There were several traditions available on the significance of Kawthar. The author of Haqq Al-Yaqin had included the Ahadith of the lake of Kawthar, Lawa al-Hamd (Banner of Praise) and intercession among the most authentic and reliable traditions (Ahadith) of the Prophet.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 20

Significance Of Believing In The Concept Of Kawthar

There were several traditions available on the significance of Kawthar. The significance of Kawthar could be appreciated from a single tradition of the Prophet that had been narrated by Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) on the authority of his elders,

“May Allah not bring him to me on the banks of Kawthar, if he has disbelieved in Kawthar, and may Allah not provide him with my intercession, if he has disbelieved in my intervention?”

There were several reports on the elaboration of the Verse of Kawthar in the Qur’an. God had said:

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

“We have awarded you Kawthar” **(*108: 1*).**

wherein the word Kawthar was specifically meant for the aforementioned lake.

Some other narrations however, pointed out that the word Kawthar stood for increasing progeny of the Prophet, in response to the taunts of the infidels, who used to call him *Abtar* (the one without male progeny). In addition to this some other writers claimed that Kawthar also stood for Prophethood and intercession.

In fact, there was no contradiction between various elaborations. Allama Tabari wrote in *Majma al-Bayan* that the word Kawthar encompassed all these meanings, since God had granted the Prophet great abundance in this world and promised the same in the hereafter.

The Description Of Kawthar

There were many reports on the description of the lake of Kawthar in both Shi’a and Sunni books. What Shaykh Abu Ja’far had described in this chapter, was the same with minor differences in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* and *Bashrat al-Mustafa* on the authority of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), in *Manaqabe Shehr Aashob* through a narration of Ibn Abbas and in *Hulyat al-Awlia* of Abu Naeem through Ans Ibn Malik on the authority of Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a).

It was reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas that when Verse ***Inna A’tayna…*** **(*108: 1*)** was revealed to the Prophet (S), Imam Ali (‘a) asked the Prophet to describe the character of this lake. The Prophet replied that Kauthar it was a canal, which was below the Throne. Its water was whiter than the milk and

sweeter than honey and softer than butter. Its pebbles were made of topaz, coral and garnet, and its bedding soil was that of strong musk. After saying this, the Prophet put his hand on one side of Imam Ali's lap and said that that canal was for him and his friends.

Proof Of Ali Being The Cup-Bearer Of Kawthar

Shaykh Abu Ja'far's assertion that Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) was the cup bearer of Kawthar was well documented in all the relevant books of both Shi'a and Sunni sects. Therefore, it was reported in the *Amali* (notes of master's lectures collected and published by his students after teacher's death) of Shaykh As-Saduq that the Prophet had said, "Ali, you are my brother, my deputy and my flag bearer in this world and the hereafter. You are also the cup-bearer of my spring (Kawthar). Anyone who adored you had adored me and anyone who detested you had detested me."

It was also reported in *Arjah al-Matalib* that the Prophet had said, "The one who wants to escape the torment of hereafter, he should befriend Ali (‘a) and follow his actions, because he was the cup-bearer of my spring. He would ward off his enemies from the spring and refresh his friends. The one who failed to drink from this source will remain thirsty forever, and the one who drank one cup full of this water will never feel thirsty."

Shaykh As-Saduq, in *Kitab al-Khisal*, reported from Amir Al-Mu'minin, who had said, "I will be with the Prophet on the spring of Kawthar along with my progeny. The one who desires to meet with us at the spring must replicate us, and put into action our advice, since there are noble and pious people in every household. Intercession is an established fact for us and our followers therefore, make an effort to meet with us at the spring of Kawthar, because we shall repel our enemies from there and (bring forward) and refresh our friends with its water. Anyone, who took one sip of this water, will never feel thirsty again."

Statement Regarding Removal Of Certain Companions Of The Prophet From Kawthar

A narration that had been reproduced by the author towards the end of his presentation was wherein the Prophet (S) had said that some of his companions would be removed from the brinks of Kawthar. Similar narrations were also available in some Sunni texts. In *Bab al-Fitn* of Sahih Muslim, Ibn Haazim reported on the authority of Sahel Ibn Saad that he had heard the Prophet of God say, "I will be the first person to reach at the bank of Kawthar. Anyone who reaches there and drinks from it will never feel thirsty again. During this interval, some people will reach the water's edge of Kawthar, who are familiar to me and I am known to them. Suddenly, a barrier will be erected between them and me. I will then say that they were of my company. I will be answered (by God) that you [Muhammad (S)] did not know what kind of evil acts they had performed after you? I shall say – let there be a curse and distance between them and me, who changed the codes of religion after me."

Similar text was also available in *Sahih Bukhari*. Some of those narrations had the words, “When they will be removed, I shall say – O, God, they were my companions.”

Similarly, in the elaboration of *Sahih Muslim*, including *Sherh al-Novi* and *Sahih Bukhari*, it was mentioned that when those people would be barred from Kawthar, the Prophet would call on God and he would be answered, “You did not know what kind of acts they had performed after you? They returned to their previous traditions.” Some other narrations included the words, “They became apostate after you.”

It was a pity that our Muslims brothers, after these clear indications, tried to defend some of the companions of the Prophet with false narrations like *Ashabi kan najoom* (my companions are like stars or whoever you follow they lead you to salvation) or *Ashabi kullu udool* (or all of my companions are Just).

Further Identification Of These Companions

Although, these hell dwellers were identified in this Hadith, they must be the same people, who had changed the Prophetic model of Islamic code after his death, by introducing their own opinions. It was therefore, important for the fact finders to visit the historical books and biographies to see, who used their speculative gestures to interfere with the religion.

Researcher could refer to *Tarikh al-Khulafa* of Allama Suyyuti and Al-*Farooq* of Maulana Shibli Nu’mani, where they have proudly presented their reinventions. For further elaboration, we have quoted a narration from Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari, which had been quoted by Allama Shabbar in *Haqq Al-Yaqin*. The summary of that Hadith is as follows: “Some people would reach the spring of Kawthar and he – the prophet, will ask them the same question as to how they had treated *Thaqalayn* (two significant things i.e. The Qur’an and the Ahl al-Bayt). Different people would provide different answers. Some of them would say that they had denied the major *Thaqal* (The Qur’an) by tearing it apart and opposing it and weakened the minor *Thaqal* (The Ahl al-Bayt) and fought against them and killed them. The Prophet would order that all of them should be sent to hell.

Then, a group of friends of Ali will reach the banks of Kawthar. They would also be asked the same question and their reply would be that they had followed the teaching of the Major *Thaqal* and testified it, while they had strengthened the minor *Thaqal* as well and accepted death to aid and help them. The Prophet would tell them to drink as much from Kawthar as they wished. At that moment the glare of their Imam Ali (‘a), would be like the glow of the Sun and the faces of the believers would be lit like the shining moon. In the *Babul Fitan* of *Kanz Al-’Ummal*, it was mentioned that on the Day of Judgement, the Qur’an and Ahl al-Bayt would complain to the God in the following words. The Qur’an would thus say,

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Chapter 21: Our View About Intercession

Shaykh Abu Ja'far, may peace of God be conferred upon him, said that our belief about intercession was that it was a reality and it was only reserved for those, whose religion and way of life were acceptable to God, and they had committed both minor and major sins. Those who have repented in life about their sins would not require intercession.

The Prophet of God said that those who did not have faith in my intercession may God keep them away from my intercession. He further said that there was no better intercessor (for a person) than repentance, for success and fulfilment. Intercession was permitted for the Prophets, their legatees and some of the chosen believers, who would intercede on behalf of many great sinners.

The least that each intercessor could recommend to God for freedom from the hell was no less than thirty thousand people each. Those who doubted the religion and indulged into infidelity and polytheism would not be pardoned. The right to intercession was only reserved for monotheists, who had committed some excesses in life.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 21

Religious Concept Of Intercession And Its Attestation

True or false, concept of intercession had always remained throughout the history in every religion. However, at this juncture, the discussion on its historical perspective was not our intention. It must be mentioned that Islam's point of view on this subject was totally different from the others.

It did not propose that God was an oppressed or a helpless entity. Islam stated that there were some sanctified people, who would intercede on behalf of some individuals, who had sinned, but their articles of faith were correct and they would be saved from the punishment of God through their intercession. Nevertheless, this intervention would be with an explicit permission of God, as God has said,

مَن ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ

"Who can intercede without the permission of God?" (***2:255***).

Or:

وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ

"They will not intercede but for those with whom God is happy" **(*21:28*).**

On this basis, our Scholars stressed that intercession would only be done with the explicit permission of God. Therefore, Shaykh Bahauddin Aameli wrote in his research paper *Al-I'taqad al-Imamia* that it was our faith that intercession would be available (with the permission of God) for those believers, who had committed major sins.

So far as evidence for intercession was concerned no Islamic sect had denied its reality. Several Qur'anic Verses and established Prophetic traditions (Ahadith) were available in its support. Anyhow, the concept of intercession was one of the main necessities of Shi'a School of thought, whose importance could be gauged from the statement of the holy Prophet (S) that had been quoted by the honourable Shaykh in his opening statements about intercession, that is.

Similarly, Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) narrated that anyone who denied three things was not among our Shi'as. These were – Mi'raj, Probing in the grave and Intercession.

There was no dispute about the principle of intercession, but people differed about its legal applications i.e. was it for elevating the status of the pious only or did it also include forgiveness of the sins of offenders. Therefore, some Wahabis, Motazalites, Waeedias and Khwaraj proclaimed that intercession was only for the elevation of the status of already blessed people, but the rest of the Muslim Ummah held the belief that intercession included both increasing the status and forgiveness of the sins as well, and this was the truth. That is why *Mohaqqaq al-Tusi* wrote in *Tajrid*, "It is a fact that intercession covers both aspects of its meanings i.e. enhancing one's status and forgiveness of sins."

When considering the misgivings of those who considered intercession to be only for raising the status, it was sufficient for us to say here that if intercession only meant a request for raising one's status in the hereafter, then it would invert its meanings i.e. instead the holy Prophet would become our intercessor we shall become his intercessor, since we pray day and night in our various supplications for raising his status and showering blessing on his person, such as

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

"O, those who believe, request God to incur peace and raise the status of His messenger" **(*33:56*).**

Such a concept was logically erroneous. Therefore, to restrict intercession to the meaning of raising the status alone was basically incorrect.

There are several Qur'anic Verses and traditions from the Prophet and Imams Ma'sumin that supported the idea of Intercession. God said in the Qur'an,

مَن ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ

"Who is there to intercede with Him without His permission?" (***2:255***).

Or:

وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ

"They do not recommend anyone (***for pardon***) ***except those with whom God is pleased"*** (***21:28***).

Or:

مَا مِن شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِن بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ

"No one can recommend anyone without God's approval" (***10:3***).

These Verses clearly supported the notion that some holy people would definitely intercede, but it would be with explicit approval of God. This was the belief of the true followers. Similarly, God declared about the Prophet in Surah Bani Isra'il and Surah Ad Dhuha,

وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ

"O Prophet! God will appoint you soon to the greatest place of glory" (***93:4***).

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ

"And gives you so much that you shall be pleased" (***93:5***).

Most of the theologians agreed that these Verses pointed to the intercessional authority of the Prophet and that the meaning of the phrase – *Maqam al–Mahmood* (place of glory) was actually meant for major intercession.

Further Elaboration Of Maqam Al-Mahmood

A long narration has been reported from the Prophet in *Tafsir al-Furat* of Ibrahim Kufi, with the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a), wherein the Prophet said, "The promise of *Maqam al-Mahmood* that God had made with me will definitely be fulfilled. Therefore, on the Day of Judgement when all the people will be gathered, a green pulpit will be installed for me that will have one thousand steps, and I will climb on to the highest step. At this moment Gabriel will come and handover the *Lawa-al-Hamd* (Flag of Praise) to me. He will say that this is the place of glory that God had promised for you.

I shall then, call for Ali (‘a) and ask him to sit beside me. He will climb the stage and sit on a step below me. I will then handover the Flag of Praise to him. Then the custodian of Paradise will approach me with the keys of the Paradise. I shall handover those keys to Ali as well. Similarly, the warden of Hell will also present its keys to me, which I will again hand it over to Ali. At this juncture, Paradise and Hell will be more obedient to me and Ali (‘a) than a compliant bride that cares for her husband. This is the meaning of the Qur'anic Verse:

أَلْقِيَا فِي جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ

***"[O Muhammad and Ali], go and fill the Hell with every infidel and transgressor"* (*50:24*).**

I shall then (stand up) and praise the Lord."

Similarly, Samaa narrated in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* that someone asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a), regarding the nature of intercession of the Prophet of Islam. Imam replied that when people would be frustrated with the excess sweating, they would approach Prophet Adam (‘a) for some relief. He would decline by offering the excuse of his original slip (*Tark al-Awla*). They would then approach Prophet Noah (‘a), who would also make a similar plea. In this way, every prophet would send the people to his next successor, until they reached the presence of Jesus (‘a), who would advise them to go to Prophet Muhammad (S).

Some of those who reached his presence would be accompanied by the Prophet to the gate of the Paradise called *Bab-ur-Rahmat*, and prostrate in front of the Majesty of God, Who would declare: ***"My adored, raise your head and proceed with your intercession, as your mediation is acceptable today. Ask whatever you require that will be granted to you."***

Who Else Will Intercede

From the previous discussion, it has been proven that the Prophet was not only the intercessor for the Muslim Ummah, but he was also the saviour of other *Ummah* (plural of *Ummat*). Therefore, the main position holder of this office was evidently Prophet Muhammad (S). Apart from him, Imams, Ma'sumin, Martyrs, Religious Scholars and some devout individuals would also intercede. There were various

Qur'anic Verses that lend support to this view. For example. in Surah Maryam it was said:

لَّا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّخَذَ عِندَ الرَّحْمَٰنِ عَهْدًا

"They cannot intervene for salvation other than those who has some accord with their God" (***19:87***).

It was reported in *Tafsir al-Safi* that the pact holder with God were Muhammad (S) and his honourable progeny. There were several reports of this kind with the authority of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, in the third volume of *Bihar*, *Kanzul Fawwaid* of Karajki, *Miratul Anwar* and *Mishkatul Asrar*, which was also known as the preface of *Tafsir al-Burhan*. It had been said that – "On the Day of Judgement, when God will collect all among the present and previous generations, He will appoint us the custodian of the deeds of the Shi'as.

Therefore, we shall request God to forgive those sins that were directly related to Him. He will grant our request. Again, we shall ask God that if they had some sins towards other humans, then grant for forgiveness against those people whose rights had been violated. A package of compensation would be provided and finally we shall forgive them, if they had shown any laxity towards our rights. This was the meaning of the Qur'anic Verse:

إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ

"They have to return to Us" (***88:25***).

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُم

"And it is on Us to judge them" (***88:26***).

We would discuss some of the *Ahadith* of this kind towards the end of this discussion. It was narrated in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) and Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), "By God we shall intercede so much on behalf of our Shi'as that our enemies, while viewing our acts will cry and say that if they had any friend and compensator like us, they would not have suffered on this day. Alas, if they were sent to the worldly life again, they would definitely be among the believers."

It was mentioned in *Kitab al-Khisal* of Shaykh As-Saduq that the Prophet had said, "Three groups will intercede in the presence of the Majesty of God, and their intercession will be accepted. They are the Prophets, the Scholars and the Martyrs."

It was reported in *Kitab al-Ilalul-Shraeh* from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), "On the Day of Judgement

when a devotee and an erudite (Religious Scholar) will reach the presence of God it will be notified to the devotee to enter the Paradise, but the erudite will be stopped to intercede for people, whom he had cared through his knowledge."

Similarly, there were many narrations in relation to the Mu'minin who could also intercede. It was mentioned in the third volume of Bihar from the Prophet, who said, "Do not consider Shi'as of Ali ('a) abase, because each of them will intercede for the people equal to the size of the tribes of Rabia and Mudher."

Likewise, the intercession by the Angels was also proven in the Qur'an and the Ahadith.

It can be concluded from these facts that intercession will be carried out by the Prophet, Imams Huda (Guided Imams), exclusive followers of Imam Ali ('a), with the inclusion of Ulamas (scholars) and Martyrs. Allama Tabrasi writes in *Tafsir al-Majma' Al-Bayan*, "According to our faith, intercession is proven for the Prophet, Imam al-Huda, their (exclusive) companions and Mu'minin of highest purity. On their request, God the Almighty would pardon many sinners."

A similar opinion was expressed by Allama Sayyid Abdullah Shabbari in Ainul Yaqeen.

Who Will Benefit From Intercession

In view of the Qur'anic statements and pronouncements of Imams, Ahl al-Bayt and scholars have reached the conclusion that intercession will benefit only those sinners, whose fundamental principles of the religion was absolutely correct, but there was some deficiency in their practical implementations due to ignorance, by mistake, due to overpowering by Satan or persuasions of *Nafs al-Ammara* (inordinate appetites) and not because they wanted to defy or desired to ridicule the religious paradigms.

However, those who have corrected themselves and performed good deeds with true faith will not require intercession. A summary of the proofs of these proclamations was given below. It was said: ***"Intercessors will not intervene for anyone other than those whom God has desired."***

Imam al-Ahl al-Bayt clarified this Verse of the Qur'an that approval of God meant those whose religion was endorsed by God (*Tafsir al-Safi* and *Tafsir al-Burhan*).

It was also reported in another chapter of the Qur'an:

يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا تَنفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهُ قَوْلًا

***"On the day of* (*Judgement*) *intercession will not benefit anyone except those with whom God has granted permission and liked his plea"* (*20: 109*).**

It can therefore, be concluded that intercession would benefit only those whose religion was approved by God, or in other words the principles of their religion were correct. These excluded infidels, heretics, polytheists, Khawaraj and other adversaries.

So far as the second category was concerned, the Prophet had categorically said that intercession was for those among his Ummah, who had committed grave sins, but were basically reverent and selfless. The word Ummah had greater dimensions, but in view of other prophetic traditions (*Ahadith*), it could be narrowed down to those people whose religion was appreciated. Similarly, it was narrated in *Kitab al-Fazail* of Shaykh As-Saduq that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had said, "On the Day of Judgement, we shall intervene to save our errant Shi'as, and those who are pious among them are already saved."

It was stated in *Basharatul Mustafa* that the Prophet announced that he would intercede on behalf of four people on the Day of Judgement. This would be for those who respect my progeny, helped those members of my descendants that were needy, aided those family members who were struggling and those who felt affection for them. This Hadith was also quoted in *Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah* of Ibn Hajar Makki.

It must be remembered that our scholars had included all Sayyids in this category, and it was not exclusive for Imams of Ahl al-Bayt. It was therefore, important that those believers, who respected Sayyids and treated them kindly, would definitely be the candidates for intercession by the Prophet on the Day of Judgement. As a corollary, it could also be said that those who hurt them would not be endorsed by the Prophet. It was quoted in the third volume of *Bihar ul Anwar* on the authority of Imam Ali Ar-Ridha ('a) that the Prophet (S) had said, "When I shall be standing on the place of Glory (*Maqam al-Mahmood*) I shall be interceding on behalf of the major sinners of my Ummah and God will accept my recommendations, but by God I shall not ask pardon for those who have harmed my progeny."

This reality was also a fact that the enemies of Ahl al-Bayt were not going to be pardoned. It was mentioned in Haqq Al-Yaqin, of Allama Shabbar, on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), "A Mu'min will intercede on behalf of his friends, if they are not *Naasib* (enemies of the progeny of the Prophet) because even if all the Prophets and Angels seek pardon for them, God will reject their plea."

An Important Clarification

The phrase that Ahl al-Bayt would intercede on behalf of their Shi'as and they will be the auditors of their work, should not make fornicators, languid and immoral to be happy, because all of these reports contained the word Shi'a. We must understand who was a Shi'a, in accordance with the definitions of Ahl al-Bayt.

There were many Ahadith in Usul al-Kafi on this issue that describe the characteristics and features of Shi'as. Few of those Ahadith have been reproduced here for information's sake. Shaykh As-Saduq narrated in *Kitab Sifat Ash-Shi'a*, on the authority of Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a) who said, "Our Shi'as

are those that establish Prayers, pay Zakat, keep fast during the month of Ramadan, perform Hajj, are passionate about us, the Ahl al-Bayt, and distance themselves from our adversaries."

This was a very long Hadith, but we have repeated only that portion, which was relevant to our present need. It should be clear in the minds of our readers that a Shi'a at its minimum was one who performed the appointed duties and refrained from the prohibited acts. *Imam al-Tahireen* (Purified Imams) had shown their displeasure with those who did not fit this criterion. It was reported in *Usul al-Kafi* on the authority of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), who had said, "Those who are subservient to Allah are our friends, and those who openly defy us, we are surely displeased with them. (It is further said) Our Wilayat cannot be attained, if one is not trying to deny prohibitions and affirming the obligations."

At another juncture the same Imam said, "Our Shi'as are those who follow us and do not defy our instructions. When we are in fear, they feel the same, and when we are blissful, they are at peace as well."

This was the reason, when a man deliberately defied the Shariah code and showed no remorse by actively working against the prohibitions of the law, then his name was removed from the list of Shi'a of Ali. They then, lost the opportunity for intercession. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said,

"Anyone who considers obligatory prayers insignificant, he will not receive our intercession."

The same applied to the statements of the Prophet in this respect. It was therefore, important that one should pay heed to these warnings, because some sins could sequester the wealth of belief, and the intercessors on whom they were counting for relief, then became their adversaries.

Repentance Is Also A Tool For Salvation

It was evident from various Ahadith and the Qur'anic Verses that repentance was also an instrument for salvation. The Prophet had said, "The one who had repented (on a sin) was like a person who had not committed any sin." The Prophet had also said, "No major sin remained after repentance, but repetition of a minor sin makes it a major sin."

The Qur'an says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ

***"O you who believe! turn to Allah a sincere turning; maybe your Lord will remove from you your evil..."* (*66:8*).**

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ

"And most surely I am most Forgiving to him who repents and believes and does good..." (***20:82***).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

"And He it is Who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons the evil deeds and He knows what you do" (***42:25***).

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

"Say: O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving the Merciful" (***39:53***).

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) said, “If in a dark night someone loses his transport and he finds it after great struggle then there is no limit of his joy, but God is even more blissful, when a servant repents for his sins in His presence.”

It has been an established fact among all the Muslim theologians that punishment of the hereafter was withdrawn from a person who had repented for his sins, that was why the author of this book commented earlier that such a person did not require intercession. However, in my humble opinion, however pious and virtuous a human being might be, he would still need intervention of the Prophet and his holy progeny for salvation, if not from punishment for his sins, then at least for elevation of his status in the Paradise.

A Cursory Description On The Conditions For Accepting Repentance

Repentance was only effective, if it was performed subject to its conditions that have been described below.

The one who repented must do it sincerely for all of his sins and show a sense of grief. He should be steadfast not to repeat it. He must make an effort to repay for his excesses.

Clarification Of Some Doubts On Intercession

Those who denied intercession for the sinners and considered it only for raising the status of virtuous and pious people have some misgivings on this subject based upon misunderstanding of a few Qur’anic Verses, mostly on the logical grounds.

Logical Doubt

They argued that just as going back on his words was a debasing act for a noble king, a disregard of his warnings and good promises was also a humiliating step. God had promised Paradise for the virtuous, and if He went back on his promise then it would be a demeaning act. Similarly, He had promised chastisement of Hell for the wrongdoers. It was, therefore, a must for Him to execute His Pledge. In other words, there was no salvation for the sinners.

Rebuttal Of This Doubt

This doubt was weaker than the spider's web. It was due to the reason that they failed to recognise the difference between promise and a warning. Otherwise, all logical minds knew, and the temperament of the people in power was a witness to this fact that just as the denial of a promise was a demeaning step, withholding or waving of a warning was an article of praise for the person in power.

Suppose a master checked his servant for disobeying the instructions that he had given to him earlier, if he then punished him, he would within his rights. However, if he forgave him on his own or listened to a plea by someone else and pardoned his mistake, then such an act would be considered as a sign of generosity and kind heartedness. It would be taken as a feather in his cap, so far as the people of intellect were concerned. Similarly, offences were forgiven with God by one's own humble pleas or intercession by someone else, who was prominent with God. It was therefore, learnt that intercession was another name for God's generosity and forgiveness. It had been recommended by God: *"Forgive those who offended you. God will forgive you* (*in return for your sins*)*".*

He had said:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

"And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord; and a Garden, the extensiveness of which is (***as***) ***the heavens and the earth, it is prepared for those who guard*** (***against evil***)***"*** (***3:133***)***.***

الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Those who spend (***benevolently***) ***in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain*** (***their***) ***anger and pardon men; and Allah loves the doers of good*** (***to others***)***"*** (***3:134***)***.***

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

***"And those who when they commit an indecency or do injustice to their souls remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their faults – and who forgives the faults but Allah, and* (*who*) *do not knowingly persist in what they have done"* (*3:135*).**

However, if some person of authority promised to reward his employee for an exceptional work and went back on his promise, then such behaviour was condemnable in the eyes of the erudites. Another difference between promise and warning was that in a promise, it was people's right on God, which He could not overlook. In warnings and reminders, however, it was God's right on people and He reserved the right to forgive them.

This defined the delicate dividing line between promise and warning. However, in intercession, if there were people's rights on God, then He could forgive an offender by duly compensating the petitioner.

Some Other Objections

These were those objections that arose due to misinterpretation of some Verses of the Qur'an, such as those cited below:

فَمَا تَنفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ

***"So, the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them* (*the guilty*)*"* (*74:48*).**

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكِرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ

***"What is then the matter with them, that they turn away from the admonition"* (*74:49*).**

Since every lewd person is a despot (Dhalim) therefore, his salvation is not possible.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِم مِّلْءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوِ افْتَدَىٰ بِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ

***"Surely, those who disbelieve and die while they are unbelievers, the earth full of gold shall not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer to ransom himself with it, these it is who shall have a painful chastisement, and they shall have no helpers"* (*3:91*).**

An intercessor is like a helper, because helpers are denied for the despots therefore, their salvation is denied.

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا

"On that day no one could help out each other" **(*82:19*).**

فَمَا تَنفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ

"So, the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them" **(*74:48*).**

Rebuttal

There is no doubt that a lewd was also called a wrongdoer or *Dhalim*, but in the true sense its delegates were infidels and polytheists, just as was indicated in Surah Al-Baqara, infidels are *Dhalimoon* or despots.

In Arabic language, the word *Dhulm* was applied to anyone, who performed an inappropriate task. In this respect, whoever performed an unjust deed was also a *Dhalim*, and its true designates were polytheists and Infidels, because they either denied God or appointed partners with Him. Similarly, God said:

إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

"Associating partners with God is the greatest Dhulm" **(*31:13*).**

Here the word *Dhalimoon* was applied to polytheists and infidels or to those so-called Muslims who adhered to unjust ideologies such as Nawaseb, Khawaraj and Ghalis. This kind of elaboration was the requirement for unification between the Verses of the Qur'an, otherwise, it would result in a conflict with Verses that pointed to intercession, and this was beyond the philosophy of the Qur'an.

If pardon for the wrongdoers was of no use, then God's instructions to the Prophet (S):

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ

"So, know **(*O Muhammad*)** ***that there is no god besides Allah, and ask forgiveness for thy sin and for believing men and believing women. Allah knoweth*** **(*both*)** ***your place of turmoil and your place of rest"*** **(*47:19*).**

Would become a useless message.

Similarly, the Prophet was also addressed at another place in the Qur'an, which suggested that the authority to seek pardon for the sinners had been granted to him and that the word *Dhalim or Dhalimoon*, actually stood for polytheists and infidels. Here it was said:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا

***"Those who have committed excesses* (*Dhulm*) *on their lives; had they come to you O, Prophet, and sought pardon from their Lord and you had also requested to God, and then you had found your Lord the most merciful"* (*4:64*).**

End Of Discussion

A great Sunni scholar, Allama Novi has reproduced the findings of Qazi Ayaz in his commentary of *Sahih Muslim*, which supported our view, and we have replicated it here as a gift of our friends, "It is the religion of Ahl al–Sunnat that intercession is intellectually permissible and it is compulsory on the basis of Qur'anic text and the statements of the Prophet. There are so many established reports about the salvation of the wrongdoers (sinners) that have been authenticated and agreed by our elders. However, some Kharjites, Moatazelites, Waeedias and Tafzeelias have denied it and concluded that the sinners will always remain in the hell, in accordance with the Qur'anic text,

فَمَا تَنفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ

***"The intercession of the intercessors will not benefit them"* (*74:48*).**

Was a wrong conclusion, since these Verses were revealed in relation to the infidels.

The explanation, which was put forward in respect of the *Hadith al–Shafaat* (intercession) was that it applied only to enhance the status of those, who were already in the Paradise. This was totally out of place and wrong, because other statements were included in the Sahih Muslim, making it completely redundant. These statements also suggested that some sinners would be sent to the Paradise, after completing their sentence in the hell."

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 22: Our Belief Regarding Promise And Warning

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our faith in God's promises and warnings was that with whom He had promised a reward for doing noble acts, He would certainly fulfil it, and with whom warning had been

given for evil deeds, He would punish him. This was His justice and if He forgave him, it was His grace and benevolence, since He has said,

وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ

"Thy Lord is not the One who transgresses on people" **(*41:46*).**

Furthermore, God had declared that He would not pardon those who were polytheists.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

"Lo! Allah forgiveth not that a partner should be ascribed unto Him. And He forgiveth **(*all*)** ***save that to whom He will"*** **(*4:116*).**

[1] [1]
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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 22

We have discussed this issue in detail in the previous chapter, which made reality of this theme far more lucid for the readers. We have made it clear that those who failed to distinguish the dividing line between promise and warning have made incorrect interpretation of the Qur'anic Verses. As a result, they labelled intercession as an unacceptable act. However, every sensible person knew that to go back on a promise for good deeds was a detestable act but forgiveness for breach of a warning for some wrongdoings was an act of mercy and benevolence.

When fulfilment of a promise and forgiveness of misconduct were credible acts, then how could God deny this attribute for Himself? Moreover, when God had commanded his people to be kind and compassionate, then how could He negate it for His Being, particularly when He had declared in the Qur'an:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ

"Do you ask others to be virtuous and deny the same rule for yourself?" **(*2:44*).**

Additionally, there were several examples of the eligibility of this concept in both the Qur'an and Hadith, therefore, He declared about the fulfilment of a promise,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

"God does not go back on His Promise" **(*13:31*).**

So far as forgiveness was concerned, He spoke to the believers,

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

"O, My servants, who have committed excesses on their being, do not be disappointed with the grace of Your Lord, He can forgive all sins" **(*39:53*).**

He further said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا

"It is possible that God might forgive all of your sins" **(*39:53*).**

It is reported in *Bihar-ul-Anwar* from the Prophet on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa) that the Prophet (S) had said – "If God has promised an individual a benefit on a virtuous deed, He would certainly deliver it, and wherever He has warned someone of punishment on an evil exploit, then He reserves the right, to either forgive him or punish him, except *shirk* that He will never excuse. As far as those, who repent on their misconduct are concerned, their sins are forgiven irrespective of their nature."

[1] [1]
SHARES

Chapter 23: Monitoring Of People's Actions

Shaykh As-Saduq said that our view about the monitoring of people's actions was that God had appointed two Angels, who inscribed each and every act that was performed by them. If someone, even desired to do an act of compassion and generosity, that was registered immediately in his record as a virtue, but when he actually performed that task, then his file was further supplemented by ten additional points.

However, when a person desired to do inequitable work, then it was not registered unless he actually performed that task, and even then, he was given a reprieve for seven hours to repent. If he availed that opportunity, that vice was then not registered in his file. If he failed to do so during this period then only a

single entry was made to update his record. These two Angels recorded every single step of human activity.

God said in the Qur'an:

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ

"Certainly, two kinds of Angels are appointed on to you" (***82: 10***).

كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ

"Who register" (***82: 11***).

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

"And discern everything that you do" (***82: 12***).

Amir Al-Mu'minin passed by a person who was using absurd and foolish language. Imam told him that he was making the Angels to write a report regarding him, which was to be presented before his Lord. Therefore, he must say those things that were beneficial to him and abstain from evil talk. He then said, "A Muslim is continuously recorded and described as a virtuous being, as long as he remains silent, but when he begins his speech, he is then registered good or bad according to his words. Both Angels remain stationed between the collar bones. The one, who resides towards the right, registers all virtues and the left of it inscribes wrongdoings. The Angels of day and night both catalogue your deeds accordingly."

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 23

The Presence Of Angels And Description Of The Type Of Their Supplications

So far, negation by the atheists, including alternative but timid accounts put forward by the philosophers as the proof of the presence of Angels, have been considered here. We shall however provide a detailed

discussion on this issue in the next chapter.

Currently, we must understand that all Muslim theologians were united on the concept that Angels were non–material creatures of God, and they were certainly present. Their number was enormous and their true count was only known to God.

Like Jinns and Humans, the purpose of their creation was to serve God, but their mode of service was different from ours. Their leisure pursuits and practices were also diverse. Some were busy in glorifying and praising God. Some were in prostration and others were in *qayam* (to stand still in praise). Some were appointed to protect human beings and the others were to query the dead in their graves. Similarly, a group was given the task of monitoring human actions and deeds. The performance of each group was considered as an act of worship for them. God had divided their tasks and they would do as they are required to do. The Qur'an said,

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِن دَابَّةٍ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

***"And whatever creature that is in the heavens and that is in the earth makes obeisance to Allah (only), and the angels (too) and they do not show pride"* (*16:49*).**

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

***"They fear their Lord above them and do what they are commanded"* (*16:50*).**

It was also mentioned in the Qur'an that they did not act sluggishly and continually remain occupied with their allocated task. No Muslim could believe God Himself was unable to do the task that these Angels were performing, as had been suggested by some misguided people. It was therefore, essential for us to believe that He had his own reasons to allot these tasks to them and made it as an act of worship for them.

Appointment Schedule For Karaman Katibeen And Their Duties

God, in His own judgement, had appointed this act of worship for the two Angels to be stationed with every male or female, who had reached the age of puberty, and record their entire actions that might be good or bad. In the Qur'anic terminology, they are called *Karaman Katibeen*, which literally meant respected scribes. It was stated in the Qur'an,

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ

***"And most surely there are keepers over you"* (*82:10*).**

كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ

"Karaman Katibeen, Honourable recorders" **(*82:11*).**

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

"Who put in writing everything that you do" **(*82:12*).**

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ

"When a person does something, the two Angels, who are stationed on the left and right of him, inscribe everything" **(*50:17*).**

مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

"He does not utter a word, but a janitor stays with him" **(*50:18*).**

This is why Imam Ali (ʿa) said, "When a man matures mentally, he withholds his tongue" (i.e. he does not smear his character book by employing loose talk).

It became clear from narrations of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt that the honourable scribes for the day and night were separate and they were so intense in numbers that once an Angel visited the earth for their scribal duties, he might not find a second chance to visit that man, until the Day of Judgement.

Mohaddas Jazairi commented on this narration by saying that God did not wish that an Angel repeatedly became aware of all of His servant's wrongdoings.

Honourable Scribes Present Their Work To The Prophet And Aimma

It was reported that the day time Angels monitored everything that a person did and presented their findings in the evening to the presence of the Prophet, and then to the Imams in turns, until it finally reached the twelfth Imam. He examined both files of every person, and if there were minor faults that could be forgiven, he requested God for His mercy. This was why Imam had issued the following message to his followers, "When your charge sheet of sins reaches me, it must be rectifiable and not the one that cannot be resolved"

After this the Angels took the character sheet to the heavens to be presented to God. This was the

meaning of the Qur'anic Verse:

ٱعْمَلُوا۟ فَسَيَرَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ

"Continue with your endeavours. Your actions are being watched by God, the Prophet and a selected group of believers" **(*9:105*).**

After this the Angels appointed for the night shift arrived and they continued their task till dawn, and all the four Angels meet at this cross over. Any person who had offered his morning prayer at the right time, his deed was noted by both groups of Angels. That is why God had mentioned in the Qur'an,

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

***"Keep up prayer from the declining of the sun* (*zuhr and asr*) *till the darkness of the night* (*maghrib and isha'*) *and the morning recitation* (*subh*)*; surely the morning recitation is witnessed* (*by the angels*)*"* (*17:78*).**

The same procedure was applied to the night time Angels as far as presentation of the character sheet was concerned.

Mulla Muhammad Salah Zindani, wrote in his commentary on *Usul al-Kafi*, with regard to the traditions applicable to the presentation of deeds, "It becomes apparent that the character sheet of all individuals is presented to the Imam each day. However, there is a question. Is that presentation made once or twice a day in the evening and during the day? However, the narration by Abdullah Ibn Ziarat favours the concept of double presentation, and this system continues until the last breath of a person."

Description Of Some Secrets And Sign Of The Character Sheet

The true nature of the scribing of character sheets of people was only known to God who had initiated this scheme. Some of the Ahadith that had been quoted above also shed some light on this subject.

The Prophet and the Imams should be made aware of the activities of their Ummah. Any person was sent to hell on the Day of Judgement would be justified on the basis of this document, so that no one could make complaint against God or His Angels. That is why God said in the Qur'an:

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا

***"Read your personal file, and make your own judgement this day"* (*17:14*).**

So far as the reasons for appointment of the Angels to do specific jobs were concerned, it was sufficient to quote a Hadith of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that had been reproduced by the author of *Tafsir al-Safi* from *Ihtijaj al-Tabrasi*. It was said that Imam was asked if God knew all the apparent and hidden things, why then He had appointed these Angels? Imam replied,

"God has taken this service from the Angels so as to make them witness on to His people, in order that they might think twice before committing sins and perform virtuous acts in the knowledge that His delegates are with them all the time."

The Scrutiny Becomes Harsher After Forty Years

Although, the process of monitoring one's character sheet began at the age of adolescence, but some of the Ahadith suggest that its monitoring was relaxed up to the age of forty, because this is a period of great temptations. However, after this age the Angels were instructed to become stricter, with a view that during this era the probability of temptations and inducements was much more reduced. Therefore, if anyone continued to commit sins at this juncture then he was an inconsiderate and hardened sinner, who was very casual about religion.

It was narrated that once somebody's beard had whitened and he was still occupied with sins, then Satan came in front of him and said,

"May my parents be ransom to this face, which will never do well, and says that he was his goal post and aspiration?"

It was related from Imams that they were astonished at two kinds of people, the one who became arrogant, while he was poor and needy and the other who developed illicit relationship at older age.

Who could count the blessings of Allah? It was apparent from various Ahadith that when a person fell ill, He instructed the scribes to write nothing but virtues that he was performing in good health, in his character file, as long as he was detained by sickness.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that when the Angels reached the presence of God, He enquired from them about the state of His servant. The Angels replied that there was nothing to report but his constant grumbles and complaints. At this moment God replied,

***"It is not fair, if I imprison someone with* (*disease*) *and then stop him from protesting. Therefore, O, Angels continue writing righteous deeds in his character file as long as he is sick just as you were compiling his actions, while he was in good health."* (*Hadith Qudsi*)**

Merits are added to people's character files, for performing a single good deed, while a solo virtue was credited just for a good thought. Similarly, a reprieve was given for seven hours for repentance if a sin was committed, and if he failed to do so then only a single entry was made into his register. It was also

confirmed through various reports that God, through His absolute affection, allowed ten virtues for one good deed and only one entry for committing an iniquity against Him in their personal files.

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Chapter 24: Justice Of God (‘Adalah)

Hazrat Shaykh Abu Ja’far said that God had commanded us to be just, and He behaved with us in a manner that was a step ahead of Justice. This is called *Tafuzzul* (superlative of compassion).

The proof was in the fact that God had commanded his scribes to add ten merits for every single virtue executed by His servants in their personal files, whereas, a single vice should be treated as a single sin, and then promised that defendants should not be transgressed.

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

“Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly” **(*6:160*).**

Speaking in terms of Justice, a lone virtue could have been treated as a solitary act, just as it was for a single vice, but God’s compassion made it ten times more fruitful. The Prophet of God had thus said, “No one can enter Paradise on the strength of his or her acts alone, except with the grace of God.”

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 24

Explanation Of The Justice Of The General And Literary Meaning Of Justice (Adalah)

The literary meaning of *Adalah* was to keep a thing at its proper place, and opposed to it is *Dhulm* or transgression, which meant to replace a thing with an improper substitute. In its general application, Justice stood for proper reward or an equal punishment for a virtue or a vice respectively. Therefore, the

meanings of the term – 'Just', as applied to God was that He never abandoned those tasks that were logical and laudable and did not carry out things that were immoral and dissipated.

Hazrat Imam Ja'far As–Sadiq ('a) was questioned, "O, Son of the Prophet, what is the meaning of the phrase Justice of God?" Imam replied that one should not appropriate things for God that He has reproved for you.

Concept Of Adalah (Justice) Is One Of The Key Requirements Of Shi'a Faith

To believe that God was Just and not immoral (unjust) was the same to say that He neither abandoned the essential nor committed an unfair act, or put excessive pressure in His commandments, or exercised intensity in His destiny and predetermination. He did not test people beyond their capabilities nor left them completely free to have a life style without bounds.

God rewarded the deserving ones and warned the wrongdoers of the chastisement of hell. It was now up to Him to punish them or to forgive them. He did not compel His servants to do good or bad. This concept was one of the most important principles of Shi'ism. The one who denied was excommunicated from the religion, because this idea was for the realization of Tawhid and other notions like Prophethood, Imamate and Resurrection etc.

If God was not considered Just, a probability would remain that all those who claimed Prophethood might not be truthful in their claims, and God by an illicit act had prompted miracles on their hands to prove their status. In this way, a doubt would always hang over the claim of Prophethood. Evidently, if Prophethood becomes uncertain then the status of their legatees could never be proved. This would also reflect on God's promises of Heaven and Hell etc. This will then put the entire religious doctrine on a slippery track.

God's Actions Are Based On Compassion

It can be concluded from several Qur'anic Verses and narrations of the Prophet that God was so compassionate that He not only treated His subjects with justice but excelled in kindness, since justice was achieved when a person was rewarded or punished according to his acts, but compassion was the name of an act when compensation is more than what one is worthy of, but the punishment was less than what he deserved.

Those who had an eye on the Qur'an and *Ahadith* of the Prophet knew that God's acts were based on compassion. Therefore, Imam Zayn Al–'Abidin ('a) said in the supplication bidding farewell to the month of Ramadan, "O, God you have rooted your actions on compassion and the basis of your strength is on forgiveness and mercy."

We can quote dozens of Qur'anic Verses to prove this thesis. One Verse was already in the Shaykh Abu Ja'far's text. The second Verse stated:

مَّثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِّائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

"Those who spend their wealth for the pleasure of God are like a grain that gives rise to seven spikes and each spike contains one hundred grains. God is able to double the reward for which He wishes. God is infinite and has the knowledge of all things" (***2:261***).

At another place it was said,

مَّن ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

"Who is it that will offer of Allah a goodly gift, so He will multiply it to him manifold, and Allah straitens and amplifies, and you shall be returned to Him" (***2:245***).

It was mentioned in Surah Yunus:

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ

"For those who do good is good (***reward***) ***and more*** (***than this***)***"*** (***10:26***).

The same subject was repeated in the statements of the Prophet. It was said that if someone committed a sin then reprieve was given to him for seven hours for repentance. If he failed to do so then only one sin was recorded in his personal file, and even that could be forgiven if he decided to repent at a later date, or it could be pardoned by the grand intercession on the Day of Judgement.

Salvation Is Not Possible Without God's Compassion

We have indicated in the chapter on intercession that salvation was not possible without God's compassion and intercession of the Prophets and Imams. A person, however pious he might be, when his acts were compared to God's favours and returns then the scales would always tilt in favour of God. Allah says:

وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

"And if you would count Allah's favours, you will not be able to number them; most surely Allah

is Forgiving, Merciful" **(*16:18*).**

When His favours could not be counted then how could one can pay his tribute to God. As a matter of fact, the tendency to pay tribute to God for His gifts was itself a blessing awarded by God. It was reported that when Prophet Ayub (Job) was squeezed by the loss of his property and the insults of his fellow beings, he requested God,

"O, God I was the only grateful servant of yours (among the whole lot) and you have put me through this misfortune and distress."

God replied,

"Who gave you this capacity to thank Me?"

Job replied; it is You, O! my God.

The answer came, why this boasting of gratitude then?

God said in the Qur'an:

يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُل لَّا تَمُنُّوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَامَكُم بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

"They think that they lay you under an obligation by becoming Muslims. Say: Lay me not under obligation by your Islam: rather Allah lays you under an obligation by guiding you to the faith if you are truthful" **(*49:17*).**

Imam Zayn Al–'Abidin ('a) supplicated to his Lord in the subsequent manner.

"O, God this is my neck that is shackled with transgressions. Please shower your blessings on Muhammad (S) and his progeny and release me from the burden of these sins with your forgiveness and compassion. My back is burdened with misdeeds, O! God lighten its weight by pouring your approvals on Muhammad (S) and his progeny.

O, God if I cry so much before you that my eyes drop out, or stay so long before you that my feet are swollen, and bow so much in front of you that my backbone is dislocated, and prostrate so long that my eyes are pushed inwards, wander all my life and drink polluted water for the rest of my days, and praise you so much that my speech is dissolved, or fail to raise my head towards the Heavens due to indignity and shame, even then I do not enjoy the right for a single sin of mine to be forgiven. And, if you forgive me in accordance with your standards of clemency and concern, then it would not be due to my right, because when I disobeyed you initially, the punishment of hell was laid out for me. Thus, if you punish me for my sins, it would not be out of place any way.

O, my Lord, when you have veiled my actions and did not humiliate me, and did not hasten to punish me and exercised kindness and tolerance towards me and did not invalidate your approvals nor tarnished your favours then pay attention to my crying and help me in my need, despite the weakness of my plea."

This shows that if God forgave the sins of His subjects and rewarded them on their gratitude, it was then His grace and compassion only, otherwise no one on the strength of his action was worthy of his place in the Paradise.

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Chapter 25: Our View On 'Araf

Hazrat Shaykh Abu Ja'far had said that our view about *'Araf* was that it was a dividing (wall) between Paradise and the Hell, where some esteemed individuals would be stationed. They will recognise people from their signs.

وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ

"...Men who will recognize all (persons) by their peculiar marks..." (7:46).

These distinguished individuals will be the Prophet Muhammad (S) and his true legatees.

Only those people would enter paradise who were identified by them and in return they would also be familiar with them.

The rest would follow the route to Hell. At *'Araf* there will be other people who were in wait for God's decision to be punished or forgiven to enter the Paradise.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 25

In fact, the belief in *'Araf* was unanimous among the theologians. However, there were some minor differences among the scholars on three points:

- What is the nature of *'Araf*?

- Who are those esteemed individuals that are stationed on *'Araf*?

- Who are the people in waiting at *'Araf*?

The distinguished author had discussed these issues in brief, and we would shed light on these questions in some detail.

What Is The Nature Of 'Araf?

There were few statements about the nature of *'Araf*.

It was a wall between the Paradise and Hell. This view was popular among the theologians and the same view has been preferred by the author of this book. This notion was also supported by a Qur'anic Verse and some narrations of the Prophet:

فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُم بِسُورٍ لَّهُ بَابٌ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِن قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ

"A wall shall be erected between them. It will have a gate and inside the gate are the blessings of God, while chastisement is outside of it" **(*57:13*).**

Similarly, at another place it was related:

وَبَيْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ

***"There shall be a veil between them* [*the residents of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell*]*"* (*7:46*).**

It could be that *'Araf* were the pinnacles of this wall. These might be the mounds between the Paradise and Hell. It might be the *Pul al-Sirat* (A delicate bridge over which righteous would cross to enter the paradise). It stood for the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt.

Allama Al-Majlisi, after quoting all of these five versions had said that if we studied these views in depth then there was no basic difference between each of these possibilities, and they all point out to the same reality. The only difference was in the style of presentation.

The purpose of this description was to tell that there was a place between Paradise and Hell, where

there were no subtleties of the Paradise and no hardships of the Hell. This had been given various names. In this respect, it was not a thin wall like mundane partitions, but it was quite spacious and worthy of dwelling, because of its height and its hill-like structure.

As *'Araf* is a plural of *Arafa*, which literary meant a hair from a horse's mane or the crown of a rooster. For this reason, it had been addressed as the pinnacles of a wall. This showed that there is not much difference between various statements, and all of these reports are focussed to the same meaning that it was a place that was neither fully like paradise nor completely hellish.

So far as the conflict of these four accounts as compared to the fifth description was concerned, it simply came out to be the difference between apparent and inner connotations of a phrase. Allama Sayyid Shabbar had reproduced some narrations in *Haqq Al-Yaqin*, in which after naming the Imams as the true inner meanings of 'Araf, he said, "From this Hadith and some other Ahadith of the same type it becomes obvious that 'Araf stands for different meanings and it provides a basis for agreement between various traditions."

Who Are The Distinguished People Of People Of 'Araf (As-hab al-'Araf)

It was accepted that there might be some people present at 'Araf on the Day of Judgement, who had the capability to recognise people through certain signs, that who among them belonged to the Paradise and who was destined for the Hell. It was stated in the Qur'an:

وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ

***"And on the most elevated places* (*'Araf*) *there shall be men who know all by their marks"* (*7:46*).**

There was however, some dispute among theologians that who those people were? The majority of Shi'a scholars agreed that they were the Prophet and his holy progeny who would have the authority. They would be sitting in a casement made of red rubies. It was reported in *Basae-rud-Darajat*, from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that - they (People of *'Araf*) would initially dispatch the true believers to the Paradise. They would make these people travel over Pul al-Sirat in a comfortable manner.

People of *'Araf* would then send Infidels, Polytheists, Nawasib and Khawarij to Hell, while the frail and sinful Shi'as along with others would stay there and only those among them who qualified for their intercession would be allowed to enter the Paradise and those who were not pardoned would stay there permanently. This information was contained in various authentic narrations. It was mentioned in Tafsir *Majma-al-Bayan* and *Basae-rud-Darajat* from Asbag Ibn Nabata, who said that once he came to the company of Amir Al-Mu'minin and asked him to elaborate on the Qur'anic Verse:

وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ

"Wa Alal 'Araf'e-Rijal..." **(*7:46*).**

He replied, "Pity is on you, O! Ibn Kawa. We the Ahl al-Bayt will be stationed at the boundary of the Paradise and Hell. We shall recognise those who had been our followers and helpers from certain signs and dispatch them to the Paradise, and those who are our enemies will also be recognised from their signs and sent to the Hell."

Another narration suggested that they might be the custodians of the Paradise and Hell, stationed in virtual human forms or they could be the respected scribes or even selected believers of highest ranks.

However, the first possibility was more authentic and acceptable, since the rest had not been authenticated by the statements of the Imams.

Recognition (Marefa) Of As-hab al-'Araf Is The Key To Enter The Paradise

When it was been proven that *Ashabul-Arafa* were the Prophet and his progeny, then it had also been established that their *marefa* was the key to entering Paradise, as stated by the author of this book and various other narrations found in established books.

Who Will Remain In 'Araf

We would like to know, who those people were that will be abandoned in 'Araf. There were following suggestions in this respect:

- sinful Shi'as,
- those whose virtues and sins were in equal proportion, and they are not permissible for the Paradise due to their deeds.
- they might be those people, who were not burdened with the religious decrees in the world, such as children, schizophrenic and many others of the same type.
- mentally retarded, who could not distinguish between good and bad?

- those who lived in the times between two Prophets.

- those who lived where God's message had not reached.

- those who have not heard of the religious divides, and even if they knew this divide was not capable of making a right choice.

- those who might be simple-minded Muslims, who did not understand the true significance of Ahl al-Bayt but they were also not friends with their enemies. These were the people who were referred to in the Qur'anic Verse of Surah At-Tawbah:

وَآخَرُونَ مُرْجَوْنَ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَإِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

"There are some people who are in wait about God's decision. It is up to God to punish them or forgive them. God is all Knowing and all Wise" (***9:106***).

These statements regarding the people of *'Araf* though appear to be contradictory; in fact they had no real difference between them. Investigations carried out by Shaykh Al-Mufid, Allama Al-Majlisi and Sayyid Abdullah Shabbar showed that the above-mentioned groups would initially be made to stay in *'Araf* on the day of resurrection. Those who could be pardoned would enter the paradise due to the intercession of the Prophet and Imams, and the rest would be permanently stationed there.

A summary of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq's statement in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* informed that they the Ahl al-Bayt will be present at the 'Araf and their Shi'as would be entering the Paradise without interrogation. At that time Imams would ask their errant Shi'as, see your brothers who are entering the Paradise without examination. At that moment, the wayward Shi'as would address them,

"Peace is on you, as you have desired to enter the paradise, thinking in mind that intercession of the Prophet and that of Imams might be available to you."

They will then be told to look into the Hell and see their enemies. When they see them, they will cry, "Do not assemble us O, Lord with the unjust people."

At this moment, the Prophet and Imams would address the people of Hell, whom they would recognise through certain signs, "Look, your pride and numerical strength have not benefited you at all."

Clarification Of A Doubt

One could argue that a person who had entered Paradise on the strength of his deeds, and another person through the intercession of the Prophet both have ended up as equals in the Paradise, which was against the Justice of God.

The reply to this doubt was that no one qualified for the paradise solely on the strength of his or her deeds, except with the kindness of God. Moreover, who could say that these two persons would share the same status in the Paradise as there were different categories of the heaven?

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Chapter 26: Sirat

Hazrat Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief about Sirat was that it was a reality, and it was a bridge that was to be setup on the Day of Judgement to cross over the Hell, and it was a passage for all the creation. God said in the Qur'an:

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

***"And there is not one of you but shall come to It* (*the hell*)*; this is an unavoidable decree of your Lord"* (*19:71*).**

In another sense Sirat was also a name for the signs of God, and whoever acknowledged the significance of those symbols in the present world, and obeyed them then God would issue a permit for him to cross over that bridge on the Day of Judgement. The Prophet (S), while addressing Ali ('a) had said, "O, Ali – Gabriel, You and I will be stationed on the Sirat and no one could pass through it, unless he held the permit of your Wilayat."

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 26

Explanation Of Phrase Pul Al-Sirat

Sirat in its literal sense meant – Passage or a Path, and in Islamic legal terminology it was the name of a bridge that would be built over Hellfire. It will initiate from the plain of Mehsher and ends in the Paradise. The passage itself was thinner than a human hair and sharper than the sword. Each and every person including the Prophets and their legatees had to pass over it. This was the meaning of the Qur'anic Verse,

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

"And there is not one of you but shall come to It (the hell); this is an unavoidable decree of your Lord" (19:71).

The confirmation of the concept of Pul al-Sirat was one of the necessities of the religion, and all Muslims despite their internal differences were unanimous on this concept that was confirmed by various Qur'anic Verses and established traditions (*Ahadith*) of the Prophet.

A Weak Elucidation Of Pul Al-Sirat

Some scholars consider *Pul al-Sirat*, a straight religious pathway that led to the pleasure of God and to Paradise. There was no imbalance in it and it stood for the Shariah of the Prophet that had reached us through our guided Imams. It was very secure for the believers to act upon it, but extremely difficult for the Infidels, Hypocrites, Nawasib, Khawarij and Ghalis, and for them it was similar to walking over a razor-sharp object.

Those who had presented this explanation in view of the complexity of Pul al-Sirat that how people could cross it, have made a grave mistake to escape the affirmed concept of Islamic Shariah. We shall answer this conjecture later on, but initially we would like to say that their statement that Sirat was a passage, which had no inequities, and it was the path of Muhammad (S) and his holy Progeny was not contradictory to our view.

It was true that the path shown by the Prophet and his progeny was the one that was sought by every believer in the obligatory prayers, but it did not mean that we should deny the Pul al-Sirat of the hereafter, as their own approach was undesirable due to its conflict with the well-established traditions of the Muslim Ummah. We could say that there were two Sirats; one that was apparent, which we would encounter on the Day of Judgement and the other in-house that required the *Marefa* (understanding)

and submission to the True Guides. Allama Sayyid Shabbar has reiterated this view in *Haqq Al-Yaqin*, "There are two Sirats, one apparent that has been mentioned above, which is a bridge over the Hell and the other internal one that represents the Prophet and the guided Imams, just as it has been told to us that we were the Sirat and only those will cross the bridge of the hereafter, who had accepted our guidance and obeyed us."

There were several Ahadith to supplement this view but we relied on one that has been quoted by Shaykh As-Saduq in *Kitab al-Maani* on the authority of Mufazzal Ibn 'Umar, who says that a question was asked from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) about the Sirat. Imam replied, "There are two Sirats, one in this world and the other in the hereafter. The worldly Sirat is the Imam, whose compliance is compulsory therefore, whoever recognises that Imam and follows his footsteps he will cross over the Sirat of the hereafter easily, and who so denied the Imam of his time then he will slip and will be consumed by the fire of the Hell."

It was also quoted in the same book from Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a), who said, "There are two Sirats, one in this world and the other in the hereafter. The mundane Sirat represents the passage, which is completely free of iniquities, simply straight and direct, with no inclination towards injustice and evil. The Sirat of the hereafter is that path, which will lead the believers to the Paradise and they will not lose their direction."

Reasons For Going Over The Pul Al-Sirat

The true reason for everyone to cross over the bridge of Sirat was only known to God, Who had established this procedure. What we could understand was that those who will cross over the Hell through this bridge and reach the Paradise would highly appreciate the comfort of the Paradise, compared to the incredible agony of Hell.

It was a matter of logic that one enjoyed that comfort more of which is obtained with a bit of struggle compared to the one, which was obtained without struggle. It was also possible that the horror of this crossover might compensate for the sins of a few that still remained intact after the period of Barzakh.

A Doubt And Its Rectification

A doubt was created here that if the state of Sirat was what it had been described – that it was a route thinner than a hair and sharper than the sword crossing over the Hell, then for the Prophets and their legatees the pain of this experience was similar to the masses, which we could not imagine for a moment that such things could ever happen to them.

This was the doubt that had made various scholars to find alternative explanations of Sirat, but for the true researchers this attitude was absolutely wrong, because if we started changing the norms of Shariah with such confusions, then the face of Islam will be left distorted permanently. Allama Al-Majlisi

wrote in *Bahar- al-Anwar*, “The innovative explanations of religious norms without much needed requisites are not permissible in Shariah.”

The same author wrote in *Risalah Itiqadiyah*, “It is important to believe in religious standards the way those have been explained, such as Sirat, Mizan and other events of the Day of Judgement. It is not permissible to assign other meanings to such things, other than what the recipient of Shariah has understood about it, because profanity and heresy initiates from such irresponsible intrusions in the revealed issues.”

Anyhow, one answer to this doubt was that those who were aware of the potentials of such celebrities, knew that they could fly in the air and walk over water. So, what difficulties might they encounter then, while passing over this bridge? It may be a bizarre phenomenon for the people, but it was routine for them. So far as other believers are concerned, God would make arrangements such that some on the strength of their deeds might fly over it like electric current or the whirling winds or a speedy horse, while some would tread leisurely.

This explanation was not one that I had coined myself, but it was based upon the solid narrations of Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a). It was reported that the Imam said, “Pul al-Sirat is thinner than a human hair and sharper than the sword, those people who will cross it are of different categories – some will cross it like an electric spark, a few like a speeding horse, some on their knees, others with a slow walk and the remaining clinching to it, such that the fire of Hell might only smoulder them.”

No One Could Cross The Sirat Without Amir Al-Mu’minin’s Permit

In both Shi’a and Sunni literature, it was reported that the Prophet on the elaboration of the Qur’anic Verse of Surah Al-Saffat:

وَقِفُوهُمْ إِنَّهُم مَّسْئُولُونَ

“And stop them, for they shall be questioned” **(*37:24*).**

Had said, “When people will be ready to cross the Sirat, then suddenly a sound would emerge asking the Angels to stop these people, because they still had to answer the query, regarding the Wilayat of Ali Ibn Abi Talib”[1].

It was also reported in both Shi’a and Sunni books that no one could cross over the Sirat, unless a permit has been issued by Amir Al-Mu’minin (‘a).

1. Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah and Bihar Al-Anwar.

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Chapter 27: Aqbat al-Mehsher

Chapter 27: Aqbat Al-Mehsher (Mountain Passes Of The Plain Of Mehsher)

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief in the concept of the *Aqbat* was that they were names of various stations or check posts on the plain of *Mehshar*. One was called the valley of obligation (*Wajib*) and the other was called the basin of demand (*Amr*) and another was named as the gorge of negation (*Nahee*).

When a person will reach the valley of obligation, and if he had shown some laxity on the obligatory duties imposed by God, he would then be stopped and questioned about Lord's rights. If he passed through this checkpoint due to his previous acts of kindness, or by the grace of God, then he will reach the second and third pass, where he will be questioned respectively.

If he passed through all of these checkpoints successfully, he would then reach a destination of eternity, where he would receive so much of the perpetual assets from his Lord's grace that he would reside in the company of the Prophets, his legatees, the candid, the martyrs and the devout persons. If someone failed to qualify a check point and his deeds were not enough to secure him a release, and God's pardon was also not available, then he will slip from this slope into the fire of Hell. (We seek God's help from the fire of the Hell).

All of these Aqbat were on the bridge of Sirat. One of these passes was named as the Pass of *Wilayat*, where the entire creation will be stopped and they will be questioned about the *wilayat* of Amir Al-Mu'minin and rest of the Imams. The one who testified his belief in their *wilayat* will successfully cross this valley and the rest will be detained and pushed into the Hell. The proof of this happening is in the Qur'anic Verse, which stated:

وَقِفُوهُمْ إِنَّهُم مَّسْئُولُونَ

***"Stop them as they are to be questioned"* (*37:24*).**

Along these routes was a corridor of *Marsad*, just as God has said:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ

***"Surely your Lord is in the place of ambush"* (*89:14*).**

It was stated in *Hadith al-Qudsi* by God, "I Swear by My dignity that no tyrant will escape Me."

There were several of these valleys, and each was named after a particular task that was imposed by God upon humans in His charter. Every single person would be stopped and questioned without reservation.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 27

Proof Of The Valleys Of Hereafter

These valleys were mentioned in various *Ahadith* of the Prophet and Imams. Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) said, "Prepare yourself for the journey. May God have mercy on you? The call for the departure has been made. There are very difficult and horrific valleys and the destination is ahead of you, where you have to reach and wait."

To explain the horror and awfulness of these valleys, Shaykh Abbas Al-Qummi had prepared a research document called *Manazil al-Aakhirat*, and another document of the same stature in Arabic has been published recently from Najaf. It was related in *Usul al-Kafi* that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had said, "Examine your acts personally, before you are checked by God, because in the plains of hereafter there are checkpoints, where you might have to stay for equivalent to one thousand earthly years. Imam then recited the Qur'anic Verse:

تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ

***"To Him ascend the angels and the Spirit in a day the measure of which is fifty thousand years"* (*70:4*).**

The Nature Of These Valleys

It should be mentioned here that the literal meanings of the word *Aqba* was an intricate pass between two mountains. Therefore, this suggested that those passages might be some physical structures as concluded by many scholars.

However, Shaykh Al-Mufid believed that these were the obligations and prohibitions, as the performance of obligations and avoidance of prohibitions was a very difficult task to achieve. So, their accountability would be very harsh, similar to the climbing of difficult and slippery heights. That is why these tasks had been allegorically named as *Aqbat* i.e. a complicated pathway. Apparently, this elaboration of Shaykh Al-Mufid was logical, but Allama Al-Majlisi had said, “Merely on account of logical conclusions the redefining of obvious reports is further from equitable course. God has all the rights to punish His sinful subjects the way He wants. Therefore, these symbols must be considered in their apparent sense.”

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Chapter 28: Accountability And The Balance (Mizan)

Hazrat Shaykh Abu Ja’far said that it was our belief that we would be accounted for our deeds on the Day of Judgement. This was a reality. Some people would be questioned directly by God and the others would be interrogated by His appointees.

The elaboration is like this. The judgements on the efforts of the Prophets and the Imams will be carried out by the Lord, and the audit of their Ummah will be carried out by their respective Prophets and their legatees. God will be a witness for His prophets and messengers, while these people will be a witness on their legatees, and Imams will then be witness on rest of the Ummah. The Qur’an declared in this respect:

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا

“What will happen to you at that time when We shall bring forth a witness from every Ummah and O! Prophet you will be a witness over them” (***4:41***).

At another place in the Qur’an God said:

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ وَمِن قَبْلِهِ كِتَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً

“Is he then who has with him clear proof from his Lord, and a witness from Him recites it and before it (***is***) ***the Book of Musa, a guide and a mercy?”*** (***11:17***).

In this Verse, the witness was Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a).

At another place in the Qur'an it was said:

إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ

"People will return to Us" **(*88:25*).**

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُم

"And their accountability is also Our responsibility" **(*88:26*).**

About the God's statement:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا

"We shall set up a standard of Justice and Equity on the Day of Judgement, and no one shall be treated with imbalance" **(*21:47*).**

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) was asked about the meaning of the phrase *Mizan* (standard) in this Qur'anic Verse. Imam replied that *Mizan* stood for the Prophets and their legatees. There were some people who would enter the Paradise without interrogation, but questions on the validity of their religion (*Deen*) would be asked from everyone, just as God had mentioned:

فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

"Most certainly then We will question those to whom* (*the messengers*) *were sent, and most certainly We will also question the messengers" **(*7:6*).**

However, the question about sins was only asked from those who would be subject to interrogation. God said:

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُسْأَلُ عَن ذَنبِهِ إِنسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ

"On that day, no human and Jinn will be asked question about their sins" **(*55:39*).**

It meant that those who were the true followers of the Prophet and Imams will not be subjected to any examination, while others would not enjoy this privilege, as indicated in the elaboration of this Verse.

Every person, who was to be questioned, would go through some kind of punishment, and that might be a prolonged delay in the plane of *Mahsher*. No one could enter the Paradise or escape the punishment of Hell on the strength of his or her deeds, unless he was covered by God's compassion.

God would take account of His entire subjects with a single address, and everyone would understand his or her position, without any misunderstanding, as if God had addressed him individually, and this was not difficult for God. On mundane time scale this accountability would finish within half an hour. God would present the character sheet of every individual in front of him like an open book, so that they could be informed of their entire deeds. In this manner, God would appoint every individual as his own Judge and would command,

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا

"Read your own charge sheet today, as you are indeed adequate to judge yourself" **(*17:14*).**

God would seal the lips of a group people on that day, and their limbs would speak out and bear witness on the crimes they had committed in secret. They will communicate with their limbs using their minds questioning them – why had they spoken against them? The limbs would reply that they had been given the power to speak by the One who had given this capability to all of His creatures. He was the One who has created you and to Him you have returned. You were not committing these crimes secretly because you feared that your body parts might speak against you, but you had thought that God was not aware of what you were doing in secrecy.

وَقَالُوا لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

"And they say unto their skins: why testify ye against us? They say: Allah, Who giveth speech to all things, hath given speech to us, and it is He Who created you at the first and it is He unto Whom ye shall return" **(*41:21*).**

وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَتِرُونَ أَنْ يَشْهَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَمْعُكُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُكُمْ وَلَا جُلُودُكُمْ وَلَٰكِنْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

"Ye did not hide yourselves lest your ears and your eyes and your skins should testify against you, but ye deemed that Allah knew not much of what ye did" **(*41:22*).**

(Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that he intended to write a book to describe the state of interrogation and the presentation of people's charge sheet.)

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 28

How Many Subjects Are Worth Discussing In This Chapter?

While the author considered a mix up of several topics in this chapter, there were a few issues that were worth considering, such as –

– What was the meaning of the word accounting (*Hisab*)?

– Who would be the auditor of this account?

– Who would be those who are under scrutiny?

– What were the things that would be inspected?

– What was the meaning of the phrase: standard of performance?

– What would be the status of evidence of the Prophets and their legatees?

– How would the human body parts present their evidence?

If we discussed all these issues in detail, it would require a long debate. We, therefore, confined ourselves to a minimum.

What Was The Meaning Of The Word Accounting

In Arabic language, the word *Hisab* or accounting was meant to scrutinize someone's good and bad deeds and then to reward or caution him accordingly.

Who Would Be The Auditor Of This Account?

The study of Qur'an and Hadith revealed that God would take account of everyone, but some narrations revealed that Angels would conduct this audit. Some other narrations also emphasized what had been expressed by the author in the text of this chapter i.e. the performance of the Prophets will be judged by God, and they would inspect their successors, who will in turn look over the deeds of the Ummah, as described in the Qur'an:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمِ

"On the Day of Judgement, We shall call people with their guides, Imams" **(*17:71*).**

Those who received evidence of their faith from their Imam would be successful and the rest would be in dire trouble. It was mentioned in *Usul al-Kafi* on the elaboration of the Qur'anic Verse:

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا

"What will happen to you at that time when We shall bring forth a witness from every Ummah and O! Prophet you will be a witness over them" **(*4:41*).**

It had been narrated by Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), who said, "In the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (S), there was an Imam among us in every aeon, who would witness the deeds of the nation and the Prophet will be a witness over us."

Similarly, in *Tafsir al-Safi* it was related from Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a) on the authority of his father that Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) had said that the Prophet (S) had mentioned, "Imam of every epoch will be a witness over his people, because he lived among them and delivered the appointed responsibility to them, (Therefore, his evidence would be very valuable about the compliant believers)."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that God had told the Prophet (S), "Anyone other than your Shi'as, who have obeyed another Imam, would come to the plane of *Mehsher* in a state that his nation would be cursing him and he was blighting them".

Again, Shaykh Al-Mufid had quoted a Hadith from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that ended like this,

"Then it will be announced second time – where is the caliph of God? Ali Ibn Abi Talib would stand up and God would address again: O, My servants, he is Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the caliph of God and His sign. Those who held his cord in the world should proceed and embrace his lead again and benefit from his light and go to the elevations of Paradise under his fellowship. A sound will come again from the Lord – those who had opted for other Imams must now follow them.

The followers and their Imams will all enter the Hell, and they would wish if they could be sent to the world again, so that they could abandon those Imams, in the same manner that they had abandoned them on this Day of Judgement."

Many other narrations had been mentioned in the section related to intercession, which elucidated that Imams would be the auditors of the deeds of their Shi'as, and we did not see any reason to repeat those traditions.

Who Will Be Scrutinised?

There were several Verses in the Qur'an, which suggested that each and every person would be scrutinised and put to the cross examination. However, some Qur'anic Verses and prophetic narrations also suggested that ideal believers and staunch infidels were not to be investigated, and they would go to the Paradise or Hell directly. Apart from these two groups, rest of the people would be examined. Therefore, in the elucidation of the Qur'anic Verse:

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُسْأَلُ عَن ذَنبِهِ إِنسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ

"On that day, no one among Jinns or Men shall be questioned about their sins" **(*55:39*).**

There were several narrations from the Imams that suggested that this privilege was only reserved for the Shi'as. It was mentioned in Tafsir Majma al-Bayan and Tafsir al-Safi that if this Verse was left to its general understanding, then it would clash with other numerous narrations, which proposed that each and every person would be scrutinised. Moreover, it also makes the concept of hereafter redundant.

Regarding non-inspection of the deeds of infidels and polytheists, it was related from Imam Ar-Ridha ('a), on the authority of his elders among the progeny of the Prophet that the Prophet of God had said, "God will audit the accounts of all people except polytheists, because they will go to hell without any impediment."

Similarly, it was mentioned in *Usul al-Kafi* on the authority of Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a), who said, "Understand it unmistakably – no appraisal will be held for the polytheists (on the Day of Judgement) nor would their character sheet will be opened. Instead, they will go to hell in groups directly. Yes, the accounts of the followers of Islam will definitely be checked."

What Actions Would Be Judged?

There were several narrations in this respect but we could say with certainty that questions would be asked about the rights of people and some rights of God. It was mentioned in Usul al-Kafi on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), who had said, "In the first examination, a man will be questioned about the Salat (obligatory prayers). If it was accepted then the rest of his noble deeds would be allowed otherwise, all his acts are rejected."

It was mentioned in Kitab *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah* from the same Imam, who said, "When a man reached the presence of God, he would initially be asked about the obligatory Prayers, Zakat, Fasting, Hajj and our Wilayat. Therefore, if he was a supporter of our Wilayat and he died on this belief then his Salat, Fasting, Zakat and Hajj would all be accepted, but if he failed to prove this in the presence of God, then God will not accept any of his deeds."

Some narrations also suggested that the first question that will be asked in the hereafter would be about the love of Ahl al-Bayt.

Clarification Of A Doubt

A doubt could be raised here that in the previous narration standard for the acceptance of one's deeds was set to be Salat and the other narration the proposed benchmark was the love of Ahl al-Bayt. How could these two narrations be reconciled?

The answer to this doubt was that the love of Ahl al-Bayt was the main condition of the acceptance of the entire portfolio of deeds including the Salat, but Salat was the standard for the rest of the conduct. Therefore, when the sphere of influence of the two was different then there was no conflict between the two narrations.

In Khisal of Shaykh As-Saduq, it was described on the authority of Ma'sumin Imams (Infallible Imams) that the Prophet of God had said, "No person will move an inch, unless he is questioned about four things. About his age, how he has spent this obligation, the youth or the formative years, on what assignments he went through this period, the wealth, its sources of receipt and expenditure and the love of us, the Ahl al-Bayt?"

These Verses and narrations also proposed that the questions would be asked about the role of eyes, ears and speech. God said in the Qur'an:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

"And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)" (17:36).

It was mentioned in *Tafsir al-Aayashi* on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), who said that your components of sense would be grilled to answer issues regarding what they have seen, heard or spoken?

Sensitivity About People's Rights (Huquq Al-'Ibad)

It was mentioned in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah* that when a man would be brought in the plane of *Mehsher*, an announcement would be made – he, who has any rights pending on him, should come forward and claim from him. There would not be a more difficult time for the crowd of *Mehsher* when the recognition by the claimants took place.

It was stated that various groups would come forth and clinch his garments for Khums, Zakat and other obligations. The scrutiny would be so strict that if a person had misused someone's money as meagre

as quarter of a cent, almost seven hundred accepted prayers will be deducted from his account and credited to the account of the claimant.

It was reported in *Ilal al-Sharai'* that when a claimant would ask a person about his debt and he had nothing to repay, then virtues from his assets equivalent to the loan will be deducted and credited to the account of the claimant, and if he had no assets left, then sins of the claimant would be added to his charge sheet.

Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) said that sins had three categories, one that would be pardoned and the other that could not be set aside and the third, for which there was a chance for forgiveness, but there was a possibility for retribution.

The first kind of sins was that for which punishment had been awarded in the world, and God was above in this in His stature that He would sentence His subject twice for a sin. The second form of the sin was that when people had aggressed against each other. God had sworn on his dignity that He would not forgive the aggressor, even if someone had hit the other person unjustifiably with a minor slap on his hand. The third category was that which was concealed by God and a sinner had the chance to repent. This was that offence for which the sinner was a candidate for God's compassion.

The Prophet of God said, "Do you know who was deprived and meagre in my Ummah?" The companions replied that in their understanding, a deprived person was the one who had no money or other relevant assets. The Prophet replied, "The deprived and meagre in my nation was the one, who reached the plane of *Mehsher* with a portfolio of Salat, Hajj and Zakat, but he had abused someone and usurped other's assets or he had murdered or tortured another human being. All of his assets would then be distributed among his victims and he would be sent to hell."

Instigation To Fulfil People's Rights

Since the fulfilment of the rights of the people was a very sensitive issue, therefore, the Prophet and the Imams had stressed that their followers repaid those rights in this world. The author of *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah* had recorded a Hadith of the Prophet, who said, "If a person can return a single Dirham to its owner, it is then better than the supplication of one thousand years and freeing of one thousand slaves."

Allama Jazaeri had quoted from the Imams that a person who made his creditors happy, would go to the Paradise without scrutiny.

There were varied reports on the use of worldly possessions. Allama Al-Majlisi had provided a wonderful insight on this issue. He wrote in *Bihar Al-Anwar*, "One must realise that accountability is a must and it has been substantiated by various Qur'anic Verses and established prophetic traditions. However, those avenues that will be judged are a point of debate among the scholars. Some narrations suggest that

food, drinks and clothing, along with other permissible necessities of life are exempt from questioning, while other traditions suggest that permissible would be audited and deplorable are liable for prosecution.

Both of these traditions can be combined in two ways – one, by proposing that the former reports are applicable to the impeccable believers and the later for non-believers or two, the earlier reports include the necessities such as food, drinks, clothing and marriage, which will not be queried, while the other reports will be applied to actions such as squandering wealth on unnecessary things and wasting precious time in accumulating avoidable possessions."

A Report On God's Arguments On The Day Of Judgment

Shaykh Al-Mufid had reported in his Aamali (lecture notes compiled by a student after master's demise) from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) on the elucidation of the Qur'anic Verse:

قُلْ فَلِلَّهِ الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ

***"Say: Then Allah's is the conclusive argument..."* (*6: 149*).**

Imam replied, "On the Day of Judgement God will ask His slave (man), if he was an erudite? If he replied in affirmative then he will be asked – why he did not use his knowledge. However, if he replied that he was ignorant then he would be told – why he did not make an effort to acquire knowledge for his benefit. This way he will be silenced."

It was reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) in Usul al-Kafi that, "On the Day of Judgement an extremely beautiful woman would be called, who was shrouded by her sins due to her beauty. She would say – O, God You had given me charm and beauty that is why I was trapped in sins. At that instance Maryam ('a), the mother of 'Isa ('a) would be called and the women would be asked if she was more beautiful or Maryam ('a), whom We have given more splendour, but despite that she did not commit sin.

Then, a handsome man will be brought in the court of justice who had done numerous sins due to his manly charm. He will make the same arguments, as provided by the previous beauty queen. God will then present Joseph ('a), the son of Jacob ('a) and sinner will be told that he had been given much more charisma and appeal, but he did not commit sin.

Then, another person who had suffered in the worldly life and committed crimes would be made to stand in the witness box. His arguments will also be along the same pattern, as were the previous defenders. God would then make Job a.s. (Prophet Ayub) to come to the witness box and declare that he suffered for more calamities than him, but he did not transgress.

In this way God has kept in all walks of life some role models among the people with whom he advances his arguments, such as Asiya, to counter the wives of imperials and Hizqeel for the government confidants.”

The Handing Over Of The Character Sheet

Numerous Verses of the Qur’an and Prophetic traditions revealed that when the dead would be raised from their graves, their character sheets would be handed over to them. The virtuous would receive the character sheet in their right hand, while the antagonists in their left hand. That is why God says in Surah Bani Isra’il:

وَكُلَّ إِنسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنشُورًا

“We shall advance a book for every person on the Day of Judgement, which he finds unwrapped and clear” (***17:13***).

In Surah Al-Inshiqaq it was further elaborated:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ

“Then as to him who is given his book in his right hand” (***84:7***).

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا

“He shall be reckoned with by an easy reckoning” (***84:8***).

وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا

“And he shall go back to his people joyful” (***84:9***).

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ

“And as to him who is given his book behind his back” (***84:10***).

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُورًا

"He shall call for perdition" **(*84:11*).**

And again in Surah Bani Isra'il:

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا

"Read your book; your own self is sufficient as a reckoner against you this day" **(*17:14*).**

The reports suggested that every single person would become literate and his memory would be so sharp that he will virtually see all his actions, as if everything had happened a moment ago with him. He would also know what kind of deeds he had sent forward and what sort of impressions he had left behind." At this juncture Man will cry out and say, "What has happened to this file, it has counted even the smallest of my mistakes?"

It was reported that some people would deny their charge sheet on the Day of Judgement. God will then produce the Angels as witnesses of their doings but they will still dispute and claim that Angels were biased against them, and they had not committed those crimes. In order to disprove their guilt, they would take the false oaths. The Qur'an had portrayed their state:

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ

"On the day that Allah will raise them up all, then they will swear to Him **(*to invalidate their faults*)** ***as they swear to you*** **(*O, Prophet*)*, and they think that they have something; now surely they are the liars"*** **(*58:18*).**

God would then shut their mouths by allowing their limbs to provide witness against them. The Qur'an said:

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

"On that day We will set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned" **(*36:65*).**

In another Surah it is mentioned:

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ

"And on the day that the enemies of Allah shall be brought together to the fire, then they shall be

formed into groups" **(*41:19*).**

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"Until when they come to it, their ears and their eyes and their skins shall bear witness against them as to what they did" **(*41:20*).**

It was mentioned in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* that God would let these criminals to speak out. They would criticize their limbs for speaking against them. The body parts will reply that the God, Who had given the power of speech to everything, had made them to stand witness against them (criminals). They would then be speechless. The initial denial and then eventual acceptance showed the folly of their behaviour. Had they confessed their sins and requested God to forgive them, they would then find Him most forgiving.

It was mentioned in a tradition that when the deeds would be weighed, a man would find the balance against him. The Angels would then be commanded to take him to the hell. When the Angels were escorting him, he would look behind. God would ask him – why he was turning behind. He would reply that he had not expected to be sent to the Hell by Him. God will say to the Angels, "I swear by My strength and power that this man never had such an expectation from Me. Since he has claimed this prospect, therefore, take him to the Paradise."

The Reality Of Scales (Mizan)

All Muslims were agreed on the general view of *Mizan*, but they differed on its nature or reality. Initial view of the scholars was that it was a physical weighing machine with two pairs of pans, in which deeds will be weighed. Secondly, Mizan or scale was referred to be an indicator of God's Justice, that salvation or punishment will be awarded according to the deeds of the individuals. Thirdly, it could represent the Prophets and their successors.

In Arabic language *Mizan* was referred to an instrument that gave the measure of a thing. That was why different devices were employed for weighing different things. For measuring usual stuff, we need ordinary gadgets that were seen in supermarkets and shops, for astronomical measurements the instruments were telescopes, spectrometers and computers etc and likewise for non-material objects there had to be some different appliances. Likewise, it was the Prophets – a manifestation of God's Justice and equity, who became *Mizan* for the people. The degree of their compliance turned into a measure to gain Paradise or Hell.

However, apparent signs of Qur'anic Verses and Hadith suggested that Mizan, belief in which was essential, existed in its primary sense. The Qur'an thus declared:

وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

"The weighing on that day is the true* (*weighing*)*. As for those whose scale is heavy, they are the successful"* (*7:8*)*.

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُم بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ

"And as for those whose scale is light: those are they who lose their souls because they used to wrong Our revelations"* (*7:9*)*.

The use of words, such as weighing, heavy and light in this Verse pointed out to the description of ordinary weighing equipment. It was expressed at another place in the Qur'an:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

"And We will set up a just balance on the day of resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed,* (*yet*) *will We bring it, and sufficient are We to take account"* (*21:47*)*.

This Verse also clearly mentioned words like scales, weight (lighter or heavier) but it also cited the accuracy on atomic scale, which qualified it to be an extremely advanced kind of measuring equipment. There were several other Qur'anic Verses that pointed to the same description of *Mizan*.

Two Doubts And Their Rebuttal

The two doubts that needed consideration were:

- Was God unaware of the deeds of people and so He required weighing scales to determine their performance?

- How would the deeds be weighed, given that only three-dimensional things could be subjected to this, and the deeds were dimensionless?

So far as men of ideal belief were concerned, the scales referred to them were the Justice of God and the Prophets and their successors. However, for the infidels and unrefined, a scale was required to be set up, so that rest of the audience in the plane of *Mehsher* could witness that injustice was not being

done to anyone.

Again, those who believed about *Mizan* in the literal sense differed on specifics that are to be weighed. There were three opinions on this subject.

- Deeds will be weighed.

- Virtuous deeds will take a form of charm, while bad deeds will be brought in a disfigured form, and these shapes are weighed.

- Good and bad deeds will itself manifest in material forms, although such transformation was not possible in the material world, but the change in space and time might affect this process.

Allama Shaykh Bahai wrote in his book *Arbaeen*, "It is a fact that deeds will be weighed on the Day of Judgement and not the character sheets." He then referred to the arguments that confirmed transformation of deeds into shapes in the hereafter. (Whoever wishes to have more information, could refer to this book).

Similarly, Allama Sayyid Nematullah Jazaeri wrote in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah,* "From positive and established sources, it had become abundantly clear to us that deeds performed by individuals take material form and those will be weighed."

Some Arguments In Support Of Materialising Human Deeds

God said in the Qur'an:

وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا

***"...and* (*on the Day of Judgement*) *what they had done they shall find present* (*there*)*..."* (*18:49*).**

In another place, it was stated in the Qur'an that people will find their deeds stationed there (on the Day of Judgement)[1].

The Prophet (S) of God said, ***"Your deeds will be returned to you on the Day of Judgement."***

In another Hadith, the Prophet addressed Qais Ibn Aasim, "O, Qais, you have a partner that will be

buried alive alongside you in the grave, while you are dead. If that companion was kind and compassionate, he would respect you, and if he was corrupted and shady, he would leave you in your misery. He will then rise with you on the day of Judgment and you will be questioned about him. If he was pious and God-fearing, you will then be familiar with him, but if he was corrupted, then you will be traumatised and shocked. This companion of yours is your conduct."

It was also mentioned in some Ahadith that people's deeds would materialise and entertain them in the Barzakh. Some of such narrations have already been mentioned in the section dealing with the state of grave and Barzakh (purgatory). In all honesty, these examples were not the solid arguments in support of the materialisation of deeds but the possibility of virtuous deeds turning into charming objects and the evil deeds manifesting into some awful forms, still remained.

This was why Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in *Bihar al-Anwar*, "In the hereafter, all kind of acts performed by humans will turn into material or virtual forms. God will either transform them into evil or good outline, or a dimensionless entity altered into a three-dimensional object and the deeds would then assume a shape of their own. At this moment, the first possibility is more probable intellectually and narrations do not oppose this view as well."

From these facts, it was amply clear that *Mizan* should be interpreted in its literal form and rest of the elucidations could be put aside, as its deeper understanding was not required by the religion. This was the view, which was adopted by Shaykh Abu Ja'far in the text of this chapter, whereas Shaykh Al-Mufid's analysis was based on the difficulty to understand the use of a literal balance to account for the weight of people's deeds. His elucidation was questionable because in order to do so he had reinterpreted the apparent meanings of the Qur'anic Verses and established Prophetic traditions, which was a dubious act. That is why, the later scholars, after critically examining his thesis declared,

"Therefore, on the basis of logical explanations and hypothetical assumptions put forward by Shaykh Al-Mufid that are weaker than the spider's web, we cannot abandon clear Qur'anic Verses and established narrations.2"

If on the other hand, the Shaykh had based his analysis on reports that favour *Mizan* as the Justice of God, Prophets and their successors, instead of his rational manipulations then his approach was acceptable and proper to an extent.

It was reported on the authority of Hisham Ibn Al-Hakam in *Ihtijaj al-Tabrasi* that once a heretic asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), "Will the deeds be weighed?" Imam replied, "No, because deeds do not possess physical dimensions. Moreover, weighing is a process, which is needed by someone who is ignorant of the quality and quantity of things, for nothing is hidden from God." The person again asked, "What is the meaning of *Mizan* then?" Imam replied, "It is God's Justice." The heretic, then quoted the Qur'anic Verse:

فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ

***"Then as for him whose measure* (*of good deeds*) *is heavy..."* (*7:8*).**

Imam replied that it meant, "The one whose noble deeds are excessive will be successful."

Due to these narrations, the problem became even more complicated. In order to safely negotiate this dilemma, careful scholars suggested that one should believe in the concept of Mizan and let its details be left to the Creator of *Mizan*. This view was shared by Allama Al-Majlisi and Sayyid Abdullah Shabbar.

Answer To A Proposition Regarding Evidence Provided By The Human Limbs

It was possible that the people of modern age might doubt the proposal that evidence about human actions would be provided by their own body parts. The answer to this query would be that it was merely a qualm and we could not deny the facts provided by the Qur'an and Hadith on the basis of a misgiving. Those who accepted the power of God would be satisfied by the answer that the body parts gave at that occasion, "We have been given the power of speech by the One who has conferred this capability upon all of you."

However, it would be unusual in this scientific era to have this idea rejected only on the basis of bigotry and narrow-mindedness, when we have seen that the same man, with God-given powers, could record and replay voices from plastic tapes and discs, could send and receive pictures from far of places, even beyond our solar system, how was it then impossible for the Creator of this man to make his body parts speak in obedience to His command.

Ahbat (Sequester), Takfeer (Restore) And Mowazena (Comparison)

Although, the respected author had not included this topic in this chapter, we felt that some information should be provided to our readers.

In the field of theology, the term *'Ahbat'* meant a sin carried out at a later date, which could destroy earlier good work, while *Takfeer* stood for the removal of an earlier sin by a virtuous deed performed at a later date. The purpose of *Mowazena* was to compare virtues with iniquity such that whichever took precedence over the other would eliminate the last, and if both were equal then both would become redundant. Mu'tazilites were in favour of such a division of deeds. There was no doubt that certain sins such as *shirk* and infidelity could swipe away previous assets, as stated in the Qur'an:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَزْنًا

"These are those people who have denied God's signs and their meeting with Him, therefore, their deeds are confiscated and no scales would be set out for them on the Day of Judgement" (***18: 105***).

Similarly, some acts of obedience could wash away the earlier sins such as belief after denial (*kufr*) and repentance after sinning. This showed that restoration and sequestering was a proven fact in its literal sense, but it was important to consider, if this formula was universally correct that every major sin was a reason for confiscation of good deeds. It was accepted among Shi'as and Al-Asharaites that this hypothesis was incorrect, as it made tyranny and oppression a compulsion and then incited to continue this unabated. So far as comparison was concerned, its irrationality was very clear. Allama Al-Majlisi said, "I say, that the loss of previous assets due to a later date infidelity and the acceptance of true belief after previous kufr to wipe away original evil are true, and it cannot be denied. Major information that has reached us confirms that virtues can eliminate misdeeds and many acts of obedience can pay for earlier mistakes but whether it is true that this formula is prevalent in all kind of sins and virtues is not known?"

Mohaddas Jazairi, who was a student of Allama Al-Majlisi, also held the same view.

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1. In reference to Verse 3:30:
"On the Day when every soul will find what it has done of good present before it and what it has done of evil..."
2. Haqq Al-Yaqin by Allama Sayyid Abdullah Shabbar.

[1] [1]
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Chapter 29: Description Of Paradise And Hell

Hazrat Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief about Paradise was that it was a house of peace and eternity, where there were no ailments, death, calamity, sanctions, misery, poverty or any kind of incapacity. On the other hand, it was a place of permanence, which was full of resources, piety and virtues for its residents. Its dwellers would neither feel tired nor experience any agony in it. There will be every provision that was desired by its residents, which will make their eyes full of joy and pleasure, and they will live there permanently.

The residents were also the holders of God's kindness and approvals and would be accommodated in various districts of Paradise according to their final status. Some would stay with the Angels, who were

busy in adoring God, and others would enjoy the company of the most beautiful women with charming eyes. They would be served with the best of food and clothes by adorable young servants. Their clothes would be made from silk and brocade and they would be provided with comfortable sofas and chairs. They would be assigned with anything that they desired.

Hazrat Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said, "There are three types of people who worship God. There is one group, who worship Him for the Paradise and its comforts, and his supplication resembles that of traders, and the other group worships Him for the fear of His Hell. Their supplication is like that of slaves. There is a third group that worships God with love. This is the supplication of gracious people and this is the group, which will find peace and tranquillity, as God has said:

وَهُمْ مِنْ فَزَعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ آمِنُونَ

"They will remain free of any fear on that day" **(*27:89*).**

Our belief about Hell was that it was a place of disgrace and ignominy and a place for taking avenging from polytheists, infidels and sinners. They would remain there permanently, while sinful believers and monotheists would be removed from the hell with God's compassion and

intercession of the Prophet and Imams.

It was reported that sinners who were monotheists would not suffer the agony of hell, but they would undergo some pain, while getting out of hell and this will be the punishment of their self-created wounds because

وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ

"God is not unjust toward His servants" **(*41:46*).**

In fact, the dwellers of hell were really destitute, where they would neither die nor get any relief from their punishment. They would not feel the pleasure of refreshing air or chilled water (78:24). Instead, they would be served with boiled polluted water (78:25) in return for their deeds (78:26). If they required a meal, they would be served with bitter cactus[1]. And, if they complained, they would be given a drink resembling molten copper, which would burn their faces (18:29). What an awful drink and what a hideous place to live!

The occupants of Hell would cry to God, saying:

أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ

"Take us out of this place and if we repeated those deeds then we shall certainly be liable for this punishment" **(*23:107*).**

They would not be answered for a long time and then they would be told that they must stay in this fire like a disgraced person (43:77), and not plead to Him (23:108).

They would then cry and ask the management of Hell to request their God to let them die, but they would be answered that they had to stay in the same state. It was mentioned through authentic traditions that God would order some people to be sent to hell and then He would direct its management that neither their feet nor their hands or their tongues and their faces should be burned, because they used to walk to the mosque for prayers, raised their hands for supplication to their Lord and recited the Holy Qur'an with tongues and performed complete ablution.

The caretaker would ask them – "O Miserable people, what made you to come to hell?" They would reply that they had performed these acts for the pleasure of others instead of God. They would be told that they should ask their reward from them, whom they wanted to please.

It was our belief that Paradise and Hell had already been created.

On the night of ascension, the Prophet had visited Paradise and observed Hell. It was also our belief that a person did not die, until he saw his place in Hell or Paradise, and a believer did not part with the world, until she (the world) had been presented to him in the most beautiful form and in that state, he viewed his house in Paradise. He was then given an option to choose between the present life and the hereafter, but he opted for the hereafter and then his spirit was captured. It was a proverb in the Arabic language that when one died it was said he was carrying out an act of generosity with his life, which meant that he was offering his life not under duress but with pleasure and joy.

The paradise in which Adam stayed was one of the gardens of this world, where the Sun used to rise and set. That was not the Paradise of the hereafter, because if it were so, Adam would not have parted with it. It was our belief also that the residents of Paradise would permanently remain there to receive the best of the God's blessings, while the Hell dwellers would remain in that anguish forever.

Anyone, who entered Paradise, would be shown a place in the Hell to let him know that if he had disobeyed God that would have been his place of abode. The same would happen to the Hell dwellers, who would be shown houses in the Paradise that belonged to them, if they had obeyed God.

Finally, the devout believers would be allotted those houses permanently that were made originally for the folks who chose their places in the Hell instead of Paradise, due to their disobedience of God, as declared in the Qur'an:

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ

"These houses will be owned by those" **(*23:10*).**

الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

"Who are the recipient of Paradise, and they will stay there permanently" **(*23:11*).**

A person in the lowest rank of Paradise will find his living standard ten times better than what the world could ever provide to him.

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1. The fruit zaqqum is referred to in the Qur'an three times in the following Verses: 37:62; 44:43; 56:52. The Qur'an describes it graphically in 37:63 and 37:64. Its tree is in the lowest stage of Hell, Jahannam.

[1] [1]
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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 29

Belief In Paradise And Hell Being An Integral Part Of The Religion

It should not remain hidden from the readers that Paradise was a house of comfort, which would be given to the believers in accordance with their degree of performance that will contain all kind of comforts, while Hell was the name of the place of agony and punishment, which would accommodate infidels, lewd, wayward and the fornicators according to their status. These two places, Paradise and Hell were real and physical, where some of God's creatures were currently living.

Those fortunate people who entered Paradise would remain there permanently, and those unfortunate ones who entered the Hell, would stay there eternally. Some would be freed after paying for their sins and intercession of the Prophets. They would then enter the Paradise. Belief in these two physical places was among the needs of the religion. Those who denied or interpreted in some way other than that had been elucidated by the Shariah, were excommunicated from Islam. No sect in Islam denied this concept except the atheists and polytheists.

The Greek philosophers had equated this concept with a virtual or intellectual/ spiritual existence, which was infidelity so far as Islam was concerned. Several Qur'anic Verses and established traditions proved the existence of Paradise and the Hell, and this discussion must include the following points.

- that the Paradise and Hell were physical and real entities.
- that they had been created and they exist somewhere in the universe.
- the living conditions in these two places.
- the permanence of the bliss of Paradise for its residents and severity of punishment for the Hell dwellers.
- Paradise in which Adam stayed
- the visualisation of their places in the Paradise or in Hell by the believers and infidel before their death.
- rebuttal of some doubts.

Proof That Paradise And Hell Are Real

Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in *Bihar Al-Anwar*, "It is among the requirements of the religion that we must believe in the existence of Paradise and Hell, the way it has been described in the Qur'anic Verses and established traditions. The one who denies it or interprets it in a different way is an apostate."

Similarly, Allama Taftazani described the same views in Sherh al-Maqasid.

Greek philosophers thought that the Paradise and Hell were spiritual, and other Sufi thinkers such as Imam Ghazali proclaimed that it had dual existence i.e. physical and spiritual, but rest of them thought it to be an intellectual and imaginative exercise.

Among the Greeks there were two schools of thought i.e. *Ashraqeen* (Eastern or Saracens) and Mashaeen (Rationals). The *Ashraqeens* were headed by Plato, who believed that punishment or reward was given in a virtual world, which was neither completely physical nor purely spiritual but it was something between the two realms.

According to this concept bliss was like a good dream, while punishment resembled a shocking delusion.

It was evident that this concept was against the physical return on the Day of Judgement, and was therefore, against the Qur'anic teachings and traditions of the other Prophets. Therefore, anyone who was committed to Islam would not be a party to such a feeble thought.

The Rationalists, whose leader was Aristotle, considered Paradise and Hell among the intellectual concepts that had no physical existence. According to them when a person died his body was destroyed but his spirit survived, and if its deeds were good, it remained happy and joyous, and that was her paradise, and if its actions were bad and ghastly and did not do anything worthwhile, she felt depressed and unhappy, and that was her hell. Evidently, this interpretation was also alien to Islamic thoughts.

It was pitiable for those Muslim Philosophers, who believed in Islamic doctrine and its legitimacy, yet accepted the teachings of Greek Philosophy and sided with its teachings. Unfortunately, the pseudo-intellectuals of the society, in order to accommodate Shariah and philosophical thoughts accepted the idea of semi physical paradise and hell. However, this duality of belief was not acceptable. They should boldly declare their allegiance to any side of their choosing. That is why, Allama Al-Majlisi declared,

"Those who carefully examine the work of these Philosophers, they will find that their concepts are against the prophetic teachings and they only professed their religious loyalty to safeguard themselves against edicts of infidelity. Their belief is verbal, while their hearts are staunched in denial and most of them are infidels."

Since this concept was not totally academic, therefore, it was not possible to have intellectual argument alone with the founders of this ideology, as its proof was related to the news that came verbally or in writing from the Prophets, therefore, its rivals must accept Islamic ideology first with complete satisfaction, then this concept would automatically become clearer to them, and it would then by design make their elucidations totally unnecessary. That is the reason why this notion of Heaven and Hell is kept towards the end of Islamic doctrine, so that researchers first convince themselves with the concepts of Monotheism, Justice and Prophecy, and then it would become easy for them to understand this view.

Proof Of The Creation Of The Paradise And Hell And Their Existence

Most of Islamic sects other than some Mu'tazilites believe that the Paradise and Hell has already been created and it is in existence at this moment. There are many Qur'anic Verses and established narrations available to prove it. Allama Al-Majlisi says,

"The existence and creation of Paradise and the Hell is well established among various Muslim sects, except a few Mu'tazilites, who claim that those will be created during the period of resurrection. However, various Qur'anic Verses and Prophetic traditions negate their thesis."

A Sunni scholar Allama Taftazani substantiated Allama Al-Majlisi's view in his book *Shahr al-Maqasid*.

The First Argument

We now present some reasons in support of our view and begin with the story of Adam and Eve that spoke of their presence in the paradise, which has been mentioned in various Qur'anic Verses. It was said,

قُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا

"And We said: O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the garden and eat from it a plenteous (food) wherever you wish" (2:35).

It remained evident that if the paradise did not exist, then to ask someone to eat and enjoy there was meaningless. It was mentioned in *Rijal al-Kishi* that Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) was asked that a certain person thought that paradise has not yet been created. Listening to this Imam replied that he was lying, because if the paradise had not yet been created then where had paradise of Adam gone?

Similarly, Ibn Sinan said that he asked Imam Musa Kaazim ('a) that he had heard Yunus saying that paradise and hell had not yet been created. Imam replied – may God curse him, where had the paradise of Adam gone? Shaykh As-Saduq quoted in *Kitab Al-Shi'a* from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) who said, "The one who denies four things was not among our Shi'as – Ascension of the Prophet, interrogation in the grave, creation of Paradise and Hell and intercession. This argument also showed the weakness of the author's point of view that Adam's Paradise was a mundane ecstasy."

Second Argument

It was mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ

"And certainly he (the Prophet) saw him (Gabriel) in another descent" (53:13).

عِندَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنتَهَىٰ

"At Sidra tul Muntaha (the farthest lote-tree)" (53:14).

عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ

"Near which is Jannat tul Ma'wa (the Paradise of Ma'wa)" (53:15).

It was mentioned in Tafsir Al-Qummi that if Jannat or Paradise was not present then why did God declare that the Prophet had met with Gabriel at Sidra, which was situated in the seventh heaven, near the Paradise of Mawa.

Third Argument

God mentioned about the Paradise that it was provided for the temperate, for the abstemious (Muttaqi) and was brought nearer to the self-controlled.

Similarly, it was mentioned about the Hell,

إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نُزُلًا

"...Surely We have prepared hell for the entertainment of the unbelievers" (***18: 102***).

These Verses clearly indicated that the Paradise and Hell had already been created.

Fourth Argument

There were several reports within the Islamic literature of both sects that the Prophet of Islam had visited the Paradise during the night of ascension. This clearly proved that Paradise has been created and it was in existence, otherwise to give a round trip to somewhere that did not exist was a meaningless venture.

The same was true about the Hell, because it was also shown to the Prophet. The denial of the creation of the Paradise and Hell thus surmounts to the denial of the Prophecy of Muhammad. Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) said,

"Those who deny the creation of Paradise and Hell are not aligned to us nor do we belong to them. Anyone, who denies the presence and creation of these two entities, denies us, the Prophet and our Wilayat; and he will permanently live in the fire of Hell.

Rebuttal Of Some Doubts

It was said that the paradise in which Adam was stationed, was one of the mundane gardens, where sun used to rise and set. There was also a narration to support this view. Again, it was said that if it were the Paradise of permanence (*Jannat al-Khuld*) then Adam would not have left it, because it was said in the Qur'an that its inhabitants would be its permanent residents.

Although, there is a difference of opinion between the theologians and the commentators (*Mufassireen*) about whether, it was a mundane garden or *Jannat al-Khuld*, some commentators sided with the view

that has been cited here. The author of this book has also adopted this view, but many other commentators differed with this analysis.

There were several narrations that could be quoted to support the second view, and the one narration that was quoted on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) was weak with respect to its documentation and repetition. It has been an accepted rule that we would only favour those narrations that were abundant and stronger in relation to their documentary evidence.

So far as this objection was concerned that had this paradise been *Jannat al-Khuld*, then Adam would not have left it, since its dwellers would remain there permanently, the objector must understand that this rule was applicable to those whom Paradise was granted as a result of an award. Adam (‘a) had not been stationed there according to this principle. If it was true that anyone who once entered the Paradise would not leave it, then what made the Prophet to leave the Paradise after he had entered to inspect it during the night of Ascension? These facts reveal that the Paradise to which Adam is referred was actually *Jannat al-Khuld*.

It was argued that if the Paradise and Hell were actually needed on the day of resurrection, then their earlier creation was a useless exercise. We could answer to this objection by saying that there was no futility in this exercise. On the other hand, there were some mysteries attached to it.

One of the benefits of earlier creation was to make people wish for Paradise and to be fearful of the Hell. As a result, they could mould their lives in accordance with the constitution of God. Such a term, according to the theologians was called *Lutf* or Pleasure, which God does not deny at any time.

The second line of reasoning was that the people who were our guides provided by God, and on whose saying we believed in the unseen objects, then logic demanded that God must have showed those objects to them so that they could describe it to their nations as per their experience. If it was not so then the news given by the messengers of God would not be trustworthy and they could not satisfy their people, if such a request was made to them.

Moreover, it was not true to say that the Paradise and Hell were lying empty, but in fact those are filled with the spirits of the pious and aberrant people respectively. It was reported on the authority of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), who said,

“By God, since the day God has created the Paradise, it was never empty of the souls of believers and the same is true for the Hell.”

It was mentioned in the Qur'an about the Paradise that it's one dimension was equal to the expanse of Heaven and Earth, which made its other dimensions immeasurable. Similar news was also available about the Hell. The question now arose that if both had been created then in what spatial coordinates did they exist?

It could be said in reply that the coordinates of the Paradise and Hell were difficult to define, since God had not spoken about it. Our responsibility as a believer was to accept God's words and continue with our other responsibilities. However, whatever we have learned from the discourses of leading theologians could be put in the following words.

It was said that Paradise was situated above the seventh Heaven and the Hell in the opposite direction. Some narrations that have incorporated the term *Sama'* or Heaven, suggested that the Paradise was at the edges of the present Universe. God has said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ

***"To those who reject Our signs and treat them with arrogance, no opening will there be of the gates of heaven, nor will they enter the garden"* (*7:40*).**

Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (ʿa) had also credited this point of view. When it was established that the Paradise was situated beyond the edges of the Universe, then all questions pertaining to its coordinates automatically became redundant.

Description Of Some Delightful Experiences Of The Paradise

True description of the Paradise was very difficult. There was Persian Proverb, which meant that the taste of sweet bread could not be appreciated without actually eating it. The bliss of the Paradise was very similar to this. Whatever we have learnt from the Qur'anic Verses and established traditions, could be summarised in the following words.

Paradise was a place in which there is no distress, ailments, degeneration, famine, animosity, encounters and assassinations, as described in the text of this chapter. Instead, it was a permanent house of peace. There would be all kinds of food and attire for the appreciation of its residents. Paradise was such a wonderful place, for which the Prophet had said,

"It is better than what anyone can imagine. It will neither be hot nor too cold for discomfort, but instead its temperature is balanced throughout its timeframe." Qur'an states, "There will be neither scorching Sun nor bitter cold."

We have presented a few more Qur'anic Verses in this respect.

قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُم بِخَيْرٍ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

"Say: Shall I tell you what is better than these? For those who guard* (*against evil*) *are gardens

with their Lord, beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them, and pure mates and Allah's pleasure; and Allah sees the servants" (***3:15***).

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ

"Surely those who guard (***against evil***) ***shall be in the midst of gardens and fountains"*** (***15:45***).

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ آمِنِينَ

"Enter them in peace, secure" (***15:46***).

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ

"And We will root out whatever of rancour is in their breasts– (***they shall be***) ***as brethren, on raised couches, face to face"*** (***15:47***).

لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ

"Toil shall not afflict them in it, nor shall they be ever ejected from it" (***15:48***).

فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ

"Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord..." (***47:15***).

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

"Save the servants of Allah, the purified ones" (***37:40***).

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ رِزْقٌ مَّعْلُومٌ

"For them is a known sustenance" (***37:41***).

فَوَاكِهُ وَهُم مُّكْرَمُونَ

“Fruits, and they shall be highly honoured” **(*37:42*).**

فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ

“In gardens of pleasure” **(*37:43*).**

عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ

“On thrones, facing each other” **(*37:44*).**

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ

“A bowl shall be made to go round them from water running out of springs” **(*37:45*).**

بَيْضَاءَ لَذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ

“White, delicious to those who drink” **(*37:46*).**

لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنزَفُونَ

“There shall be no trouble in it, nor shall they be exhausted therewith” **(*37:47*).**

وَعِندَهُمْ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ عِينٌ

“And with them shall be those who restrain the eyes, having beautiful eyes” **(*37:48*).**

كَأَنَّهُنَّ بَيْضٌ مَّكْنُونٌ

“As if they were eggs carefully protected” **(*37:49*).**

لَٰكِنِ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِّن فَوْقِهَا غُرَفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ الْمِيعَادَ

“But those who are fearful of their Lord will be given lofty palaces with extended heights, underneath which the rivers flow. This is a promise of their Lord, and He does not go back on His promises” (***39:20***).

الْأَخِلَّاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ

“The friends shall on that day be enemies one to another, except those who guard (***against evil***)***”*** (***43:67***).

يَا عِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ

“O My servants! there is no fear for you this day, nor shall you grieve” (***43:68***).

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِين

“Those who believed in Our communications and were submissive” (***43:69***).

ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ

“Enter the garden, you and your wives; you shall be made happy” (***43:70***).

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“There shall be sent round to them golden bowls and drinking-cups and therein shall be what their souls yearn after and (***wherein***) ***the eyes shall delight, and you shall abide therein*** (***permanently***)***”*** (***43:71***).

مَّثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ

“A similitude of the Garden which those who keep their duty (***to Allah***) ***are promised: Therein are rivers of water unpolluted, and rivers of milk whereof the flavour changeth not, and rivers of wine delicious to the drinkers, and rivers of clear-run honey; therein for them is every kind of fruit,***

with pardon from their Lord” (***47:15***).

عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ

“On lined couches” (***56:15***).

مُّتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ

“Reclining therein face to face” (***56:16***).

يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ

“There wait on them immortal youths” (***56:17***).

بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ

“With bowls and ewers and a cup from a pure spring” (***56:18***).

لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ

“Wherefrom they get no aching of the head nor any madness” (***56:19***).

وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ

“And fruit that they prefer” (***56:20***).

وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

“And flesh of fowls that they desire” (***56:21***).

وَحُورٌ عِينٌ

“And (***there are***) ***fair ones with wide, lovely eyes”*** (***56:22***).

كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ

“Like unto hidden pearls” **(*56:23*).**

جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“Reward for what they used to do” **(*56:24*).**

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا

“There hear they no vain speaking nor recrimination (Naught)” **(*56:25*).**

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا

“But the saying: Peace, (and again) Peace” **(*56:26*).**

وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنجَبِيلًا

“There are they watered with a cup whereof the mixture is of Zanjabil” **(*76:17*).**

عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّىٰ سَلْسَبِيلًا

“(The water of) a spring therein, named Salsabil” **(*76:18*).**

وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنثُورًا

“There wait on them immortal youths, whom, when thou seest, thou wouldst take for scattered pearls” **(*76:19*).**

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا

“When thou seest, thou wilt see there bliss and high estate” **(*76:20*).**

عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُندُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُّوا أَسَاوِرَ مِن فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا

“Their raiment will be fine green silk and gold embroidery. Bracelets of silver will they wear. Their Lord will slake their thirst with a pure drink” (***76:21***).

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَةَ الْأُولَىٰ وَوَقَاهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ

“They (***the residents of the Paradise***) ***shall not taste therein death except the first death”*** (***44:56***).

لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ

“They will neither undergo grief (***in the Paradise***), ***nor they are asked to vacate it”*** (***15:48***).

لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَامًا وَلَهُمْ رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا

“They shall not hear therein any vain discourse, but only: Peace, and they shall have their sustenance therein morning and evening” (***19:62***).

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord; and a Garden, the extensiveness of which is (***as***) ***the heavens and the earth, it is prepared for those who guard*** (***against evil***)***”*** (***3:133***).

وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

“Such as persevere in seeking their Lord's Countenance and are regular in prayer and spend of that which We bestow upon them secretly and openly, and overcome evil with good. Theirs will be the sequel of the (***heavenly***) ***Home”*** (***13:22***).

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ

“Gardens of Eden which they enter, along with all who do right of their fathers and their helpmeets and their seed. The angels enter unto them from every gate, (***Saying***)***”*** (***13:23***).

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

“Peace be unto you because ye persevered. Ah, passing sweet will be the sequel of the (*heavenly*) *Home”* (*13:24*).

قُلْ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ الْخُلْدِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَزَاءً وَمَصِيرًا

“Say (*O Prophet*)*: Is this* (*Hell*) *better or the abiding garden which those who guard* (*against evil*) *are promised? That shall be a reward and a resort for them”* (*25:15*).

لَّهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ خَالِدِينَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَّسْئُولًا

“They shall have therein what they desire abiding (*in it*)*; it is a promise which it is proper to be prayed for from your Lord”* (*25:16*).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

“In the case of those who say, "Our Lord is Allah", and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (*from time to time*)*: "Fear ye not!"* (*they suggest*)*, "Nor grieve! but receive the Glad Tidings of the Garden* (*of Bliss*)*, the which ye were promised!”* (*41:30*).

نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ

“We are your protectors in this life and in the Hereafter: therein shall ye have all that your souls shall desire; therein shall ye have all that ye ask for!” (*41:31*).

نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ

“A hospitable gift from one Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful!” (*41:32*).

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ

“In them will be fair (*Companions*)*, good, beautiful”* (*55:70*).

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

“Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?” (*55:71*).

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ

"Companions restrained (as to their glances), in (goodly) pavilions" **(*55:72*).**

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

"Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?" **(*55:73*).**

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ

"Whom no man or Jinn before them has touched" **(*55:74*).**

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

"Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?" **(*55:75*).**

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلَالٍ وَعُيُونٍ

"Surely those who guard (against evil) shall be amid shades and fountains" **(*77:41*).**

وَفَوَاكِهَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

"And fruits such as they desire" **(*77:42*).**

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

"Eat and drink pleasantly because of what you did" **(*77:43*).**

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Surely thus do We reward the doers of good" **(*77:44*).**

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ

***“Faces* (*of the virtuous*) *that Day will be joyful”* (*88:8*).**

لِّسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ

***“Pleased with their striving”* (*88:9*).**

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ

***“In a Garden on high”* (*88:10*).**

لَّا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَاغِيَةً

***“Where they shall hear no* (*word*) *of vanity”* (*88:11*).**

فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ

***“Therein will be a bubbling spring”* (*88:12*).**

فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ

***“Therein will be Thrones* (*of dignity*)*, raised on high”* (*88:13*).**

وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ

***“And drinking-cups ready placed”* (*88:14*).**

وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ

***“And cushions set in rows”* (*88:15*).**

وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ

***“And rich carpets* (*all*) *spread out”* (*88:16*).**

There are so many other Verses in the Qur’an regarding Paradise that God has quietened after

describing the bounties and pleasures of the Paradise by saying:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"So, no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes; a reward for what they did" **(*32:17*).**

Features Of Paradise Through Ahadith

Although, enough had been stated regarding the Paradise in the previous pages, we have quoted further narrations to enhance faith of the devotees.

In various narrations, the structural layout of houses in the Paradise was described in this manner that its walls would use bricks of silver, gold and rubies alternatively arranged. Its cement would be mixed with strong musk, saffron and pearls, its pinnacles were that of red Rubies and the roof would consist of green Emeralds or Topaz1.

The Prophet (S) said that, "There are those kinds of rooms in the Paradise, which reveal their intrinsic splendour from outside and external majesty from inside. Only those people of my Ummah will find their residence in those rooms that speak with neat and careful tone, feed the needy, offer salam to those whom they meet, pray during the nights when others are sleeping."

It was mentioned in the same book that when the Prophet entered the Paradise during the night of ascension, he saw a force of Angels building houses in the Paradise. They were using the bricks of gold and silver in the process of construction, but their continuity of work used to cease on certain occasions. The Prophet asked them the reason for the pause in activity. They said that they were waiting for the cement or binding mixture to arrive. The Prophet enquired regarding the nature of the binding mixture. They replied that it was the supplication to God by the believers, particularly when they said – 'Most high is the Lord, all praise is to Him, there is no lord but Allah and He is the Most elevated', that we start the work and when they became

Passive, we ceased to work

There categories of Paradise were different where people would share residence with the Prophets, Messengers, Imams and Mu'minin. The resident of each category was so much satisfied with his place that he would assume that there was no other place better than what was been allotted for him.

It was reported in *Al-Khisal* of Shaykh As-Saduq that Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Talib ('a) said that among the various gates of the Paradise, one was reserved for the Prophets through which the Prophets and the *Siddiqeens* (Truthful) would pass through. The other would be used by Martyrs and the Pious, whereas five other entry points would be used by our Shi'as, including the believers of the past Ummah.

Imam Ali said that he would stand constantly on the *Pul al-Sirat*, while continuously requesting to God to forgive and save all those Shi'as, who loved and helped him in the world, from the chastisement of Hell.

It was reported in various narrations on the authority of Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a) and Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that the categories of the Paradise were equal to the Verses of the Holy Qur'an. The one who recited the Qur'an would be asked to continue reading it and attain elevation in the hierarchy of the Paradise. Therefore, no one could claim better position among the residents of the Paradise than the Prophets, *Siddiqeen* and the readers of the Qur'an.

Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) said that: "There are different classes (in terms of their status) of Paradise and each is much different from the other. Its dwellers will never find its resources being depleted nor will they like to move out of it or get any kind of boredom or disappoint in it."

Hazrat As-Sadiq Aali Muhammad (‘a) said – "The fragrance of the Paradise comes from a distance of one thousand years. The people of the least status (in Paradise) will receive so many bounties that if the entire humanity becomes their guest, then it would not deplete their resources."

There were a few people who would not perceive the fragrance of the Paradise. These were the son who had been excommunicated (*Aaq*) by his parents, an Aged Adulterer, Enemy of the Ahl al-Bayt, an Arrogant who walked with conceit.

There were some other narrations, which suggested that at the time of the creation of the Paradise God had sworn on His dignity that some of the people would never enter His Paradise. They were – a habitual drinker, the one who was addicted to intoxicating drugs, a backbiter, shameless or immodest person, one who desecrates the grave, a tyrant, a callous person, a *Qudri* (the one who believed that God exercised compulsion, and He is responsible for all the good and bad acts that happen in the world), compulsive liar and a usurer.

According to the narrations of the Prophet, an inch of space in the Paradise was better than what could be found in the entire Cosmos around us. It was reported from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) that when people would enter the Paradise, would will make them acquire the height of Adam (‘a), the age of Jesus (‘a), the language of Prophet (‘a), the beauty of Joseph (‘a), their faces would glow and their hearts would be devoid of jealousy and animosity – like the heart of Job (Ayub).

It was reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) on the authority of his elders that Amir Al-Mu'minin (‘a) had said, "Tooba is a celestial tree, whose roots are in the house of the Prophet and there is no Mu'min (believer) in the Paradise, whose house does not contain a portion of is growth. The tree is so big that if a fast-moving person runs for one hundred years, he will not be able to escape its shadow and if he tries to conquer its height, he will turn into an old man and falls to the ground before reaching is top. It is therefore, important to strive to gain such an award. It is also narrated that when anyone plucks a fruit from that tree another fruit is immediately replaces it. There will be no dearth of anything in the Paradise."

It was asked from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) that if there was any mundane resemblance of that tree. Imam replied that one could light one thousand lamps from a single lamp, yet it will not make any difference to the luminosity of the first lamp.

The reports about kind of awards and their abundance a Mu’min will receive have different versions that depend on their status in the Paradise. Allama Jazairi wrote *in Al-Anwar An-Nu’maniyah,* “It is narrated that God will grant a Mu’min seventy thousand such women that if one of them sneaks a look on this world then the whole world will dazzle with her beauty and the people would die to acquire her.”

It was also reported by Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) that if one of the celestial women was made to appear before the people, the whole world would like to die to acquire her. The Prophet of God said that these women would sing proudly, “We are that sensitive and subtle species that will never become obsolete or old. We are those who are very neatly dressed that will never be exposed. We are those perpetuals, that will never die. We are those who will never show temper. We are those permanent residents that will never be asked to leave. Auspicious are those for whom we have been reserved, and it is our privilege to have them. We are best of the wives and our husbands are kind and caring people.”

God would let the residents of the Paradise to marry these women. It was also reported in a Hadith of the Prophet (S) that if a woman was married twice in this life, and both of her husbands managed to reach the Paradise, then she will be wedded to the one who kept her happier in the world.

It was written about the cuisine of Paradise that each of its dishes will have thousands different tastes and the same was true about its fruits. It was also reported that this food would not produce any excreta, but it would discharge from the body as a scented sweat. It was asked from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) that if there was any mundane example of this process. Imam replied that a foetus, while developing in mother’s womb, received regular food but did not produce any excreta.

The residents of the Paradise would also enjoy the company of other friends. If a believer found some of his friends or relatives in the Hell then he would certainly be depressed, therefore, God would wipe out the memory of such people from his mind so that their separation might not hurt them.

The Paradise would have all kind of entertainments. Once a Bedouin asked the Prophet, if there was any music in the Paradise for providing pleasure to its listeners? The Prophet replied yes, there were instruments (in the Paradise), and when they will be played it will produce such a sound that if it was heard by the earthlings, they would drowse in pleasure.

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that “There was a lake in the paradise whose water was sweeter than honey, softer than foam, colder than ice and with greater fragrance than the musk.”

It was realised from various other narrations that there were various channels in the Paradise that contained water, honey and milk. The names of those waterways were – Camphor, Salsabeel, Tasneem, Zanjabeel, Daheeq and Kawthar.

The Prophet (S) said that God had informed him that He had provided so much in the Paradise that it was not seen by an eye, neither heard by an ear, nor it could be imagined by a mind.

Weakness Of Authors View Spiritual Pleasures Only In The Paradise

The author of this book described that there would be some residents of the Paradise whose enjoyment and pleasure was the praise of God, instead of eating, drinking or other physical pleasures. Shaykh Al-Mufid provided a very healthy criticism of this view and proposed that the narration on which this idea was based was fictitious, since Qur'an opposed such a vision by proposing the provisions of food and drink along with marriage, and other corporeal pleasures, and then encouraged the believers to strive for it. He then quoted some of the relevant Qur'anic Verses, which we have already mentioned.

Moreover, how is it possible that one group of believers should behave like Angel by depriving themselves of food and drink and marriage. This behaviour was totally against Islamic spirit and unanimous opinion of the Muslims. Allama Al-Majlisi, after approving Shaykh Al-Mufid's comments said that the residents of the Paradise, after receiving its bliss would bow down to God in respect, as described in the Qur'an,

دَعْوَاهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ وَآخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

"Their cry in it shall be: Glory to Thee, O Allah! and their greeting in it shall be: Peace; and the last of their cry shall be: Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds" (***10:10***).

At another place, it was recorded in the Qur'an:

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ

"And those who are careful of (***their duty to***) ***their Lord shall be conveyed to the garden in companies; until when they come to it, and its doors shall be opened, and the keepers of it shall say to them: Peace be on you, you shall be happy; therefore, enter it to abide"*** (***39:73***).

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

"And they shall say: (***All***) ***praise is due to Allah, Who has made good to us His promise, and He has made us inherit the land; we may abide in the garden where we please; so goodly is the reward of the workers"*** (***39:74***).

Explanation Of Imam As Sadiq's Words

The Hadith of Imam As–Sadiq (‘a) that had been quoted by the author, wherein different categories of the worshippers had been mentioned. Although credible, it did not support the view that the supplications of only one type of worshippers were accepted and the others were negated. None of the grand theologians were of this view, because if it was accepted to be true that the prayers that were offered for the love of Paradise or due to the fear of Hell became redundant, its responsibility would fall on God and His messengers, who had persuaded people to strive for the Paradise.

Yes, there was no doubt that the supplication that was made solely in the love of God was definitely superior. That was why Amir Al–Mu'minin (‘a) had said – "I have not worshipped You due to the fear of your Hell or for the aspiration of your Paradise, but I have worshipped You because You deserve to be worshipped."

A Short Description Of The Calamity Of Hell

Just as the nature of the bliss of Paradise was difficult to explain, similarly, the description of the sufferings of Hell remained beyond adequate portrayal. A summary of what was depicted in the Qur'an and Ahadith of the Prophet presented Hell to be a punishment, which would contain every aspect of castigation. Boiling water for drinking and purulent discharge and cactus to eat, which could perforate the intestine.

When the original skin would deteriorate, it would be replaced by a fresh one. The punishment would be permanent because its dwellers neither died nor were given any respite. They would appeal but it will be disallowed and they would remain in this state of degradation until eternity.

The Hell would have different levels where polytheists, infidels, hypocrites and other sinners were accommodated, according to the degree of their crimes. We have presented here a few Verses of the Qur'an in this context.

إِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَن تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

"Be fearful of that fire whose fuel will be humans and stones. It is specially prepared for the infidels" **(*2:24*).**

إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا

"...Surely We have prepared for the iniquitous a fire, the curtains of which shall encompass them

about; and if they cry for water, they shall be given water like molten brass which will scald their faces; evil the drink and ill the resting-place" (***18:29***).

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

"...And (***as for***) ***those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, announce to them a painful chastisement"*** (***9:34***).

يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ

"On the day when it shall be heated in the fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it; this is what you hoarded up for yourselves, therefore taste what you hoarded" (***9:35***).

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُم بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ

"Their wish will be to get out of the Fire, but never will they get out therefrom: their penalty will be one that endures" (***5:37***).

فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِّعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِّن نَّارٍ يُصَبُّ مِن فَوْقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ الْحَمِيمُ

"...then (***as to***) ***those who disbelieve, for them are cut out garments of fire, boiling water shall be poured over their heads"*** (***22:19***).

يُصْهَرُ بِهِ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَالْجُلُودُ

"With it shall be melted what is in their bellies and (***their***) ***skins as well"*** (***22:20***).

وَلَهُم مَّقَامِعُ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ

"And for them are whips of iron" (***22:21***).

كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

"Whenever they will desire to go forth from it, from grief, they shall be turned back into it, and

taste the chastisement of burning” (***22:22***).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“(As for) those who disbelieve in Our communications, We shall make them enter fire; so oft as their skins are thoroughly burned, We will change them for other skins, that they may taste the chastisement; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise” (***4:56***).

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرْكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ

“There is no doubt that hypocrites will be in the lowest station of the Hell” (***4:145***).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَن تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“Undoubtedly, those who opted for infidelity, their wealth and children will not save them from God’s punishment. They are the residents of Hell and they will remain there forever” (***3:116***).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا

“(As for) those who swallow the property of the orphans unjustly, surely they only swallow fire into their bellies and they shall enter burning fire” (***4:10***).

وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

“But those who disobey Allah and His Messenger and transgress His limits will be admitted to a Fire, to abide therein: And they shall have a humiliating punishment” (***4:14***).

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا

“And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is hell; he shall abide in it, and Allah will send His wrath on him and curse him and prepare for him a painful chastisement” (***4:93***).

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مَن يُحَادِدِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَأَنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا ذَٰلِكَ الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ

“Know they not that for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, is the Fire of Hell? Wherein they shall dwell. That is the supreme disgrace” (***9:63***).

ثُمَّ قِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْخُلْدِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ

“Then it shall be said to those who were unjust: Taste abiding chastisement; you are not requited except for what you earned” (***10:52***).

فَادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

“Therefore, enter the gates of hell, to abide therein; so certainly evil is the dwelling place of the proud” (***16:29***).

وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

“And lo! for all such, hell will be the promised place” (***15:43***).

لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِّكُلِّ بَابٍ مِّنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَّقْسُومٌ

“It hath seven gates, and each gate hath an appointed portion” (***15:44***).

وَذَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولِي النَّعْمَةِ وَمَهِّلْهُمْ قَلِيلًا

“And leave Me and the rejecters, the possessors of ease and plenty, and respite them a little” (***73:11***).

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا

“Surely with Us are heavy fetters and a flaming fire” (***73:12***).

وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

“And food that chokes and a painful punishment,..” (***73:13***).

إِنَّ شَجَرَتَ الزَّقُّومِ

“Surely the tree of the Zaqqum (cactus-like plant)” (44:43).

طَعَامُ الْأَثِيمِ

“Is the food of the sinful” (44:44)

كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ

“Like dregs of oil; it shall boil in (their) bellies” (44:45).

كَغَلْيِ الْحَمِيمِ

“Like the boiling of hot water” (44:46).

وَاسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ

“But they sought victory and decision (there and then), and frustration was the lot of every powerful obstinate transgressor” (14:15).

مِّن وَرَائِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ مِن مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ

“In front of such a one is Hell, and he is given, for drink, boiling fetid water” (14:16).

يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِن وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ

“In gulps will he sip it, but never will he be near swallowing it down his throat: death will come to him from every quarter, yet will he not die: and in front of him will be a chastisement unrelenting” (14:17).

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

“And (ask) of the Sinners” (74:41).

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرَ

“What led you into Hell Fire?” (***74:42***).

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ

“They will say: "We were not of those who prayed” (***74:43***).

وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِينَ

“Nor were we of those who fed the indigent” (***74:44***).

وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ

“But we used to talk vanities with vain talkers” (***74:45***).

وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ

“And we used to deny the Day of Judgment” (***74:46***).

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالسَّاعَةِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَن كَذَّبَ بِالسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا

“Nay, but they deny (***the coming of***) ***the Hour, and for those who deny*** (***the coming of***) ***the Hour We have prepared a flame”*** (***25:11***).

إِذَا رَأَتْهُم مِّن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغَيُّظًا وَزَفِيرًا

“When it seeth them from afar, they hear the crackling and the roar thereof” (***25:12***).

وَإِذَا أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُّقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا

“And when they are flung into a narrow place thereof, chained together, they pray for destruction there” (***25:13***).

لَّا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَادْعُوا ثُبُورًا كَثِيرًا

“Pray not this day for one destruction, but pray for many destructions!” (***25:14***).

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُم مِّنْ عَذَابِهَا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَفُورٍ

“And (***as for***) ***those who disbelieve, for them is the fire of hell; it shall not be finished with them entirely so that they should die, nor shall the chastisement thereof be lightened to them: even thus do We retribute every ungrateful one”***(***35:36***).

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ

“And they shall cry therein for succour: O our Lord ! take us out, we will do good deeds other than those which we used to do. Did We not preserve you alive long enough, so that he who would be mindful in it should mind? And there came to you the warner; therefore taste; because for the unjust, there is no helper” (***35:37***).

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

“And your Lord says: Call upon Me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud for My service shall soon enter hell abased” (***40:60***).

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ

“Surely the guilty shall abide in the chastisement of hell” (***43:74***).

لَا يُفَتَّرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ

“It shall not be abated from them and they shall therein be despairing” (***43:75***).

وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوا هُمُ الظَّالِمِينَ

“And We are not unjust to them, but they themselves were unjust” (***43:76***).

وَنَادَوْا يَا مَالِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُم مَّاكِثُونَ

“And they shall call out: O Malik! let your Lord make an end of us. He shall say: Surely you shall tarry” (***43:77***).

لَقَدْ جِئْنَاكُم بِالْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ

“Certainly, We have brought you the truth, but most of you are averse to the truth” (***43:78***).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

“O you who believe! save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones; over it are angels stern and strong, they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and do as they are commanded” (***66:6***).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُون

“O you who disbelieve! do not urge excuses today; you shall be rewarded only according to what you did” (***66:7***).

إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ

“Indeed, it throws about sparks (***huge***) ***as Forts”*** (***77:32***).

كَأَنَّهُ جِمَالَتٌ صُفْرٌ

“As if there were (***a string of***) ***yellow camels*** (***marching swiftly***)***”*** (***77:33***).

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!” (***77:34***).

A Brief Description Of The Punishment Of Hell In The Words Of Imam Ali (‘A)

Amir Al-Mu’minin (‘a) described in a sermon, “You must realise that your soft and delicate skin cannot

withstand the fire of Hell. Have pity on your souls, because you have already tried and tested yourself against misfortune and disaster in this world. You must have seen someone who has a spike stuck into his foot, then how he cries and snivels (until the thorn is removed). A minor accident makes him covered with blood and hot sand burns his feet. How would he feel, when he was sleeping within the two grinding wheels of fire and in the company of Satan?

Do you know what happens when the caretaker of Hell got angry with its fire? Some sections of Hell shattered into other parts of Hell with his rage, and when he rebuked the fire, its flames escape to the entrance of Hell to seek refuge. O weak and elderly People with whom fragility was entwined, what would be your condition be when neck locks would penetrate in your bones like an incision in the flesh. They would remain until they had consumed all of the flesh from your arms?"

It was reported on the authority of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), who said, "The severity of punishment would be such that residents of Hell will howl like dogs and wolves. O, Omru what is your opinion about that assemblage, which cannot die or find a little respite in their punishment.

They will be thirsty and hungry, with bewildered eyes like handicapped people, and they will be marked for punishment despite them being regretful and apologetic. They will neither be treated with compassion nor is their punishment reduced and they will be sent into the fire of Hell, where they would drink boiling water and eat from the cactus tree.

They will be broken with the hammers of fire and beaten with the mace by very harsh Angels, who will not feel any sympathy for them. They will be dragged into the fire, imprisoned with mischievous people and kept in chains. They will cry for help but their request will be turned down, and if they request for something else, their call will be refused. This is the state of a person who will enter the Hell."

It was mentioned in *Al-Khisal* of Shaykh As-Saduq that Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) once said, "There is a milling machine in Hell, which will grind five kinds of people. Would you not like to know from me, who are those people?" He was then requested to identify those people. He replied that these were – unchaste religious scholars, lewd readers of the Qur'an, tyrant rulers, dishonest ministers and fake sages.

Imam Ali ('a) said about the Hell – "Beware of the fire of Hell that is extremely deep and very hot. Its punishment is innovative. It is such a house, where there is neither compassion nor any request would be heard or a tragedy removed."

We present a supplication of Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a), to conclude this section:

"O My God, I seek Your protection against that fire, which You have prepared to incarcerate those who have disobeyed you and threatened those who had turned away from your approvals. I seek Your protection from that fire that has darkness instead of luminosity, and whose slightest blast is very painful, which is very near despite its extreme distance.

I ask for Your shield from that fire, which can overcome its counterpart and it will turn bones into ash, and serve its residents with boiling water. O! God, I seek Your protection against that fire, which shows no compassion to anyone who begs for clemency from it. It will not have any consent to lower its gaze from those who have surrendered themselves to it. It will go after its residents with horrifying punishment. O! God, I seek Your protection from the reptiles (snakes) and spiders (scorpions) of the Hell, whose mouths are open and they are grinding their teeth in fury, and from its water that will cut intestines into pieces and burst open the chests to flush out the hearts. O God, I ask Your favour for those things that can avert and push back this fire."

Permanent Stay In The Paradise And Hell

All Muslims agree that those who entered the Paradise would remain there permanently. That is why its name was *Jannat ul Khuld* (Garden of permanence). There were several Qur'anic Verses and established traditions of the Prophet to support this view, for example:

> وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ

"And those who are careful of **(*their duty to*)** ***their Lord shall be conveyed to the garden in companies; until when they come to it, and its doors shall be opened, and the keepers of it shall say to them: Peace be on you, you shall be happy; therefore enter it to abide"*** **(*39:73*).**

> إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ

"Those who believed and worked accordingly, they are better than rest of the creation" **(*98:7*).**

> جَزَاؤُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا

"Their reward in sight of God is beautiful gardens of residence, underneath which rivers flow, where they will remain permanently" **(*98:8*).**

> وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

"**(*On the Day of Judgement*****)*** ***And as for those whose faces have been whitened, in the mercy of Allah they dwell for ever"*** **(*3:107*).**

There were so many Verses of this kind in the Qur'an that show permanence of stay in the Paradise. In

fact, the greatest gift of hereafter is the continuity of life. The present world also had lots of pleasures but it did not have durability of existence. Therefore, its attraction and appeal were temporary.

There was no standard measure of happiness, beyond which there was no sorrow. Here flowers were entangled with thorns, light was accompanied by darkness, death was tagged with every living thing, thirst was there after satisfaction, and poverty after richness. A man found the sight of pleasure in the world after going through much anxiety and sorrows appealing, but just when he began to enjoy, his call for departure from this world came about and that was the greatest setback of one's life.

However, paradise was the name of the place where leisures were permanent and bliss was everlasting. Here was life but no death, comfort but no pain, delight but no grief, and peace but no disturbance. This perpetual place of bliss was allocated by right to the loyal progeny of Adam. This garden of unending glee was that timeless kingdom, whose comfort was without a break and whose peace was eternal.

The standard of personal pleasure, which everyone in this world desired could be expressed by a single word – Monarchy, since this was the only word that could be used to depict the final destiny of personal desires. In other words, Monarchy or being a Royal was the name of that state of mind, where no man felt deprived of any desire or success. Surplus of the means of console and abundance of joy without the feeling of grief, high rising palaces, blooming gardens, pools and lakes, gold and silver crockery, emeralds, diamonds and pearls to wear, housemaids and expensive dresses, beautiful wives all of these things were synonymous with the life of Royalty.

The shortest but most elegant definition of Paradise was done by Adam's own enemy, the Satan; it was referred to as a Kingdom without an end. However, this reality must also be kept under the view that benefits of hereafter were only symbolically similar to the mundane pleasures, in reality the two were oceans apart.

Similarly, a majority of Muslim thinkers, other than Ibn Arabi were all unanimous in this view that all polytheists, infidels, hypocrites, and some so–called Muslims, such as Ghalis, Nasbis and Kharjites would remain permanently in the Hell. However, those sinners with true articles of faith, who failed to cleanse themselves in the period of Barzakh, would temporarily remain in Hell and then with God's compassion or with the intercession of the Prophet and Imams were freed to go to the Paradise.

There were several Qur'anic Verses to prove the permanence of stay in the Paradise or Hell, and we present a few for our reader's consideration.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَنَ الْكَافِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا

"Surely Allah has cursed the unbelievers and has prepared for them a burning fire" (***33:64***).

وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا

"...for any that disobey Allah and His Messenger, for them is Hell: they shall dwell therein for ever" (***72:23***)***.***

In these Verses, the confirmation of stay in the Paradise or Hell was done with such a clarity that was not hidden from the people of intellect. The word *Khuld* in Arabic lexicon stands for continuity and its attachment with the word 'Abaad' has extended its continuity. This subject had been addressed in the Qur'an in different ways. It was mentioned at one place –

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُم بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ

"Their wish will be to get out of the Fire, but never will they get out therefrom: their penalty will be one that endures" (***5:37***)***.***

And again, at another place it was said:

فَلَنُذِيقَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"Therefore, We will most certainly make those who disbelieve taste a severe punishment, and We will most certainly reward them for the evil deeds they used to do" (***41:27***)***.***

لِكَ جَزَاءُ أَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ النَّارُ لَهُمْ فِيهَا دَارُ الْخُلْدِ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ

"That is the reward of the enemies of Allah – the fire; for them therein shall be the house of long abiding; a reward for their denying Our communications" (***41:28***)***.***

or,

إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ

"...Surely whoever associates (***others***) ***with Allah, then Allah has forbidden to him the garden, and his abode is the fire..."*** (***5:72***)***.***

It was mentioned in Surah Al–Araf,

لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ

"... nor shall they enter the garden until the camel pass through the eye of the needle; and thus do We reward the guilty" (***7:40***).

If after all of these clarifications, someone suggested that a time would come when Hell would be demolished, or if anyone goes in search of it, he would not find it and it would be replaced by meadows, where the Hell dwellers will get used to that environment, then how could the ideology of such a person (*Fatoohat al-Makkiya*, Ibn Arabi) be equated with Islamic doctrine?

In some Qur'anic Verses where the exception:

إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ

"Illa Ma sha Allah" (***6:128; 11:107; 11:108***).

Was given, it simply meant that some sinners who were of true faith would be cleansed from their sins by undergoing punishment or by the compassion of God or by the grand intercession. They would be taken out of Hell and placed in the Paradise, or it could mean that no one could displace them from Paradise except with the will of God. It would certainly mean that their shelter was permanent. Therefore, for whom God had willed continuity, how could it be destroyed?

Reasons For A Permanence Of Stay In Paradise Or Hell

It was worth considering why some people of Paradise whose upright works were less would remain in the Paradise permanently, while the Hell dwellers with the same upright deeds will stay longer or even permanently in the Hell?

Whatever we have understood from the reports and statements of Imams was as follows.

It was learned that although some of the residents of Paradise had committed less upright deeds, their intention of perpetrating sin was not to purposely disobey or defy God (it might be due to the weakness of their personality) whereas, the Hell dweller's intended to defy and negate God. This is why both were differentiated in the returns they received. This conclusion was substantiated by a Hadith of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), and its essence was the same as mentioned above.

An Important Message

This statement of the respected author that those believers who went to Hell would not undergo any physical pain during their stay in it, was in conflict with many established traditions. One of these traditions was already mentioned in *Risala al-I'tiqadia*, which mentioned that some sinners would stay for up to almost 300,000 years in the Hell, before they could get freedom by the intercession of Imam of Ahl al-Bayt.

The other Hadith, which was common between both Shi'a and Sunni schools stated that when the sinners would be taken out of Hell, after completing their sentence, they would look like fossilised coal. Moreover, the information that was contained in the literature regarding the punishment of Hell also indicated that anyone who entered Hell would definitely go through a period of sanctions.

Clarifications Of Some Doubts

Although, all Islamic schools of thought agreed broadly on what we have described in this chapter, but some atheists and their corroborators raised some doubts regarding the punishment of Hell.

Criticism

It was argued that punishment or revenge was taken by a person who had suffered through an injustice, or there might be a chance of such happenings. However, God was way above this allegation that anyone could harm Him. Therefore, the statement of revenge was a meaningless statement. Again, they argued that if God was very kind (as believers thought) then the punishment of Hell was against His character.

Rebuttal

This objection could be answered in several ways. There was no doubt that God was kind and compassionate. However, was He kind only for infidels, polytheists, adulterers, murderers, thieves and tyrants or He was also caring about those who were oppressed, slaughtered and wronged? If the answer to this query was yes, then tell us with an honest mind that should these oppressed, wounded and indignant people be avenged or not?

In the different periods of history these beast-like humans (tyrants) have committed earth shattering crimes on humanity that made the whole human race mortified. Should such detestable persons be allowed to go free?

The objectors should know that if God was compassionate and benevolent then He was also omnipotent and Subduer and His holds were unyielding. The author of Philosophy of Islam had written a beautiful phrase in his book. He said that it was not bizarre why the Hell was created but it was weird that why these aggressors and tyrants had been given relief until the Day of Judgement?

Similarly, the same was true about the Rights of God. If this process of punishment and reward was withdrawn then distinction between a benefactor and offender, pious and irreverent, submissive and reprobate would be forfeited and they would all become equal, which was against the calibre of God. That was why God had spoken very clearly in the Qur'an:

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ

"Shall We then treat the People of Faith like the People of Sin?" (***68:35***).

or,

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ

"...Or shall We treat the pious as the wicked?" (***38:28***).

If this view (of non–punishment) was upheld then the rule of law would be impossible to implement. In short, this objection was only acceptable to those whose mind was bent and twisted. Some scholars had adopted another approach to address this objection. They said just as in material world, cause and effect had a role to play.

Spiritualism also had a similar chain of command. Good and bad deeds influenced the character of a being; therefore, award and punishment were the natural consequence of this behaviour and it could not be separated from each other, and we must not label it as revenge. Imam Ghazali had written in his paper – *Maznoon bi ala ghairehi ahluhi* – that punishment or reward, which was given on prohibitions and demands did not mean that God had become angry and so He took revenge. Rather, this example was like a person who would not have children, until he approached a woman.

Punishment and reward in the hereafter depended upon one's behaviour in the world. Therefore, such complaints about why someone was penalized upon committing a sin, was just like saying that why a person had died after drinking poison.

God's prohibitions and demands were similar to the treatment suggested by a doctor to his patients for recovery from an ailment. If a patient chose to ignore doctor's instructions, then his demise was certain. Therefore, the rules that govern personal felicity and callousness were the same that were applied to the nations, very similar to a scientist who defined and propagated physical laws. In modern terminology, this was called Science.

Along the same pattern, it was the responsibility of the Prophets to explain the Science of spiritual cause and effect, and this was done through a mechanism called Shariah. We must accept this code in the same manner that we submit to a doctor for the treatment of a physical disorder. To summarise this, we could say that the rules of cause and effect, action and reaction that were applied to the physical Universe, also envisaged every word and bad act of human behaviour.

That was why the end product of a sin was punishment and the result of a virtuous deed was nothing but recompense. The word '*Aqaab*' (punishment) was derived from '*aqab*', which meant to follow. This was why '*Aqaab*' was the name of that outcome, which followed an act. The reward (*Thawab*) was derived from '*Thob*', which meant to return. That was why it was used for naming the return of a noble deed.

Some Qur'anic Verses also supplemented this view:

وَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

"And Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth and that every soul may be rewarded for what it has earned and they shall not be wronged" (***45:22***).

لِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا تَسْعَىٰ

"...For every soul to receive its reward by the measure of its Endeavour" (***20:15***).

فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

"So, the evil (***consequences***) ***of what they did shall afflict them and that which they mocked shall encompass them"*** (***16:34***).

This suggested that punishment or reward were the outcome of our deeds.

Criticism

The time period of sin, in view of human life was very short, but its punishment as proposed by religion was very long, and this return was against God's Justice.

Rebuttal

This criticism could be answered in several ways. It was accepted that the measure of punishment (in terms of time) was never equal to the measure of the sin. There were several examples of this approach in the mundane laws, for example, when a person would kill another person within few seconds but the court would award him life imprisonment for that crime. If somebody now argued to the sentencing court that the defendant took only a few seconds to kill and so the sentence awarded to him was too long, then no one could doubt the ignorance of such a person.

Similarly, sometimes a minor neglect in consuming food could cause long term illness or the ailment could last for life. This suggested that the time period of committing a sin could never be equated to the span of punishment.

The same problem could be viewed in another way. It was an established fact that occasionally people could do things whose negative effects continued for centuries, and many innocent generations had to go through its pain, such as polytheism and infidelity or other evil deeds, the likes of murdering innocent

people by tyrants and dictators. God said in the Qur'an,

مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

"...if any one slew a person – unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people..." **(*5:32*).**

The Prophet of God had said, "A believer's intention is better than his deeds and an infidel's intention is worse than his deeds." Therefore, while their actions might be scanty but the length of their punishment or award was related to their intentions. A believer might pray for a longer life so that he could spend more time in God's obedience, while an infidel's attitude would to spread more corruption. Hence, the return for both of these people was different – a long-term joy for the one and a drawn-out punishment for the other.

Criticism

One failed to understand that how a thing that was engulfed in fire, boiling water was poured over its head, ate foul things was still alive in Hell?

Rebuttal

Human brain, even now is unaware of so many things that were happening around us. Modern Scientists did not completely understand the entire implication of the DNA molecule. They were still unaware of how among many variants, an RNA molecule could have started copying itself. They were still perplexed on the stability of L4 and L5 of Lagrangian points in the Earth's orbit. They could not truly understand how the reptiles managed to change their scales into wings. They still could not understand how the breathing mechanism of high-flying birds had evolved from reptiles.

There were a million things about which their understanding was not complete and yet they believed in it. Therefore, for a believer, the phrase – God has power over everything – was sufficient to understand, how the sinners would survive in the Hell.

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1. Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah.

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Chapter 30: Mannerism Of The Transmission Of Revelation

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief regarding the transmission of Revelations was that in the Heavens, there was a celestial screen in the line of vision of Isra'fil. When God wanted to transmit a message, it appeared on the screen, and he was alerted. He read the message and passed it on to Michael, who relayed it to Gabriel and he took it to the relevant Prophet.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) used to undergo a state of trance when receiving a *Wahy*. His body appeared to become very heavy and he was drenched in sweat. This was due to God speaking to the Prophet, and not the presence of Gabriel, who used to respect the Prophet greatly and preferred to sit like a servant in his company.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 30

Description Of The Meanings Of Wahy And Place Of Its Application

In Arabic dictionary, the word *Wahy* (Revelation) was used to indicate several meanings. Some of those meanings were:

- to point towards something
- writing down of Prophetic messages
- *ilham* or inspiration
- a secret communication, and

- a covert dialogue

It was for these meanings that the word *Wahy* had been used in the Qur'an. Therefore, the Qur'anic Verse:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ

***"So We sent "Wahy"* (*inspiration*) *to the mother of Moses: "Suckle* (*thy child*)*"* (*28:7*).**

Here the word Wahy was used in the context of inspiration on her mind.

Again, in Surah Al–Nahl:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ

***"And your Lord sent Wahy* (*revealed*) *to the bee saying: Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build"* (*16:68*).**

Meant that the bee was empowered or as some other commentators had suggested that bee was inspired to perform a particular task.

Or, regarding John the Baptist (Yahya), it was said:

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ

***"So he went forth to his people from his place of worship, then he made known to them..."* (*19:11*).**

Similarly, in the Qur'anic Verse:

عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا

***"... (evil ones among men and jinns), inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception"* (*6:112*).**

the word *Wahy* was used in the context of secret communication.

So, the literal meanings of *Wahy* was – "*Alqaish shay illul ghair ala wajhhir sirree*" (to send some covert

messages to the other), but in the language of Shariah, the word *Wahy* meant the message that came from God to His messengers, overpowering their speech.

The Phiosophical And Religious Significance Of Wahy

Since, it was Wahy that distinguished between a true and a false prophet, as described in the Qur'an:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ

"Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one Allah" (***18:110***).

Therefore, some further elaborations were required on this topic due to its significance.

We must understand that the theologians have named revelation as a key feature – *Malikate Nubuwa* of the prophecy. They explained this in the following manner. They said among the Prophets, intellectual depth was beyond ordinary human beings. Our senses simply discovered material things, but mind could approach and discover higher echelons of reality Wahy however, was even beyond this level. It could detect elevated forms of certainty, and this judgement was so perfect that it did not require further thought nor it needed any logical justifications in its conclusions.

Higher reality in revelation appeared in a manner similar to an intuition or as a physical touch. Since, this knowledge was imparted without any human interference by the One, who knew the secrets of hidden things, that is why it was called *Wahy* or inspiration in the language of Shariah. It was therefore, suggested by some scholars that *Wahy* was not the name of an external reality or occasional teachings of God, but it was a result of Prophets higher level of understanding and awareness, which was given to them from the beginning, including some incomparable mental qualities and ingrained knowledge that made it easy for them to understand the will of God, while other people were devoid of it.

However, we cannot name this capability as *Wahy*. At the most we could call it the natural potential or an asset of the prophecy. Nevertheless, *Wahy* was the name of that external reality through which God chose to inform His Messengers via Angels or through *Ilham* (Inspiration).

Distinction Between Qur'an, Hadith Al-Qudsi And Ordinary Hadith

It was beyond doubt that Prophetic knowledge, information, teachings and sermons were all under the umbrella of *Wahy*. The only difference would be that if words and their meanings were both from God and they would also have a miraculous panache. Then, such a collection would be called the Qur'an, Zaboor or Injeel.

If, however, words and its meanings were both from God but the text was not of the standard of miraculous splendour, it was called Hadith al-Qudsi.

If on the other hand, the meanings were from God and the words were chosen by the Prophet, it was then called Hadith or a Prophetic tradition.

On this basis, the scholars have named the first kind of *Wahy* as *Wahy Matlu* (that could be recited) and Sunnah of the Prophet is called *Wahy Ghair Matlu* (non recitable).

Satanic Revelations

Whatever, we have described so far was related to the revelations from God. In opposition to this there were satanic revelations as well. These were described by God as what Satan and his associates transmitted as *Wahy* to their friends. This transmission was in the form of doubts and distrusts. Therefore, if some mentally retarded persons, either under the influence of Satan or due to their own disturbed mind started projecting his proclamations as a message from God, and began to assume himself as a prophet, then instead of accepting his assertion, such a person should be taken to a mental clinic for treatment.

Three Types Of Shariah Revelation

There are several ways in which Prophets were inspired. God had said, "There is no one among humans who could say that God had spoken to him in a manner other than *Wahy*, behind a veil and through a Messenger, (angel) who is explicitly approved by God to speak to a person of His choice. Allah is all wise."

Further Approval Of Author's Opinion

What the honourable author had mentioned about the modes of *Wahy* was supplemented by quite a few *Ahadith* of the Prophet and Imams, which was also logically possible. However, Shaykh Al-Mufid's criticism of this approach, due to certain hesitations and far-fetched doubts was not up to the mark. It was strange that at this juncture he censured author's approach by considering his evidence based on a rare Hadith, but while discussing Pen and the Tablet, where Abu Ja'far proposed that those were two Angels.

Shaykh Al-Mufid rejected his approach by suggesting that the proposed methodology of *Wahy* by Shaykh Abu Ja'far's was the result of numerous traditions and narrations. He said: "Therefore, the Angels after viewing the Guarded Tablet remembered the message that they were commanded to take to the Prophets, and also comprehended the instructions they had to abide by. In this respect, there were several narrations and reports from the Prophet and Imams."

On such issues Allama Al-Majlisi said, “Subjects of this type that are present in the Qur’an and Hadith should not be reinterpreted on the basis of a far-fetched doubt, without clear cut evidence.”

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Chapter 31: Revelation Of Qur’an During The Night Of Qadr

Shaykh Abu Ja’far said that the transmission of the Holy Qur’an began in the month of Ramadhan, and then it was transmitted gradually over twenty years. God had provided a complete overview of the Qur’an to the Prophet beforehand, that is why He said:

فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

***“Supremely exalted is therefore Allah, the King, the Truth and (O, Prophet) do not make haste with the Qur’an before its revelation is made complete to you and say: O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge”* (*20:114*).**

Qur’an invited the Prophet to supplicate in this manner:

رَّبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

***“O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge”* (*20:114*).**

Once again, the Prophet was advised by God:

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ

***“(O Prophet) Do not move your tongue with it to make haste with it”* (*75:16*).**

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ

***“Surely on Us (devolves) the collecting of it and the reciting of it”* (*75:17*).**

فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ

"Therefore, when We have recited it, follow its recitation" **(*75:18*).**

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ

"Again, on Us **(*devolves*)** ***the explaining of it"*** **(*75:19*).**

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 31

Whatever the respected author had said about the revelation of the Qur'an, it fell within the context of several Qur'anic Verses and the traditions of the Prophet. God said in the Qur'an that Ramadhan was the month in which Qur'an was revealed. This Verse told us that the Qur'an was revealed in one of the twelve months of the year i.e. in Ramadhan.

However, it was mentioned at another place that it was revealed during a celebrated night. At another place, it was declared that it was revealed during the night of *Qadr* (determination or power).

These Verses gave us a clue to determine the complete time frame of its revelation. It had reached within the night of Qadr from the Guarded Tablet to *Baitul Mamoor* (Populous or Delightful House) and from there it was transmitted in stages to the Prophet through Gabriel, in accordance with the requirements of the time, and it continued over another twenty years. It was said,

فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

"...for he **(*Gabriel*)** ***brings down the*** **(*revelation*)** ***to thy heart by Allah's will"*** **(*2:97*).**

It was mentioned in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* on the authority of Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a), who said: "God transferred Qur'an from the Guarded Tablet to the Populous House during the night of Qadr and then its transmission to the Prophet was completed in twenty years."

It was narrated in *Usul al-Kafi* on the authority of Hafs Ibn Ghias that he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) in relation to the Qur'anic Verse, which stated that the Qur'an was revealed in the month of Ramadhan. Imam replied that the whole Qur'an was transmitted in one go from the Guarded Tablet to

the Bait-ul-Mamoor. Thereafter it took twenty years to reach the Prophets in required stages. There were several similar narrations in Shi'a literature and bulks of Shi'a scholars accepted the same view.

Clearance Of Two Doubts

First Doubt

Altogether, it was very strange to say that some scholars on the basis of some far-fetched and baseless doubts had refused to accept the transmission of the Qur'an in one night from the Guarded Tablet to the Bait-ul-Mamoor. They quoted a few Qur'anic Verses, which suggested that it was revealed according to the circumstances and requirements of the time e.g. God quoted a statement of the infidels,

قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ

"Our hearts are enveloped" **(*4: 155*).**

Or, as the polytheists said when they rejected the invitation to Islam,

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا

***"They who are idolaters will say: Had Allah willed, we had not ascribed* (*unto Him*) *partners neither had our fathers"* (*6: 148*).**

Similarly, on the issue of *Zihar* (when a person declared his wife to be like his mother), God said,

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا

***"Allah has heard the statement of the woman, who was arguing with you regarding her husband"* (*58: 1*).**

Therefore, how was it possible that the Qur'an might be collected in advance at one place, when it commented on issues that took place at a later date?

Rebuttal

There was no doubt that the reasons for the revelation of Qur'an were subject to the prevailing conditions, and this situation remained over twenty years, when it got the credentials of completion in the form of:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ

"Today, We have completed your religion" **(*5:3*).**

However, where was it proven that God was ignorant of these episodes in advance? Is there any Muslim, who could be a party to such a thought, when the entire Ummah believed that God knew clearly about all things, before and after their happening?

This immoral view was the product of Greek philosophy, which suggested that God was ignorant of things before the actual incidents or He had only partial information. Islamic theologians have rebutted this view with strong arguments. When, it was established that God had the knowledge of all things, irrespective of any time frame, then there was no problem in accepting that the Qur'an was present in its completed form.

Second Doubt And Its Rebuttal

If it was assumed that before its apparent revelation, the Qur'an was present in the completed form, then the antagonist's view of – *Kalam an-Nafs* (inner voice of God's essence or being), would be authenticated. Therefore, to assume that the Qur'an was ever present in the completed form before its visible transmission was incorrect.

Disregarding, what could not be the meaning of the phrase *Kalam an-Nafs*, which was neither understood by those who advocated it nor they could make us understand that what they really meant by this term. In fact, this phrase had become an enigma for all kind of intellectuals. Those who accepted this expression, claimed it to be eternal like God. Since, no one is eternal other than God, according to our view, this concept therefore was incorrect so far as Shi'as are concerned. This was so because it proposed eternity for more than one being.

However, if the presence of whole of the Qur'an was accepted to be present in the Guarded Tablet or the House of Delight, then it did not tantamount as being an eternal, because a true eternal was the one who had no beginning. However, if something had a beginning, even if it might be thousands or hundreds of thousands of years ago, it could not claim eternity.

Besides, when the Guarded Tablet and the *Bait-ul-Mamoor* were both probable entities, then how could a thing that was contained within those boundaries be eternal. That is why the respected author had used the terminology of – Eternal – for God alone, as being the originator and guardian of the Qur'an, who spoke through it. These facts disclosed to us that to deny an already proven thesis was a wasteful exercise for a believer.

Warning

It should not remain hidden from one's mind that the comments, which the respected author had made, regarding the Qur'anic Verse:

وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ

"And do not make haste with the Qur'an" **(*20:114*).**

Were in accordance with the prophetic stature, and this was supplemented by some Ahadith as well. Its other elaborations were unacceptable due to those being in opposition to the prophetic eminence.

In the text, there appeared to be some contradiction regarding the time frame of Qur'anic revelation. Some references suggest a period of twenty years, while others spoke of twenty–three years.

If we critically examined this point then there was no contradiction between the two views, because the first three years of the prophetic mission were completely secret and the transmission of the Qur'an was very scanty, but the process of revelation had started. It hastened after three years. Therefore, if a critical examination of the revelations was carried out then it amounted to twenty–three years of Prophet's life time and if we ignored the first years of secrecy then the time frame of twenty years was correct.

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Chapter 32: Belief About The Qur'an

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief regarding Qur'an was that it was the word of God and its transmission was authorised by Him.

Falsehood and deception could not stand against it nor could it gain entry into it through backdoor.

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ

"Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it. A revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy" **(*41:42*).**

This was to say that its past, present and future episode were all correct. This book was from the All–

Knowledgeable God and all of its events were correct.

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ ۚ

"Lo! This verily is the true narrative" **(*3:62*).**

It was an absolute word, and not a book of playtime stories. God had revealed it with His authority.

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ

***"And Verily this* (*Qur'an*) *is a conclusive word"* (*86:13*).**

وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ

***"It is no pleasantry"* (*86:14*).**

He was its initiator and He was the one to protect it and He was the one to speak through it.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 32

Qur'an Is A Living Miracle Of The Prophet

In brief, whatever, the honourable author had said about Qur'an, was it the basic faith of almost all Muslims?

It was known to the people of foresight that God had been awarding His Messengers with miracles that suited their times. Someone had made the raging fire of Nimrod into a blooming garden, and another cured the lepers and turned those naturally blind into normal human beings. Someone moulded iron and the another prevailed over the winds, birds and beasts. However, these miracles were time bound with their holders, and as soon as they died their miracles also faded away with them.

Similarly, in continuation of His tradition the last of the Prophets i.e. Muhammad (S) was also given several miracles that counted up to four thousand in numbers. These miracles were also more or less similar to those, whose permanence was bound with the life of the Prophet and they ended with demise

of the Prophet, other than from the pages of history where their description was still preserved. Now since the Shariah of the Prophet (S) had to exist until the Day of Judgement and his prophecy (*Nubuwwah*), included the entire universe, it was necessary that he should be awarded with a miracle that could survive until the Day of Judgement. This miracle was the Qur'an.

What Is Miraculous About The Qur'an

There were differing opinions among the scholars on this issue. Was it the eloquence of the Qur'an that was beyond human reach or its distinguished diction or was it miraculous due to its subjugation (*Sarfa*) of the polytheists?

The majority of the Muslim Scholars thought that Qur'an, due to its eloquence and expression was a miracle and the others named it a miracle due to its news of the future, or due to its guiding principles and everlasting impact or in view of *Sarfa* i.e. it made the polytheists and

infidels to surrender before it, and not due to its eloquence and rhetoric. However, the researchers favoured the first opinion and we do not have enough time to expedite this point any further. However, the Qur'an had thrown a challenge to the infidels of Arabia and invited them to answer:

فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَن تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

***"And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a Surah like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers* (*If there are any*) *besides Allah, if your* (*doubts*) *are true* (*in the validity of your rejection*)*"* (*2:23*).**

Again, the Qur'an was challenging the world of today:

قُل لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا

***"Say: If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others"* (*17:88*).**

Despite the high level of literacy in the world today no one has dared to accept this challenge. The Qur'an said:

فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَن تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

"But if you do* (*it – taking up this challenge*) *not and never shall you do* (*it*)*, then be on your guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel; it is prepared for the unbelievers"

(***2:24***).

To Remember Qur'an's Stature And To Remain In Touch With It

It was narrated in *Usul al-Kafi* that the Prophet had said, "When mishaps and insolence overcome you like the shadow of the night, you must then take refuge in the Qur'an, who is your intercessor, whose recommendations are irrefutable and its arguments will be accepted. It provides a strong defence by arguing for those who had acted upon its message, and its appeals would be heard. If someone takes it as his guide it will herd him towards the Paradise and the one who ignored it will be pushed into the Hell.

Qur'an was that teacher and guide who directed towards best of the routes i.e. Islam, and it was that book, which had explicit definition of everything. It being an ideal truth without any quirks, had both apparent and hidden aspects. Its apparent were its commandments and its inner being was its pure knowledge.

Its wonders could not be counted. Its visible was very pleasant and the inward very deep. It had profundity upon profundity, whose mysteries could not be determined and its secrets would never become obsolete. It had the keys for guidance and education, and minarets of knowledge and intellect. If there was anyone who was familiar with the procedure of acquiring guidance, then the Book was the principal guide for him. Hadith ath-Thaqalayn was also a chain of the same narration."

It was reported in *Usul al-Safi*, with reference from *Usul al-Kafi*, on the authority of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (ʿa) who had said, "On the Day of Judgement, in the presence of all the Prophets and Angels and all generations of human beings, the Qur'an will appear in an extremely handsome form and it will walk through the company of Muslims and advance thorough the crowd of the Prophets. They will assume that he is a Muslim, similar to one of us but he will bypass them, and walking through the grouping of Angels reach the presence of God and will provide evidence for some people who had fasted in the morning and recited it during the nights. God will reply:

"O, the Qur'an, take them to their destinations in the Paradise and He will address those people to keep on reciting the Qur'an and find better and better place in the Paradise, until they all reached their appointed destinations."

Reward Of Reciting The Qur'an

The Prophet (S) had said, "Brighten your homes by reciting the Qur'an". It was mentioned that a person who listens, learns or just glances at one word of the Qur'an, his character file was documented with a virtue and one of his sins was eliminated. The one who learnt one word of the Qur'an, was bestowed with ten merits and ten of his sins were forgiven and his status was raised by ten points.

Anyone who recited Qur'an, in prayers (in sitting posture) he was awarded with fifty merits and fifty of his

sins were forgiven. His status was raised by fifty points. And, if he read Qur'an in obligatory prayers, in a standing posture then each letter was awarded with a hundred plus points and hundreds of his sins were forgiven and his rank was hoisted up by one hundred points.

Qur'an Is Hadith (A Created Being) And Not Eternal

Towards the end of this chapter, the honourable author had pointed to a question of discord among the Muslims. This was about the subject of creation or eternity of the Qur'an. Among the entire Muslim Ummah Shi'as of Ahl al-Bayt and the Mu'tazilites were of the opinion that it was Hadith i.e. it was a created being.

The Asharaites Sunnis however, considered it to be eternal. They were the confessors of an ambiguous terminology called *Kalam an-Nafs* (This idea seemed to have come from Christian traditions, which stated – in the beginning there was word, the word was with God and the word was God.

With this background, we have presented a few arguments to prove our view.

Speech was composed of words and words could be displaced or even eliminated. Naturally, this was the sign of probable (*Hadith*). Therefore, the Qur'an was a created book. All Muslims agreed that everything in the Qur'an, from *Al-Hamd* to *Wunnas* was the word of God, which was compounded with letters and words. Anything that was compound was probable and could not be eternal. Therefore, the Qur'an was *Hadith*.

Qur'an was composed of divine letters and words that could be observed, and it was not the name of an ancient terminology i.e. the inner voice of God (*Kalam an-Nafs*) and this labelling was a sure deceit. Sayyid Moinuddin Shafaee wrote in his *Risala I'tiqadia* that, "Asharaites invented this terminology in third century Hijra, when it was an unknown entity before that time, Qur'an insisted on it being a created entity (*Hadith*). God has said:

مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِم مُّحْدَثٍ إِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ

***"Never cometh there unto them a new reminder* (*Dhikr*) *from their Lord but they listen to it while they play"* (*21:2*).**

Most commentators have agreed that the word Dhikr was meant for Qur'an, which God had declared as *Hadith* (*Muhdathin or new*).

Acceptance Of The Acceptance Of Qur'anic Stature By The

Outsiders

Famous historian Gibbon said, “Qur’an is a great testament for the unity of God. The Prophet of Islam rejected the practices of the infidels of Makkah with logical arguments. He said: anything that arises, must lay down. And, anything that is created must end one day. He has proposed that the initiator of the Universe has neither a beginning nor an end nor he is confined in a place. He has no partner with Him that He can be compared with. He is fully aware of our thoughts and secret desires and lives without the need of any baggage. All His traits of knowledge and character are within His being.

These great realities were introduced by the Prophets and their followers owned it rigidly, while the commentators of the Qur’an explained the message with rational clarifications. A scholar who believes in the person and characteristics of God and states that it is such a trust, which is above our perception, because when we declared God to be beyond time, space, motion, feelings and touch, then what is left for us to understand. That first reality (unity of the essence and attributes), whose basis is on *Wahy* and intellect has achieved its strength due to its confirmation by Muhammad (S). Therefore, his followers from the land of India to Morocco are called Monotheists, and a ban on statues reduced the risk of idol worship.”

George Sale wrote in the foreword of his translation of the Qur’an, “It is an established view that Qur’an was written in the language of Quraish, which was most delicate and chaste, and who were very distinguished and civilised people among the Arab tribes. Those followers, who have firm faith in Islam claim it to be the greatest living example of Arabic text, which states that no human or else can bring a parallel text of this quality and called it to be an imperishable eternal miracle (though some sects have different views) that is even more significant than raising the dead. It is a testimony to the world that it is from the Lord God. That is why Muhammad (S) himself relied on it to establish his Prophethood, and openly challenged the greatest minds of his time whose full-time activity was to become the champions of Arabic literature to bring a single Surah of this quality.

It was said that Baseed Ibn Rabiaa, who was among the greatest linguists in Muhammad’s time, and whose eulogium was displayed at the wall of the Kaaba, (nobody else dared to exhibit their work against him), but later on, when some of the Verses of Surah Al-Baqara were displayed alongside his work, he went into a stunning reverie and converted to Islam immediately. He declared that such language could only come from a Prophet and no one else.”

John Davenport, a highly acclaimed scholar, who was famous for his impartiality said, “Among many qualities of the Qur’an that could be the reason for its decorum, two features are highly acclaimed i.e. the awe and dignity of its diction that is espoused for God, wherein He is not branded for those deficits that are mostly found in humans, and secondly free of those thoughts and accounts that are responsible for human dilapidation, which are found in abundance in the current Bible. In fact, the Qur’an is free of such decays and we do not require the modification of a single word that is employed by the Qur’an. You

can read it from the beginning to the end, but you will not find a single word that makes you reluctant or mortified by its usage."

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Chapter 33: The Measure Of Qur'an

Hazrat Shaykh Ibn Babway said that our belief about the measure of the Qur'an was that the Book, which was revealed to the Prophet by God was the same as that which was read by the people today in normal binding. For the people of Sunni faith, it has one hundred and fourteen Suras, but according to Imamia faith the numbers of Suras were one hundred and twelve, since we count Surah Al-Dhuha and Surah Alam Nashra as one Surah and Surah La Ilaf and Surah Alum Tara Kaifa as one Surah. In this way, the total measure of the Qur'an remained the same between all Muslims.

If any person claimed that we believe in a Qur'an, which had more material, then such a person was a liar. Those of our narrations that favoured the reading of one complete Surah of the Qur'an equivalent to the blessing of completing the whole Qur'an, and the permission of reading two Suras in one *Rakat* of non-obligatory prayers, against the recitation of two Suras in one *Rakat* of the obligatory prayers (we cannot recite incomplete Suras in any *Rakat* of obligatory prayers), was a proof of our point of view that we conformed to the same measure of the Qur'an, which was held by ordinary people.

Similarly, the instructions that reading of the Qur'an should not be completed in one night, or it should not be completed in less than three days also proved our point of view. However, we had the belief that several *Wahy* were sent to the Prophet outside the revelation of Qur'an, and if these were included with the present Qur'an then its Verses would be seventeen thousand in number, (let me quote some examples). Just as Gabriel had said to the Prophet, "God commands you to greet His creatures in a kind and benevolent manner, the way He treats you."

Gabriel had conveyed at other occasions:

"Beware of the people's jealousy and animosity."

"Live as long as you want but you have to die, enjoy whatever you desire but you have to part with it, do whatever you want but you have to reap its fruit."

"The late-night prayer is an act of elegance for a believer, and not to harm people is the sign of greatness and respect."

The Prophet said that Gabriel always reminded him to brush his teeth and while he (the Prophet), feared

that (due to excessive brushing) his teeth might fall.

Similarly, Gabriel had reminded him to take care of his neighbours in a way that he thought they might become shareholder in his legacy.

Gabriel was prompting him so much about women that he felt as if divorcing a woman was not right. Similarly, Gabriel was persuading him to take care of the slaves so much that he thought that their period of freedom might be introduced and they would be free men automatically.

The Prophet said after the battle of trenches that Gabriel had approached him and told him that God had commanded him to offer his afternoon prayer among the tribe of Bani Qoraiza.

Similarly, God had instructed him to be kind and compassionate to people, in a way that was very similar to the obligatory duties of the religion.

The Prophet said that we, the Prophets had been instructed by God to speak to people keeping their intellectual limits in mind.

The Prophet said that once Gabriel came to him with a message that made his eyes shine with pleasure, the message was that Ali was the leader of all believers and of the radiant-faced people (all believers on the Day of Judgement would be radiant-faced irrespective of their skin colour in the world).

Once Gabriel came to him and said that God had performed the Nikah ceremony of Fatimah with Ali and made His Angels a witness to this rite, therefore, he should also perform the same service on the Earth, making best of the people of his Ummah as the witness for this act.

Anyhow, there were many of such traditions, which were sent to the Prophet through *Wahy*, but those could not be called Qur'an, because if it were so, they should not be separated from the Qur'an.

When Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) completed the collection of Qur'an and presented it to the people by saying, "It is the book of God and it is in the same form in which it has been revealed to the Prophet, and it has no additions or deletions." The people (in authority) said that they did not require that book, since they had a similar book with them as it was in his hands. Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) returned from there saying,

فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا

***"But they flung it behind their backs and bought therewith a little gain. Verily evil is that which they have gained thereby"* (*3:187*).**

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that the Qur'an was unique, it had been sent by the only God to his Last Messenger (who was also unique), but a difference in (dialect) had been created due to its narrators, such as the Verses containing the subjects like these:

لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"If thou ascribe a partner to Allah thy work will fail and thou indeed will be among the losers!" (***39:65***).

وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"But if they had set up (***for worship***) ***aught beside Him,*** (***all***) ***that they did would have been vain"*** (***6:88***).

Or:

لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ

"That Allah may forgive thee of thy sin that which is past and that which is to come..." (***48:2***).

Or:

وَلَوْلَا أَن ثَبَّتْنَاكَ لَقَدْ كِدتَّ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا

"And had We not given thee strength, thou wouldst nearly have inclined to them a little" (***17:74***).

إِذًا لَّأَذَقْنَاكَ ضِعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضِعْفَ الْمَمَاتِ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ عَلَيْنَا نَصِيرًا

"In that case We should have made thee taste an equal portion (***of punishment***) ***in this life, and an equal portion in death: and moreover, thou wouldst have found none to help thee against Us"*** (***17:75***).

We believed that all such Verses of the Qur'an, were in line with the Arabic language proverbs, wherein the real addressees were the followers of the Prophet but the Prophet was addressed to highlight the significance of those subjects. For all Qur'anic Verses that start with "*Ao*" or "*Ya*", its delegate had the right to adopt whatever meanings that were suitable for him e.g. in repayment for breaking an oath, the Qur'anic Verse stated:

فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ

"...The expiation thereof is the feeding of ten of the needy with the average of that wherewith ye

feed your own folk, or the clothing of them, or the liberation of a slave” (***5:89***).

Wherever in the Qur’an the phrase

“Ya ayyuha alladhina amanu”[1]

had appeared, Torah had used “*Ya aiyyuha al-masakeen*” for the same. In Qur’anic context, the beneficiary of this title was Amir Al-Mu’minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a), the leader of the faithful, who was the seniormost individual in Islam.

Those Verses that pointed towards the Paradise were for the true followers of the Prophets and the Shi’as of Ahl al-Bayt, and those that promised Hell were for the enemies of the Prophet and his progeny. Those Qur’anic Verses that praised or admonished the people of the earlier Ummah should also be considered for the benefit of this Ummah.

There was no Prophet or a Messenger that could be compared to Muhammad (S) in stature and neither was there any legatee (of other prophets) who could be compared to the legatees of Prophet Muhammad (S), nor any Ummah that could be weighed against the Ummah of the Prophet. The real Ummah of the Prophet were his true followers and not those who battled against him, and there was none worst among the human beings who was the enemy of the Prophet and his progeny.

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1. The phrase "يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا" (Ya ayyuha alladhina amanu) appears 89 times in the Holy Quran: 2:104; 2:153; 2:172; 2:178; 2:183; 2:208; 2:254; 2:264; 2:267; 2:278; 2:282; 3:100; 3:102; 3:118; 3:130; 3:149; 3:156; 3:200; 4:19; 4:29; 4:43; 4:59; 4:71; 4:94; 4:135; 4:136; 4:144; 5:1; 5:2; 5:6; 5:8; 5:11; 5:35; 5:51; 5:54; 5:57; 5:87; 5:90; 5:94; 5:95; 5:101; 5:105; 5:106; 8:15; 8:20; 8:24; 8:27; 8:29; 8:45; 9:23; 9:28; 9:34; 9:38; 9:119; 9:123; 22:77; 24:21; 24:27; 24:58; 33:9; 33:41; 33:49; 33:53; 33:56; 33:69; 33:70; 47:7; 47:33; 49:1; 49:2; 49:6; 49:11; 49:12; 57:28; 58:9; 58:11; 58:12; 59:18; 60:1; 60:10; 60:13; 61:2; 61:10; 61:14; 62:9; 63:9; 64:14; 66:6; 66:8.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 33

Suggestions Of Alterations In The Qur’an Is Meant To Divide The Ummah

There were several issues in Islam that had been made into a battleground for the people, by the lack of sincerity and scholarship of few individuals, and some irresponsible groups flared it up to tarnish the

image of other Muslims, which allowed bigoted mullahs to exploit it for their own benefits. This created a situation in which the reality had been disfigured to that extent that it was not easy to find true facts, even with greatest care.

However, God had promised in Surah Al-Ankaboot:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا

"And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them in Our ways" (29:69).

Nevertheless, such people were few and far between. Among these debating points was the issue of alterations in the Qur'an, which was a reason for discord among the Ummah. Shi'as were baselessly targeted to defame them, although they have repeatedly cleared their position regarding such groundless allegations. Despite this, there was no response from the brothers of Joseph (metaphorically speaking) and they kept on singing the same tune that Shi'as had no faith in the Qur'an. We have tried to remove such veils of lies and despondency with logical and intellectual tools for the benefit of our readers.

True Meanings Of Transposition

Before we presented our findings on this topic, it was important that meaning of the word (*Tahrif*) must be established first. *Tahrif* had its origin based on the gateway of *Tafeel*, whose root was '*Harf*', which meant side or embankment. Therefore, the literal meaning of *Tahrif* was to grip a thing from its side or edge, but never to collect it completely.

However, in its literary sense it meant to change a phrase by displacing or by adding or subtracting words. There was no binding in it that the transposition was done in words alone, or in its meaning, or both. Among its various varieties, all scholars agreed on the application of some or neglect of the others, while there was great dispute on some of its other postures. We could explain this statement.

Academics agreed that transposition of contents in Qur'an had definitely happened because we could see that the present arrangement of Suras was not according to its schedule of revelation (i.e. Makki Suras were at the end of the Qur'an, while those revealed in Medina were promoted first). This was not confined to the chapters, but it had happened in various Verses of Qur'an too.

These Verses were mixed with the contents of another chapter, as suggested by Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti. This was accepted in *Durr al-Manthur* and by various other authors. He said: "This division (reasons for separating Makki and Madani Suras) was general, but it was not certain that if it was under the direction of the Prophet that the two kinds of Verses were mixed or it was under the influence of

some outside source. However, there was no doubt that the Prophet was the best judge to decide the true place of the Verses? Therefore, to decide with certainty, the precise placement of Makki or Madani Verses in a Surah was very difficult.

The traditions that we have received were not to the level of certainty, those were at best a good approximation. At this moment, deciding whether if these Verses were mixed up under the instructions of the Prophet or by the decree of the third Caliph, was not important. Nonetheless, we wanted to establish that mixing of the two kinds of Verses in Makki and Madani Suras was a well-known fact."

Similarly, *Tahrif* in terms of addition to the Qur'an was unanimously rejected by all sects. Allama Tabari and Allama At-Tusi expressed their categorical affirmation of this view, in the forewords of *Tafsir Majma al-Bayan* and *Tafsir ul Tibyan*, but in terms of deleting the contents there was a kind of division.

Members of the Sunni sect always tried to defame Shi'as by saying that they believed in erasure of some of its content and therefore, they did not have faith in this Qur'an. This was despite knowing that we recited, taught and wrote commentaries on the same Qur'an as they did.

Our Imams gave us the same standard to distinguish between right and wrong. This was to say that the standard was the present-day Qur'an. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said: "Everything must be returned to the Qur'an for evaluation, and every Hadith that contradicted Qur'an must be considered to be a false tradition."

Authentication Of The Present Qur'an By The Imams Of Ahl Al-Bayt

Imams of Ahl al-Bayt have authenticated the same Qur'an. Amir Al-Mu'minin (‘a) said: "This is the book of God which is between the two ordinary bindings". Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said: "Learn and read Qur'an the way as the other Muslims do". It was reported by Imam Ali An-Naqi (‘a), who said: "Entire Muslim Ummah agreed that Qur'an is that book, wherein there is no doubt and there is no difference on its revelation and confirmation".

Therefore, if Qur'an testified the authenticity of a Hadith, and a group among the Muslims decided to oppose its validity then it was improper for them to deny its authority, because Ma'sumin Imams had insisted on the infidelity of those who opposed Qur'an. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that anyone who chose to oppose the Sunnah of God and His Prophet was an infidel.

Although, after the clarifications from the Imams, there was no room left for the opinion of Ulamas (religious scholars). However, for the sake of satisfaction, in order to clarify about this topic, we have quoted some confirmations of leading Shi'a scholars as well.

Shaykh Al-Mufid wrote in his research paper, "Shi'as say that there is no addition or subtraction of a

single word in the Qur'an except the elaborations, which Imam Ali (‘a) has made, under the guidance of the Prophet, were removed. In my opinion, this statement is better than the other view which suggests that there are some phrases that are missing from it, and my inclination is also with the earlier view. I am fully confident of the futility of this allegation that there was ever any addition to the Qur'an.

Even when the book of Sayyid Murtaza ‘Ilm al–Huda was not in hand, it can be said that his views were authenticated by his student Shaykh At–Tusi. He said that we were as sure of the authenticity of this book as we were certain of the great episodes that took place in the distant lands and the famous books that contained couplets of Arab poets."

Shaykh At–Tusi wrote in his commentary of the Qur'an that the topic of additions or subtractions in the Qur'an was not our subject (because his book was a commentary on the Qur'an), but Muslims as a whole agreed that it was totally false to suggest that additions had been made to the Qur'an.

So far as reduction in contents of the Qur'an was concerned, we would say that our view like other Muslims was also the same that its contents had never been reduced. Sayyid Murtaza also sided with this view.

Clarification Of A Doubt

The slyness and guile of our opponents was also worth mentioning. When we show them the elucidations of great Shi'a scholars, instead of them being ashamed and abandon their mischief they immediately start singing the old tune that all these affirmations of Shi'a scholars were based on *Taqiyya*, and they affirmed the distortions in the Qur'an.

How far this statement was away from the facts could be judged by those who had their sights set on our Ulama's books that openly displayed the illegitimacy of the first three caliphs and showed no sign of *Taqiyya*. So, what was the reason for them to exhibit *Taqiyya* on this subject? These were the reasons that some of the honest minded Sunni scholars agreed that Shi'as were not the authenticators of distortions in the Qur'an.

Muhammad Aslam Jaipuri wrote in his book *Tarikh ul Islam*, under the title – ‘Shi'a and the Qur'an' that these were the statements of Shi'a scholars, which were vivid and authentic and had no room for conjectures or surmise, and nor could we say that they might have employed *Taqiyya*, because some of them had written books against Sunni doctrine.

Moreover, Abu Ja'far Al–Qummi's book – Al–*I'tiqad* and Mullah Mohsin's – *Tafsir'e Saafi* were included in Shi'a theological courses. So, it could not be imagined for a moment that they were teaching their own students against their own doctrine.

Similarly, Shaykh Rehmatullah Sarhindi wrote in his book *Izhar al–Haq,* "It has been proved after these facts that according to Shi'a scholars the book that God the Almighty has revealed to His Messenger is

the same, which is in the hands of people today, and that the Qur'an was collected in the life time of the Prophet and that it was remembered and copied by thousands of companions. Some weak traditions that are available in their literature cannot be used as an excuse to abandon the established facts."

We have been aware of the real reasons of this blame game against us, but their apparent reasons was the presence of some (weak) traditions that were found in our books, which outwardly support *Tahrif*.

Our Reply To The Blame Game

Although, lot was written on this issue by us, but what we wanted to say was that if some of our traditions pointed out towards *Tahrif* and we were blamed for the negation of the Qur'an, then our brothers in Islam could not save themselves from the same allegation and nor could they be called as the believers in the present Qur'an, because several of such traditions were also available in their own literature.

We have presented here some examples for the interest of our readers.

Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti wrote in *Tafsir al-Itteqaq*, "It is reported from Aisha that two hundred Verses of Surah Ahzab were recited during the time of the Prophet, but when Othman collected Qur'an, we found as much as we see today, which are only seventy-three Verses and the remaining one hundred twenty-seven were permanently lost."

Zar Ibn Jaish reported on the authority of Ibn Kaab that he had asked him if it were the same number of Verses of Surah Ahzab that were counted today? Zar Ibn Jaish replied that the present Verses were not more than seventy-two or seventy-three, but in fact these had been equivalent to Surah Al-Baqara in the Prophet's time, and we used to recite the Verse of Rajam.

He was asked what that Verse was. He replied: ***"If an old man commits adultery with an old woman then they should be stoned*** (***to death***)***. This was the punishment of their crime, so that it became a lesson for the others. Surely, God is all Wise and powerful."***

It was reported in *Tafsir Durr al-Manthur* on the authority of Hozaifa that Surah Tauba was the Surah of Adhab. It was said, "By God it had not left any aspect untouched and spoke something about each of us. What you read today in this Surah was not more than a quarter of the original contents that we used to recite in the time of the Prophet".

There were several reports in the Sunni books (Tafsir and Hadith) that pointed out towards the transposition of the Qur'anic Verses. We have presented a few more examples here.

In the present-day Qur'an, there was a Verse that read like this:

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

"Guard your prayers and particularly the middle prayer and stand in front of Allah in submission" **(*2:238*).**

Sunni literature suggested that some deletion had taken place in this Verse of Surah Al-Baqara. Allama Suyuti wrote in Durr al-Manthur on the authority of Omru Ibn Na'feh who said, "I was the pen man for Hafsa, the wife of the Prophet, who said to me that when I reach the place where the Verse reads: **"Haafizu 'alas salati",** then I should refer to her. So, I did and she made me write the Verse like this: **"Haafizu ala salati was salatil wusta was salatil asr".**

She, then said that she bore witness to the fact that she heard the Verse in the manner as she has reported, from the Prophet." However, in the present Qur'an, "*Salatul Asr*" was missing.

In the present Qur'an, this following Verse was written like this:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ وَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

"O Messenger! proclaim the* (*message*) *which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. And Allah will defend thee from men* (*who mean mischief*)*". **(*5:67*)**

but if we went through Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, we would find Abdullah Ibn Masud saying:

"We used to read this Verse like this – ***"Ya aiyyu har rasulu ballihg ma unzila alaika min rabbik inna ali un Maulal Mu'minin, fa in lam taf 'al fama ballaghtal risala, wallahu yasimuka minun naas",*** but in the present text – "***inna Ali un Maulal Mu'minin"*** was missing". It appeared that it had been (purposely) omitted.

In *Tafsir Iteqan* and *Durr al-Manthur* there were several narrations that suggested that *Aayat al-Rajam* had been removed from the Qur'an. Ibn Ka'ab (as reported earlier) said that they used to recite this Verse in the Prophet's time.

In the present text of the Qur'an the following Verse was given like this:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

"Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! call for* (*Divine*) *blessings on him and salute him with a* (*becoming*) *salutation" **(*33:56*).**

Yet, it was suggested in Tafsir Durr al-Manthur that in the copies of the Qur'an, which were in the possession of Aisha and Hafsa, the same Verse ended with the words – **wa allazeena yusalluna soufal awwal**, but this text was missing in the present-day Qur'an.

In the present Qur'an, a Verse read like this:

وَكَفَى اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْقِتَالَ

"..And Allah sufficed the believers in fighting" **(*33:25*).**

but the narrations suggested by our Sunni brothers proposed that this Verse was read in the Prophet's time in the following manner: ***"Wakafallahul Mu'minin al qital bi Ali ibn Abi Talib"***. The ending of this Verse was missing in the present text of the Qur'an.

This was the reason that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar used to say that no one should claim that he had acquired complete Qur'an. How did he know what the complete Qur'an was when a major part of the Qur'an had been lost?[1]

It was an old habit of bigoted mullahs that when their baseless allegations were answered with the same coin, and they did not find a logical response, then they reverted to their famous technique of declaring these Verses to be redundant (*naskh*), in order to save their skin. Their proposition was unacceptable due to certain reasons.

In their narrations, there were so many reports that negated the thesis of *naskh*, because this procedure was only applicable during the revelation of the Qur'an, at the time of the Prophet. It was therefore written in *Tafsir al-Itteqan* that *naskh* was not permissible after the life of the Prophet. These narrations, however, suggested that Aisha and Hafsa had read these Verses in such and such manners and instructed their pen-men to write those Verses in a particular way, and then bore witness that these Verses were read in that same manner as they had directed, during the life of the Prophet.

Similarly, there were some elaborations of the companions of the Prophet that such and such Verses were read in a different way before the intervention of Othman. Fair minded readers must tell us, that in the presence of these elaborations, how could the concept of *naskh* help them in this predicament?

There were some fundamental rules that justified the concept of *naskh*. As long as those rulings were not applied, these sordid excuses were of no use. Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti said in Tafsir al-Itteqan: "Regarding naskh we can only rely on a Hadith of the Prophet or the report of a companion, who must state that he has asked the explanation from the Prophet and he pointed out that this Verse is replaced by such and such directive."

He further said, "Concerning *naskh,* the statements of commentators or the declarations of academics had no grounds, unless it was supported by an authentic Hadith or a clear-cut Verse of the Qur'an that opposed it, as *naskh* was the name of a directive in the life time of the Prophet that replaced another ruling, therefore, we could only rely on an exact report or on factual historical evidence."

God said in the Qur'an:

مَا نَنسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

***"None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar"* (*2:106*).**

This Verse clearly proved that the ratio between *nasikh* (the one which replaces a Verse) and *mansookh* (the one that is erased) must be in one-to-one proportion. Our opponents, if they were true in their belief, must prove to us by giving the names of those Verses that had erased the above-mentioned Qur'anic Verses.

Acceptance Of Tahrif By Academics Does Not Mean That It Is Recognised By The Religion

It remained true that some of our academics were in line with those who agreed that transposition of Qur'anic Verses had taken place. However, it was a matter of principle that if views of a few scholars clashed with grand masters on a controversial issue, then it could not be taken as belief of the whole religion. Yes, those who believed in the transposition of Verses had their own arguments. We have presented their findings in the following text.

Their initial points of argument were those narrations that were present in the books of both parties, which proved that some deletion in the contents of Qur'an had taken place at the time of its collection. These narrations were so excessive that the allegation could not be denied. Allama Al-Majlisi, in *Miratul Uqul* had claimed continuity in chain and thus authenticity of such narrations.

The procedure that was adopted for the collection of Qur'an was described in the books of history. Initially this work was handed over by the first caliph to Zaid Ibn Thabit and he was ordered to sit at the gate of the Prophet's Mosque and make an announcement to the public that whoever had a portion of the Qur'an in his possession, must bring it to the attention of Zaid, with a condition that he must produce two witnesses who testified that those portions were among the contents of the Qur'an.

Thus, the Qur'an was collected under these conditions. Some material that was scribed on bones, date leaves, cardboard and papyrus were also collected. In this manner, the Qur'an with minor adjustments of contents and recitation was revisited in the lifetime of the third caliph, and published in the colonies.

If we call upon an unbiased person, who had seen this methodology, he would think that some contents might have remained undiscovered due to someone having a portion of the Qur'an, but not being willing to part with it, as was in the case of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud. Similarly, Aisha and Hafsa did not part with their collection. Again, someone might have a portion of the Qur'an but he might not be able to find two

witnesses to approve him. This method of research that was adopted suggested that some portions of the Qur'an were not discovered despite passionate efforts.

People could only trust the collection of a person, whose efforts were so sincere that no other motive could be associated with his work, other than the service of Islam. On the other hand, the collectors whose religious strength was not only questionable but their basic belief was doubtful and their critic were not willing to accept their efforts in the service of Islam, but associated corporeal benefits with their efforts, if they believed that some parts of the Qur'an had been deleted, then one could understand their point of view.

They had piles of material to support their thesis, but we would not want to indulge in this scrutiny for the sake of religious harmony. So far as the question concerned was that these thoughts might give way to mistrust in the Qur'an – these were totally unfounded. This is so because the true guardians of the Qur'an had authenticated its contents, and wherever intrusions were made those areas had been identified.

The books revealed for earlier nations had been corrupted. The Prophet (S) had said, "Whatever had happened with those nations would also happen with his Ummah." It was therefore, possible that some alterations might have happened in the Qur'an as well.

A natural question arose that when the Qur'an was collected by Amir Al–Mu'minin, and the two previous Caliphs were present, what was the reason for Othman to recollect the same text, and why he exaggerated so much in favour of his own collection that he burnt all other specimens (other than Imam Ali's version)?

This suggested that this collection was done with some ulterior motive, which might be to change some of the legal rules to alter the face of Islam so that it might pave the way for the enemies of Islam to assume political powers on long term basis, without religious opposition. The whole purpose of this discussion was to tell our critics that those who opposed them, also had some arguments to prove their case.

Inappropriate Use Of The Two Qur'anic Verses To Disprove The Theory Of Transposition

To disprove transposition of Qur'anic Verses, two Qur'anic Verses have been wrongly quoted:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

"Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian". (***15:9***)

If God had promised protection to the Book, who could then add or subtract anything from it? Ignoring the falseness or truth of the rebuttal of the theory of *Tahrif*, this Qur'anic Verse was used to prove that their case was not correct due to the following reasons.

In Qur'anic terminology, use of the word *Dhikr* was as much applicable to the person of the Prophet – *Nazzalna alaikum Dhikran Rasula*, as it was for the Qur'an,

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

***"...it is nothing but a reminder for all mankind"* (*12:104*).**

Therefore, it was possible that in the quoted Verse God might be promising protection of the Prophet from the mischief of his enemies by saying:

وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

***"God will protect you from the evil of the people"* (*5:67*).**

That is why in the Qur'anic Verse:

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

***"Ask from the followers of the Reminder* (*Ahl udh-Dhikr, family of the messenger*) *if you don't know"* (*16:43; 21:7*).**

The phrase – '*Ahl udh-Dhikr'* was meant for the family of the Prophet. Therefore, this Verse has nothing to do with our current problem.

If we accepted that in this Verse the word *Dhikr* stood for the Qur'an, then a question arose – was this a promise for all the individual copies of the Qur'an or was it made for a specific Qur'an?

The first postulate was definitely wrong, because if it were so, Othman would have failed to burn the other collections of the Qur'an, and Walid would have perished when he had put this Qur'an to the arrows.

Also, we have found some printing mistakes in the present-day Qur'an, and some copies of the Qur'an had been burnt during accidental fires. Recently, the American Military would not have been able to disgrace Qur'an in Guantanamo Bay, as it happened when pages of it were flushed through the toilet. We would therefore, be right to assume that if God had made the promise to protect all (physical copies of) Qur'an, then no one could have succeeded in disgracing it. Thus, we have to conclude that this

promise was made for the Qur'an as an entity, and this could represent even a single copy of the Qur'an that was free of any changes.

This thesis would then vindicate the promise of God, and a person of this camp could say that the Qur'an collected by Hazrat Ali was the manifestation of that promise. On the other hand, those who did not believe in the transposition of the Qur'an would say that the only difference between the present specimen of the Qur'an and that of Imam Ali's version, was that its collection was according to the chronology of revelation and the notes had been dictated by the Prophet. This is why Ibn Saireen said that if the Qur'an collected by Ali ('a) was available, we would have a treasure of information with us.

Another question worth considering was that what do we understand from the phrase – God's protection?

It was possible that it meant that no one could defeat Qur'an with any kind of logical arguments. This was such a truth that could not be denied, because many centuries have passed and no one could answer the challenge of the Qur'an. Therefore, with all these possibilities this Verse could not be used to defend the original thesis that no subtraction or reduction could be done with the Qur'an.

This clear–cut reality was accepted by some pragmatic Sunni scholars and therefore, Allama Fakhruddin Razi had criticised Allama Baqalani's arguments on the basis of the above Verse by saying, "This argument was weak because it was using the claim to defend itself with the same claim, which was wrong.

The second set of Qur'anic Verses wrongly used to rebut transposition is:

وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ...

***"... and most surely it is a Mighty Book"* (*41:41*).**

لَّا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ

***"Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it; a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One"* (*41:42*).**

These Verse were also not helpful to advance their argument due to following reasons:

The use of these Verses is also subject to the same criticism. Did they include reference to all copies of the Qur'an by various individuals or a specific one? Naturally, all of its copies cannot be included and we had to assume a specific individual, which was proven by the presence of a single Qur'an that of Imam Ali.

What did we understand by the phrase that falsehood cannot penetrate it? Although, transposition was an abominable task, but its meanings could also be that its earlier and later Verses had no contradictions in it, which could be taken as a reason to prove it wrong. It was also possible that the phrase might mean that no previously revealed books denied Qur'an and no new message would come that could contradict it, and make its laws redundant, just as it was mentioned in *Tafsir Al-Qummi* on the authority of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), who said, "No Verse from the Old and New Testament has opposed Qur'an and nothing would come later to deny it. Therefore, this Verse too cannot help the opponents of *Tahrif*".

Clarification Of A Doubt

It was usually thought that by accepting transposition, trust was lost in the entire book. We have already explained this point earlier and can further point out that if transposition was accepted in a manner that the places of transposition were not identified, then certainly it could cause mistrust of the whole Qur'an, but as the exponents of this view claimed that if the material that was erased and the place from where it was erased were identifiable, then the remaining contents were cleared of any doubt.

Narrations regarding *Tahrif* were of two types – one, were those which simply mentioned that transposition in Qur'an had taken place and the other were those that identified what sentences were removed and from where those are expunged. This made the remaining Qur'an free of any doubt, especially when the present text was verified by the Imams.

Explanation Of The Term Sabas Ahraf

The respectable author quoted a Hadith of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) that, which stated that the Qur'an was one, and it was sent by one God. This Hadith has invalidated a famous hypothesis, which was very famous among our critics, and some of our own narrations also go along with it. It was mentioned that the Prophet of God had said that the Qur'an was revealed on seven letters, and each of those letters were sufficient and adequate. There is huge gulf between various commentators on the true meanings of these words, but two possible statements were very famous.

- These seven letters meant seven different recitations of the Qur'an.

- This also meant the variation of linguistic trends among the Arabs. It was said that the Qur'an was transmitted on different Arabic literary trends. These were – Quraish, Hazeel, Hawazan and Yemen.

Some of the other Ahadith from our side also gave another interpretation of this Hadith. It was reported that Imam Ali (‘a) had said, "Qur'an is revealed in seven categories, which are – *Amr*, *Zajr*, *Targeeb*, *Tarheeb*, *Amsal*, *Jadal* and *Qasas*.

These meanings were supplemented by other Ahadith as well. Bahiqi narrated from Ibn Masud who had

said that the previous heavenly books had been revealed on a single pattern, but Qur'an was revealed on seven kinds – *Zajr* (reprimand), *Amr* (commandments), *Halal* (permissible), *Haram* (prohibited), *Mohkam* (Firm), *Motashabeh* (Resembling) and *Amsal*.

Another explanation of the seven letters was also rendered by Imams as that there are were levels of Qur'anic understandings. However, very reliable narrations of our faith, which claimed that the Qur'an was revealed on a single letter, were against this view of seven recitations.

Fazeel Ibn Yasaar said in his booklet that he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that some people had claimed that Qur'an was revealed on seven letters (seven recitations). Imam said that these enemies of God were lying, in fact the Qur'an had been revealed on single letter.

According to Zarara Ibn Aa'een Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a) had said that Qur'an was one and it was sent by the one God. Its disparity in words was initiated by its reporters and its conveyors (*Qari*). This theory was commonly accepted by our great masters, such as Shaykh At-Tusi who writes in the foreword of Al-Tibyan, "The famous premises of our scholars on which their major narrations depend are that Qur'an is revealed on a single letter and on one Prophet. However, its categories of seven or more inner levels are authenticated by another narration, which cannot be denied."

Ali Is The Leader Of The Faithful

So far as the Father of all Imams, Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) was concerned, this title of Amir Al-Mu'minin was specially granted by the Prophet along with another designation – *Qaed-ul-Ghur-ul-Muhajejeen*, i.e. leader of the people with radiating (with light) foreheads. This was frequently quoted in both Shi'a and Sunni sources.

Marriage Of Ali Took Place Under The Commandment Of God

Similarly, God's commandment to the Prophet that He had authorised the marriage of Fatimah with Ali in the heavens therefore, he should perform the marriage contract on earth was also contained in abundance in Sunni literature (for reference see *Yanabe ul Mowadda* and *Arjah al-Matalib*).

Commandment To Greet People With Pleasant Attitude

If true explanation of religious charter was needed then it would require many volumes, but if its synopsis was required then the spirit of the religion could be summarised in two phrases – submission to the God's commandments and compassion and concern with the public at large.

This showed that religion had two major departments – one, in the terminology of behavioural sciences as *Huququllah* (Rights of God on people) and *Huququnaas* (Rights of people). The second department was more significant than the other as it was discussed earlier in the chapter regarding accounting of

deeds on the Day of Judgement. The family of the Prophet greatly insisted to redress the chapter of *Huququnaas*.

The Prophet of God had said: “Whatever you desire for yourself, aspire it for your brothers in the community, and negate it for him that you negate it for yourself”. Amir Al-Mu’minin (‘a) said: “Spend your time among people in a manner that if you go somewhere, their hearts must be attracted towards you (i.e. they might miss your company), and if you had died then the people should be seen crying for you”. Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that the quality of humanity could not be judged by the abundance of prayers and fasting, but it could be identified by your treatment and dealings with the people.

Alternative Explanation Is Necessary For Metaphoric Verses

Whenever, a Verse was in contrast to the accepted norms (logic and law), then it must be explained in a manner that the apparent contradiction associated with it must disappear. The respected author pointed to a famous personality (the Prophet) for whom this article was applicable.

As the virtuosity of the Prophet of God was an established fact, therefore, if an allegorical Verse seems to be contradicting with this view, then its alternative explanation was necessary. The justification, which the learned author provided, was correct according to various narrations of Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) and Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a), which explained that such warnings were sometimes necessary to warn people of the gravity and significance of the message. These warnings were delivered by addressing the Prophet instead of the populace.

The author also explained in this chapter that the Prophet was the most elevated among all the Prophets and his true Ummah was the best among all nations. God willing, this subject will be discussed in detail in chapter thirty-five.

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1. Tafsir Itteqan Vol. 2, p. 25.

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SHARES

Chapter 34: Belief About Prophets, Their Legatees And Angels

Shaykh Abu Ja’far said that in this regard our belief was that Prophets, Messengers and their Deputies

(heir) were more eminent than the Angels, because when God announced that He was about to appoint His representative on the earth, the Angels in reply to this proclamation said,

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

***"Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?" He said: "I know what ye know not'"* (*2:30*).**

God replied that He knows what they know not. This dialogue suggests that it was Angels' desire to acquire the status of Adam, which according to their aspiration was superior to their rank, as knowledge was the standard of differentiation. God taught Adam the names (the nature) of all things, and He then asked Angels to explain the nature of things. They replied:

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

***"They said: Glory be to Thee! we have no knowledge but that which Thou hast taught us; surely Thou art the Knowing, the Wise"* (*2:32*).**

God then addressed Adam and repeated the question. Adam explained everything in relation to the issue. God then told the Angels,

قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ

***"... He said: Did I not tell you that I know the secret of the heavens and the earth? And I know that which ye disclose and which ye hide"* (*2:33*).**

All these things suggested that Adam was superior to the Angels and he was also a Prophet towards them, as God declared:

أَنبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ

***"Tell them the name of those..."* (*2:33*).**

Another thing that distinguished Adam from the Angels was God's command to them to show their respect towards him by prostration. It was stated that all Angels bowed before Adam.

فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ

"So the angels fell prostrate, all of them together" **(*15:30*).**

This performance definitely proved Adam's superiority, and an illustration of obedience to God, and a sign of respect for Adam, since his seed had contained the light of the persons of Muhammad (S) and his holy progeny. He, the Prophet of God (S), said, "I am superior to Gabriel, Michael and Isra'fil, and all those Angels that are given the special status of propinquity."

He also said, "I am the leader of Adam's entire generations, (including Jesus Christ) for whom God had said that he (Jesus) did not negate to be a servant of God and nor the Angels."

This did not mean that Angels were superior to Jesus. This clarification was done by the Lord, because some Christians believed that Jesus was God for them and they worshipped him, and that there were some star worshippers who have adulated Angels. This concept was repudiated by God with this declaration:

لَّن يَسْتَنكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِّلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَن يَسْتَنكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا

***"The Messiah disdaineth nor to serve and worship Allah, nor do the angels, those nearest* (*to Allah*)*: those who disdain His worship and are arrogant. He will gather them all together unto Himself to* (*answer*)*"* (*4:172*).**

It was also our faith that Angels were spiritual creatures and they did not disobey Him and they performed as they were required to do. They did not eat and drink and nor did they feel pain or fall ill or become old. Their food and nourishment was the worship of God and their life depended on the ambience of the region of the Seat of Authority (the Throne).

Their pleasures and delights were various branches of knowledge. God had created them the way He wanted as a combination of light and spirit and each group of Angels looked after other creations of God. Those people whom we have preferred over the Angels had attributes far disproportionate than the Angels.

[1] [1]
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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 34

Like other differences, the eminence of Prophets and their legatees was also a bone of contention among various Muslim factions. Mu'tazilites, among the Sunni sects, considered Angels to be superior to the Prophets and some other scholars such as Abu Abdullah Haleemi and Qazi Abu Bakr Baqalani were also of the same opinion. They divided Angels into two groups – earthly and heavenly. In their opinion, Prophets were superior to the earthly Angels but below heavenly Seraphs. Some were in doubt about this issue and they did not prefer anyone over each other.

Shi'as and majority of Ahl al-Sunnat were unanimous that Prophets and Messengers were more prominent than Angels and other heavenly creatures. Therefore, Shaykh Al-Mufid, in his book *Awaelil Maqalat* said that the Shi'as and Ahl al-Hadith among the Sunnis were unanimous that Prophets and Messengers were at a higher rank than the Angels. There were several reasons to support this view.

We all agreed that Angels did not possess the features of anger and lust. Therefore, they did not possess the capability to go off track. Hence, their virtuosity was unavoidable and not by choice. On the other hand, Prophets and Messengers have all these capabilities, yet they kept away from felony and transgression. Therefore, their talent was by choice and they subdued the powers of lust and wrath and moulded it into a heavenly disposition.

This was why the obedience of the Prophets was much more complex and painstaking. Therefore, those acts that required thorny choices were more superior to the easy-going tasks. Not to speak of the Messengers and their recipients, we could safely assume that some simple law abiding and God-fearing people were better than the Angels. It was reported on the authority of Imams who said, "Angels are subservient to some of our dedicated followers."

It was a well-known fact that the Angels' attributes and eminence were limited and there was no chance of further progression. Those who prostrated were in the state of prostration and those who were in obeisance would continue to bow forever. The Qur'an pictured their state of affairs in their own words:

وَمَا مِنَّا إِلَّا لَهُ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ

"And there is none of us but has an assigned place" (***37:164***).

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الصَّافُّونَ

"Lo! We, even we are they who set the ranks" (***37:165***).

Amir Al-Mu'minin spoke about them in a sermon:

"Some were in prostration, they did not bow and some were in the state of obeisance they could not raise themselves; some were in a queue and they could not move; while some supplicated in a manner that sleep could not discourage them." However, chances for the elevation of status and acquisition of attributes were unlimited for the Prophets. They could not however, acquire the eminence of God, but for someone (Muhammad, S.) Gabriel had to say, "O! Prophet of God, if I move an inch forward with you from my current station then I will burn to ashes."

The Prophet's statements clearly demonstrated that the Prophets were more prominent than the Angels. Allama Jazairi wrote in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah* on the authority of Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) that the Prophet was asked by Imam Ali ('a), "Is Gabriel more momentous than you or somebody else?" The Prophet replied, "O! Ali, God has made all His Prophets and Messengers more vital than the Angels and made me distinguished among all of them. O! Ali, this stature will be held by you after me and rest of the Imams after you. Certainly, Angels are subservient to us and our dedicated friends.

O! Ali, those Angels that are embracing the Throne and all others who are close to it, they continue to praise the Lord, and continue to seek forgiveness for those who accept our authority (*Wilayat*). O! Ali, had we not been created (by God), the Lord would not have created the Universe, including the Heavens, Paradise, Hell and even Adam and Eve. Therefore, under these circumstances how are we not superior to the Angels?"

God, in Surah Al-Anaam – after mentioning Noah, Lot, Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, Moses Aaron, Zachariah, John the Baptist and Jesus, said:

وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ...

***"...We have preferred all of them over the entire Cosmos"* (*6:86*).**

Evidently, Angels were also included in the Universe. Therefore, those who were preferable over the Universe must supersede the Angels in their stature.

People of erudition and knowledge knew that the measure of eminence was knowledge and its application was specified in the Qur'an, regarding the episode of Taloot, when (Jewish) nation objected to his appointment (on the grounds of poverty). God replied by saying that he was selected on the basis of his knowledge and bravery. This was also the meaning of the Qur'anic Verse:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

"Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is* (*he who is*) *the most righteous* (*God-

***fearing*) *among you"* (*49: 13*).**

If this standard was applied, then the Prophets and their successors would prevail over the rest.

Clarification Of Doubt

Those who denied the eminence of Prophets, presented two misgivings. One of those hesitations was as pointed out by the author earlier and adequately replied in the text of this chapter. The other was as they said, "Angels are created from light (Noor), while, Prophets are created from the matter. Since light is superior to the material things, therefore Angels are more prominent than the Prophets."

This objection was the result of their ignorance of Islamic values. Otherwise, the scholarly people knew that the standard of eminence in Islam was not the material of creation, but the attributes of knowledge and its applications. The hypothesis that the Angels were created from pure light and the Prophets from the material alone was against this fact.

It had been proven that Prophets and their successors were a medium of communication between God and His creatures. Therefore, they must have attributes of both sides. Hence their spirit or soul was composed of light energy and the body was material. Also, both of their aspects were so pure that they became leaders of the Angels on one hand and were best of the mankind on the other hand.

In other words, the comparison was not between *noor* and the matter alone, but it was between light on one side and light as well as matter on the other side. When matter was also under the supervision of soul, then an intellectual mind would prefer a thing that had both aspects of matter and light. Since Prophetic constituents were dual therefore, they had an edge over the Angels.

If we accepted that the Prophets were created as material beings and there was no contribution of Noor then the accuser had to accept this much that they possessed a soul that was different in nature compared to the ordinary soul, which in the language of Qur'an was *nooran* as stated in Surah Al-Shoora:

وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَن نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا

***"But We have made the Noor* (*a Light*), *wherewith We guide such of Our servants as We will"* (*42:52*).**

Therefore, equipped with this light they were superior to the Angels. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that Satan had compared his source of creation (heat energy) with the material aspect of Adam, if he had compared his source of creation with the *noorani* aspects of Adam, he would have learned the status of Adam."

Non-Permissibility Of The Prostration Of Honour

In the text of *Risala al-Itiqadiyah*, prostration out of respect was mentioned, and since it was a significant issue of public interest, we felt it was our responsibility to write a few lines on this subject.

It was an open fact that the prostration of worship was not allowed for anyone other than God in Islam. However, there was some difference of opinion among the Muslims regarding prostration out of respect for some saintly persons. There were some schools of thought that permitted such an act. However, Shi'as were totally against this practice, and proved their point of view through Qur'an, the Ahadith of the Prophet and the teachings of Imams.

Prohibition By The Qur'an

If we read Qur'an exhaustively, we would find that wherever prostration was mentioned it was linked to God such as:

فَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ

"...Prostrate to God..." **(*53:62*).**

Or:

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

"And unto Allah falleth prostrate whosoever is in the heavens and the earth" **(*13:15*).**

Or:

فَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ وَاعْبُدُوا

"Prostrate to God and worship Him" **(*53:62*).**

Therefore, in the light of Qur'an all kinds of prostration were prohibited and this was permissible for God alone. The following Qur'anic Verses conclusively specified prostration for God alone:

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

"All the places of prostration are for God, therefore, do not call anyone other than Him" **(*72:18*).**

Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) had said that – Al-Masajid – stood for all the constituent body parts that took part in sajda (prostration). These were – forehead, palms of both hands, both knees and both thumbs of the feet. Similar narrations were also available in *Tafsir al-Saafi* and *Tafsir al-Aayashi*. Mu'tasim Abbasi asked the explanation of the Qur'anic phrase:

فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا...

***"... So invoke not any one along with Allah"* (*72:18*).**

Imam replied that it meant not to share these body parts with anyone other than when in prostration to God.

Prohibition By The Prophet

For the sake of brevity, we have confined ourselves to two or three statements of the Prophet. It was reported in *Usul al-Kafi* that once a Bedouin clutching an iguana in his arm pit said, "If this Iguana gave your testimony by way of speech, then I would surrender to your prophethood and accept you as a Prophet of God". The Iguana, by virtue of miracle expressed itself in fluent Arabic and recited the testimony of acceptance:

لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ

La ilaha illa Allah, wa Muhammadan Rasul Allah

There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger.

The Bedouin then made the declaration of faith and decided to prostrate in front of the Prophet, in accordance with his custom. The Prophet immediately stopped him and told him that if it was permissible to prostrate to anyone other than God, then he would have advised the wives to show respect to their husbands in such a mode.

Therefore, if a person like the Prophet could not receive respect in that manner, then how could anyone else qualify for this act of veneration? Another companion had once wished to prostrate to him. The Prophet then replied, "Do not prostrate to me but reserve this right for the God who is Eternal and alive, and for Whom there is no demise."

That was why the Prophet had prayed to the God that his grave should not become like an idol to be worshipped by the people.

Prohibitions According To Imams

It had come to light that on several occasions, people decided to prostrate before the Imams. They were harshly stopped them from the act. Shaykh Abbas Al-Qummi narrated a report from Amir Al-Mu'minin (‘a) in *Mafatih al-Jinan*, referring to *Kitab Farhatul Ghora*, edited by Shaykh Tawoos, which related to Abu Hamza Ath-Thumali's meeting with Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a) in the Mosque of Kufa. He said that he fell down upon the feet of Imam in a posture resembling prostration and wished to kiss his feet. Imam immediately stopped him and raised his head with his hands and said that prostration was not permissible for anyone other than God. It was evident that Abu Hamza was a monotheist and he was not performing the act as prostration of worship, rather he was showing his respect. This attitude of Imam sent a clear signal that prostration of any kind was reserved only for God and no one else.

It was reported that once a Christian priest tried to prostrate before Imam Ali (‘a), who stopped him by saying – prostrate before God and not before me. The supplication that was made after two Rakats of prayer of Ziarat al-Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) stated: "O! God, I have performed this prayer for you and have offered this act of bowing and prostration only for you, since this is not allowed for anyone other than You." If prostration was allowed for any other than God, then such clear-cut sentences were not needed in this supplication.

A Great Misunderstanding And Its Clarification

Those who permitted prostration out of respect for people other than God, provided the Qur'anic example of Angels bowing down to Adam and the prostration of Jacob and his sons in front of Joseph. Both these examples were technically wrong due to following reasons.

Firstly, these Verses were abbreviated and did not show clearly, whether it was a prostration of worship or out of respect or these people simply acted in the direction of reverence to God (Qibla) or it was performed in imitation or corroboration with them.

It was true that Adam (‘a) and Joseph (‘a) had first prostrated to God to show their gratitude and then the Angels and the family of Jacob were commanded to follow them in confirmation. The word *sajda* was simply used in a sense of minor bowing of head as done by many non- Arabs to show respect to their seniors. When there were so many possibilities in a Verse then to construe it in a particular direction was not correct. This prostration could be to the Being of God, but Adam and Joseph were only used as a direction of reverence.

Also, in this Qur'anic Verse, the Arabic letter 'L' pronounced as '*Lam*' was used to signify '*Ila*'. This was a common practice in Arabic literature and it was used by Hasan Ibn Thabit in the eulogy of Amir Al-Mu'minin (‘a), where '*Lam*' was used as '*Ila*' – *Alaisal awwla min salli liqiblatikum.* In this part of the couplet the '*Lam*' that was used in '*Liqibalitikum*' was meant for *Ila Qiblatikum* – towards your direction of reverence. This was further supplemented by various *Ahadith*. It was reported from Imam Hasan Al-

'Askari (‘a) in *Hayat al-Qulub,* as having said, “Angel’s prostration was not for Adam but it was for submission to the God, and Adam was only made as a direction of veneration for the God”.

If we accepted for the sake of argument that it was a prostration for the respect of Adam, even then it did not affect our claim, since those legal codes that allowed this act were now redundant. An outmoded legal system could not challenge the current code that had made all previous acts obsolete. This argument was aided by an elucidation of Baghvi in *Malamul Tanzeel* and in *Asbabul Nazool* by Allama Suyuti, that said, “In the previous legal codes prostration out of respect was allowed but Islam has aborted it.”

Allama Al-Majlisi also supported this view.

It Is Essential To Believe In The Reality Of Angels

It was essential for a Muslim to believe in the presence of Angels, while many Qur’anic Verses, statements of the Prophet and Imams strengthened this view. It was also known that people had such a belief, even in the early history of humanity. It was another matter that Satan, like many other issues had blanketed this view for the people. As a result, some people denied the presence of the Angels and the others made them share the attributes of God, such as creation and provision of sustenance etc. Some religions treated them as daughters and the others called them as the army of God. They said that God could not overcome the satanic forces without Angels.

However, Islam called all such beliefs as nonsensical views and said, ***“They are obedient servants of God, who worship the Lord and do not exceed the limits by way of speech or action that are set by God, and work according to His instructions***[1]***”.***

Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in *Bihar Al-Anwar,* “All Shi’as and rest of the Muslim Ummah, except some philosophers, who have entered Islam to corrupt its teachings, believe that Angels possess a body frame made of light energy (*noor*) and were provided with two, three or four wings and they could change to any form, as was required by the situation. They were capable of all kind of motions. Prophets and Messengers could see them with open eyes. To say that they were devoid of body or to associate them with intellect or heavenly bodies, and to create baseless doubts and to reinterpret clear Qur’anic Verse was equivalent to backing off the right track, and was comparable to the fellowship of ill trodden.”

Mohaqiq Dowani has also substantiated this view.

Sustenance Of Angels

Daily sustenance of Angels, as described in this book was supplication of God and other prayers. It was mentioned in various Ahadith that Angels were free of material ambience and their spiritual food was also submission to God and His worship. They were neither masculine nor feminine gender, birth,

pregnancy, call of nature, weakness or failing and grief or infirmity.

Numerical Strength Of Angels

The numerical strength of Angels was countless among God's creation, and no one knew their number except the Lord. Amir Al-Mu'minin (‘a) said that there was no space in the cosmos, where there were no Angels. It was reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a), when he was asked about the numerical strength of Angels, he said, "I swear by the Lord who holds my life; Angels were more than the particles of soil in the entire earth. There was no room in the space where there were no Angels. They continued to obey and worship God and present the results of their daily work to God. They confirmed their allegiance to our Wilayat on a daily basis and cursed our enemies and asked for their punishment from God."

It was reported that there was an angel with every droplet of rain and every seedling of the vegetable kingdom. God's own words sufficed to conclude this section. He said:

وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"He creates so much that you know not" (***16:8***).

Types And Categories Of Angels

The narrations that have reached us informed that there were several categories of Angels, in respect of their job description. These were:

- Angels associated with God's Throne of authority.

- Angels responsible for communication (*Wahy* and *Ilham*).

- Angels in the service of Paradise.

- Angels appointed to look after Hell.

- Angels who scribed people's deeds.

- Guarding Angels.

- Angels who accompanied the pilgrims.

- Angels responsible for rain and the movement of water in rivers and oceans.

- Angels for life and death.

– Angels for accounting human deeds (good and bad). All these Angels are called *Baraatul Amr*.

Clarification Of Some Doubts

Opponents of Angels made several objections to this concept.

- How was it possible that something existed and could not be seen?
- If Angels were made from such a delicate form of energy, then could how they perform arduous tasks?
- How things could travel so fast that they crossed celestial limits in a blink of an eye?

Reply To The First Objection

It had been proven beyond doubt that invisibility of a thing could not be used as a reason for its non–existence. For example, love, hatred, hunger and thirst were all present but could not be visualised by eyes.

There were several things that were present in this Universe, but were invisible, such as air and soul.

We could not see things during pitched black nights, but bats and other night–oriented animals could see perfectly in darkness. Some reptiles could detect minute temperature changes around them, which could not be noticed by humans. Salmon fish could travel thousands of miles in the sea and could pass through complicated tributary of rivers and canals and still could reach its original birth place to lay her eggs, whereas, we can easily lose our way in a strange place. Therefore, Prophets who were given supernatural powers could see things that we cannot envisage.

Reply To The Second Objection

This objection was also the production of ignorance. Wind was very soft and pleasant substance, but it could dislodge huge trees from its roots in a matter of minutes. Electricity could power equipments and machines that could outclass thousands of men in terms of efficiency. Imagine, if God could grant powers to such subtle things like air, water and electricity, why could He not provide a similar power to His Angels?

Reply To The Third Objection

This objection was also baseless. There were several examples, of this kind of speed in the present world. We know light could travel 186,000 miles per second. It had recently been found that there were super-fast neutrinos that could outspeed light. Our own earth travelled several thousand miles in a single minute. Last of all, human thought could outclass all speeds.

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1. Refer to the following Verses of the Holy Qur'an: 66:6; 21:26; 21:27; 16:50.

[1] [1]
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Chapter 35: Numerical Strength Of Prophets And Their Legatees

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our faith regarding the numerical strength of Prophets and their legatees was that there was a total of 124,000 Prophets and the same number was true about the number of their heirs or legatees. There was at least one successor to every Prophet. They were appointed by the Prophet under the supervision of God1.

We also believe that the Prophets came with truth from their Lord. Therefore, their word was God's word, submission to them was submission to God and defiance towards them was showing defiance to God. These Prophets never called for a thing other than what was commanded by God. Among the group of Prophets there were five, who were the leaders of this assemblage. They were the recipients of *Wahy*, and owners of the books of legislation, and they were called grand Prophets. Their names were as follows:

1. Noah (‘a),
2. Abraham (‘a),
3. Moses (‘a),

4. Jesus (‘a)

5. and Muhammad (S).

أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ

***“Messengers of inflexible purpose”* (*46:35*).**

However, Muhammad (S) was the leader of this group, who came with truth from his Lord and authenticated the previous Prophets. Those who had denied him would taste horrible chastisement on the Day of Judgement while those who had faith in him, respected him, aided him in his mission and accepted the guidance that followed him, were those who could be called successful people.

It was also important to believe that God had not created any being that was more eminent than Muhammad (S) and his holy progeny. These were the people who were most dear to God, and they were those pure persons who declared the unity of God before rest of the creation on the Day of *Alust* (the occasion of acceptance of God, before the physical creation of the Universe, when everything had its spiritual existence). It was then that God took covenant from His creation that they would accept Him as their Lord. Then God appointed them as His witness on that covenant.

وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ ۛ شَهِدْنَا

***“And* [*God*] *required them to bear witness of themselves* (*saying*)*: Am I not your Lord? and they said: Yes, verily”* (*7:172*).**

On the same day God appointed Muhammad (S) as the Prophet on all Prophets, and awarded him with their cumulative qualities. The perception of God as known to Muhammad (S) was beyond all the creation. This was why He was the first to acknowledge Lord God as his God.

It was our faith that God would not have created anything including Adam, Eve, Angels and the other inhabitants of the Universe, if he had not created Muhammad (S) and his holy progeny. It was also our faith that after the Prophet, God’s sign in the Universe were the twelve Imams, of whom the first was Ali (‘a) then Hasan (‘a), Husayn (‘a), Zayn Al–’Abidin (‘a), Muhammad Al–Baqir (‘a), Ja’far As–Sadiq (‘a), Musa Al–Kadhim (‘a), Ali Ar–Ridha (‘a), Muhammad At–Taqi (‘a), Ali An–Naqi (‘a), Hasan Al–’Askari (‘a) and the twelfth Imam Al–Mahdi (‘a).

Master of the time – Imam Al–Mahdi (‘a) was God’s sign and His representative. He was in occultation but he was alive and present in the cities. We also believed that these Imams were that *‘Ul Al–’Amr*

(people of authority) whose obedience was commanded by God. They were witness of the people, entrance to the knowledge of God, a route to reach Him, a guide to those who sought God's awareness, treasure of His knowledge, interpreters of His *Wahy* and the constituent of His unity. All of them were free of errors and mistakes. They were free from the bondage of sin.

اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

***"God has removed all impurity, oh Ahl Aal-Bayt, and made them absolutely pure"* (*33:33*).**

These were those people whom God had sanctified from all kinds of malign and refuse, and kept them purified as clarity required. These people were the holders of miracles and rationale, and they were the cause of peace and concord for the residents of the earth, just as the stars were for the populace of space.

These people in this Ummah were like Noah's Ark. All those who managed to get on board, had been saved. Moreover, they were also like the example of *Bab al-Hitta* (the gate of forgiveness) of the Israelites in this nation – whoever entered the gate their previous sins were completely forgiven. They were the most obedient servants of God, who did not exceed God's commandments in any matter and proceeded according to His instructions.

لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ

***"They speak not until He hath spoken; and they act by His command"* (*21:27*).**

We also believed about these people that love for them was representative of pure faith and animosity with them was open infidelity. Their decree was God's decree, their refusal was God's refusal, their amity was God's amity and their enmity was enmity with God.

لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

"...In order to make it supersede all religion, though the polytheists may dislike (it)" (9:33)[2].

We also believed that the Earth could not remain empty of God's sign, which may be apparent or hidden. We also held the faith that today the sign and delegate of God was Imam Al-Mahdi (ʻa), the son of Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Musa Ibn Ja'far Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Talib (ʻa). He was that person, whose ancestral details were provided by the Prophet who also gave the good tiding that he would fill the earth with peace and tranquillity, the way it was filled with brutality and malice.

He was the same person through whom God would make His approved religion (Islam) to dominate over all religions of the world, even if polytheists may find it unpleasant. God would make countries of East and West to surrender to him, and no corner on Earth will be left, where the call of prayer would not be heard.

The whole world would be subdued to the constitution of God. He was the same Al-Mahdi ('a), on whose appearance from occultation, the Prophet had predicted that Jesus ('a) would descend from the Heavens and pray behind him. This act would be equivalent to praying behind the Prophet, as he was his Deputy.

We also believed that no one else could claim to be Qaim Aali Muhammad ('a), even if his occultation was extended to very long times or even to the end of time, because the Prophet had identified his family tree and given a clear verdict on his authority and appearance. I have adopted this material from my book *Kitab al-Hidaya*.

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1. In this chapter, the honourable author has discussed the numerical strength of the Prophets, the eminence of Prophet Muhammad (S) and Imams of Huda over rest of the creation, proof of the Imamate of Aali Muhammad and that of Imam Mahdi ('a). We shall discuss these issues in the following pages in accordance with the requirements of time.
2. And smilar verses are 48:28 and 61:9.

[1] [1]
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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 35

In this chapter, the honourable author has discussed the numerical strength of the Prophets, the eminence of Prophet Muhammad (S) and A'imma Huda over rest of the creation, proof of the Imamate of Aali Muhammad and that of Imam Al-Mahdi ('a).

We shall discuss these issues in the following pages in accordance with the requirements of time, but initially want to devote few moments to evaluate conditions associated with the Prophesy to understand the station of Nubuwwah.

Facts About The Prophethood

What was the nature of Prophethood (*Nubuwwah*) and what were the conditions and requirements of this office? What was the standard for judging someone's claim of Prophethood? We shall discuss these issues briefly in this chapter.

Nubuwwah was an award and a gift from God that could not be obtained by meditation, studentship or by contemplation and research. God knew better as to who this office would be awarded (Surah Al-Anaam). Or, this was a blessing of God, which He awarded it to anyone whom He wished to. He was the owner of great approvals.

Conditions And Attributes For Prophethood

It was essential for the person to whom this office was awarded to be associated with respectable lineage, intellect and knowledge, ideal habits and conduct, free of jealousy, cowardice, despair and greed and also other human demerits. He should also possess an illustrious personality among the people. In other words, two attributes were essential for him. These were – purity of character (*'Ismah*) and recipient of a Miracle.

These deductions were based on the fact that the Prophet's Essence was Heavenly, which made him superior to mankind, due to his advanced intellect and purity. These attributes were awarded to him from God, and as a result he could not indulge into sins. On the other hand, he educated people about lofty morals and true practices to distil their personalities.

Just as human actions may sound a little strange to animals, similarly, some of the prophetic actions appeared miraculous to ordinary folks. Although a prophet shared body contents with ordinary people, but his intellect and understanding, purity of essence, amazing persona, and being an addressee of Heavenly revelations, made him different from other persons. It was declared in the Qur'an for Prophet Muhammad (S):

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ

"Say, I am a man like you but I receive revelations" **(*18:110*).**

It was also important for the station of Prophethood that the person should possess amicable demeanour and balanced temperament.

Human Aspects Of Prophets

Like many other issues, before the arrival of Prophet Muhammad (S), the reality of this concept was also tangled with extreme ideas. Similar to Jews, many other contemporary religions regarded Prophets no more than future tellers and treated them reprobates like ordinary people.

This was an example of a mortifying view while on the other end of this spectrum, Christians considered their saviour a genus above man or God, or a part of God, reflecting his material and divine existence. Also, Hindus named their guides as gods or god incarnate and treated them at the level of divinity. This

was an extreme view.

Islam proposed a middle of the road solution that was free of any kind of twirls and twists of perverseness. On one hand Islam considered Prophets and Messengers as humans, who were humble and destitute in front of God, but on the other hand treated them as best of God's creation in terms of intellectual maturity, embodiment of purity and felicity and of miraculous bearings.

Ordinary Arabs, reminiscent of Hindus, Christians and Greeks had considered that celestial beings were required to guide men. They thought that such a species could only be the Angels. The Qur'an had repeatedly rejected this proposal and said that if the earth was populated with Angels, only then Angels could be sent as guides for them. This suggested that because earth was inhabited with humans, therefore, it was essential that humans should be sent as guides for humanity.

Two Aspects Of Prophets

If we deeply examined this situation, we would then find that Prophets had two sides to their personality. On one hand, they had all the ingredients of humanity i.e. they ate, slept, married, remained in good or bad health and then died like ordinary people, but they were different in characteristics of Prophethood, spiritualism, purity of thoughts and actions, providing guidance to people and dignity of disposition.

Like Jews, who only saw their material aspect considered them ordinary humans, and those similar to Christians, who saw them in their spiritual form, assigned divinity to them. In fact, both of these concepts were far removed from the reality and the truth lay in between these two views. Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Sibtain said, "There is no doubt that a Prophet belongs to human race, but if we are a simple soil then they are elixir. We are hard rocks they are philosopher's stone. We are speck of clay, they are radiating Sun. We are ignorant, they are erudite. We are flawed; they are perfect. We are instruments of survival, and they are the mode of life. They are humans but an embodiment of soul. They are a body, which is impregnated with spirit."

Both Sides Of The Picture

Infidels, as a policy, denied the Prophets by calling them only humans, therefore, unfit for teaching. Prophets, on the other hand accepted their humanity but invited them to their other aspect, which was dignified with revelation from the Lord. The Qur'an said in Surah Ibrahim:

> قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنْ نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ نَأْتِيَكُمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

"Their messengers said to them: "True, we are human like yourselves, but Allah doth grant His grace to such of his servants as He pleases. It is not for us to bring you an authority except as

Allah permits. And on Allah let all men of faith put their trust" **(*14:11*).**

In this way, the Prophets showed the other angle of their personality and made them to ponder. Just like other Prophets, the last of the Prophets also declared under God's command on several occasions that he was a man like them who received revelations. At another moment, he declared: "Glory is to the God, I am but a human Prophet".

This statement though negated the erroneous ideology of one group, which claimed divinity for Prophets, but it also denied the wrong concept of others who considered Prophets like ordinary humans. In these Qur'anic Verses, wherever human nature of a Prophets was expressed it was accompanied by the words *Wahy* and Prophethood. This automatically included various other attributes that were necessary for the recipient of *Wahy* or revelation.

Those who considered Prophets as another genus were under this illusion that by accepting them as humans, they would then be equated with all those discrepancies and failing that were commonly linked with mortal men. This thought was nothing but the fabrication of short- sightedness and inner gloom of their personality, otherwise, all visionary and thinkers knew that every species had a big gap of features between them, and each community of living objects had superior and inferior individuals within it. Can anyone say that Plato and Aristotle, were anything other than humans or Baqal Ibn Hainqa, who was a proverbial dupe and idiot was not a human being?

It is true that Plato and Aristotle, though shared human components, but they were unique in their sphere of influence and well above humans of their times. Similarly, Prophets, despite some commonalities with people were way above in their status due to communication with God and its relevant requirements.

If we dug deeper into prophetic features, we would find that there were several distinct qualities that were not found in ordinary human beings e.g. sleep could not affect the awareness of Prophets. They were fully aware of their surroundings despite in a state of slumber or sleep. Prophet Muhammad (S) used to say to his companions: Keep your lines straight behind me in the prayers as I can see equally well behind my back as I can see ahead of me.

When Prophet's wives could become distinctly different from other woman in their conduct, after marriage to the Prophet, as indicated by the Qur'an "O, the Wives of the Prophet; you are not like other women, if you fear God." If this was true then how could the Messenger of God be similar to ordinary human beings?

In other words, the difference between a Prophet and an ordinary man was the reception of *Wahy* that implemented all other features relevant to the prophethood in the person of a Prophet, therefore after accepting an individual to be a Prophet, then its relevant attributes must be accepted along with his human frame.

Reasons And Needs For The Emergence Of Prophets

There were several reasons for the need to send Prophets. We have discussed a few in this section.

God provided every human being with two types of forces. One of those forces was spiritual and the other one was material in nature. As in order to correct problems arising in the physical state of human body, doctors and hakims were provided, it was also essential to address the spiritual aspects of human need for its healthy development or in case any malfunctions appeared. For this purpose, those physicians were needed, who were human in nature but better than Angels in their spiritual development. These kinds of people were called Prophets and Messengers in religious terminology. God had said in Surah Yunus:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُم مَّوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"O, mankind! there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts and a guidance and a mercy for the believers" (***10:57***).

An intelligent man could discover with logical reasoning that someone had created him and then he addressed himself to unearth the reasons of his creation. At this juncture, he could not reach the presence of God to ask Him the grounds of his design, nor God, due to His grandeur and splendour would come to his company to tell him the basis of his conception, educate him about those acts that could bring him nearer to Him, or throw him out of His presence.

To understand these things a middle man, who had two facets of his personality, was required. One of his aspects should manifest the beauty and perfection of God to acquire commands and instructions from Him. The other facet should be that he was one of the people whom he had to deliver that message, and his life pattern could become role model for the populace.

This view was not an understatement that man was a social animal, who could not alone fulfil his needs, since he was locked with the society at large. This was also evident that such a society was prone to excesses. Therefore, there was always a need for an upright law, and a just ruler who could implement such a legal system. Evidently, man-made laws and half-baked rulers could not accomplish such a demand. Hence, there was a need for an ideal person who could implement this rule of law, without fear of society's backlash. Such a system was called (*Deen*) i.e. the constitution of a religion and its administrator was called the Prophet.

Standard For The Identification Of A Prophet

There were some requirements that were needed to judge a person for his claim of Prophethood. A person, who made such a claim, should be free from all kinds of sins. His beliefs should be straight and

honourable, his morals must be reverent, his temperament should be pleasant, and he must possess some kind of a miracle, which might be logically possible but extremely difficult to achieve. He ought to be against the routine that could not be copied by the best minds of his time. This will prove beyond doubt that he was a messenger of the Almighty God.

One could see a light of abstinence and love of God on the foreheads of true Prophets. Their body parts were living examples of guidance and edification. They ignored people of wealth and power. They derided the appeal of mundane things. God fearing individuals were automatically drawn to them.

On the other hand, pretenders who claimed this office, were quite the opposite to real claimants. They sang to the tune of rich and powerful, and continued to remain busy in the lures of the world. This difference of their behaviour was as vivid, as we found day to be in comparison to the night. Any false claimant for Prophethood could not conceal his identity permanently despite best of efforts, and his real face would be identified sooner or later.

An easy way of recognising a Prophet was that when he gave news of the past and the future events, then that information would be absolutely correct, without any mending. Foretelling of events correctly was the testimony of claimant's authenticity, because his knowledge was not acquired from any mundane source. Rather, it was given by the divine source.

Another way of judging the truth of a claimant was to see if articles of his Shariah were congruent with logic and in agreement with the true nature. If his practices were in accordance with that standard then it would count as an argument in favour of his claim.

Again, if a recognised Prophet of the past declared the signs of an incoming Prophet, then this would also be a way to evaluate his assertion. In any case the best way of appraising a claimant was to find two essential ingredients namely – the purity of his being (infallibility) and possession of a miracle by him. If an activist was devoid of these two essential elements, then one must understand that he is a fake petitioner.

Definition Of Miracle

Literal meaning of the word – miracle was to make someone to submit or yield to its potency. In the vocabulary of theology, a miracle was defined to be an act from God that was beyond a normal approach. It usually came out of the hands of a Prophet, provided it was linked to someone's claim of Prophethood or Imamate.

If such an act appeared at the hands of a person before his proposed claim, then it was called '*Arhas'*, and if it was shown by a reverent person, who was not claiming Prophethood then it was called '*Karamat'* (supernatural). Otherwise, it was called *Istedraj* in the language of theology.

It was generally said that the things a Prophet achieved through his miracle could also be performed by

a magician, trickster or a hypnotist. Therefore, how could a miracle become a proof of one's legitimacy as a Prophet? It was therefore important that the difference between miracle and magic be clearly established.

Magic was a technique that could be acquired by learning, whereas Miracle could not be acquired through learning. Magic could be countered but Miracle could not be undone even by a greatest scholar.

Magic depended upon special requirements, hidden gadgets, specific times and terms and conditions of the pledge. Miracle was free of any such restrictions. A miracle was real, while most of magic was a deception. It was performed in a manner that eyes were tricked into believing and no permanent change took place.

The change that happened in a miracle was real. For example, if some Prophet changed a pebble into a grape, then all constituents and attributes of pebble will cease to exist and it would become a real fruit of whatever denomination that was desired by the Prophet. Magic could show a pebble to change into a grape but its nature would not alter. When you try to eat it, it will still be a stone as before. In contrast, when Moses produced water from a bone-dry ground, each and every person accompanying him drank from it to their full, or when the Prophet invited his relatives for the introduction of Islam, then a little food that was cooked at home was more than sufficient for the big bellied Arabs to satisfy their appetite.

Miracle was always shown by virtuous and just people, whereas magic was performed by crafty, lewd and evil people.

Difference Between A Prophet And Messenger

In literal sense, Prophet and a Messenger were the same but their implied meanings were different. In theological words, one could say that Prophet was a person who was appointed by God to bring people to guidance, even if he had no new laws to implement. He might be an elucidator and a propagator of the legislations of a previous Prophet.

On the other hand, the one who was appointed by God as a Messenger would need to have a fresh constitution and a book. This showed that every Messenger could be a Prophet, but every Prophet could not be a *La nabiyya ba'di* or a Messenger. It was learned through some Ahadith of the Messenger of God that a Prophet was the one who saw the angel in a dream and heard their voice.

Numerical Strength Of Prophets

Nothing could be said with absolute authority about the numerical strength of the Prophets. However, a figure of one hundred and twenty-four thousand was generally accepted by most of the Muslim sects, out of which one hundred and thirteen were *Rasuls* (Messengers) including the five who were Grand Messengers. The rest were Prophets.

In the Qur'an, twenty-six lofty people were mentioned by name, whose Prophethood had been confirmed, but for the rest Qur'an simply mentioned:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُم مَّن قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُم مَّن لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ

"And certainly, We sent messengers before you: there are some of them that We have mentioned to you and there are others whom We have not mentioned to you" (***40:78***).

Also, it was cited that this chain of guidance was not linked to a specific nation or a country but all the nations (of the world) had benefited from this blessing. The Qur'an mentioned as follows:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولٌ

"There is a Messenger for every nation" (***10:47***).

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا

"We have sent a Messenger to every nation" (***16:36***).

وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ

"There is no nation that has not received any warner" (***35:24***).

وَاسْأَلْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رُّسُلِنَا

"And ask those of Our messengers whom We sent before you" (***43:45***).

وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

"There is a guide for every nation" (***13:7***).

These Qur'anic Verses clearly mentioned that other nations had also received Prophets and guides. On this basis, some scholars proposed that Krishna in India and Zoroaster in Iran were also among the chosen people. Although, this view could not be challenged, there was no way to ascertain this analysis.

Meaning Of The Phrase ‘Ul Al-Adhm

It was understood through the statements of Imams that the phrase – *‘Ul Al-Adhm* stood for those Prophets who were associated with enduring Shariah, and they had terminated the Shariah of the previous Prophets, while they were steadfast in their duties and accepted with great dignity all the trials and tribulations that fell on them in the task of preaching. Their names were, Noah (‘a), Ibrahim (‘a), Moses (‘a), Jesus (‘a) and the last of the Prophets – Muhammad (S), whose legislation would last until the Day of Judgement.

Superiority Of Prophet Muhammad Over All The Prophets

There were several reasons to prove that Prophet Muhammad (S) had a precedence over all the Prophets. It had been proved without doubt that the person of Muhammad (S) and his holy progeny were the reason for the creation of the entire Universe, as stated by Shaykh As-Saduq in his *Risala al-I’tiqadia*. Allama Al-Majlisi also quoted the famous *Hadith al-Qudsi*, which stated, “There shouldn’t be any Heavens or Earth, had I not been created by God?”

It was also an established fact that qualities and the attributes that were awarded to the Prophet by God, extended beyond the cumulative approach of all the previous Prophets. It was also interesting to note that the miracles, which were given to previous Prophets, remained in existence only during the lifetime of those Prophets. However, our Prophet had a living miracle that still existed today in the form of the Holy Qur’an. It excelled every book in all departments of highly appraised literature.

Prophet Muhammad was marked as a Prophet for the Universe and not for a given tribe or a country. The chain of Prophethood was terminated after him. His Shariah dominated all other religious legislations since his advent and it would continue to do so until the Day of Judgement.

It was learnt through books of various Islamic sects that all other Prophets received the office of Prophethood after submitting to the Prophethood of Muhammad (Peace be upon him). It was acknowledged through various reports that several Prophets approached God through the intercession of Prophet Muhammad (S) to remove some of the pains and hurts that they underwent during their period of preaching.

Some Special Qualities Of Islamic Shariah

We have considered the some of the special aspects of Islamic Shariah:

1. This was a complete code of life and there was no department of human need, where there were no explicit solutions available for its problems, had escaped its attention. No other religions could claim this status.

2. Islam created a balance between the spiritual and material aspects of life and did not override it.

3. The Islamic laws were so flexible that it could cater for all times and for all people.

4. Islamic rules were simple and practicable. They were applicable to all people, irrespective of their material or physical status.

5. All of its rules were in harmony with nature.

Logical Evaluation Of Termination Of Prophethood

If we removed the specifications of prejudice and bigotry and devoted our attention to this problem in the light of logic and wisdom, we would conclude that no new prophet was required after Muhammad (S), because logically there were four conditions under which a new prophet was required:

1. a Prophet was sent to a nation that had not received a Prophet before or had not received any message from the Prophet of another nation.

2. teachings of a previous Prophet had been completely forgotten, corrupted or lost

3. message was still incomplete and further divine elaborations were required

4. another Prophet was needed to aide an existing Prophet.

If we deeply studied these conditions, we could easily reach the conclusion that after Prophet Muhammad (S) none of the above conditions were applicable. The Qur'an testified that he was sent to the Universe as a warner and guide. It was also proven historically that his message reached the entire civilised world in his life time and the process was still ongoing at present. Therefore, no new Prophet was required in present times.

It was also true that teachings of the Prophet were still preserved in the books of *Ahadith* and the Qur'an

in its true and uncorrupted form. Therefore, there was no need for any new Prophet to come.

It was also established in the Qur'an that the Divine constitution (Deen) had been perfected and completed in the Prophet's lifetime.

So far as the fourth condition was concerned, it would have happened, if required in the duration of the Prophet's life. When all of these four conditions were not applicable today, then what was the fifth condition that permitted the need for a new Prophet to come?

Again, the arrival of a new Prophet today would be detrimental and not beneficial for the Ummah, because any new arrival would create a fracas of belief Verses infidelity, among the people. The ummah would be divided into two groups – those who believed in him and those who denied him. This division would not be an ordinary split but a split based upon principles. Who would then be responsible for this degradation of the society? Naturally the fingers would be pointed towards God and the Prophet that if any other person was to come after Muhammad (S) and faith in him was essential, then why God and His messenger remained tight–lipped during the time of revelations.

Such a premise was beyond God's mature judgment and ideal poised that He should shove people in a fresh dilemma of faith and infidelity. Therefore, when God and His Prophet had not instructed about any incoming prophet, whilst the Prophet had indicated the ending of this Divine office at the same time. It was then an irrefutable argument that this office of Prophethood had ended for good. This point of view was accepted by all the thinkers and scholars of Muslim Ummah.

Removal Of Some Doubts

First Objection And Its Reply

It was said that in the phrase '*La*' for the negation of perfection such as – *La salatul jaril masjade illa fil masjid.*

The one who lived near the mosque his prayer could not become perfect unless it was performed in the mosque. Therefore, some of the antagonists claimed that the phrase – *La nabiyya ba'di* – meant that no perfect Prophet would come after Prophet Muhammad (S).

The correct reply to this suggestion was that the word '*La*' was undoubtedly for the negation of the main subject, which was Prophethood, and if in a sentence, it was metaphorically used due to its internal or external requirement then it did not mean that such a symbolic representation had become a universal law to be applicable everywhere. If it was true then it would create fundamental problems for the opponents.

If an idol worshipper returned this argument to them by saying that the phrase – *La ilaha illa Allah* – meant that there was no perfect god other than Allah (this meant that there were lots of imperfect gods),

then what would be their answer to such a claim?

Similarly, the one who denied the Qur'an said that in the phrase:

لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ

***"La raiba fihi, there is no doubt in it"* (*2:1*).**

The word '*La*' was for the negation of perfection i.e. in the Qur'an there was some potential doubt that it may not be perfect, what would be their reply then? Whatever argument one would employ to answer the objection on – *La ilaha illa Allah* – was also applicable to *La nabiyya ba'di*.

Second Objection And Its Reply

The word *Khatm* meant the Stamp or Seal. It signified that if any other prophet comes, he would be under the stamp of Prophet Muhammad (S) or he will receive Prophethood by the authentication of Prophet Muhammad (S). The ignominy of this sentence was not subject to any word. When it was said that this was the stamp of a magistrate or a judge, then no right-minded person could assume that the use of this stamp would produce magistrates and judges.

Third Objection And Its Reply

When it was said about a person that he was *Khatm ash-Shu'ara* or *Khatm al-Fuqaha'*, then it did not mean that there was no poet or a legislator after him. It generally meant that pinnacle of his profession was perfectly placed with him. The answer to this doubt was that if at any place this word was used in its exaggerated form of perfection or excellence, then what was the compulsion to assume that its literal meaning had also completely changed and its real connotation had become obsolete?

Prominence Of Guided Imams Over The Prophets Other Than The Last Prophet

Here the prominence of guided imams over rest of the Prophets except Prophet Muhammad (S), had been discussed. There were three opinions on this subject from our earlier scholars:

A. they were superior to all the Prophets except Prophet Muhammad

B. Prophets had a precedence over Imams

C. only Grand Prophets had excellence over them.

However, if we considered the opinion of the later day scholars, it was almost agreed that the first option was more prevalent. There were several arguments to support this view.

First Argument

It was a proven fact that the guided Imams were true recipients of the legacy of the Prophet, in accordance with the Qur'anic Verse:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا

"Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants" **(*35:32*).**

It was mentioned in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda li-Dhawi 'l-Qurba* and *Fraid us-Samtain* that Prophet Muhammad's (S) knowledge was far in excess of the other Prophets. Therefore, legatees of the Prophet would definitely excel those whom the Prophet had outshone.

Second Argument

It was reported that the Prophet had said, "If God had not created Ali, then there was no counterpart to my daughter Fatimah, even among the likes of Adam or the other Prophets."

It was evident that the Prophet had made this statement irrespective of being the Prophet or the father of Fatimah. This shows that Amir Al-Mu'minin was way ahead of the previous Prophets. The same argument was true for the rest of Imams. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had said: No one can find the essentials of faith, unless he accepts that whatever was true for our first is also true for our last".

Third Argument

This argument was a branch of the second argument which showed that Imams Ahl al-Bayt's knowledge was greater than rest of the prophets except that of Prophet Muhammad (S).

It was mentioned that *Isme Aazam* (Greatest name of God) had total of seventy-three letters. Adam ('a) was granted an access to twenty-five of those letters, Noah ('a) got fifteen, Moses ('a) got five, Jesus ('a) got two but Prophet Muhammad (S) had been given access to seventy-two letters and only one was kept by God in His treasure of knowledge.

Those names that were granted to the Prophet were also passed on to his progeny i.e. infallible Imams. That is why their knowledge and station was very high among the previous prophets.

Fourth Argument

This Hadith of the Prophet was very famous among Shi'as and Sunnis, wherein the Prophet had said, "The one who wants to comprehend the knowledge of Adam, gentleness of Noah, amity of Abraham, majesty of Moses and piety of Jesus, then he must see Ali Ibn Abi Talib."

This was a clear-cut report, which established the attributes of Ali against the cumulative features of previous five Prophets.

Fifth Argument

It was mentioned in *Basa'ir al-Darajt* that rest of the prophets did not receive the office of Prophethood, until they took oath on the unity of God, the Prophethood of Muhammad and Wilayat of the infallible Imams.

This idea of Imams Ahl al-Bayt to be more distinguished than the previous Prophets was subjected to some criticism by suggesting that no one could equal Prophets in their virtuosity (*Thawab*), therefore, non-prophets could not be compared to the Prophets in respect to their status. This criticism was unacceptable due to certain reasons.

It was not established that elevation in status depended solely on the abundance of *Thawab* (return of good deeds), because Qur'an sets a different standard. It stated:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ

***"Surely Allah has chosen him in preference to you, and He has increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique"* (*2:247*).**

This thesis that a non-prophet's *Thawab* could not equal the virtuosity of a Prophet was against the arguments put forward by the own school of the critic. It was mentioned in *Ahya al-Uloom* of Imam Ghazali: The one who sought knowledge with a view to please God by narrating *Ahadith* to the people, then God would grant him approvals (blessings) equal to the receipts of seventy Prophets.

Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani wrote in his book *Ghunyat at-Talibeen*, "Anyone who seeks one chapter of knowledge to spread it among the people then God will grant him the returns of seventy prophets and candid people." If on account of this Sunni belief an ordinary scholar could gain *Thawab* equal to seventy Prophets, then there should not be any hesitation in accepting our thesis.

If we accepted that credits of a non-prophet could not equal to that of the prophets, then this decree was only for the ummah of that Prophet. This meant that a person who was a prophet for certain people, he then definitely would appear superior to them in his status. Since Imams of Ahl al-Bayt were not the

subjects of the previous Prophets, therefore, their status could not be compared to the earlier Prophets.

Proof Of Imamah And Caliphate Of The Imams Of Ahl Al-Bayt

There were so many confirmations of the Caliphate and Imamate of Ahl al-Bayt that it required a treatise to present the entire information. We have already published two books to prove this proposal therefore, we have relied on two Qur'anic Verses and two narrations for the moment, and those who want to seek further information could refer to our website.

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ

"Submit to Allah, His Prophet and the People of Amr [***Authority***] ***among you"*** (***4:59***).

It has been proven that a directive clause was factual in its application, unless some contradictory article or its connexion was available. Although no such clash was offered to dislodge this directive, we therefore, had to agree to it being a command. On the other hand, in this Verse, a clear ruling was available as obedience to God and the Prophet was obligatory and obedience to the people of authority was associated with it, therefore, it was also enforced.

Furthermore, it was evident from the Verse that obedience to God and His Prophet was not attached to a time or space frame. Consequently, same would be true for the People of Authority. As a corollary to this conclusion, we could safely assume that such People of Authority should also be flawless and perfect. This proposition had been accepted by a foremost cynic like Fakhruddin Razi, who wrote in *Tafsir al-Kabir*.

In this Verse God had made the obedience to the People of Authority, an obligation. To conform with it was announced to be mandatory and these must be infallible people. This fact was clear as daylight that none other than Muhammad wa Aali Muhammad (ʻa) were infallible among the entire Muslim ummah. This statement was elucidated by Allah in *Aayat al-Tatheer*. Ibn Abbas said that he had heard the Prophet of God say that He, Ali, Hasan, Husayn and nine sons from his progeny were all infallible[1].

We had to consider a few things in order to prove the Imamate of Ahl al-Bayt (ʻa), in accordance with this Verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

"O those who believe, fear God and stand by the side of truthful" (***9:119***).

As it had been proven earlier that a directive clause was factual in its application, therefore, the support of the candid (*Sadiqeen*) people, was compulsory in the same way that fear of God (*Taqwa*) was

compulsory.

The Islamic Shariah was not confined to a certain country, race or time. Therefore, its prohibitions and allowances were sufficient for all the people, until the Day of Judgement. Intellect was compelled to concur with this reality that those people who were commanded to be with the candid were different, and those who were to be aided were different. Otherwise, followers and those who were to be followed would become the same, which was logically wrong.

Logic also made it clear that this association with the truthful was not spatial so that people from all corners of world were required to migrate from their lands to live with them. Rather, this association meant to arise with them in actions and words. This also proved that one of these people (*Sadiqeen*) must be present all the time in this world, so that believers could be salvaged in both worlds by siding with them, as mentioned in a famous Hadith of the Prophet:

"Mummata wa lum yarifu imama zamanahi mata matatal jahiliya". A person who failed to recognise the Imam of his time has suffered a death of ignorance.

When this association was the fellowship in actions and deeds, then we had to believe that Sadiqeen must be free of all kinds of sins – minor or major. Wording of the Verse proved that true Sadiqeen were those who were infallible, because only that person could command truthfulness, who were free of deviations from childhood to the end of his life. There was no one in the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (S), other than Imams of Ahl al-Bayt who was capable of this station. Moreover, no one else claimed this position among the nation of Islam.

If one was still not satisfied with this concept then we could offer few statements from authentic Sunni books. It was mentioned in *Tafsir Durr al-Manthur* on the authority of Ibn Abbas, who said about the elucidation of the Qur'anic Verse:

كُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

***"kunu ma' as-sadiqeen, be with those who are truthful"* (*9:119*).**

Meant to be with Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a). It was written in *Yanabi' al-Mawadda li-Dhawi 'l-Qurba* that truthful were Muhammad (S) and his holy progeny. Manuscript of Hamvaini stated that – "kunu ma' as-sadiqeen", meant to be with Muhammad (S) and Aal al-Muhammad ('a).

Narrations

1) Hadith Ath-Thaqalayn: The Prophet had told his companions on several occasions, "I am leaving behind two heavy weights for your guidance and those are the Book of God and my Ahl al-Bayt. If you remain in touch with both of them; you will not go off course. These two will not part from each other till

they meet me at the spring of Kawthar."

To provide complete commentary of this Hadith, we would require volumes of written work. The essence of this Hadith could be summarized by saying that for successfully governing a country, a good constitution and some capable people to implement and elucidate it, were required. Likewise, the Prophet of God had also left two things to stabilise the state of Islam – Qur'an and his Ahl al-Bayt to implement and protect its constitution. These people were the true successors of the Prophet.

2) It was reported on the authority of Jabber Ibn Abdullah Ansari, in *Yanebeul Mowadda* and **Kifayat ul-'Asr**, that at the time of revelation of the Qur'anic Verse,

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ

"Submit to Allah, His Prophet and the People of Amr or Authority among you." (***4:59***)

that he asked the Prophet (S), "We have recognised God and his Messenger, but who are these People of Authority that are joined with God and the Prophet in compliance?" The Prophet replied that they were Ali ('a), Hasan ('a), Husayn ('a), Ali Ibn Husayn ('a), Muhammad Ibn Ali ('a), who is the East and the West to surrender on his hands.

Unanimity Of The Concept Of Al-Mahdi

So far as the history of world religions was concerned, it was learned that Jews, Christians, Hindus or Buddhists all had a concept of a saviour, and Muslims in particular had a belief in the coming of the Mahdi ('a) with minor differences in his features. Sound reasoning also guided us to the conclusion that a religion whose foundation rested on the Justice and potency of God, in the world that was full of injustice, malice and aficionados of vainness, must have a day in its calendar when ignominy and malice would disappear like an erroneous letter, and it would be replaced by fairness and equity. This could only become effective when Imam Al-Mahdi ('a) returned to the world.

The Prophet of God had said, "If only one day of the existence of this world is left, then God will stretch it so that a man from my Ahl al-Bayt may come, who is my namesake and he will fill the world with justice and equity as it was originally filled with spite and brutality." The Prophet had known that many pretenders will arise and come forth.

Therefore, it was his duty to leave no stone unturned to propagate his attributes so much so that the responsibility of those who were caught in their web of lies would not be shifted to the Prophet. That is why he explained all aspects of his attributes, including facial characteristics in great detail, so that any deficit may not remain obvious in completing the argument.

Mahdi Is From The Ahl Al-Bayt Of The Prophet

The Prophet (S) had said that Mahdi (‘a) was from the descendants of Fatimah (‘a) (Abu Daoud, Sunan Ibn Maaja). In *Al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqah* Prophet was quoted to say that Imam Al-Mahdi was from his Ahl al-Bayt (‘a)

Salman al-Farsi narrated that the Prophet had told him in the presence of his grandchildren Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) and Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) that Mahdi (‘a) would be from my Ahl al-Bayt. Salman said that he asked the Prophet again, pointing towards Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) and Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) to know from whose lineage he would be? The Prophet replied by putting his hands on the shoulders of Imam Al-Husayn (‘a), “From the issue of this son of mine.” (*Yanabi’ al-Mawadda li-Dhawi ‘l-Qurba*).

This Hadith also annulled the claims of Qadiani pretender, who used his lineage with Salman to claim himself as Mahdi, while his own blood relationship with Salman al-Farsi was without any substantial proof, and Salman himself had quoted the above-mentioned Hadith from the Prophet (S).

Imam Mahdi’s Personal Features

The Prophet said that Imam Al-Mahdi was from my progeny. His facial colour was Arabic and the body features resembled the Israelites. He had a mole on the right cheek that shone like bright stars. He would fill the earth with justice and equity when it was clouded with abhorrence and brutality. During his period of reign creatures of the earth, heavens and space will all be satisfied and blissful.

Despite other arguments that were available to annul the dubious claims of pretenders, such as Mirza Muhammad Ali Bab, Bahaullah and Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani, this single Hadith that was quoted above was sufficient to shatter their false claims, because their features had no resemblance with that of the Prophet, and nor did justice and equity prevail in the world during their life time.

Birth Of Imam Al-Mahdi (‘A)

We have already mentioned that although Muslims were united in the concept of Mahdi, yet some minor differences still existed, including about the timing of his birth i.e. whether he was already born or whether he would take birth near the time of his appearance?

Almost all Shi’as and some Sunni thinkers were of the opinion that he had already born on 15th Shaban, 255 Hijra in Samarra. A majority of Sunni scholars believed that he would be born towards the end of time. We have quoted the name of some Sunni Scholars, and the books in which their opinion was recorded as Imam being born in 255 Hijra. These were:

1. Ibn Abi Hadid, Commentary on Nahj al-Balagha Vol. 1 p. 93, Vol. 2 p. 490;

2. *Asaafur Ragebeen* p. 104 – 116;

3. *Shawahadun Nubuwwah* by Jami p. 213;

4. *Fasoole Mohimma* of Ibn Sabag;

5. *Yanabi' al-Mawadda li-Dhawi 'l-Qurba;*

6. *Kitab at-Tabeyan* by Allama Hafiz Muhammad Kunji;

7. *Kashf Al-Makhfi fi Manaqib'e Mahdi;*

8. *Al Tawzeeh fi Tawatar Ma Jaa fil Muntazer Al-Mahdi* by Shokafi;

9. *Al Orful Wardi fi Akhbar'e Mahdi* by Hafiz Jalaluddin Suyuti;

As Imam Hasan Al-'Askari ('a) was martyred in 260 Hijra, therefore, this pride of Jesus and Yahya took the office of Imamate at a tender age of five.

Presence Of The Sign Of God Was Essential In Every Interval Of Time

God had created a system where every constituent was dependent on different causes and effects. This mechanism was also contained in life and death, health and illness and poverty and affluence where everything appeared under right conditions and then disappeared in the void of non-existence under a set of conditions.

If things happened in opposition to this nature, then it was called Miracle, which was another name for happenings against nature. It was another thing that this pattern of life might be entirely matter-oriented or some of its links might be of divine nature. Anyhow, God had bound this system with the presence of His Sign (Prophet or Imam), therefore, if from this planet the sign of God disappeared for a short time then this system could not survive.

This point of view was supported by many authentic traditions. The Prophet of God had said, “My progeny is the reason for the survival of the inhabitants of this earth, just as stars are a balancing force for the populace of space.” Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that if by chance only two people were left in the world then one of them must be the Sign of God, because no one could survive without that.

It was mentioned in *Bihar al-Anwar*, that presence of the sign of God was essential before with and after the end of mortal life. If currently he (Imam Mahdi) was in occultation then there was no reason that one should deny his existence, especially when God – the Almighty had declared the attributes of believers saying that they believed in the unseen, such as Paradise, Hell, Barzakh, the Day of Judgement and the Angels.

Reply Of Some Doubts About The Presence Of Imam Mahdi

The first and foremost doubt was about the length of Imam’s life, which was well over a thousand years. Critics said that such a long life was not possible. We would say that such an objection could only be made by a person who did not believe in the Power and Majesty of God, otherwise, it was an established fact that some Prophets like Khizr, Ilyas and Jesus were kept alive by God and their life was much longer than that of Imam Al-Mahdi (‘a). What was then any impediment for God in granting Imam Al-Mahdi (‘a) a longer span of life? Shaykh Muhammad Yusuf Al-Kunji used the same argument in his book on Imam Al-Mahdi (‘a).

It was mentioned in various books of Islamic history that many people had existed before Imam Al-Mahdi whose life span was not much different from his. Prophet Adam’s life span was nine Hundred and thirty years, his grandson Shees lived for nine hundred and ten years, while Noah according to the Qur’anic testimony preached for more than nine hundred and fifty years, while his overall period of stay in this world was around fifteen hundred years. In the light of these examples the objection on Imam’s longevity was a baseless criticism.

The second criticism questioned Imam Mahdi’s occultation and the usefulness of his presence if we could not see or meet him to seek the solution of some legal issues? It could be answered here that to restrict the Imam just for offering solutions to some legal issues was a grave mistake, when the people of intellect and erudition knew that the benefit of Imam’s life was not confined to the explanation of some religious legal matters alone.

We have already explained that the continuation of life in this environment was coupled with the life of Imam, which was a great benefit for humanity. Muhaqqiq al-Tusi wrote in *Tajrid* that Imam’s existence was a blessing from God and his apparent manifestation was a second approval but its non-implementation was due to our own acts.

Moreover, people of scholarship knew that guidance or diversion did not require a physical presence of the guide before our eyes. God was veiled from our vision, yet He guided. Satan influenced us from a

void of space and time. Therefore, why could our Imam not fulfil his duties without appearing before us? This question was asked from the Imam and he replied – “Just as the Sun continued to benefit the Universe even when it was covered by the clouds”.

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1. Fraidis Samtain and Yanabi’ al-Mawadda li-Dhawi ‘l-Qurba.

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Chapter 36: Purity Of The Essence Of Prophets, Imams And Angels

Shaykh Abu Ja’far said that our belief about the purity of the essence and physicality was that they were all infallible and free of any kind of sin and errors. They neither committed minor nor a major sin nor disobeyed God. On the other hand, they acted as they were advised. Anyone who declined their stature in any way was ignorant of their standing. Anyone who was unaware and impolite about their status was a kafir.

We also believed that these people were free of sins from the beginning of their creation. They were gifted with all decorum of knowledge and piety, and they were never associated with ignorance and sin at any stage of their life.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 36

A Summary Of Muslim’s Divergence On The Issue Of Purity Of The Prophets

There were several differences that still persisted among Muslims about the sanctity and purity of the Prophets. There was a major section of Sunni Muslims, who completely denied the inviolability of the Prophets, and considered the possibility of committing mistakes and errors of judgement by the Prophets

as an open reality.

Some of them differentiated between infidelity and sin and they said that Prophets could not execute infidelity but they could be sinful. Some of them discriminated between major and minor sins and claimed that Prophets were prone to minor sins. There were others from the same school who proposed that Prophets could commit mistakes and sins unknowingly and some of them suggested that the Prophets were as sinful as anyone else, before assuming the office of Prophethood, but they were pure after becoming Prophets.

In short, the true belief about the Prophets was that what was held by Shi'as, i.e. Prophets were impervious to sins and mistakes from the birth to their demise. They did not commit sins, either purposefully or accidentally or by speech and actions before or after assuming the office of Prophethood. Shi'as held the same belief about Imams and Angels. There were numerous reports and narrations available to prove the sanctity of their view. This subject had been dealt by us in great detail in our book *Asbat al-Imamah wa al-Imam al-Athar* and readers could refer to it.

Literal Meaning Of Purity ('Ismah)

There were several definitions of this subject, but the most comprehensive definition was that *'Ismah* was a gift of God, which was granted by God to His chosen subjects. It made them neither to delay any divine command nor commit a major or minor slip. This showed that Prophet's 'Ismah was by choice and they had the capability to commit sins and mistakes, but they chose not to do it by the strength of this award, and behave in accordance with the will and desire of God. That is why they were adored and loved by people.

Arguments In Defence Of The Prophets

If Prophets were not pure and sanctified then the very reason of their emergence was annulled. Then, neither their lecturing would be respected nor people would submit to them. As a result, God's warning would be justified on them, which stated:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

"You invite people to virtuosity and forget your own conduct" **(*2:44*).**

People could also taunt them and their Prophethood by reminding their sins to them, which they had committed, and they would reject their decrees. No right-minded person would choose such an ambassador, and if appointed then his diktats would be refused. We, therefore, must accept that Prophets were pure and infallible.

If Prophets could commit sins, then they would be branded as fornicators, and according to the Qur'an their testimony would be unacceptable even in mundane affairs. In these conditions who would rely on their religious proclamations? Not to speak of God, even a person of mediocre intellect would not make such a mistake.

If we accepted that Prophets could commit sins, then they could also lie. If it was so, who would then believe in their assurances of Paradise, Hell, proscriptions and allowances. All of their acts would be subject to misgivings. Therefore, no right–minded person would like to follow them and it would result in rescinding the purpose of their appointment.

If Prophets were capable of committing sins and mistakes then it would amount to the acquiescence of two opposites at the same time, therefore, the acceptance and defiance of both at the same time would be essential, which was logically impossible. The explanation of this suggestion was in the following. Since they were Prophets, therefore, according to the Qur'an their fellowship was essential:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

"If you love God then follow me, God will then love you too" **(*3:31*).**

Again, in another Qur'anic Verse it was said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

"We sent no messenger save that he should be obeyed by Allah's leave ..." **(*4:64*).**

Now if they were also sinful, then according to Qur'an, every sinful person was an unjust being, and for such people there was a clear divine command:

وَلَا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ

"And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touch you, and you have no guardians besides Allah, then you shall not be helped" **(*11:113*).**

God again spoke through Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ

"Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all

shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion" (***16:90***).

It was evident that submission and defiance were opposite to each other and their accumulation at the same time was impossible. Therefore, a thing that was impossible by acquisition was also futile and false, therefore, the view that Prophets were sinful was wrong and baseless.

A Short Description Of The Sanctity Of The Imams

The reasons and argument that had been provided to prove the sanctity of the Prophets was also applicable to the Imams. Therefore, there was no need to set up a separate chapter for them. For complete understanding of this subject, readers could refer to our book *Asbat al-Imamah*.

The episode of Haroot and Maroot Angels was addressed in some of the less authentic books of Islam and was borrowed from the Jewish traditions. It was totally unreliable due to its frail reasoning. In the light of these facts, it was essential to have complete faith in the sanctity and purity of Prophets, Imams and the Angels.

Imams, like the Prophets should be unique in the fields of knowledge, God-fearing disposition, abstinence, piety, generosity, bravery, modesty, sense of honour and benevolence, as compared to the rest of the Ummah. Otherwise, preference of the subdued over the triumphant would become evident and the blame could be shifted to God, which was beyond the status of God's justice. If on the other hand, there was someone who was at par with the Prophet and Imam in all the relevant fields, then to appoint someone else as Prophet or Imam in his place would cause preference without the subdued, which was immoral. It was therefore, necessary that the sanctity and purity of Prophets, Imams and Angels must be observed.

An Important Clarification

Those allegorical Verses that were used by the antagonists to indicate the effluence of Prophets were fully answered in the recognised and authentic books of Shi'a faith. Readers were advised to study a book called *Tanziat al-Anbiya'* written by Sayyid Murtaza *'Ilm al-Hoda* and *Ismahu al-Anbiya' wa al-Imam* written by Sayyid Abul Qasim.

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Chapter 37: Exaggeration And Entrust

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our belief regarding *Ghali* and *Mofawweza* was that in reality they did not believe in God, and in fact they were worse than Jews, Christians, Majoos, Qudria, Khawaraij and even greater evildoers than the pagans and wicked innovators of religion. They were those people who had degraded God the most.

Allah had said that no one whom He had given the Book and wisdom and awarded with Prophethood would go to people and say that God should be abandoned and people should become their servants. Instead, He would say:

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

***"It is not possible for any human being unto whom Allah has given the scripture and wisdom and the prophethood that he should afterwards have said unto mankind: Be slaves of me instead of Allah; but* (*what he said was*)*: Be ye faithful servants of the Lord by virtue of your constant teaching of the Scripture and of your constant study thereof"* (*3:79*).**

وَلَا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا ۗ أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

***"And he commanded you not that ye should take the angels and the prophets for lords. Would he command you to disbelieve after ye had become Muslims?"* (*3:80*).**

God had also commanded us not to exaggerate in our religion, i.e. we should not transgress the limits of religion and we should have right attitude about God:

لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ

***"Do not be excessive in your belief"* (*4:171; 5:77*).**

- It has been our belief that the Prophet was poisoned during the battle of Khyber and that poison had continued to act, until it damaged his heart and the Prophet died under its effect on 28th Safar, in 11th Hijra.

- Amir Al-Mu'minin was martyred by Abdur Rahman Ibn Muljam. He was struck with sword on 19th Ramadan and he died on 21st Ramadan in 40 Hijra. He was buried in Najaf.

- Imam Al-Hasan's wife Joda, the daughter of Ashus – an agent of Mu'awiyah, poisoned him, may God curse both father and daughter. He died on 28th Safar in 50 Hijra.

- Imam Al-Husayn was martyred by Sanan Ibn Ans Al-Nakha'i in Karbala on 10th of Muharram, 61 Hijra.

- Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a) died in 95 Hijra with poison administered on the instructions of Walid Ibn Abdul Malik. He was buried in Jannat al-Baqih.

- Imam Al-Baqir was poisoned by Ibrahim Ibn Walid on 7th Dhu 'l-Hijjah in 114 Hijra.

- Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq was poisoned on the instructions of Mansur Dwaneqi on 25th Shawwal in 148 Hijra.

- Harun Rashid poisoned Imam Musa Al-Kadhim and he died on 25th Rajab of 183 Hijra.

- Mamun Al-Rashid poisoned Imam Ali Ar-Ridha and he died on 23rd Zeeqad or 30th Safar in 203 Hijra.

- Imam Muhammad At-Taqi was poisoned on the orders of Motasam Billah Abbasi and he died on 25th Jamadi ath-Thani or towards the end of Zeeqad in 220 Hijra.

- Motawwakal Abbasi poisoned Imam Ali An-Naqi and he died on 4th Rajab, 254 Hijra.

- Mu'tamad Abbasi poisoned Imam Hasan Al-'Askari and he died on 8th Rabi ul Awwal, 264 Hijra.

We have believed that these acts of murder and poisoning actually happened to the Imams and there was no ambiguity among the people about these murders, as proclaimed by those who exaggerated about them. In fact, people had seen them dying in front of their own eyes and they had not adopted this view simply on rumours and hearsay.

Those who claimed that these Imams were not actually murdered, but it happened with their virtual bodies or with people of similar facial outlook, would be excommunicated from the religion, and we would disagree with them. This is because the Prophet of God had earlier warned us that all of them would be murdered. However, if someone said that they were not actually murdered, such a person then falsified the Imams. And, the one who falsified Imams would have in reality denied God. Such a person would be outside the venue of Islam.

Anyone who chose a religion other than Islam, his religion would not be accepted and he would be among those who had lost their way. Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) used to say in his supplication to God:

"O God, I deride in your presence all of mine commands and control that I possess, and I show my disgust with those who claim things about us that we do not possess. O God, Creation and Command are with You. We only worship you and seek help from you alone. You are our Creator and that of our forefathers. Divinity and Worship is only reserved for you. O God, dispatch your curse on Christians who tried to diminish your Majesty, and also curse on those people who side with them, among your creatures.

O God we are your servants and the progeny of those who were also your servants. We are neither capable of our profit or loss nor life or death and nor we have the capability to recreate our self on the Day of Judgement Anyone who thinks that we create and provide sustenance to them, we are disgusted with them as Jesus was dismayed with the Christians. O God, we have not invited them on the belief that they possess about us, therefore, do not question us about what they say about us and forgive us for the ills they spread about us.

"My Lord! leave not one of the disbelievers in the land" **(*71:26*).**

"If Thou shouldst leave them, they will mislead Thy slaves and will beget none save lewd ingrates" **(*71:27*).**

Honourable Zarara said that he asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that an individual from the lineage of Abdullah Ibn Sabaa proclaimed *Tafweez* (delegation of powers from God to Imams). Imam asked him what he meant about *Tafweez* (delegation of powers). He replied that God had only created the Prophet and Ali, and the rest of the powers were handed over to them. They now created, provided sustenance, resurrected and made people to die.

Listening to this Imam replied: This enemy of God was telling lies. He was asked to go to him and read the Verse of Surah Al-Raad, which spoke thus:

أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

"Have they associated others with God, who can create like Him and it made the two creations vague in their mind. **(*O, Prophet*)** ***tell them that God alone is the Creator of every thing, and He is Unique and Powerful"*** **(*13:16*).**

Zarara said that when he approached that man and told him what the Imam had said, he was bewildered, and dumbfounded, as if his mouth had been filled with handful of stones.

Yes, God had entrusted His Prophet with religious responsibilities and legal matters as indicated in Qur'an:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانتَهُوا

"...And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back..." **(*59:7*).**

The same responsibilities and decrees had been passed on to the Imams. A sign of those who followed the footsteps of *Ghalis* and *Mofawweza* was that they abhorred the learned scholars and claimed that they toned down the majesty of Imams. Among the *Ghalis*, a sect called *Hallagia* could be recognised by their statements that God, due to intense supplication of his devotees manifested through them. They could also be recognised by the denial of obligatory deeds such as prayers and fasting.

They declared that they were aware of *Ism al–Azam* of God and asserted that God had incarnated in them. They had a further imprudent claim that if a person was sincere, and developed the understanding of their religion then he was more respectable in their sight than the Prophets.

Among their many false claims was the one that they were aware of the knowledge of Alchemy (transformation of base metals into precious metals), but in fact they knew nothing, and their job was to deceive people. O, God do not include us among them and remit your curse on them.

[1] [1]
SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 37

If we took a cursory glance at the history of world's civilisations and religions, we would find that the advent of polytheism was due to a personality cult and a feeling of excessive devotion. We are,

however, not interested at this moment to discuss, in detail, the evolution of polytheism and its developed outlines.

Primarily, it was well known that *shirk* had started in the period between Adam and Noah. This was caused by the show of extreme affection towards certain godly people. Therefore, the five major deities whose names were – Wod, Swah, Yaooq, Yaghoos and Nasr, were actually very pious, God fearing, well respected and much-loved people, whose separation, after their death was so shocking for the masses that they decided to keep alive their memories by devising certain ways.

Meanwhile, Satan produced figurines of these people for the populace, and they were overjoyed with this demonstration. This gave their devotion and desires a sense of satisfaction and relief. Originally, these statuettes were kept out in the open, but with the start of winter those were moved inside the houses, this practice continued for a long time and when the new generations emerged with passage of time, this practice moulded into idol worshipping, as they had seen their forefathers sitting with respect in front of these shapes without knowing the reasons of this respect by their elders.

Gradually, these idolaters started imagining these figurines to be their helpers and intercessor with God. As time passed the statues of Prophets and their deputies were added to the collection. During the time of Prophet Muhammad's emergence, Arabia was engulfed with idolatry and the capital of this practice was Makkah and the House of God, where at least three hundred and sixty idols were placed, which belonged to different tribes, and some were kept as symbols of protection for journeys to the far-off lands, in pursuit of trade.

These people were not devoid of the concept of God. They had a vague imprint of Tawhid on their minds. The Qur'an substantiated this view: If you asked them who had created Heavens and the earth, they would certainly answer – God. They used this practice of idolatry as a vehicle to seek intercession of God through these statues. The Qur'an also validated this view:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِندَ اللَّهِ

"They worship those, other than God, who cannot offer any benefit or loss; they say that they are our intercessors in front of God" (***10:18***).

At another place, the same view was presented in another way. Those who had adopted others as their providers in place of God, said that they only praised them so that they might make them closer to God. These facts disclosed that self-appointed intercessors and recommended acts were not useful in the presence of God. Such mediators had to be approved by God. That was why God had commanded us to seek His approved intermediaries.

People's Attitude Towards Saintly People

After studying the history of world religions, we reached the conclusion that people were always in the habit of exaggerating the capabilities of their elders after indulging in their extreme love. That was the reason, which made the Jews and Christians to declare Prophet Ozair and Jesus as sons of God respectively. Precisely for this reason Allah had reprimanded them in the Qur'an by saying:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ

"O, the people of Book; do not exaggerate in your religion" (***5:77***).

The same attitude was also adopted for Prophet Muhammad (S). The people made inappropriate suggestions about him. Therefore, many individuals declared him god, while others absolutely refused his Prophethood, whilst some ignorant Muslims, who affirmed his witness by reciting Kalima, treated him as an ordinary sinful man like themselves. There were extremely small numbers of people who were on the balanced course.

The same attitude was adopted for the progeny of the Prophet i.e. about Imams. Many people refused to accept their Imamate and Caliphate, when some scaled Amir Al-Mu'minin down to the fourth position, and some considered him out of Islamic folds, while others lifted him to the station of divinity. They claimed that he was god, who appeared sometimes as Muhammad, and on other occasions materialized as Ali in human form and he only claimed himself as the servant of God just to test people in their faith, but in fact he was nothing but god himself.

Abul Khatab Muhammad Ibn Abi Zainab and his companions considered four persons as god. These were Ali, Fatimah and the respected Hasanain. They denied the divinity of Prophet Muhammad (S). However, Mokhammasa believed in the divinity of five individuals. They said that first divine was Muhammad, then his divinity was transferred to Ali, then to Fatimah and then finally to Hasan and Husayn. They also believed that Salman Farsi was also a Prophet appointed by Muhammad. They considered abandoning of the prayers and indulging into prohibitions was good, and believed in the transmigration of soul.

Similarly, the follower of Muhammad Ibn Bashir considered Muhammad as a deity and treated him as the manifestation of:

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

"He begets not, nor is He begotten". (***112:3***)

They considered that his divinity was transferable to the rest of Imams by virtue of transmigration.

Moghira Ibn Saeed Sayad Nehdi, Harrus Shami, Faras Ibn Hatam Qozvaini, Ibn abi Zarqa, Hasan Ibn Muhammad Ibn Baba Al-Qummi, Muhammad Abri, Muhammad Ibn Bashir and Mansur Hallaj all of them were the perpetrators of this evil design and contradictors of Islamic Shariah. The Imams had said much about them. They labelled these individuals as infidels and a degree worse than the Jews and Christians.

These realities made it clear that excessive approach was damaging from both angles, and the best route was the middle route, as suggested by Imam Ali in *Nahj al-Balagha*: "In these matters, the middle of the road approach is prescribed for you, and that was the behaviour of the Prophet as well."

Condemnation Of Ghalis By The Imams

Imams of Ahl al-Bayt had condemned those who possessed extreme views about them. It was reported in *Ihtijaj al-Tabrasi* from Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) that Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) had said: "Do not exceed us from the limits of adoration of God, and then claim whatever you desire about our credentials within these confines. Beware; do not exaggerate about us like Christians, as I am fed up with the Ghalis. "

Ibn Maskan reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), who said: "God will curse all those who say things about us, which we do not claim about ourselves. May God curse them who take us out of the worship and adoration of God, who is our Creator and to whom we have to return and who holds our existence. "

Ibn Baseer narrated that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had told him: "Abu Muhammad show your disgust for those people those who think that we are god". I replied – "I am disgusted with such people". Imam then said: "Express your dismay for those who presumed about us that we were Prophets". I replied, "I am fed up with those who hold such views".

It was reported in *Kitab Ayun Al-Akhbar* of Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) that once Mamoon asked him that he had been informed that some people exaggerated about Imam. Imam replied to him on the authority of his elders that Imam Ali had narrated from the Prophet: "Do not elevate me from my rightful place, because God has made me his servant before appointing me his Prophet, as God said:

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِّي مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ

"It is not meet for a mortal that Allah should give him the Book and the wisdom and prophethood, then he should say to men: Be my servants rather than Allah's" **(*3:79*).**

After quoting this Qur'anic Verse, the author continued with the statement of Imam Ali ('a), which affirmed: "Regarding me two kinds of people will be razed without any fault of mine, those who exceed in my love and the others who surpass in my animosity. I declare my revulsion in front of God against

those people who inflate me beyond my status, similar to Jesus who detested his followers."

He then said: We are sickened with anyone who suggested divinity for the Prophets and Imams in this life and the hereafter."

It was reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a), who said: "A least act that results in the loss of faith is to sit with a Ghali and listen to his chit chat and then approve his point of view, because my forefathers have told me that they were informed by the Prophet who said: There are two groups in Ummah, who have no share in Islam, they are Ghalis and Qudrias."

Types Of Exaggerations

Allama Al-Majlisi mentioned various types of *Ghuloo* or exaggeration in the 7th Volume of *Bihar Al-Anwar*. He said: "You must know how Ghuloo can be associated with the Prophets and Imams. According to them, they should be accepted as God. They should make them partners with God in creation and divinity. They would say that God has personified in them. God was forged with them. They possessed the knowledge of the unseen without Godly revelations or aspiration. They considered Imams as Prophets. They say that their souls moved within each other. They also said that their appreciation freed us from the worship of God, while fear of committing sin was diminished.

It would be infidelity and *shirk* to associate with any one of the above-mentioned conditions. It would be a reason to be excommunicated from the religion.

This view was supplemented by Qur'anic Verses and very strong logical arguments. It was therefore, important to realise that our Imams had shown their disgust against such people and threatened them with life. If anyone listened to a statement that was in opposition to the above-mentioned conditions then after labelling it as a design of Ghalis, they should reject it.

The Beliefs Of Mofaweza

There were a few ignorant claimants of love for Imams, who had some seeds of *Ghuloo*, and had the passion to address Imams of Ahl al-Bayt as a deity. However, due to strong reprimand of the Imams and apparent obligation to the Shariah laws, they could not openly label them as gods. Yet, internally they spoke of Imams with those attributes, which were solely reserved for God. They developed a view similar to the Jews that after creating Muhammad and his progeny, God had handed over the charge of creation, demise, resurrection, sustenance, making of clouds and provision of rains, healing the sick and remaining management of running the Universe to them.

This corrupt ideology in the religious legal terms was called – *Tafweez*, which literally meant to handover. This view was basically another form of *Ghuloo* or exaggeration. Its legal repercussions were no less than for the Ghalis. A minor difference between the two was that Ghalis openly denies God while

the *Mofawweza* apparently accepted God. These types of people were present in the life times of Imams. This was why they had strongly criticised and rejected them.

Rebuttals Of Mofawezza Thoughts Is Essential

There were several reasons for rebutting the Mofawweza's ideology. The first and the foremost reason was that that they claimed Muhammad and Aali Muhammad were God, when they had all the attributes and signs of having been created. No right-minded person could accept the divinity of those who appeared to be created like other human beings.

Secondly, sects like Ghalis have vanished today from the face of the earth. The Mofawweza however, were present everywhere, especially in our country.

Thirdly, an open invitation to the divinity of Imams was so alien that people could not be attracted to it, but *Tafweez* was so attractive that those people who are basically inclined to exaggeration were prone to accepting it. Consequently, even one person of this hideous ideology, if present anywhere could influence multitude of simple-minded individuals. This view was now spreading among our people like a contagious disease, and some wicked mullahs were sprinkling oil on this fire. In order to offset their teachings, we have submitted a detailed rebuttal of their thoughts.

Imam's Attitude To Mofawweza

It was reported from Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) that he said: "Anyone who believed that God was the architect of our deeds and He would then punish us, is an advocate of *Jabr* (compulsion), and the one who assumed that God had handed over the acts of creation, death and other divine responsibilities to Muhammad and his progeny was an exponent of Tafweez. The believer in Jabr was an infidel and believer in Tafweez was a mushrik".

Husayn Ibn Khalid had quoted a lengthy tradition from Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a), who had said: "O, the son of Khalid, the reports that pointed towards us regarding *Jabr* and *Tashbeh* (assigning) were the inventions of Ghalis, who lessened the majesty of God. Therefore, anyone who befriends them, in fact hates us and the one who detests them certainly loves us.

The one who blended with them was severed from us and whoever mingled with us was split from them. Anyone who was callous to them was kind to us. Whoever, revered them despised us and whosoever affronted them respected us. The one who conforms to them denied us, and the one who denied them conformed to us. O, son of Khalid, it is important for our Shi'as that they do not take any one of them as their friend or an aide."

Mofawweza Are Another Branch Of Ghalia Sect

It was just possible that a short-sighted person might say, that in the last report only Ghalis were condemned by the Imam, and this should not in any way be considered the censure of Mofawweza. To clear the ground, it could be said that their absolute exaggeration was veiled, so it remained hidden from many people's thoughts.

Although, majority of these people were weak and fragile, in their belief, some of them were very staunch. Tafweez was also a component of this mechanism. In other words, there were several types of Ghalis and Mofawweza.

Shaykh Al-Mufid wrote in *Sherh al-Aqaid*, "Mofawweza are another branch of the Ghalia sect, with a difference that they do not consider Imams as eternal, and consider them as a created being.

Shaykh Fadhlulla Noori Sheerazi wrote in the margin of *Awaelul Maqalat* a book written by Shaykh Al-Mufid that Mofawweza was another faction of Ghalis. Some other great scholars have the same opinion on this subject.

It was reported by Yasir, an attendant of Imam Ar-Ridha ('a), that he asked the Imam about his opinion regarding Tafweez. Imam replied: "God has entrusted his Prophet to deliver the message of his religion and then commanded people to accept what the Prophet is delivering and refrain from what he has proscribed. However, creation of life and death, provision of sustenance and its deliverance are kept under His control. He declared this position in the Qur'an:

قُلْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ قُلِ اللَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ

***"Say: Is there of your partners* (*whom ye ascribe unto Allah*) *one that produceth Creation and then reproduceth it? Say: Allah produceth Creation, then reproduceth it"* (*10:34*).**

God was well above the idea of companionship that they associated him with.

Shaykh Kishee narrated on the authority of his own sources that Hajar Ibn Zaida and Aamir Ibn Khodaa went to see Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) and told him that a certain person had claimed that the Imams organized people's sustenance. Imam replied: "By God no one schedules anyone's sustenance other than God. God also arranges our own provisions."

He continued by saying that he had been concerned about the provision of his own family, and he was worried. However, when he realized that these were absolute arrangements of God, he relaxed.

May God curse these people for the wrong concepts they have adopted for their religion.

Tafweez In The Light Of Qur'an

There were several Verses in the Qur'an, which clearly mentioned that creation (of life and death), provision of sustenance, resurrection and healing the sick were divine acts and they belonged to God alone. He had not transferred these tasks to any one else among his creatures, either temporarily or permanently. We have quoted few Verses from the Qur'an as an illustration.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

"O mankind! worship your Lord, Who hath created you and those before you, so that ye may ward off (evil)" (2:21).

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

"Who made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a canopy and (Who) sends down rain from the cloud then brings forth with it subsistence for you of the fruits; therefore do not set up rivals to Allah while you know" (2:22).

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَيْءٍ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

"Allah is He Who created you, then gave you sustenance, then He causes you to die, then brings you to life. Is there any of your associate-gods who does aught of it? Glory be to Him, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)" (30:40).

Allama Al-Majlisi said in respect of this Verse that it provided us with the understanding that creation, death, resurrection and provision of sustenance was only possible for God and its mention for someone else was prohibited.

أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

"... Or have they set up with Allah associates who have created creation like His, so that what is created became confused to them? Say: Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Supreme" (13:16).

اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَفَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ

“Allah amplifies and straitens the means of subsistence for whom He pleases” **(*13:26*).**

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

“And when I fall ill, **(*only*)** ***He relieves me from sickness”*** **(*26:80*).**

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Say: O Allah, Master of the Kingdom! Thou givest the kingdom to whomsoever Thou pleasest and takest away the kingdom from whomsoever Thou pleasest, and Thou exaltest whom Thou pleasest and abasest whom Thou pleasest in Thine hand is the good; surety, Thou hast power over all things” **(*3:26*).**

قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَن يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ

“Say **(*O Prophet*)*: Who is it that sustains you*** **(*in life*)** ***from the sky and from the earth? or who is it that has power over hearing and sight? And who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? and who is it that rules and regulates all affairs? They will soon say; Allah. Say; will ye not then show piety*** **(*to Him*)*?”*** **(*10:31*).**

Entrust In Religious Affairs

There were several kinds of power delegations. Allama Al-Majlisi mentioned up to seven types in *Bihar al-Anwar,* out of which two were very significant i.e. delegation of power in Divine management and secondly, in religious affairs.

The first kind of delegation was absolutely impossible. This was the sole responsibility of God. Therefore, those who said that issues relating to life and death, provision of sustenance, health and illness and resurrection were handed over to the Imams, were totally wrong. However, the other type, which did not undertake the development of religious code and how setting up of its laws was concerned, was handed over to the Prophets and Imams, so that they could provide a true explanation of each of its articles and subclasses and make arrangements for its protection.

The provision of rationalization was also left to the will of the Prophets, as they could pick and choose, where elucidation was required and where it was unnecessary. Also, they could choose the moment when a decision had to be made on the basis of apparent laws of the constitution or they would use their

own knowledge.

There were several narrations in the Islamic literature that suggested that this kind of delegation was permissible for the Prophet of Islam and the Imams. In Kitab *Kashf al-Ghumma* it was reported on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Jaber Ansari that the Prophet of God said, "God had created earth and the heavens and then called them to submit to His commands. They replied in affirmative for my Prophethood. Ali's Wilayat was then presented to them and they accepted it too. God then called for the entire creation (in its spiritual form) and handed over the implementation of their religious requirements to us. So, successful are those who obeyed us and cursed are those who defied us. We are the measure of God's permissible (*Halal*) and offensives (*Haram*)."

It was narrated in *Usool al-Kafi* from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), who said: "God had edified the Prophet on His affection and finally honoured him by saying; you are sitting at the pinnacle of morality. He then handed over his constitution of religion (*deen*) to him and commanded His subjects:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

***"...And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back, and be careful of* (*your duty to*) *Allah; surely Allah is severe in retributing* (*evil*)*..."* (*59:7*).**

The Prophet then handed over this task to Ali. O, our Shi'as you have submitted to this decree but rest of the Ummah has declined".

Rebuttal Of A Weak Argument Provided For Permanent And Temporary Delegation

Those followers of *Tafweez*, who were careful about their fault and sanctions of the learned people, including strong rejections from the Imams, had devised an argument to justify their erratic beliefs by dividing *Tafweez* into two classes – permanent and non-permanent.

They then argued that delegation of powers to Muhammad and Aali Muhammad should not be considered in a manner, which made God redundant in His affairs, but there was no harm if we said that all those divine acts were in essence, performed by God, but Muhammad and his progeny acted as an instrument to achieve this i.e. the exposition of creation, life and death and sustenance was done through them, under the explicit will of God. Therefore, to say that they created, made people to die and re-create with the permission of God was a *Tafweez*, which was not illicit. Such an entrustment of divine power was called temporary or non-permanent handover.

This argument, due to certain reasons was unacceptable. If we accepted this logic then no infidel would ever qualify for his infidelity. The Qur'an stated that when these idol worshippers were asked as to why

they worshipped idols instead of God, they said:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ

"... And* (*as for*) *those who take guardians besides Him,* (*saying*)*, We do not serve them save that they may make us nearer to Allah". (***39:3***)

See how clearly the infidels were negating their divinity and appointing them only as route for intercession with God, but God and his Messenger did not accept their account.

Several traditions had been mentioned that legitimised *Tafweez* in religious context, and the same traditions also pointed out to the illegality of Tafweez for other religious codes. This comparison made it clear that those aspects for which religious *Tafweez* was permissible, was unlawful for similar mundane matters.

Therefore, in religious matters, if the delegation of power was permanent and it was in person, in such a way that the Prophet of God and the guided Imams made the legal codes on their own and then preached it, while God was kept out of the context, then the prohibition of *Tafweez* in the religious framework would also mean the same that had been given in this explanation.

But if in the religious matters, *Tafweez* stood for God to make rules and regulations, as law making was His discipline, and the elucidation of its high points was the responsibility of the Prophets and Imams, then in comparison to this the *Tafweez*, which was illegal in the mundane affairs would also stand for non-permanent delegation of powers, which would make the deception of permanent *Tafweez* more apparent in a manner that had been explained earlier.

If the two branches of *Tafweez* had any real difference as their advocates thought, then it was essential that Imams explained it. Whereas, rejecting the concept that prohibited Tafweez was such a criminal offence, as it made God redundant, had to be avoided.

If we assumed that the Imams performed all these acts with the permission of God and it was true, then its mention was not made in those *Ahadith*. Instead, its overall rejection was clearly stated. This shows that all kind of *Tafweez* was prohibited.

The explanation was needless, because such a description was only essential when we had two kinds of narrations available that were equal par excellence, and then some of those justified *Tafweez*, while the others negated it. Under those conditions, there was a reason for such an explanation, as some arrangements were needed to reconcile the facts where permanent delegation of divine power was mentioned.

We would have argued for it to be a non-permanent delegation, and where it was negated, it would have

been permanent divine entrustment. However, there was no such conflict available in the narrations regarding delegation of heavenly powers, therefore, such a supposition of permanent or temporary entrustment of godly powers was meaningless.

If, however, we found such a contradiction, then for the sake of the rules of justice those narrations would be preferred that contradicted entrusting divine powers, because they were in apparent unison with the Qur'an, as the tasks involving creation, life and death, provision of sustenance and resurrection were mentioned as God's practical attributes. It was an accepted practice that anything that contradicted Qur'an was improper.

There were some narrations that prohibited even the temporary delegation of godly powers. It was narrated from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) who said: "Those who believe that we create with the permission of God are also infidels"[1].

On the basis of these realities, all high-ranking scholars disallowed the temporary delegation of divine powers. Allama Al-Majlisi, wrote in *Bihar Al-Anwar*: Although, temporary delegation of power was logically possible, it was prohibited in the light of strong reports from the Imams. Again, this was such a view, whose credibility was not certain.

So far, we were concerned that there was no authentic Hadith available in support of this view. The same author wrote in his *Risala al-Itiqadiyah*: "You must not believe that Imams had created this Universe with the explicit permission of God, since we were advised through authentic *Ahadith* not to embrace such views". Barsi had mentioned some narrations in this context, which were weak and unreliable.

True Shi'a Concept Of Tafweez

There was a time when the followers used to present their acts and beliefs in front of the Imams for correction and sought their opinion against their conduct. Therefore, those practices that were approved by the Imams were retained and the rest abandoned.

There were several reports to supplement this practice in the history books, but today people had made the religion and laws of Shariah as a playing tool, and they threw it in any direction like a tennis ball to justify their ends. No one strove to know what was the decision of divine law in that respect, which was the sign of an honourable practicing Muslim.

However, the nature of people was so disoriented that if a senior religious clerk made a decision on a given issue, then people immediately start to decline it with their own irrational suggestions. If those who belonged to religious foundation adopted such approach on the basis of a judicial guess, then it would not be an astonishing thing. Unfortunately, this conduct was also prevalent among those whose religious foundation was on Qur'an and declarations of Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that if any one wanted to be a person of exquisite faith, then it was desirable for him if he said that his behaviour in all acts was what Muhammad and Aali Muhammad had demonstrated. This congruency with Imams may be in those deeds that were apparent or those, which were kept secret, or about those which had reached him or those that had not reached him.

Our twelfth Imam had also shed some light on the topic under present consideration. It was mentioned in *Ihtijaj al-Tabrasi* that during the minor occultation of Imam, when Abu Ja'far was his representative, disagreement erupted among Shi'a community on the issues related to the creation (of the Universe) and the provision of sustenance to the people through Muhammad and Aali Muhammad. One of a senior member of this disputing community suggested that the matter should be referred to Imam for clarification through his deputy Abu Ja'far.

Everyone agreed to this suggestion. Therefore, a question was prepared and handed over to Abu Ja'far. After a while, the reply with Imam's authentication reached them in the following format: "In the name of God very gracious and merciful, God was the creator of body frames and the provider of sustenance to His subjects. He neither possessed body nor incarnated in any form. There was none that could resemble Him. He was all seeing and all hearing. Imams requested Him, so He created, they appealed for sustenance and He provided. In order to honour His Servants, He never rejected their plea".

After the clarification of Imam Zaman, it became absolutely plain that to believe that God had granted the Imams power to execute divine acts, such as creation or the provision of sustenance or that God performed these tasks through them – these were utterly wrong. On the other hand; to say that they could not intervene in any of the divine acts, such as intercession for the qualified sinners was to lower their status with God.

Over-indulgence and diminution were both dangerous concepts, so far as Muhammad and Aali Muhammad are concerned, we have to find a moderate course to succeed in both worlds. The clarifying note of Imam, which cited that Imams were intermediaries between God and His creature, and could intercede with God and He did not refuse their requests, identified this middle route.

Methodology Of Seeking Help From God

There were two qualified methods to approach God.

- Appeal for health, sustenance, longer life and children should be directly made to God, supplemented through the names of the Prophet and his Holy Progeny.

- Address the Prophet and his progeny and ask them to get the following requests granted from God. However direct rapprochement with the Prophet or Imams, avoiding God was not permissible in any sense, as it appears like *Tafweez*.

It was useful to state the reasons that became the root cause of *Tafweez*. A careful study of this subject

revealed that it was those miracles that happened through them on different occasions, just as reviving someone from death or healing a gravely sick person etc. Persons of limited intellectual capability inferred from these miracles that God had passed on this right to them, and now they are doing this job as a responsibility.

Miracle Is An Act Of God

It should be realised that whatever happens during a miracle, was not the work of Prophet or Imam, instead it was an act of God. Miracle was therefore, defined as follows: Miracle was an act of God, which came into view in the hands of a Prophet or Imam to prove the legitimacy of the person.

Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) had said: "When poverty and hunger emerged with Amir Al-Mu'minin, it showed that a person who had such attributes could be shared with other deprived people, then miracles could not be the proceed of such a person. This proved that the originator of miracles was God, who had no resemblance in any attribute with His creatures. This was not the act of a man, who shared his limitation with other dispossessed people".

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq said: "Miracle was a special sign of God that was initiated through the hands of Prophets and Imams, to prove the legitimacy of the candid and fallacy of the swindlers". This definition was in accordance with an episode that was mentioned in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah*. It was said that a man saw Amir Al-Mu'minin breaking a dry piece of barley bread by holding it under his knee. He was astonished and asked Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) if it was not the same wrist, which deracinated the main gate of Khyber. Imam replied: "Yes it was, but I had pulled up the main door of Khyber fort by the strength of God and not with my personal power".

On the basis of these narrations, the great scholars have insisted that the true originator of a miracle was God, but as it was seen to be carried out by the Prophets and Imam, it was metaphorically called the act of its performing person.

God revealed the Qur'an, since it was revealed on Prophet Muhammad (S), it was symbolically called the Miracle of Muhammad. God doused the fire of Nimrod, but its apparent show was at the hands of Abraham, that was why it was referred to be as Abraham's miracle. Similarly, there were several other examples, including the miracles of Prophets David, Saleh, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

Allama Al-Majlisi said: "Any one who believes that miracle is the creation of the Prophets or Imams, then there was no doubt in the infidelity of such a person". Shaykh Al-Mufid said that a miracle was the work of God. There were several other Ulama who have approved the same definition of miracle.

If we said that the departments of Creation, provision of Sustenance, Resurrection and other Divine acts were not handed over to the Prophets and Imams. we did not mean to say that they were incapable of performing these tasks, even with explicit permission of God, so that we might need miracles to prove

their capability. We say that the position of these great people was way beyond this supposition. They could perform all these tasks at the opportune of a miracle, but the objection was that God had not appointed them to perform these acts as a duty. There is colossal difference between performing an act as one time miracle and doing it as a fulltime job.

Clearance Of Some Doubts

First Doubt

Major argument that was presented by the advocates of *Tafweez* was a sermon, which was alleged to be the work of Imam Ali. It was claimed that he said, "I am the creator of clouds, I am the one who brought forth springs and lakes and make water to flow through canals. I clad the trees with green pigment. I am the one who had spread the Earth and raised the firmaments. I am the one who would resurrect the faithful from their graves. I am the one who had sent the Prophets and Messengers. I had created the Universe and other dimensions. I had ignited the Sun, and brought forth the day from it. I had created the stars and made the ships to move in the Sea. I am the creator of shapes in the uterus of mothers and developed muscles and flesh on their bones. I am the one who resurrects and provides sustenance to the living. I am all hearing and all seeing. I am responsible for Noah to board his ship and I am the saviour of Abraham from the fire."

In our response to this sermon, we would like to say that reliance on this Khutba was inappropriate for various reasons.

This sermon was groundless on the basis of narration and established critical norms, and it had nothing to do with Imam Ali (ʻa), since it was not found in any of our authentic religious books, especially in *Nahj al-Balagha*. However, this was found in a book like *Kokabi Durri*, which was full of baseless accounts.

The author of *Kokabi Durri* had sourced it from the papers of an unknown person called Khawaja Dahdar. That is why major researchers and scholars had denounced many other writings similar to this projection. Allama Al-Majlisi wrote on page 365 of the seventh volume of *Bihar ul Anwar*: "Sermons like *Khutba Al-Bayan* and many others like this were the work of Ghalis, and those were not found in any other source except their books".

A similar verdict was provided by Muhaqqiq Khoi in *Minhajul Braa*, Abul Qasim Al-Qummi in *Jamea Al-Shatat* and this humble commentator in his various writings. Shaykh Muhammad Ali Rabbani wrote in his book *Tofha Imamia Fi Haqiqate Mazhabus Shi'a*: "Some people claimed that Amir Al-Mu'minin was the Creator, who had fashioned us with the permission of God. This was absolutely wrong. There were several Verses of the Qur'an and prophetic traditions that rejected such a claim. It was also said that Imam had made a comment in one of his sermons that he had created heavens and the earth. It was completely false".

Someone might have added this sentence in his work deliberately at a later date. Allama Muhammad Sibtain Sarsavi, who wrote a preface of ninety-two pages on *Kokabe Durri* and tried to suggest alternative explanations of this sermon, which according to me was a useless exercise, before proving the authenticity of something that, was associated with Imam.

Ignoring the roots of its occurrence, if we critically examined the contents of this sermon then a person of mediocre understanding would immediately conclude that this sermon was not the work of Imam Ali (‘a), because every great author, who may be a poet or a prose writer had a specific diction that made him notable among the other authors. If we structurally examined this writing then we could say with utmost certainty that this sermon was not the work of Imam Ali (‘a), as it did not resemble any of his work that was reported in Nahj al-Balagha and the other sources. One of the attributes of his speech or writing was that its contents were full of the secrets of Tawhid, but this sermon had demolished the very foundation of the Unity of God.

When many great thinkers of Egypt had made it plain that if *Nahj al-Balagha* was not available to them, then the chapter of Tawhid would not have opened on them. Whatever, is reported in Qur’an regarding the Majesty of God was imitated for Imam Ali in this sermon, which was in direct conflict with God.

Even with great reluctance, if we accepted the contents of this sermon to be true, still the concept of *Tafweez* could not be proven. In this case, we have to develop an alternative explanation that should not be in conflict with the Qur’an. Since Muhammad and Aali Muhammad were the objective reason for the creation of this Universe, therefore, they could claim metaphorically that they were the source of everything that existed today in the Cosmos.

Apart from *Nahj al-Balagha*, there were several other clarifications of Imam Ali that contradicted this sermon. We shall make a brief quote to one such report. Meaning of *La ilaha illa Allah* – was that there was no guide other than God. All the Creatures of Heavens and the Earth were called upon to stand as witness to the fact that there was no Creator other than God, nor there was any one else beyond Him who could be a provider and sustainer of this Cosmos, nor there was anyone else who could have been worshipped. There was no one in place of Him, who could enhance or impair nor there was anyone else, other than Him, who was sufficient for His subjects, nor there was anyone else to change the order of events. All virtues were within His domain, and God was Gracious, He was the provider of resources to this world.

I would appeal to the intellect of fair-minded readers to tell, if the subscriber of these views could be an author of the Sermon of Al-Bayan?

Second Doubt

It was narrated in various books by Jamhour Ibn Al-Hakam, who said: “I saw Imam Ali Ibn Husayn suddenly flying, after developing wings. He returned after a time lapse, and told me that he had seen

Ja'far Tayyar in the heavens. I asked him, if he could climb up the heavens? He replied how it could be difficult for a person to climb something that is made by him. We are the residents of Throne and the Chair".

Rebuttal

This was a fake narration because the identity of its narrator could not be established through entire, Islamic literary channels. Therefore, such forged narrations could not be used to determine the principles of a religion, when it could not be used to justify ordinary religious practices. If they were questioned on the Day of Judgement to ratify the status of this narration, then what would be their answer, when there was no trace of such a narration in any authentic book of Hadith?

Third Doubt

In the third volume of *Nahj al-Balagha*, it was mentioned that Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) had said: We are the creatures of God and people were our creation. This was said to show that Imams were the creators of things.

Rebuttal

This translation of the text was explicitly wrong. It was evident if the translation was incorrect then its deductions would also be erroneous. The real translation was: "Our creation was only for God, and rest of the creation was through our rationale". The purpose of this statement was to show that we were the real reason of creation – *illati ghaee mumkinat*, just as it was mentioned in a Hadith Qudsi, "*Lo laka lama khalqattal aflak*" I would not have created heavens and the earth, if you (O, Prophet) were not there.

It had been also mentioned in the Qur'an regarding Moses:

وَاصْطَنَعْتُكَ لِنَفْسِي

"[O Moses] I have created you especially for Myself" (20:41).

This meant that the creation of Moses was the prime cause, and his Ummah was a secondary reason. That is why the heading of the second sentence was altered. It was not = *Wannasa bada sanaena*, but it was – wa an-*nasa bada sanaelana*. This '*L*' (ponounced as *Lam*) was present in *Lana* and was called *Lam* of *Aljeya* and *Sababya*. This gave meaning to the text that has been mentioned above.

Mufti Muhammad Abdahu of Egypt understood the following meanings of this phrase: "We are indebted to the grace and poise of God, and the people are in return to us". These meanings did not in any way support the cause of *Mofawweza*.

Fourth Doubt

A narration was reported from Miqdad Ibn Aswad in some books, which stated: “One day my master Ali asked me to bring his sword. I presented him his sword. He placed the sword on his knees and started rising towards the heavens. I kept on watching him, until he disappeared from my sight.

He returned from his journey around Dhuhur time, while blood was dripping from his sword. I asked him where he had gone. He replied that in the heights there was a dispute between two groups and I made decision between them. I asked my Master if the matters of the heavens were also under his jurisdiction? He replied: “Aswad I am the sign of God in heavens and the earth. No Angel can move an inch from its place without my permission in the heavens”.

Rebuttal

Due to certain reasons this narration was not acceptable as an argument for *Tafweez*.

The chain of narration of this report was not available, so we could not say anything about the authenticity of this tradition. Also, there was no mention of this tradition in authentic books. Otherwise, researchers would not have ignored it.

If we put this report to the sword of criticism, we would find that this narration was completely false, because its negation was contained within its subject matter. It was contrary to the high status of the Angels, which was highlighted by the Qur’an and general consensus of Muslim Ummah. There was no question of a dispute between this group and the one that culminated in blood shed. It was beyond consideration, because God had said about the Angels that they were respected servants of God, who did not disobey His commands or deny His orders. Moreover, Angels were a spiritual creation and the presence of blood was against all norms.

It was also contained in this report that Angels could not move from one place to the other without Amir Al-Mu’minin ’s permission. This view was also against established Qur’anic and Prophetic norms. The Qur’an also referred to some angelic quotes: “O, Prophet we do not descend but with the permission of God, with whom our station or movement was appended”. The background to this revelation was that once the Prophet asked Gabriel, why he did not visit him more often. Gabriel replied that God controlled his movement.

Similarly, it was mentioned in Surah Al-Qadr:

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ

“Angels and the spirit descend during the night of Qadr (***ascertainment***) ***with the consent of God”*** (***97:4***).

We have now provided two statements to the readers. They can now make up their own mind about the rights and wrongs of this narration.

There was a supplication of Imam Zayn Al–'Abidin, in Sahifa Kamila, in the praise of Angels. Imam said in that supplication: "O, God send your blessing on those Angels that I have not referred, nor I know much about them about what sort of standing they enjoy in your presence, nor do I know the nature of their tasks". These were the phrases from a book whose authenticity was beyond doubt.

Imam accepted that there were some Angels whose status and he did not know their duties. However, the narration under discussion, whose falseness we wanted to prove stated that Angels could not move without the permission of Imam. Allama Sayyid Ali Khan wrote in *Riazul Salikeen*: "Anyone else, other than God, did not know the information about Angels in totality". This statement was also supplemented by the Qur'an.

Fifth Doubt

It was narrated from Qambar (a helper of Imam Ali) that he once went to the house of Amir Al–Mu'minin ('a), and asked his whereabouts from the housemaid Fizza. She replied that he had gone to a place called Barooj. Qambar said that he asked her what he was doing in Barooj? She replied that he went there to distribute sustenance, determine the ages of species, create new species, resurrect and eradicate people, while allocating honour and discredit to some individuals.

Qambar felt in his heart that he would complain to the Imam about the thoughts of this miserable lady. While, this discussion was in progress Amir Al–Mu'minin ('a) appeared and asked me about the ongoing discussion with Fizza. I briefed him about the conversation. Imam asked me if I was not in agreement with what she said. I replied in affirmative. Amir Al–Mu'minin recited something at that moment and touched my eyes with his hand. Qambar says that he immediately saw the Universe leaning in obedience before the honourable Imam, just like a piece of almond lying in front of a person, and I saw other type of the creatures as well.

Amir Al–Mu'minin ('a) then said: We have created all kind of creatures that live within, under and in between the heavens. Imam then put his hand at his eyes again, and everything disappeared from his eyes.

Rebuttal

This was totally unreliable narration, which had a broken chain of reference. It was beyond the measures and standards of the judgement about a Hadith. Moreover, it was not mentioned in any of the authentic books of Hadith.

If we ignored its weakness on the chain of reference, the subject matter that is contained in this narration was a proof of its falseness, similar to the Sermon of Al–Bayan, because its contents clashed with

Qur'an, and Imams have specifically mentioned that if there was a quotation that was in opposition to the Qur'an then it must be rejected.

Qur'an said that God had created the mortals of heavens and the space underneath it, and this narration said that it was Ali who did all this creation. It was now up to the faithful to decide, which of the two explanations could be correct.

One must keep in mind that this matter related to the principles of the faith, and people of erudition knew that in such themes, the Qur'anic Verses took precedence over all other confirmations. Such ridiculous narrations had no place in this connection.

Sixth Doubt

It was mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

"... And thou (Muhammad) threwest not when thou didst throw, but (it was) Allah (that) threw". (8:17)

This Qur'anic Verse suggested that act of Prophet was also an act of God. Therefore, whatever they did, it became a Godly act. Therefore, *Tafweez* was proven.

Rebuttal

The use of this Qur'anic Verse to prove *Tafweez* was wrong on two counts.

Firstly, if this Verse provided a licence for *Tafweez* for the Prophet, then it must provide the same right to all of those people who accompanied the Prophet in that battle, because Qur'an said:

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ

"So, you did not slay them (the infidels), but it was Allah Who slew them" (8:17).

Both parts of the Verse had the same texture.

This Verse was referred to at a station of miracle. This happened during a battle with the infidels and the Prophet picked a handful of pebbles and threw it at the enemy. These pebbles struck the enemy combatants on their faces and they were blinded. At this juncture, this Qur'anic Verse was revealed:

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

***"... And thou* (*Muhammad*)*, threwest not when thou didst throw, but* (*it was*) *Allah* (*that*) *threw"* (*8:17*).**

This was done to remind the Prophet that while apparently it was Prophet who had thrown the pebbles, but to make those stones reach the faces of the enemy, was God's job. Mohaddas Mohsin Faiz Kashani wrote: "God has approved the throwing of missiles by the Prophet; because he was seen to be doing that and negated the rest as its effect that was beyond human control. This was produced by Him. It was as if the pebbles were thrown by the God Himself and not the Prophet.

Similarly, the companions were advised not to be proud on the killing of the infidels though it was their sword that slashed their bodies, but the induction of fear in their hearts, and the help of the Angels was done by God. This statement was very similar to the Qur'anic Verse of Surah At-Tawbah, which stated:

أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ

***"See ye the seed that ye sow in the ground?"* (*56:63*).**

أَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ

***"Is it ye that cause it to grow, or are We the Cause?"* (*56:64*).**

This proved that the above quotation has nothing to do with Tafweez".

Seventh Doubt

God said:

فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

***"Blessed, is the God who is best of the creators"* (*23:14*).**

It was concluded from this Verse that there were persons other than God, who also create.

Rebuttal

The inference in favour of *Tafweez* from this Verse was not proper on four counts.

Firstly, this Verse was in line with Arabic language tradition. It was customary for Arabs that when they had to express quality of someone's craftsmanship, they always employed plural article with the specialists of that trade, along with the word '*Ahsan*' to give him precedence of all others, for Example,

Ahsanul Tajireen, *Ahsanul Najjareen*, *Khairul Khubbazeen*, even though these so-called specialists might not exist at all. The same was true for *Ahsanul Khaliqeen*, in the above Qur'anic Verse.

Secondly*, Khalaq* was also used for technology. It was just possible that the Verse might be saying that as there were all kind of craftsmen in a community and God was the best among all other experts in any field.

Thirdly, the word *Khalaq* was also used in Arabic language for estimation or deduction. Readers could refer to Qamoos and Al-Munjid. This would then mean that God was the best planner and estimator of things. This had nothing to do with *Tafweez*.

Fourthly*, Tafsir al-Saafi* quoted a narration from *Aaimma*, with reference to this Verse. It was stated that the term *Khaliq* (Creator) was used metaphorically for some creatures as well. Those created beings who were figuratively called creators were Jesus, the Angels who performed their allocated task in the wombs of mothers during pregnancy and Samiri – the magician, who made a golden calf for the Israelites.

This meant that the Verse would hold its apparent sense without proposing Imams being the creators. In fact, this explanation denounced the very concept of other creators. If these people (Muhammad and Aali Muhammad) were creating things with the subtle approval of God, therefore and when the word creator could be used for the three entities mentioned above, then it would be proper in the same context that the Ahl al-Bayt were also the creators. However, when no such statement was made by them at any this juncture, then it would be out of place to impose such titles on them.

Eighth Doubt

It was evident from various Qur'anic Verses and numerous Ahadith that God had appointed Angels for various appointed tasks; such as creation, provision of sustenance and even life and death. It being an integral part of our faith that Angels were subservient to Imams, therefore, if servants could perform such tasks, then what was the limitation for the Masters?

It was just possible that the labour force for accomplishing these tasks might be the Angels and the holy progeny were their leaders and God was above them all, very similar to mundane hierarchy in the state establishment. What was wrong to have such a view in relation to the religious kingdom?

Rebuttal

Since this matter dealt with the fundamental principles of the religion then it required absolute proof or perfect reasoning to establish it among the followers. Naturally, in these matters conjectures did not count an iota nor probabilities added up to any positive result. There were several things that might be possible, but to deny those was essential. For example, what was logically wrong to not prostrate and worship the last of the prophets and his holy progeny? However, according to the sacred Shariah,

neither prostration nor worship was allowed for anyone other than God. The same was true in the problem under consideration.

Several Qur'anic Verses and numerous prophetic traditions repudiated this concept. We, on the other hand, could go to this limit and say that if there was no clear verdict on this issue available in the Qur'an, even then there was no hesitation in us to reject this twisted faith. Notably, negating a concept did not require a proof, whilst a claim, especially when it was related to the principles of faith, required tentative proof of its validity.

It was claimed that such a concept had no malevolence or iniquity attached to it. We would agree that this postulation was excellent to attract people's attention and then to rob them of their true faith. However, people of intellect knew that this speech was devoid of reality.

It was important to consider the phrase "What wrong results from this concept"? Then we asked them, what did they mean from this word "wrong"? If they meant that running of the universe was not affected by this belief, then they should know that it was true – not because their proposition was factual, but it was God, who managed this Universe. However, if it pointed to any religious iniquity then it was definitely present because it was an accusation levelled at Muhammad and Aali Muhammad, which was against many clear Qur'anic verdicts.

To compare a spiritual domain with mundane state management model was fundamentally wrong according to our religious code. Real task of the Prophets and Imams was to establish and implement religious system and not to make and invent laws, except they could make recommendations to God, which were not abandoned by the Lord.

It had been mentioned earlier that God had no ministerial assistance. His person was well above these mundane concepts. Amir Al-Mu'minin said in Dua al-Yashtasheer (This word was derived from *Mushwera*, which meant to consult), "God is the one who manages the Universe, without consulting with any of his creatures". God says in Qur'an:

فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ

"Invent not similitudes for Allah" **(*16:74*).**

Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) said that anyone who designed examples for God was a Mushrik.

This statement that if Angels could be appointed to do these tasks, what was the difficulty then for Muhammad and Aali Muhammad to take on these responsibilities, when they were superior to the Angels, was a farce communication. It was full of ignorance because no one claimed that Imams, if appointed could not do this job, when they were best of God's creatures.

The question was not the suitability of Imams, but it was related to the command and will of God. As believers, we – the faithful, had to accept God's verdict and then abide by it.

Ninth Doubt

There were a few entreaties of greetings that contained sentences, which substantiated *Tafweez*, just as in *Ziarat al-Rajabiya*. We would like to say in reply to this accusation that keeping aside the authenticity of such salutations, the Tafweez that was mentioned in those greetings was a request in religious matters that had already been discussed, and it was also substantiated by the text of those Ziarats. This intervention stood for supplying better reward on the Day of Judgement by way of their grand intercession.

Tenth Doubt

It was mentioned in certain reports from Imams, who said: "Keep us below the station of God and then say whatever you want to say about us, you will never be able to gauge our majesty".

This showed that we could say that whatever we desired for Muhammad and Aali Muhammad other than Divinity was agreeable. This narration also revealed that we could not exaggerate about them, since the limits of their attributes are not fathomable.

Rebuttal

This was a singular report. As it had been mentioned on various occasions, we could not rely on such reports for the fundamental doctrine of the faith, because singular reports could take us to the level of possibility, which could not be relied upon. In the field of faith; knowledge and assurance were essential, which was obtained either from Qur'anic Verses or from repetitive narrations. This was also the view of all Islamic schools.

We would say that the interpreters had deduced those meanings from the report that were not associated with the text. It meant the phrase – keep us below the majesty of God, also meant – do not associate us with the attributes of God. We have shown through different Qur'anic Verses that Creation, Life and Death and Sustenance all belonged to God alone. Therefore, it was not right to associate Imams with such titles.

If we followed the interpretation of the opposition and agreed to keep Imams below the status of God and then claimed any rank for them, would our antagonists agree if we called Imams as Prophets and Messengers, or favoured them over Prophet Muhammad? Naturally, no one will support this suggestion. If it was true then the statement could be only be factual to the extent of general praise and desist from recommending Godly attributes for them.

It was true that we would not able to glorify God, the Prophet and Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, to the level they

deserved. We know that the status of Imam was as towering, among the populace as a star in the heavens, but it does not mean that we could not differentiate between the limits of God, the Prophethood and Imamate. Otherwise, the knowledge of God's attributes and the features of Prophethood would become meaningless.

Also, where does the knowledge of a few attributes of the Person of God, the Prophethood and Imamate tells us that we have known the true depth of their personality and they have now become restricted? On the other hand, we at least would be sure that we were not including anyone else in the attributes that are reserved for God, and were not incorporating non–Prophets with the Prophets. If on the other hand we included Imam in the attributes that were reserved for God and the Prophet, then *Ghuloo* (exaggeration) would certainly be committed.

The same principle would indeed apply for the Prophets as well. What an illogical statement had been made by them that one should avoid the station of Divinity for the holy progeny and then call them anything. This was overstatement; and the concept of *Tafweez* is another branch of exaggeration as argued in the beginning of this discussion.

Therefore, these facts proved that the basis of this statement "Then say whatever you want" had not stayed with its roots, but it had become specific. After avoiding these facts and then to argue with the alleged phrase was as illogical as the idea of believing that all the Islamic sects were salvaged after siding with the Prophetic statement: "*Qulu la ilaha illa Allah tuflihu*" (Say there is no god but God, you will be saved). An impractical person could say that performance of the religious rites was no more required after saying – *la ilaha illa Allah*.

Eleventh Doubt

If the concept of *Tafweez* was wrong because it led to *shirk* (to associate others with God), then no one could escape this state of affairs, because we all accept that Angels were definitely involved in carrying out those duties. It was not fair that if Muhammad and Aali Muhammad perform those tasks then it became shirk, but if the Angels executed those obligations; then it was acceptable.

Rebuttal

This misgiving could be answered in several ways.

Sometimes any two acts that were very similar to each other, could produce two different results – one that was carried out with the permission of God became appreciative, while the other could be deemed as *shirk*.

It was narrated in various reports that those who follow leaders of evil instead of guided Imams, were *mushriks*, and the others who followed Ma'sumin Imams were Unitarian and godly people, even though the apparent action of obedience was exactly the same in both instances because both leaders were

non–God.

This difference was created by the fact that obedience of Ma'sumin Imams was ordained by God and the other rulers were without this certification. The same logic was applicable to our problem of *Tafweez*. It was proven that Angels were appointed to do those tasks but Imams were not asked to do those things. Therefore, those who followed this route are committing *shirk*.

Twelfth Doubt And Its Rebuttal

In various commentaries of *Surah Inn Anzalna*, it was stated that Angels, during the night of Qadr came to the presence of Imam of his time with various commandments and informed the Imam of the entire happenings of the year to follow. This showed that the management of the earth was carried out under supervision of the Imam, otherwise the arrival of Angels would become a meaningless gesture. The authentic answer to this problem was provided by Allama Al–Majlisi is as follows.

"Angels do not come to the Imams for the reason that they have to play the role of an advisor or a manager to God, in running the administration of the Universe, but it is done to enhance the image of His viceroy or caliph on the earth; otherwise, God alone is the master of the Universe."

A similar explanation was also provided by the authors of *Miratul Anwar* and *Mishkatul Asrar*. These were those doubts that were created by the advocates of *Tafweez*, and we have provided adequate rebuttal of their twists and turns.

The signs and symbols of *Ghalats* and *Mofawweza* that were provided by the author of this booklet were alleged by the two groups to be incorrect and deficient, due to the inadequacy and paucity of the Grand Masters of Qom. We could only say in its explanation that it was not a formula that every Ghali or Mofawweza must have those signs and symbols, but the author's view was based on the conditions prevailing at the occasion of writing of his booklet in Qom. The change of space and time could result in different observations.

Shaikhees, who were the perfect artefact of *Mofawweza* – their guru, Shaykh Hissae had claimed that the great masters of Najjaf were less informed and little exposed, while he possessed complete knowledge of the secret heavenly code. The same was true in Pakistan, where the followers of Shaikhees did not feel ashamed in insulting the great scholars of their time; just to acquire more monetary benefits for their selves.

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1. Shurhal Khutba by Al–Kadhim Rishte Shaikhi.

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SHARES

Chapter 38: Our View About The Tyrants And Despots

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our view regarding the tyrants and despots was that they were evil people and far removed from the grace and blessing of God. It was mandatory to show disgust and revulsion against them[1].

God said:

وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ

"...And there shall be no helpers for the unjust (***on the Day of Judgement***)***"*** (***2:270; 3:192; 5:72***).

At another juncture the Qur'an said,

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أُولَٰئِكَ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَقُولُ الْأَشْهَادُ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ أَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ

"Who doth more wrong than those who invent a life against Allah? They will be turned back to the presence of their Lord, and the witnesses will say, These are the ones who lied against their Lord! Behold! the Curse of Allah is on those who do wrong!" (***11:18***).

الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُم بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ

"Those who would hinder (***men***) ***from the path of Allah and would seek in it something crooked: these were they who denied the Hereafter!"*** (***11:19***).

Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas said in connection with the explanation of the above quotation that the phrase 'Path of God' in the Verse was meant for Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) and the other Imams.

In the book of God, two kinds of Imams were mentioned – Imams of guidance and Imams of deviation and destruction. God said:

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا يُنصَرُونَ

“And we made them (***but***) ***imams*** (***leaders***) ***inviting to the Fire; and on the Day of Judgment no help shall they find”*** (***28:41***)***.***

وَأَتْبَعْنَاهُمْ فِي هَٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُم مِّنَ الْمَقْبُوحِينَ

“In this world We made a curse to follow them and on the Day of Judgment they will be among the loathed (***and despised***)***”*** (***28:42***)***.***

When this Verse was revealed:

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنكُمْ خَاصَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

“And fear tumult or oppression, which affecteth not in particular (***only***) ***those of you who do wrong: and know that Allah is strict in punishment”*** (***8:25***)***.***

the Prophet of God said, “Anyone who is to initiate dispute on the caliphate of Ali after my death will be like a person who has denied my Prophethood and that of the previous Prophets, therefore, anyone who socialises with despots is also a despot.”

God said in this respect:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

“O ye who believe! Choose not your fathers nor your brethren for friends if they take pleasure in disbelief rather than faith. Whoso of you taketh them for friends, such are wrong-doers” (***9:23***)***.***

Again, God said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ يَئِسُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا يَئِسَ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ

“O ye who believe! Turn not (***for friendship***) ***to people on whom is the Wrath of Allah, of the Hereafter they are already in despair, just as the Unbelievers are in despair about those*** (***buried***) ***in graves”*** (***60:13***)***.***

That was why God was saying:

لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ

عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ

"Thou wilt not find folk who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His messenger, even though they be their fathers or their sons or their brethren or their clan. As for such, He hath written faith upon their hearts" (***58:22***).

Again, God said:

وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

"... And whoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people" (***5:51***).

At another place, the Qur'an warned:

وَلَا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ

"And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touch you, and you have no guardians besides Allah, then you shall not be helped" (***11:113***).

In literature, the meaning of *Dhulm* was not to place an object at its rightful place. Hence anyone who claimed to be an Imam, but in reality, he was not, then he was *Dhalim* (unjust) and the cursed, the same was true for those who were to agree with the Imamate of such people.

The Prophet of God has also said, *"Anyone who has denied the caliphate of Ali after me is like a person, who has denied my Prophethood and that of the previous Prophets, including the Majesty of God. O, Ali you will be treated unjustly after me, but remember, whoever was malicious and spiteful to you, is certainly cruel to me. Anybody who is just to you is just to me and whoever denies you deny me; whoever loves you loves me; whoever bears grudge against you shows resentment against me."*

We believe that according to our faith; anyone who denied the Imamate of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt was like a person who had denied the Prophethood of all the Prophets. If someone accepted the Imamate of Hazrat Ali (ʻa), but denied the Imamate of anyone of the remaining eleven Imams, then such a person was to us the like of the one who had faith in all the previous Prophets but had denied the Prophethood of Muhammad al-Mustafa (S).

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʻa) said that whosoever denied our last Imam was like a person who denied our first Imam. The Prophet of God had said, "In my Ummah there will be twelve legatees of mine, their first is Ali Ibn Abi Talib (ʻa) and the last is Al-Mahdi Al-Qaim (ʻa); their obedience is mine and their defiance is to contest me. If someone has denied the Imamate of anyone of them, he is just like a person who

had denied my Prophethood."

Imam Ja'far (‘a) said that the one who had doubts on the infidelity of those who committed aggression against the Imams was also an infidel.

Amir Al-Mu'minin said that he was under repression from the time of his birth, in a way that if Aqeel had some eye sore then he used to ask to put the medicine first in Imam Ali's eyes and then to commit the rest to his own eyes. Imam Ali said that. "The medicine used to be dispensed in my eyes, although I was not suffering from any kind of eye infection."

Our belief about those who waged armed conflicts against Ali was the same as the Prophet of God had said, "Anyone, who fights Ali, fights me and one who fights me fights God."

Similarly, while addressing the Holy Household (Amir Al-Mu'minin, the Lady of Light – Fatimah, Imams Hasan and Husayn, ‘a), the Prophet (S) had said, "I shall fight those, who fight you and I shall be peaceful with those who are peaceful to you".

We believed that Lady Fatimah (‘a) was سيدة نساء العالمين, the Principal of all ladies at all times. God would be angry when she was annoyed and He would be pleased when she was blissful, as God had freed her and her followers from the fire of hell.

We also believed that when she left the world, she was very irate with some people who have forfeited her rights, committed brutality with her and deprived her of the legacy of her father, although the Prophet of God had often said that Fatimah (‘a) was a piece of his heart and anyone who had impaired her had impaired him and the one who had made her cheerful, had made him happy, because Fatimah (‘a) was his part and her soul resided within right and left of his body. Anything that hurt her would hurt him and anything that pleased her made him blissful.

So far as our faith in acquittal (freeing from the influence of some deities) was concerned we were committed to show our disgust towards four idols, *Yagoos*, *Yaooq*, *Nasr* and *Hubl* along with those who were considered to be godlike. They were *Laat*, *Manat*, *Uzza* and *Shaara* and their followers, who were worst of the creation. One could not claim to be in line with the Imamate of the Imams of *Huda* (Guidance), Prophethood of Muhammad (S) and the unity of God, unless one completely defied their enemies and exhibited absolute break up with their culture.

Our belief regarding assassins of the Prophets, Messengers and the Imams was that such people were infidels and *mushriks*, and they would remain in the worst compartments of the hell forever. If anyone possessed any doctrine other than what we have proposed here, he did not qualify for a share of God's religion.

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1. In this chapter, the honourable author has discussed the following subjects – seeking severance with tyrants, despots

and enemies of the progeny of the Prophet, ultimate outcome of those who denied Imams of, final position of those who chose to fight Ali Ibn Abi Talib, preference of Fatimah Az-Zahra' over women of all eras and the infidelity of the assassins of the Prophets and Imams.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 38

In this chapter the honourable author has discussed the following subjects.

1. To seek severance with tyrants, despots and enemies of the progeny of the Prophet.

2. Ultimate outcome of those who denied A'imma Ahl Al-Bayt.

3. Final position of those who chose to fight Ali Ibne Abi Talib.

4. Preference of Fatimah Az-Zahra' over women of all eras.

5. Infidelity of the assassins of the Prophets and Imams.

We shall discuss these, and a number of other relevant topics in somewhat detail in the following pages

Feud Between Right And Wrong

Struggle between truth and falsehood was continuous from the beginning of life. The apparent signs were that the chain of events that led to this strife, would continue for some time to come. When Ahraman and Satan countered Yazdan and Rahman, then what was left behind for one to be satisfied, as every reality was opposed by its converse? We could see Abel facing Cane, Pharaoh challenging Moses ('a) and Muhammad (S) being countered by Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan and Musaylima al-Kadhdhab.

Similarly, there was an artificial system of governance established against true religious structure. The fact of the matter was that the entire bloodshed that had happened in Islam so far, was related to this disparity between truth and charade. Truth declined to surrender before travesty and farce, even at the cost of its precious life. Falsehood, on the other hand also left no stone unturned to obliterate the true disciples of Islam. This conflict had a devastating effect on the permissible and religious aspects of the faith that resulted in major alterations of the legal working code.

Those who gained control of the Islamic state after the death of the Prophet moulded the direction of the state towards Greek and Roman patterns, thereby altering every concept that favoured true order of

governance in Islam. This political demarcation resulted in the disfigurement of Islam.

According to the author of Al-*Milal Wan-Nahl*, this divergence was the greatest departure from Islamic ideals and it became the basis of the Shi'a-Sunni divide. Shi'as, so far as Imamate was concerned, started their count from Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a), as their first Imam and ended with Imam Al-Mahdi (‘a) as the twelfth successor of the Prophet, in accordance with the Hadith of Ghadir, whereas the other group started their count with Abu Bakr and ended it with Marwan al-Omavi or perhaps Mu'tasim Billah Abbasi. The real terminal point of the caliphate was ambiguous for them.

Readers could refer to our book *Asbat al-Imamah* for further information on this subject.

Brief Account Of Hazrat Ali's Caliphate

It was firm belief of the Shi'as that the Prophet had appointed Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) as his successor before his death, in accordance with the norm established by God. This succession was initially announced at the time of *Dawat al-Dhul-Asheera*, when a family gathering was arranged to invite near relatives to the religion of Islam. The tradition of such an appointment was observed in front of the whole family then and finally again near the wells of Ghadir, in front of the majority of his nation, after the last pilgrimage.

The Prophet had shown with his actions that his succession was a divine appointment and it could only come into place through the revelation and not from collective people's decision. But alas, the old traditions prevailed and the real heirs of the Prophet were not allowed to assume their rightful place, and the reign of power was handed over to those who did not deserve it. The action of those who assumed power in the presence of Tahir Imams (virtuous leaders), was illegal and unjust as viewed by Imam Ali (‘a) and his progeny. Imam Ali (‘a) declared this in many of his sermons and speeches. He said in the sermon of *Shaqshaqiyya*, "The first caliph wrapped the robes of caliphate around his body, with perfect understanding that I had the same affiliation to this office as the pivot that holds the rotating wheel. I am sitting at such a lofty position where springs of knowledge are oozing out from me and no high flier can reach my pinnacle."

Imams Of Ahl Al-Bayt And The First Three Caliphs

A letter from Imam Ali to Mu'awiyah, the rebel governor of Syria, was found in Nahj al-Balagha, in which he wrote a reply to his earlier communication, and showed his disgust towards the first three caliphates. "I do not owe any apology to the people for showing my disgust on the legality of the (first three caliphs)."

After the death of second caliph, when Abdur Rahman Ibn Auf, offered the seat of authority to him, conditional to the following of the Sunnah of Shaikhain (Abu Bakr and ‘Umar), he rejected the offer without giving it a second thought. This incident also showed that he considered the first three caliphates

as usurpers and completely illegal and they were aware of this situation.

It was mentioned in Sahih Muslim that ‘Umar Ibn Khattab, the second Caliph admitted, when talking to Abdullah Ibn Abbas,

“You two not only consider me a liar, sinner, traitor and usurper but also have the same opinion about the one, who was better than me (Abu Bakr).”

Ibn Abbas kept quiet on this allegation, and his silence has put a stamp of confirmation on this allegation that they were really what they were thought to be.

Readers could refer to our book *Asbat al-Imamah*.

Logical Proof Of Dejection And Repulsion

As truth lay with the progeny of the Prophet, therefore, their fellowship and compliance, which was authorised by the Qur’an could not be perfected, unless we showed our disgust and repulsion to their enemies. This was very similar to the rejection and repugnance of those whom we had to deny before witnessing the Unity of God and the Prophethood of Muhammad (S).

The declaration of allegiance i.e. *Kalima of Tawhid* was the key for Ali-un-Waliullah. This conclusion was based on the true understanding of nature. Since Islam was a religion of nature and nature told that truthful and a liar, erudite and an illiterate, hypocrite and a faithful, aggressor and the defender, cheat and a virtuous could not be equal. As it was an undivided verdict of the mind that one would feel sympathy towards the innocent and repulsion against the oppressor, it became mandatory that false Prophets and Imams would be detested. No right-minded person of any religion or land would disagree with this approach.

However, Shi’as were the only sect among the Muslims, who had this approach of loving the pious and despising the ones not worthy of reverence. This was an integral part of their doctrine. This ideology was in line with the pronouncements of the Qur’an and Hadith. It was mentioned in Surah Ale Imran:

لَّا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“Let not the believers Take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers” **(*3:28*).**

At another place in Surah Al-Mumtahinna the same advice was issued,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ

“O you who believe! Do not take My enemy and your enemy for friends” **(*60: 1*).**

It was mentioned about Abraham (‘a) that when he came to know that his uncle was an enemy of God, he immediately withdrew from him. Allah praised this act of Abraham (‘a). This was the true interpretation of – *Tawalla* and *Tabarra*, which could not be denied by any fair-minded person, but the agitating and provocative *Mullahs* presented this concept in such a repulsive way that it was described as being a mode of abusing the companions of the Prophet.

It Is Inappropriate In Shi’a Faith To Abuse Anyone

We the Shi’as, in accordance with the Qur’anic verdict, disapproved the use of harmful language even for the infidels and *mushriks*. Then how could we make it permissible for those who had declared themselves as Muslims?

On the other hand – *Lanat* and *Tabarra* – were two different things that had been permitted by the Qur’an. *Lanat* literally meant separation from God’s blessings. *Tabarra* stood for displeasure or annoyance with the enemies of God and His Messengers. No man could claim to have reached the position of faith as long as he did not prefer the person of the Prophet to every asset, including his family and wealth, other than God, which was in line with the declaration of the Qur’an:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ

“The Prophet has a greater claim on the faithful than they have on themselves” **(*33:6*).**

or, as the Prophet had proclaimed for himself, “No person can claim to be a man of faith, unless he prefers me over everything, including his family and friends.”

In Shi’a Faith, The Love Of Virtuous Companions Of The Prophet Is Part Of The Faith

How was it possible for a believer to claim Iman, while feeling ghastly about the virtuous friends of the Prophet?

For some reasons, love for the companions of the Prophet was considered compulsory because they were Mu’mins and according to the Qur’an – all believers were brothers. The love of a believer was therefore, essential for another believer. As such, it was a religious duty.

Secondly, the companions of the Prophet had aided the Prophet. Moreover, respect for the associates of the adored one was naturally obvious. So, God favoured the companions of the Prophet, by virtue of their Jihad in His way.

Again, the companions were disciples of the Prophet and those who obeyed the Prophet were friends of

God, in accordance with the Qur'anic assertions. It was therefore, important for the people to know that the respect for the companions of the Prophet was mandatory, and part and parcel of faith.

Muhaqqiq Shaykh Bahai wrote in his research paper, "It is our conviction that the love of those companions of the Prophet is an integral part of our faith that remained steadfast in their fellowship and did not disobey his will and his legatees, after his death. This is our perception of the companions of the Prophet, and we the Shi'as, in submission to our Imams take it as a routine to seek God's favour for them."

Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin ('a) in a supplication to God talked about the companions of the Prophet, saying:

"O, God do not forsake those companions of the Prophet, who treated Your Messenger with affection and love, and fought relentlessly in his support and came forward to accept his message. O! God enhance their standing among thy blessings."

There Were All Types Of People Among The Prophet's Companions

It was revealed through the history that among the companions of the Prophets there were all kinds of people, including hypocrites, murderers, unjust, just, faithful, unreliable and some double minded individuals. Shi'as were of the opinion that this group should not be viewed with a single lens. Having such a practice was malice towards intellect and a civilised culture.

Some honest minded Sunni Scholars had to admit this reality with some hesitation. Therefore, Allama Taftani wrotes in *Sharh al-Maqasid*,

"The battles and disputes that took place among the companions of the Prophet, which were witnessed and recorded by history prove that some of the companions of the Prophet had diverted from the path set by the Prophet of God, and their behaviour was approaching impudence and apostasy. The reasons behind such behaviour were personal jealousy and greed for the world. This was because not every companion of the Prophet or anyone who happened to meet the Prophet was a spotless person."

Hadith That All My Companions Are Stars Is Fake

These facts also revealed that the *Hadith*, which was very much touted by our Sunni brothers, wherein the Prophet had supposedly said, "My friends are like stars, you will be guided by following anyone of them", was fake and a counterfeit *Hadith*.

Ibn Tamia wrote in *Minhajul Sunna*: "This Hadith is feeble because the great masters have said so.

Moulavi Abdul Hayee mentioned in *Tuhfat al-Akhyar*, the opinion of several scholars who proved

deception of this Hadith. They said that Ibn Hazm had proven that this was an engineered work. Ibn Zahabi was of the same opinion.

If after some reservation we accepted this Hadith to be true, then we had to agree that it was Ali (‘a), Fatimah (‘a), Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a), who were the subjects of this assertion. They were endowed with blood relations with the Prophet as well as his companionship. They were also virtuous in character and the Qur’an had laid down their love as a prerequisite for gaining high rank amongst the Ummah.

Allama Taftazani wrote to this extent, “We can only trust the virtuosity of those companions who had remained longer in the company of the Prophet and learned from his message, otherwise the rest of the companions are no different from common folks, who are a mixture of good and bad.”

Under these circumstances Shi’a faith could not treat all companions equally. The companions of the Prophet (S), who were steadfast in their belief, chose Ahl al-Bayt as their guide after death of the messenger of God, and paid their religious dues by submitting themselves to their command. We considered the soil under the feet of such companions as a source of vision for our eyes. However, we felt it was essential to disengage from those companions who did not fully comply with the assertions of the Prophet and moved away from Ahl al-Bayt after his death.

Ending Of Those Who Denied Imams Of Ahl Al-Bayt

In this respect, whatever the learned author wrote about those who had denied the Imamate of Ahl al-Bayt and thereby actually denied the Prophethood of all the Prophets was true under logical and reported assertions. We have already commented on this subject in the previous chapters, when we said that God had not handed over the task of Prophethood to various individuals, unless they had agreed to the Prophethood of the Prophet and the Caliphate or Imamate of Ahl al-Bayt.

We would now ask a simple question from the people of intellect. If a person apparently submitted to the office of the Prophets, but refused to recognise the Imamate of Ahl al-Bayt, who were initially responsible for the Prophets to receive the designation of Prophethood (from Allah), then what value would be left for his apparent stance on the Prophets. That was why the Prophet of God had said that whoever declined the Imamate of my legatees – was like a person who had declined the station of all Prophets.

Readers could refer to an exhaustive discussion on this subject in the seventh volume of *Bihar Al-Anwar.* According to our view, those who believed in four Imams or six Imams were equally wrong, since rejection of one Imam was equivalent to the refusal of all.

Treatment Of The Ahl Al-Bayt By The Ummah

Alas, instead of accepting the Ahl al-Bayt as their rightly guided leaders, people turned on them in

cruelty and started extinguishing one flame of truth after another. They were so much insulted that the daughter of the Prophet had to say, “We have been subjected to such malice that if that hatred had fallen on the days; they would have turned into nights.”

Imam Zayn Al–’Abidin (‘a) has said about the treatment they had received from the Ummah, “I was paraded in the streets of Damascus, like a slave without protection.”

The Prophet of God was aware that this kind of treatment of his Progeny by the Ummah would occur, through the information provided by God. He had informed them and also advised them to remain patient. It was mentioned in *Khasais al–Kubra* of Jalaluddin Suyuti, “We are that family for whom God has preferred hereafter rather than this mundane world. My progeny will go through hideous pains, trials and tribulation and exiles.”

The Prophet in his Last Will to Amir Al–Mu’minin had specially asked him to remain patient and avoid the use of force. The authors of *Marajun Nubuwwah* and *Rozat al–Ahbab* mentioned, “O, Ali you shall reach me at the springs of Kawthar before anyone else. You will receive ghastly treatment after me, but be serene and do not let the robe of fortitude slip from your hands. Choose hereafter, when you see that the others have opted for the world.”

Reasons For Ali To Not Fight The Usurpers

Although, in the early period after the death of the Prophet, this family had suffered a lot, its leader kept his cool and did not resort to the use of force. The prime reason for this attitude was the will and instructions of the Prophet. Secondly, as mentioned in *Nahj al–Balagha*, the safety and the establishment of Islam was his primary concern.

The security and wellbeing of Islam was linked with peace and amity. If he had raised his sword against the protagonists, it would have certainly resulted in mutiny and internal strife. The enemies of Islam would have then used this occasion to demolish the efforts of the Prophet (S).

Battle Against Ali Is A Battle Against The Prophet

Since according to the Qur’an, Imam Ali (‘a) was the *Nafs* (being) of the Prophet, the behaviour towards one was reciprocated towards the other. There were several *Ahadith* to support this view in both Shi’a and Sunni books.

We have quoted a few narrations from Sunni sources. It was mentioned in *Al–Sawa’iq al–Muhriqah* and *Tarikh ul Khulafa* that the Prophet had said, “If anyone abused Ali (‘a), he has abused me. If anyone angered Ali (‘a) he has angered me. (One must know) that Ali (‘a) and the Qur’an are inseparable.”

On pages 17 to 171 of *Al–Sawa’iq al–Muhriqah*, it was written, “Anyone who tormented Ali (‘a) has distressed me, and whosoever distressed me has angered God.”

It is quoted in *Mishkat*, regarding the Holy Five, “Whoever fights them; he will fight me and whoso makes peace with them will make peace with me.”

Despite these assertions of the Prophet, rulers of Bani Umayyah continued the contempt of Aali Muhammad for ninety years from every official and non-official platform of the state. Maulana Shibli Nu’mani wrote, “Compilation of Hadith has taken place during the era of Banu Umayyah, who insulted the family of Fatimah for ninety years throughout their kingdom, and manufactured many Ahadith in favour of Bani Umayyah, including regular desecration of Ali (‘a) in every sermon of Friday prayers.”

Assassins Of The Imam And Prophets Are Infidels

Imams Ahl al-Bayt were not only verbally tormented but active armed campaigns were waged against them to eliminate them from the scene.

Wherever sword was not possible, treacherous mode of poisoning was employed, despite the warnings that God had given out regarding the punishment that was in waiting for those who had killed one innocent person. The Qur’an mentioned:

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا

“And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is hell; he shall abide in it, and Allah will send His wrath on him and curse him and prepare for him a painful chastisement” **(*4:93*).**

In the Shariah of Islam, the assassination of Prophets or Imams was classed as infidelity, therefore such a person might be a Muslim but he will revert to disbelief and his apology will not be accepted, even if offered.

Fatimah Is The Leader Of Women At All Times

There were numerous reports in both Shi’a and the Sunni books that Fatimah (‘a), the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (S) was the leader of women of all times. It was mentioned in some *Ahadith*: “Fatimah (‘a) is the leader of all women in the Paradise”, or as stated in *Arjah al-Matalib*, “Fatimah (‘a) is the leader of women of all times”.

Listening to this statement of the Prophet some companions asked about the status of Mary (‘a) – the mother of Jesus (‘a). The Prophet replied that Mary (‘a) was the chosen women of her time, while Fatimah (‘a) was the head of women at all times.

Some adversaries of the family of the Prophet had dragged some wives of the Prophet in this competition, which was a portrayal of their jealousy against Ahl al-Bayt. They must understand that the station of respect that Fatimah (‘a) held with God was not available to many Prophets, not to speak of

the wives of the Messenger of God. The other statements like – Fatimah's pleasure and anger was the elation and anger of God and the Prophet respectively, was well documented in Sunni books and its authenticity could not be challenged. The Qur'anic Verses such as *Aayat al-Tatheer* and other remarks were permanent arguments for her chastity.

A Brief Discussion On Fadak

Sadly, this Ummah did not care about this magnificent lady, and her estate, which was allotted by the Prophet to her in accordance with the Qur'anic decision. It was confiscated by the State. She made a petition to the first Caliph and he replied that the truth of her claim was not established[1].

Lady Fatimah provided further evidence in support of her claim in the way of statements of Imam Ali (‘a) and her two sons Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a) and Umm Aaiman. The evidence of her two sons Imam Al-Hasan and Husayn was rejected on the grounds as they were in juvenile age group, Umm Aaiman's because she was a woman and that of Imam Ali because he was the husband of Fatimah.

Lady Fatimah then produced the written deed of occupation authorised by the Prophet, but it was rejected as well. At this juncture, Fatimah invoked the Qur'anic argument of receiving legacy of her father but the State, which had earlier relied on the slogan that the book of God was sufficient for them, pushed aside their earlier statements and invoked a fake *Hadith* at the spur of the moment, which stated, "We the Prophets neither receive nor leave any legacy."

At this moment Fatimah was quoting Qur'anic Verses. This showed that the State was in the hands of opportunists who used any available tactics to deny the rights of Aali ar-Rasul by either refraining from the Qur'an or engineering fake narrations in the name of the Prophet.

Finally, Abu Bakr, as quoted by Bokhari refused to respect the claim of Fatimah and confiscated her estate. It has been stated that she died within three months of this decision and was secretly buried during the night and Abu Bakr and Umar were barred from participating in her funeral.

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1. Tafsir al-Kabir by Fakhruddin Razi

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Chapter 39: Parentage Of The Prophet

Sheikh Abu Jaffer says that our belief regarding the parentage of the Prophet (S) is that his ancestors from Adam to Abdullah were all Muslims. This was true for Abu Talib (‘a) and Amina (‘a) – the uncle and mother of the Prophet (S) respectively, as well.

The Prophet of God (S) said: “Looking back from Adam to Abdullah, my transition (from the pure seeds to the pure wombs) was through the legal method of Nikah and not through adultery.”

[1] [1]
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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 39

There is a great gulf on this issue between various scholars. Most of Sunni theologians and historians are committed to the idea that the Prophet’s parents were infidels. They have used very low-down arguments and manipulations to justify their claim. They are particularly adamant on the faithlessness of the immediate parents of the Prophet and his uncle Abu Talib. It is mentioned in *Fiqh* al-Akbar,

“The Prophet’s parents and his uncle Abu Talib died in the state of kufr (infidelity).”

Similarly, there are other books that have elucidated on this subject. However, Shi’as were unanimous on this issue that the entire lineage of the Prophet was Muslim in the broader sense of the word Islam. Similarly, his lineage from the mother’s side was also without a blemish. All the women on this side were monotheists and of highest moral standing. There have been some Sunni scholars who shared Shi’a point of view and wrote many books to support it. We have provided here the following arguments to support our thesis.

First Argument

God affirmed in Surah Al-Shu’ara:

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ

“And rely on the Mighty, the Merciful” **(*26:217*).**

الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ

"Who sees you when you stand up" **(*26:218*).**

وَتَقَلُّبَكَ فِي السَّاجِدِينَ

"And your turning over and over among those who prostrate themselves before Allah **[*We have seen your transit from one prostrating generation to another*]*"*** **(*26:219*).**

Allama Fakhruddin Razi and the author of *Tafsir al-Nishapuri* quoted a narration of the Prophet in the elucidation of the above Verse, "God has transferred me from one pure seed to another chaste womb, until my birth among you."

In *Tafsir Durr al-Manthur*, Allama Suyuti wrote about the meaning of the above Qur'anic Verse, "I have been shuffling among the Prophets' seeds, until I came in this world as a Prophet."

Similarly, it was narrated from Ibn Abbas that the Prophet had said: "God has always transferred me from one pure seed to another chaste womb."

What more did one require to prove the belief about the ancestors of the Prophet?

It was mentioned in the book *Mowaddat-ul-Qurba* that once Gabriel came to the Prophet and said,

"O, Muhammad God has forbidden the fire of hell on the genome that contained you and the womb that bore you, and the lap that cared for you."

The Prophet of God asked Gabriel to expand on the statement. Gabriel replied that from genome it was meant Abdullah, from womb it meant Amina and the lap meant Abu Talib and Fatimah Bint Asad. The same report was contained in our book *Maani Al-Akhbar* on the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a).

Qur'an bore witness that when Abraham was asked to build the house of God and he had completed the task with his son Ishmael, precisely at the time when a labourer demands his dues, both father and son asked:

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

"...Our Lord! accept from us; surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing" **(*2:127*).**

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

***"Our Lord! and make us both submissive to Thee and* (*raise*) *from our offspring a nation submitting to Thee, and show us our ways of devotion* (*rites of pilgrimage*) *and turn to us* (*mercifully*)*, surely Thou art the Oft-returning* (*to mercy*)*, the Merciful"* (*2:128*).**

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ

***"Our Lord! and raise up in them a Messenger from among them ..."* (*2:129*).**

How could the supplications of this father and his son be disregarded? God, the details of which are contained in various other Qur'anic Verses, immediately responded to it.

This nation of Muslims that was demanded by Abraham was none other than parentage, ancestry and progeny of the Prophet. This argument confirmed the purity of the ancestry of the Prophet from Abraham to his immediate descent, but we presented this reference to show that it also included the parentage of Imam Ali as well.

This supplication showed that there must have been a group of Muslims from the time of Abraham to the era of Prophet Muhammad (S) without break. The Last of the Prophets had to be from that descent. The nation of Islam had to be prior to the traditional Islam as we define it today. They must have received teachings from the last of the Prophets (S). And, when they learnt the message, they should have said that they were Muslims right from the beginning.

People of erudition must tell otherwise – who was that group in which the Prophet was born, which was not the fruit of Abraham's supplication? This group was the perpetual Ummah of Islam that had been alive at the time of the Prophet's birth, believing in the constitution of Abraham.

This argument was related to the Islam of Abu Talib. We feel pity on the objectivity of Muslim scholars, who in order to save the necks of their own ancestors reverted to tarnish the image of this patron of Islam. In this pursuit, their daggers attacked the parents of the Prophet (S).

The space available in this book would not be enough to discuss the issue in any detail, but the readers could refer to "*Abu Talib Mu'min al-Quraish*" for complete study of this subject. The fact was that anyone who viewed this issue without prejudice from the time of the initiation of Islam, when Muslims were very weak, would not doubt on the faith of Abu Talib.

Some people with a narrow outlook made casual remarks that the attitude of Abu Talib towards the Prophet was due to him being a blood relation. It had to said that the memory of a liar was short and they would forget that the Prophet had other uncles too, who never helped him despite being close blood relations. Rather, they took part in schemes along with the infidels of Makkah to torture the Prophet, which was witnessed by the Qur'an.

On the other hand, Abu Talib was ready to sacrifice the lives of his children to save the life of the Prophet, as observed by history at the time of his exile from the city of Mecca. This showed that there was more than just the blood relation that made Abu Talib to stand firm in defence of the Prophet and his message.

Hazrat Abu Talib was a poet and many of his couplets suggested the strength of his faith in the Prophet and his message. We have quoted a few examples from his book of poetry.

Do you not understand

That we have found in Muhammad

A Prophet very similar to Moses

His Prophethood was contained in previous Books

I have faith –

That Muhammad's religion

Is best of all religion (*S*)

Of the World.

The family of the Prophet was unanimous in saying that Abu Talib was a believer. Since Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) are pure and infallible in the light of the Qur'anic Verse of *Tatheer* and the *Hadith of Thaqalayn*, their unanimous declaration about this matter had to be correct and free of any fault.

Sunni Scholars accepted the stand of Ahl al-Bayt on this issue. Ibn Atheer Jazari wrote in Jami-ul-Usool: "It is concerted opinion of the family of Prophet Muhammad that Abu Talib died as a believer."

Similarly, the author of Sirah al-Alawiyya wrote: "Entire family of the Prophet believed that Abu Talib (‘a) died as a Muslim".

To sum up this subject, we have quoted a few lines from the statement of Imam Ali (‘a). It was mentioned in the book, *Basharat-ul-Mustafa* that once he was resting in Rahba, a locality of Kufa. People were around him. Suddenly a person stood up and said that he (Ali) was at the highest position with God, while his father was constrained in the fire of hell.

Imam angrily responded, "May God deface you, I swear by the Almighty Lord, who sent Muhammad (S) as His messenger, my father holds such a position with God that if he intercedes with God on behalf of all the sinners then God will not turn down his recommendations. How is it possible, that while I am the distributor of Paradise and Hell, my father will lie in anguish. On the Day of Judgement, the glow of my father's face will subdue all lights except that of the holy five."

It should not remain hidden from the readers that the family of the Prophet was unanimous on the purity of the ancestors of all the Prophets and their legatees.

Abu Talib's speech that he delivered on the occasion of the Marriage of Khadija with the Prophet (S), was an open testimony to his belief in Islam. Its few initial sentences read like this, "All praise is for the Lord, who raised us from the progeny of Abraham and Ishmael and appointed us the guardians of Kaaba, where Hajj is performed; and made us leader over all people".

Shaykh Ali Ibn Burhan wrote in his book *Sirah al–Halabiyya* that Abu Talib had made a will for the sons of Haashim at the time of his death. It said, "Testify the message of Muhammad (S), you will be saved."

This statement made it clear that Abu Talib was in the state of Islam, otherwise he would not in a position to advise others what he did not do it himself.

A Historian, Ibn Asakir had admitted in his book *Tarikh Dimashq* that Abu Talib ('a) had accepted Islam.

Logical Argument

If we accepted that the descent of the Prophets was from *kafir* individuals, then indirectly they would become idol worshippers, while their parents were bowing to the idols.

If the descent of the Prophets was from polytheists, then their teachings could be influenced by such thoughts and they (Prophets) would lose respect with the general populace.

How was it possible that God would place his chosen one with those who had the grime of infidelity and polytheism, while He had the capacity to create a womb and sow in the seed of chastity.

Clarification Of A Doubt

Some of our antagonists claim that Aazar – the uncle of Abraham and a known idol worshipper was addressed as his father in the Qur'an. In Arabic language, the word *Ab* (pronounced on the pattern of 'sub' or 'rub') was also applicable for the ancestry as well.

This was well documented in other Verses of the Qur'an, particularly, when Jacob asked his children about whom they will worship after his death, their reply was that they would worship the Lord of their Aaba – Issac, Ishmael and Abraham. It was understandable that Ishmael was not the father of Jacob's children but still the word Ab had been used in the Qur'anic Verse.

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Chapter 40: Taqiyya Or Judicious Concealment Of Views

Shaykh Abu Ja'far has said that our view about *Taqiyya*[1] was that it was mandatory. Anyone who abandoned it was like a person who abdicated from obligatory prayers.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa) was once asked about a man, who was openly invective towards his enemies. Imam sent him a message pointing out that he by doing so, he was putting him and many of his supporters at risk, as it would incite people against them. He invited their attention on the following Qur'anic Verse:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

***"Revile not those unto whom they pray beside Allah lest they wrongfully revile Allah through ignorance..."* (*6:108*).**

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa), while elucidating this Verse said that (our followers) should not shout insults on these people (enemies of Ahl al-Bayt) lest they started reciprocating by insults against our Imam Ali (ʿa). Anyone who insulted a friend of God was like a person who had hurled abuse at God. Anyone who affronted God, would be held by the nose and thrown by Him into the hell. The Prophet of God had said, "O, Ali a person who abuses you, abuses me and who abuses me abuses Allah."

Taqiyya is compulsory and it should not be abandoned before the coming of Al-Mahdi (ʿa) and whosoever discarded it before the *Qaim's* arrival would be excommunicated from Imamia faith. He will be considered as a rebel of God, the Prophet and our Imams.

Imam was asked about the explanation of a Qur'anic Verse:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

***"...Surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one who is most abstinent and virtuous"* (*49:13*).**

Imam replied that – *atqakum* – stood for a person who was most particular about *Taqiyya*. God had permitted to exhibit friendship with the infidels, in the state of *Taqiyya*, when you were fearful for your life. He had not barred from dispensing justice and treating them well. However, under normal conditions it was not necessary for the faithful to choose infidels as their friends in place of believers.

The Qur'an said:

لَّا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

***"Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for* (*your*) *Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just"* (*60:8*).**

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوْهُمْ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

***"Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for* (*your*) *Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support* (*others*) *in driving you out, from turning to them* (*for friendship and protection*). *It is such as turn to them* (*in these circumstances*), *that do wrong"* (*60:9*).**

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa) said, "If I hear with my own ears that a person is cursing me, then I conceal myself behind a tree so that he might not see me."

Imam further elaborated, "Show as much apparent care to your enemy as you can, but stay on guard against him in your private life."

Imam also said, "To deceive a faithful is equivalent to committing shirk, and to be diplomatic with a hypocrite in his house is an act of worship. If someone prays with his enemies, while standing in the first row is like a person who had prayed in the company of the Prophet in the leading row."

The same Imam [Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa)] has also commanded us: "To become their strength instead of weakness by accompanying their enemies' funeral cortège to the graveyard, pray with them in their mosques and seek wellbeing of their sick. May God shower His blessings on him who ignites our love in our enemy's hearts and does not display us in their eyes as their foe?"

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (ʿa) was told about the storytellers. Imam replied that God might curse them as they ridiculed us. He was then asked if it was sensible to listen to their tales and episodes. Imam strictly replied – no. It was also narrated from the same Imam that whosoever listened to someone with complete attention was like a person who worshipped him. Therefore, if the speaker was a godly person and articulated about God and His religion then his listener was an obedient servant of God, and if he was telling satanic tales and futile affairs then his listener was also an attendant of Satan.

Someone asked Imam about his views of the Qur'anic Verse related to the poets:

وَالشُّعَرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ

"And as to the poets, those who go astray follow them" **(*26:224*).**

Imam replied that the word 'poet' was used in the Verse for those people who described false episodes. The Prophet of God has said that if someone approached a religious distorter (*Bidati*) and demonstrated his respect to him, he was then like a person who tried to demolish the pillars of Islam.

This was also our belief that a person who opposed anyone with our religious maxims, then he was like a person who had opposed us in the entire religion.

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1. In this chapter the honourable author had provided very basic information about Taqiyya, without explaining its nomenclature and the places of its enactment.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 40

In this chapter the honourable author has provided very basic information about Taqiyya, without explaining its nomenclature and the places of its enactment. We shall address these issues in the following pages.

Literal meanings of *Taqiyya* were fear or fright. In its application – it meant concealing one's religious views, due to fear of loss of life or reverence and then to say something that was against the true facts.

This was one of those complex issues for which our opponents had always ridiculed us, although it was a natural phenomenon, which was needed to protect any minority in a hostile environment, irrespective of its religious creed. If weak and fragile people had not used the mode of Taqiyya in aggressive societies, then they would have long perished from the scene.

How was it possible that Islam, which was a natural religion would ban the natural requirement of survival for a frail group of people. That is why the founder of Islam and its saviours had not only allowed its application but also stressed on its significance. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) had said, "There was nothing dearer to me on this planet than the concept of Taqiyya."

He had also said that there was no religion for a man, who refused to accept *Taqiyya*.

First Argument – Qur'anic Verse For Qualifying Taqiyya

It has been mentioned in Surah Al-Nahl:

مَن كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَٰكِن مَّن شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

"He who disbelieves in Allah after his having believed, not he who is compelled while his heart is at rest on account of faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief – on these is the wrath of Allah, and they shall have a grievous chastisement" (16:106).

Commentators of the Qur'an have agreed that this was the basic Qur'anic Verse in support of *Taqiyya*.

It was mentioned in *Tafsir al-Baidhaavi* and *Tafsir al-Kashaf* that once the infidels of Makkah had captured Ammar and his parents – Yasir and Sumayya. They were then forced to say a few words of infidelity. Ammar's parents refused to obey the call so they were murdered in cold blood, but Ammar saved his life by obeying the infidels. Some people complained to the Prophet that Ammar had reverted to Kufr. The Prophet replied, "Don't say this? Ammar is full of faith from head to toe and the faith has penetrated his flesh and blood."

Meanwhile, Ammar reached the presence of the Prophet, who wiped his tears and said, "If infidels force you to reiterate those words again then you should repeat it without any fear."

The above Verse was revealed to strengthen the faith of Muslims. Qadhi Baidhaavi wrote that this Verse was a licence to say unwanted things at a time of crisis for saving life.

Second Argument

It was clearly mentioned in Surah Ale Imran:

لَّا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَن تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

"Let not the believers Take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah: except by way of precaution, that ye may Guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (To remember) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah" (3:28).

This Verse provided an argument that under normal conditions the friendship with the infidels was prohibited, unless one was fearful for his life. This Verse used the phrase

إِلَّا أَن تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً

***Illa an-tattaqu minhum tuqata* (*3:28*),** and the word *Tuqata* according to the seven dialects of the Qur'an was pronounced as *Taqiyya* by Qitada and Abu Rija. Qadhi Baidhaavi wrote in his commentary that was published from Egypt, "God has prohibited friendship, openly or discreetly with the infidels, except when you are anxious about your life."

Similarly, in *Tafsir al-Nishapuri*, Taqiyya was considered acceptable for safeguarding your life and property.

Third Argument

God, while praising a virtuous individual from the household of the Pharaoh said:

وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمَانَهُ

***"And a believing man of Pharaoh's people who hid his faith said..."* (*40:28*).**

Yaktumu Imanahu – a believer from the household of Pharaoh, who concealed his faith said, "God's praise for the man, who concealed his faith, was a proof that under duress one was allowed to say words of disloyalty."

Moreover, this statement belonged to the Shariah of Moses (ʻa), and the absence of its abolition in the Shariah of Muhammad (S) was a proof that the application of *Taqiyya* was a universal code of conduct.

Allama Novi wrote in his commentary of *Sahih Muslim*: "Leading scholars of Islamic law are unanimous that if a man is hiding in the protection of a person and a murderer reaches there with intent to kill and asks the occupier of that house regarding the alleged person or he is holding in custody some money belonging to another person and a usurper reaches there and asks for the money, then it is essential for him to hide the truth from the would-be assassin or the usurper deliberately."

In the light of these facts, situation regarding *Taqiyya* became abundantly clear that even if it was declared as a lie, it was acceptable under those circumstances.

Addressing Some Doubts On Taqiyya

Taqiyya could be considered as a form of hypocrisy, since in both of these approaches, the thoughts of heart and words of mouth are not congruent. Since hypocrisy was illicit, therefore *Taqiyya* could also be deemed illegitimate.

To answer this claim, we would say that this supposition was baseless, as there was huge difference

between the two acts. In *Taqiyya*, faith was concealed and in *Kufr* it was explicit. And, in hypocrisy, the infidelity was concealed and truth was exhibited. When two of these were different realities, it was unrealistic to equate them. This equation was wrong even in the eyes of those who considered presumption as an acceptable tool in religious legal matters.

In the beginning when Islam was weak, *Taqiyya* could be permissible. Now the Muslims are powerful and strong, therefore, this command was now redundant and therefore, illegal. This doubt was also unfounded because the removal of an act from the statutory books was different from keeping a code that had not been used for sometimes.

It was true that there was no need for *Taqiyya* to be practiced after the victory of Makkah, but this statement that it had been withdrawn from the legislative was a lie against the Prophet. You could not prove the abrogation of a code, unless there was a clear Qur'anic statement to do so. God says:

مَا نَنسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا

***"Whatever communications We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or like it"* (*2:106*).**

Allama Suyuti wrote in his *Tafsir al-Ittaqan*, "On the removal of a directive, one can rely on the evidence of any companion of the Prophet if a Verse that had annulled is presented. It is also said that in regard to *naskh* (abrogation), we cannot rely on the collective judicial conjectures of the specialists, unless a clear Qur'anic verdict is not available."

If *Taqiyya* was correct, why Imam Al-Husayn ('a) did not avail it. He had allowed his entire household to be sacrificed in the name of God, instead of committing oath of allegiance to Yazid. This doubt was also created by not understanding the true perspective of *Taqiyya*.

Although it was quite simple for us to say that if *Taqiyya* was not permissible then Imam Ali ('a), in the time of Shaikhain and Imam Al-Hasan ('a), during the period of Mu'awiyah, would not have employed it. However, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, we have explained it fully.

One must understand that Taqiyya was not a compulsory matter as mentioned in the text of the author's paper, but according to the findings of researchers it was subjected to five dictates. It was sometimes mandatory, unacceptable, good, unpleasant or just permissible. On this basis, we could say that Amir Al-Mu'minin 's silence during the caliphates of Shaykhain, or facing the enemy in the battles of Jamal and Siffin, Imam Al-Hasan's initial armed engagement with Mu'awiyah and later peace, Imam Al-Husayn's jihad or Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin's imprisonments, seclusion of Imam Al-Baqir and Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq's from the politics of the state - were all designed to safeguard the religion of Islam, and in reality, there was no difference between these tactics of various Imams.

Reasons For Apparent Conflict In The Imam's Behaviour

It would be quite easy to understand that a change in circumstance could lead to adjustment in the modes for achieving a target. At the time of death of the holy Prophet, Islam was surrounded by external and internal threats. If at this moment Imam Ali (‘a) had fought to reclaim his right, then the civil war would have wrecked Islam in its infancy in Medina.

Imam Ali (‘a) himself admitted the state of affairs at that time. He said: I realised that if I had not helped Islam with my silence then it would have created a rift in Islam that would be hurting me more than the loss of caliphate."

He made it plain that silence under *Taqiyya* was more useful for Islam at that time for him. However, when he was openly elected, he then earned the right to redress the situation. Some mischief mongers tried to impede his work and then the state of affairs permitted him to raise his sword against them, which resulted in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nehrawan.

Similarly, after the death of Amir Al-Mu'minin, when Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) got the seat of authority, the governor of Syria started spreading his conspiracies and tried to eliminate Imam Al-Hasan from the scene by bribing the commanders of his army in a cunning way. The situation became so grave that Imam was ambushed amid mandatory prayer. All his belongings, including his prayer mat were looted and his thigh was severely injured.

On the other hand, when Mu'awiyah offered him a peace treaty on suitable terms, Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) accepted this offer to safeguard the lives of innocent Muslims and the continuity of Islam. Any fair-minded Muslim could not deny these established historical facts. Many honest Sunni scholars accepted this point of view that Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) always considered Mu'awiyah, a usurper and not a legitimate ruler.

Imam Al-Husayn's Circumstances Were Different From His Elders

Imam Husayn's state was totally different from his predecessors, because his adversary Yazid was a person who allowed the forbidden and disregarded the signs of Islam, while openly showing his contempt for the religion. Under these circumstances it was essential for Imam Al-Husayn to declare Jihad against such a regime, even according to the minimum standards laid down by Sunni thinkers.

Shah Waliullah Mohaddas Dehlavi wrote in *Hujjatatul Balegha*, "When a caliph denies any one of the religious essentials and moves towards Kufr, then it is necessary to wage war against him, and this battle is pure Jihad."

Under such conditions Imam Al-Husayn could never think of *Taqiyya*, because it would license the

destruction of Islam forever. Who could be better judge than Imam himself, when he said, “If the religion of Muhammad (S) can be saved with my murder then let the swords come and penetrate my body.”

Another crucial difference that existed between his predecessors and him was that they were offered reconciliation on several occasions by their protagonists, but for Imam Al-Husayn (‘a),

there was only one choice – surrender to Yazid or die. If he chose alliance with Yazid he had to forgo his faith. If he refused then he had to die. Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) followed the route suggested by the Shariah and did what was necessary to safeguard Islam

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Chapter 41: Our View About The Children Of Ali (‘A)

In this chapter, the views of Imams and scholars have been outlined1.

Shaykh Abu Ja’far said about the children of Imam Ali (‘a) that they are the progeny of the Prophet (S), and love and respect for them was essential on all the Muslims, because it was a repayment of the Messengership as mentioned by God in the Qur’an,

ذٰلِكَ الَّذِي يُبَشِّرُ اللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ قُل لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

***“[Say O Prophet] That is of which Allah gives the good news to His servants, (to) those who believe and do good deeds. Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives”* (42:23).**

Sadaqa, which was a leftover from peoples’ needs, was forbidden for his family, but their own *Sadaqa* was permissible for some of the family members and their servants. *Zakat* was also not allowed for the. God has compensated them with Khums. It was our belief about Sayyids, that if anyone among them was corrupt and dishonest – then his punishment was double to that of a non-Sayyid. At the same time, a virtuous Sayyid had his reward doubled.

Sayyids were equivalent and comparable in social and matrimonial status with one another. This view was supplemented by the call of the Prophet, which he made while addressing the children of Abu Talib – Imam Ali (‘a) and Ja’far Tayyar (‘a): “Our daughters are the likes of our sons and our sons are the likes

of our daughters."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said that it was essential to fend off those who opposed the norms of the religion and loved the enemies of God or held animosity against the friends of God, irrespective of the status of their tribe and family.

Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) had told his son Muhammad Ibn Hanafiya that the respect, which he could earn through his own deed and acts of kindness was far more valuable than what could be earned through the authority and identity of his family.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) said, "I value my belief in Imam Ali's wilayat much more than being one of his progeny".

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) was asked about the identity of *Aal al-Rasul*. Imam replied that they were people with whom the Prophet could not marry.

God said in the Qur'an:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

***"And certainly, We sent Nuh and Ibrahim and We gave to their offspring the* (*gift of*) *prophecy and the Book; so, there are among them those who go aright, and most of them are transgressors"* (*57:26*).**

Imam As-Sadiq ('a) was asked to explain the Qur'anic Verse:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

***"Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants; but of them is he who makes his soul to suffer a loss, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness by Allah's permission"* (*35:32*).**

He replied, "God has handed over His book to those whom He has selected among the rest; while some of them are balanced, the others are unjust to themselves (in their routine affairs). Those who are balanced they rush towards the highly merited assets."

Imam ('a) also told that in this Qur'anic Verse that a *Dhalim* or unjust was the one who did not have the awareness of the Imam of his time. Whereas, the balanced were the ones who recognise the right of their Imam on them, and those who step forward towards the virtues were Imams themselves. His son Isma'il once asked the Imam, "What would be the state of those who are sinners among us"?

Imam (‘a) replied:

لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيِّ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ۗ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

“(This) shall not be in accordance with your vain desires nor in accordance with the vain desires of the followers of the Book; whoever does evil, he shall be requited with it, and besides Allah he will find for himself neither a guardian nor a helper” (4:123).

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) stated in a lengthy Hadith: “There is no corporeal relationship between God and His creatures. God only likes that person among His creatures, who fears Him the most, and conforms to His commands above anyone else.

By God, no one can claim proximity to God, except the person who is most obedient and submissive to Him. We have no certificate for release from hell, nor anyone has an argument to deliberate with God. Anyone who is subservient to God is our friend; and whoever is not His subordinate is our enemy. Our wilayat and amity cannot be attained without rejecting the unlawful and performance of good deeds.”

Prophet Noah requested God, when his son was drowning:

وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ رَّبَّهُ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ ابْنِي مِنْ أَهْلِي وَإِنَّ وَعْدَكَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنتَ أَحْكَمُ الْحَاكِمِينَ

“And Noah called upon his Lord, and said: "O my Lord! surely my son is of my family! and Thy promise is true, and Thou art the justest of Judges!” (11:45).

God replied:

قَالَ يَا نُوحُ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنِّي أَعِظُكَ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“... O Noah! He is not of thy family: For his conduct is unrighteous. So ask not of Me that of which thou hast no knowledge! I give thee counsel, lest thou act like the ignorant!” (11:46).

Noah replied:

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

“... O my Lord! I do seek refuge with Thee, lest I ask Thee for that of which I have no knowledge. And unless thou forgive me and have Mercy on me, I should indeed be lost!” (11:47).

Imam As-Sadiq (‘a) was asked to elaborate on this Verse:

وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تَرَى الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم مُّسْوَدَّةٌ أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

"And on the day of resurrection you shall see those who lied against Allah; their faces shall be blackened. Is there not in hell an abode for the proud?" (***39:60***).

Imam replied, "A person who lied in the name of God is the one who claims Imamhood, while he is not an Imam."

Another person asked about what happens if the false claimant is an *Alawite*. Imam replied, he might be a *Fatmi*, along with being an *Alawite* (it would not make any difference). Imam then addressed his companions and said, "Between you and your enemy, the detachment is only that of *Muzmir*."

The companions asked, what did he mean by *Muzmir*. Imam replied, "It is something which you call – *B'raat*, which is something from which you want to keep away and not be responsible for. If there is anyone who is your adversary in religion and breaks the rules of true faith, then you must seek departure from him, even if he is an *Alawite* or a *Fatmi*."

Imam then told his companions about his son Abdullah, who was not on the path, which they were treading. Therefore, Imam was not pleased with him and had sought separation from him.

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1. In this chapter, the respected author has introduced briefly several topics. We shall discuss those subjects and provide some explanations for our readers.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 41

In this chapter, the respected author has introduced briefly several topics. We shall discuss those subjects and provide some explanations for our readers.

The Children Of Ali Are The Children Of The Prophet

It was an established point of view of Shi'a faith that the children of Ali ('a) were the children of the Prophet. Many Sunni scholars shared this view with us. There were several Qur'anic Verses and other narrations to strengthen this vision.

Once Abbasid Caliph Mamoon asked Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) to provide evidence from Qur'an to support

their claim that they were the progeny of the Prophet, even though they were only the offsprings of his daughter. He replied that the following Verse of Surah Al-Anaam was a

the proof of his query:

وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"And in his progeny were David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Aaron, and Moses. Thus We do reward those who do well? And Zakariyya, John, Jesus and Ilyas all were in the ranks of righteous" **(*6:84*).**

In this Verse God had included Jesus (‘a) in the progeny of Abraham via his mother Mary (‘a). That was such a strong argument that a linguist like Mamoon could not say anything but praise for the Imam.

It was mentioned in both Shi’a and Sunni books that the Prophet of God had said: “God has sanctioned the offspring of every Prophet from his sperms, but my progeny was endorsed through the seeds of Ali Ibn Abi Talib.”

A similar statement is recorded in *Al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqah*: “The children of a woman are related to their father’s lineage, except in the case of the children of Fatimah (‘a), whose guardianship and lineage are endorsed through me.”

The Prophet (S) addressed Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) and Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) as his sons on several occasions through statements such as, “My son Hasan (‘a) is a leader”, or, when he referred to both Imams (‘a) saying, “O God, I deeply love these two sons of mine who are born to Fatimah (‘a) You too my Lord, show Thy love for them.”

It was also reported that Angels were instructed by God to address Imam Al-Husayn (‘a) as Ibn Rasul or son of the Prophet. The Prophet of God once said “An angel, which had not visited me before came to me today. He told me that my son Husayn (‘a) will be martyred, naturally, until a metaphor had its basis, words remain confined to their original meanings.”

Love Of Aali Ar-Rasul Is Mandatory

The Qur’anic Verse, which the respected author produced above from Surah Al-Shura, was a definite proof of this claim. Although, it was apparently revealed in the support of Infallible Imams, yet the companions asked the Prophet (S) to tell them the identity of his nearest relations whose love was made compulsory for them. The Prophet replied – Ali (‘a), Fatimah (‘a), Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a). However, as a corollary it also envisaged all Sayyids.

There were several Prophetic narrations, which suggested that the love of Aali ar-Rasul was

compulsory. We have quote some of those traditions below, to complete this subject.

1. “The one who dies in the love of Aali Muhammad has died the death of a martyr.”

2. “The one who dies in the love of Aali Muhammad, his sins are pardoned.”

3. “The one, who dies with the love of Aali Muhammad, is a person of perfect faith.”

4. The one who dies with the love of Aali Muhammad, initially he is given the good tidings of Paradise by the angel of death and then by the Angels accounting for deeds (Nakirain)”.

   There are other *Ahadith,* as below, that tackle the same goal from an opposite perspective.

5. “Anyone who holds animosity against my Ahl al-Bayt will be deprived of my intercession”.

6. “Anyone who holds grudge against my family will find his forehead marked on the Day of Resurrection that he is deprived of God’s grace.”

7. “Anyone who dies with the animosity of my family (Aali Muhammad) dies a death of an infidel.”

8. “The one, who dies with the animosity of Aali Muhammad, will not smell the fragrance of Paradise.”

9. The Prophet of God had said, “There are four categories of people such that if they come to me with sins equivalent to the entire humanity, even then I shall intercede on their behalf. They are – those who help my progeny, or those help them in their need, those who love them with words and actions, and those who practically defend them against an aggressor.”

It is reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that on the day of resurrection, the Prophet (S) would call out, "If anyone holds an obligation against me, he should come forward and take a reward for that claim.

People would reply – may our parents be ransom to you, how could we hold a claim against you, while you hold entitlements against us. The Prophet would say that from the word 'claim', he meant that if someone had provided shelter to any member of Ahl al-Bayt, or performed an act of kindness to anyone of them, or clad a frayed member of my family or fed one of them while he was hungry. He would ask that person to stand up and ask for return of that favour.

At that instant, some people would stand and speak for their services for the family of the Prophet (S). At this juncture, a voice will come from God – O My dearly loved, place them in the Paradise where ever you wish.

The Prophet (S) would place them in a district of paradise, called *Wasila*, where they would not find any partition between the faithful and the Prophets."

Clarification Of A Doubt

Some *Ahadith* that we have mentioned above, were specifically related to the Imams, but there were several other authentic traditions about all kinds of Sayyids, including virtuous and reprobates. Some individuals of the Ummah suggested that the Shariah did not recommend extending regards to those Sayyids who were sinners. Some objectors go on to state to the extent that they were in doubt about such sinners being *Sadat* (members of the Prophets family). They quoted the Qur'anic Verses related to Prophet Noah and his son.

To counter this argument, we could say that lacking personal integrity did not qualify one to be ex-communicated from their family lineage. The Qur'an bore witness that when Abraham ('a) requested God to continue the office of Imamate permanently within his family, he was answered:

لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

"But My Promise is not within the reach of evil-doers" **(*2:124*).**

This Verse suggested that while unfair members of the family would continue to be the part of the Abraham's lineage, they would not receive the status of Imamate.

Similarly, in the Qur'an God said:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

"And certainly, We sent Nuh and Ibrahim and We gave to their offspring the (gift of) prophethood and the Book; so, there are among them those who go aright, and most of them are transgressors" **(*57:26*).**

This Verse clearly suggested that misbehaving children do remain within the family lineage. In another Qur'anic Verse:

فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

"... But of them are some who wrong themselves and of them are some who are lukewarm, and of them are some who outstrip (others) through good deeds, by Allah's leave" **(*35:32*).**

It was mentioned in the elucidation of this Verse that the first kind of Sadaat classed, as *Dhalim* were the sinners and reprobate. A Hadith of the holy Prophet that qualified the respect for his family members states, "Respect my family members for the sake of God if they are virtuous, and for me if they are dissolute."

Reprobation Cannot Dissolve Family Title

To argue on the grounds of the episode of Noah's Son that sinning might excommunicate you from the family tree is not correct. However, it is correct to infer that this honour would be withdrawn from those who distort their faith and relinquish the honourable family traditions of their guided ancestors.

This is so because Noah's son was not only accused of renouncing the need for prayers, fasting and other aspects of the religion, but he was also charged for completely denying the heavenly laws. Noah's own statement:

يَا بُنَيَّ ارْكَب مَّعَنَا وَلَا تَكُن مَّعَ الْكَافِرِينَ

"O, Son come aboard with us and don't be among the infidels" **(*11:42*).**

The Qur'an said:

إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ

"He is not of thy family: For his conduct is unrighteous" **(*11:46*).**

This meant that his basic concept of the faith was wrong. Consequently, such types of Sayyids, who were not in accord with the religion and faith of Ahl al-Bayt and associated themselves with their

enemies and yet, qualified for any respect, were not found.

Many traditions were mentioned about such people in the text of this booklet (*Risalah*). The statement of Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) supplements these. He said: "To cast an eye of adoration on our progeny is an act of faith".

The narrator asked Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) whether that privilege was only reserved for the faces of the Imams ('a)? The Imam replied that it applied to the rest of the progeny as well, as long as they did not excommunicate themselves from the religion of Prophet Muhammad (S), and did not become the followers of falsehood and the condemned religions".

Summarily, those Sayyids, who firmly believe in the religion of Islam but due to human weakness commit some mistakes, their respect is to be definitely observed.

A Question And Its Answer

Are those Sayyids like Zaid and his sons Yahya and Ja'far worth respecting, when they proclaimed their own Imamate in opposition to the guided Imams?

There were several narrations from the Imams condemning such behaviour. They had commanded their followers to discard such claimants. However, as a precaution, one should remain silent since it was an internal family affair. The Imams might have forgiven their acts. There were several reports, which suggested that such a situation might have prevailed in the family of Imams.

It was mentioned in *Ihtijaj al-Tabrasi* that some problems were discussed with the twelfth Imam including the episode of Zaid and his sons. Imam replied,

"My uncle's state of affairs was very similar to the experience of Joseph and his brothers."

Researchers and Scholars have concluded from this reply that Ja'far had faltered in a manner similar to the brothers of Joseph, but later on with the help of God he repented and his apology was accepted, just as Joseph had said to his brothers on that occasion:

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُم

"There is no blame on you today; God will forgive you* (*for the mistakes you have committed*)*"* (12:92***).

This showed that the finale of these Sayyids might have happened along the same note of repentance and forgiveness. There were various narrations in praise of Ja'far, which suggest that he never claimed Imamate for himself that is why, he is called Ja'far al-Tawwab. It is recommended that non-Sayyids

must show their respect for Ja'far. This is so because according to Abi Saeed Makarmi, it is said that once he was sitting with Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) and some people among the gathering used foul language for Ja'far al-Tawwab. Then the Imam rebuked them by saying,

"Beware, of interfering in our family matters, other than with words of respect."

True Sayyids Must Repent Before Their Death

There were several authentic narrations, which suggested that when Sayyids linked truly in lineage to the Prophet, when involved with iniquities, were provided with a chance by the grace of God to repent and die as a true Muslim. It was reported from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a) that God provided a chance to all the members of Prophet's family to correct themself before death, and that period may be as short as two consecutive milking phases of a camel.

In *Tarikh al-Qum* an episode of Ahmed Ibn Ishaaq was quoted, which supplemented this view. It is said that Ahmed used to admire and revere the Sayyids. Among them was one Sayyid Husayn Al-Qummi. Once Ahmed came to know that he was an alcoholic. Therefore, Ahmed stopped his social security and refused to pay the prescribed funds. At this point, Sayyid tried to meet Ahmed, who snubbed him by refusing to meet him. Husayn Al-Qummi returned home totally dejected and disappointed.

After sometime, Ahmed went to Makkah for the Hajj and after completing the pilgrimage went to visit Imam Hasan Al-'Askari ('a) in Medina. Imam declined his request saying that if he had no time to meet 'our progeny', then we too have no time for him. After some efforts Ahmed made his way to Imam and told him that his behaviour was in response to Husayn's indulgence in drinking. Imam replied that no matter what the physical state of his descendent was, his respect for him was mandatory. Imam advised him not to underestimate his progeny, for his attitude towards them was a reflection of the love and care held by the followers for their Imams. If they are laid back over this issue, then they might be among the losers.

After this meeting, Ahmed went back to Qum. People as usual came to greet him and Husayn was also among the crowd. Ahmed received Husayn Al-Qummi with love and respect, and when rest of the crowd dispersed Husayn enquired about the reason behind his change in behaviour. Ahmed then narrated the entire incident that took place in Medina. Husayn thus realised his mistake and cried to seek repentance for his sins from Allah. He became an exemplary Muslim. This incident reflected that a true Sayyid must one day return to the folds of faith. On the other hand, if a person claims to be a Sadat and yet dies as a fornicator then he is certainly not a Sayyid.

Sadaqa Is Prohibited For Sayyids

All Muslims agree that *Sadaqa* was forbidden for the Sayyids, and its reason was the same that was quoted by the author in the text of this Risalah. Allegorically speaking Sadaqa was the leftover muck and

grime of human needs. So, God had protected the Sayyids from consuming this, given their value in His eyes. This was an instruction for those who considered non-Sayyids to be at par with the Sayyids.

Also, just as a state purse was reserved only for the Royals and Lords, God had allocated Khums for Sayyids, which was half of the 20% levy charged on all savings in a year from every working male and female. It therefore, was regrettable then that a majority of Muslims had debarred Sayyids from this allowance. And some of those who accepted this charge, did not pay it as due regularly. Or, if they did, they did not use it for the right causes.

Blessings And Punishments Are Doubled Up For The Sayyids

There were so many narrations, besides what has been quoted above to highlight the status of the Sayyids. Yet, it did not mean that all the privileges were free for them. They could not do whatever they wished to, in order to disfigure the codes of Islamic law, and yet be licensed to enter the Paradise without being probed. If it was so, then it would tantamount to the charging our Prophet (S) with partiality towards his family. This would mean that the person of the Prophet (S) could be blamed for execution of some cardinal sins, which God-forbidding was beyond his status.

The fact was that the final reward depended upon the true faith and exemplary deeds of a person. However, this was also the accepted view of all Muslims that Sayyids were preferred one up over the rest of the Ummah. For each act of decency and immorality their reward or punishment would also be doubled respectively. This was not at all strange, because God said about the wives of the Prophet:

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ مَن يَأْتِ مِنكُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَاعَفْ لَهَا الْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ

"O, wives of the Prophet! If any of you were guilty of evident unseemly conduct, you will receive double the punishment" (***33:30***).

وَمَن يَقْنُتْ مِنكُنَّ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا نُّؤْتِهَا أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ

"And whosoever of you is submissive unto Allah and His messenger and doeth right, We shall give double the reward" (***33:31***).

If this logic was true for wives of the Prophet; it would also be true for his other relatives.

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Chapter 42: About Mujmil And Mufassir Ahadith

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that the *Ahadith* which contained details of legal codes or commandments were called the *Mujmil Ahadith*, as stated by Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a).

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 42

Definition Of Mujmil And Mufassir Ahadith

Among the scholars of later era; just as the Ahadith are divided into two classes on the strength of its authenticity, in the same way they further classify the Ahadith on the basis of its meaning and connotations.

Mujmil (abstract) was a hadith, where the presenter had not made the meanings of the contents of narration clear in the mind of the recipient. Whereas, *Mufassir* and *Mufassil* narrations were the ones where its narrator made the importance and implications of the *hadith* fully clear, without any misconception.

It was an established fact that similar to the Verses of Qur'an, *Ahadith* were also divided into common, special, absolute, confined, abstract and detailed modules. In reality, there was no difference between them. In fact, a common (*hadith*) was suitable for the special, absolute for the confined and an abstract was applicable for detailed. In this way, they elucidated each other.

It is also mentioned that some *Ahadith* clarified the contents of the other traditions e.g., if a ruler issued a decree that the learned should be respected and then he issued another decree that those scholars who were fornicators should not be valued. Thus, in reality there was no contradiction between the two decrees. As a matter of fact, the second decree supplemented the first ruling.

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Chapter 43: Prohibitions And Permissions

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that as long as there was no clear verdict available from God about things, which were to be considered improper; then those things must be treated permissible and valid.

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 43

Difference In Opinion On The Issue

There is a minor difference of opinion among the scholars that follow the word to the letter, and those who deal with the broad principles on this issue. The point of contention is to understand whether things are inherently prohibited or permissible? Therefore, all of the scholars that deal with the principles consider everything permissible, unless there is a clear directive against it. The second group considers that things are prohibited, unless clearly declared to be permissible.

The truth of the matter was that unless there was a clear verdict against it, one must consider that thing to be acceptable. There was a plain ruling of Imam Ja'far As–Sadiq (‘a) on this issue, "Everything is permissible or halal, unless there is a clear judgment against it". This was the distinct feature of the Islamic law, which was in tandem with its constitution.

One must bear in mind that this clause was applicable only where a permanent judgement could not be made through the acceptable logic. This included matters such as those whose outcome would vary with the change of place or person, and changes had to be made to the law according to the prevailing circumstances.

However, in matters where logic and intellect endured, such as theft, telling lies or committing tyranny, then rulings against such affairs did not require any clear verdict. These actions would be considered *haram* (illegal).

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Chapter 44: Ahadith Relating To The Medical Profession

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that there were different types of *Ahadith*, which related to the profession of medicine. There were some that were linked to the environment of Makkah and Medina, and it was not appropriate to relate those to other countries, where the climate was different. There were other narrations, in which the Imam advised according to the requirements of the patient. This advice was not extendable to people with other afflictions, as Imam was best attuned to the needs of the patient.

In some *Ahadith*, content from conflicting sources entered fraudulently into Shi'a literature, in order to make the Shi'a *Fiqh* a subject of ridicule for opposing camps. In some *Ahadith*, the reporters made genuine mistakes by forgetting some essential aspects of the report, for example, it was reported that honey was the cure for all diseases. The report while factual was relevant only for those illnesses that involved energy loss in the body.

Similarly, it had been recommended for the patients of piles to clean their back passage with cold water. This was effective only if it was initiated by the use of high-energy foods. It is had been told that *bringan* (a vegetable), was also its cure. This recommendation was applicable only at the time of the maturing of dates when the patient also desired to eat the dates. This treatment could not be universal.

Anyhow, recommendations of correct medicines that were related to the Imams were based on Qur'anic suras and Verses. Certain supplications were available in the authentic *Ahadith* treatise. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) had once also said that philosophers and sages of the earlier era were recognized as physicians.

Once Moses asked God, who was responsible for sending a disease? God replied that it was from Him. Moses then asked about who provides medicine? God replied that it was He, the Lord. Moses then asked, why did the people then visit the physicians. God replied that because it made their hearts satisfied, and it was for this reason that the physicians were called - *Tabeeb*. In dictionary, the word *Tibb* stood for the provision of confidence.

It was reported that in the prayer hall of David, every day a special grass would grow and communicate with God's permission that it was suitable for such and such disease. During the last days of David's life, he saw a particular grass near the place of worship. He asked the grass to identify itself. It responded that its name was *Khorabia*. Listening to this, David (‘a) realised that his end was near and his place of worship was about to be destroyed so that nothing will ever grow there again.

The Prophet of God (S) has said that if Surah Al-Hamd could not cure a person, then it means God would not heal him.

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It has been mentioned in several Ahadith and narrations that health and disease are all from God. It is cited in Qur'an in the language of Abraham:

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

"When I fall ill, only He [***God***] ***restores me to health"*** (***26:80***).

Diseases have several physical and spiritual advantages for the patients. It is not possible to go into those details here. However, a disease is also called the 'postman of death'. Thus, it could become the ransom of many minor and cardinal sins that had been performed by the afflicted person.

While cure of an illness was from God, we are directed to consult the doctors and specialist physicians as we live in a society with interdependence. On the authority of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), it was mentioned in *Al-Anwar An-Nu'maniyah* that once a Prophet fell ill. He said that he would not seek cure for that illness, unless the One Who had made him ill, cured him. God replied that He would not grant him health unless he had consulted with the Physician and worked on his instructions.

So, it is important to mention here that Medicine being a great profession, was initiated through *Wahi* or revelation from God. The Prophets then taught this science to the erudite, which were later on called the Physicians.

Some Important Principles Of Keeping Healthy

God, his Prophet (S) and Imams ('a) have provided some golden rules for keeping fit. An example is the statement that the belly is home to all illnesses and best of the medicine was to eat less. It was reported from Imam Ar-Ridha ('a) that if people exercised moderation in their food habits, their bodies would remain healthy and strong.

A Christian physician once asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq ('a), if there were any instructions related to the profession of medicine in the book of God and the sermons of the Prophet? Imam replied that both these sources had instructions in this respect. It was mentioned in the book of God:

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا

"Eat and drink, but do not exceed" **(*7:31*).**

Also, the Prophet of God had said, "Less consumption is the best medicine." The Christian physician departed from the company of the Imam after stating that their Lord and the Prophet had omitted nothing in their advice to the profession of medicine.

Similarly, these spiritual healers (Prophets and Imams) have left several instructions to remain fit and healthy, along with spiritual benefits of several Qur'anic Verses and other relevant supplications.

Medicines Recommended By Imams ('A) Are Good For Everyone

Although, the author of this *Risalah* has provided good explanation on the effectiveness of many medicines suggested by the Imams, we have opted to cite the results of research carried out by Mohaddas Jazairi. He said: "Some medical suggestions point towards benefits depending upon the personality type and the environment of the patient, such as the mention of honey. However, it is also true that Qur'an was not sent for a particular place or a person. Therefore, its medicines would be equally good for people of any land. All that is required is that the patients should exhibit confidence and poise towards the suggested modes of treatment, and use it without fear of any negative reaction."

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Chapter 45: Regarding Our Faith On Two Differing Ahadith

Shaykh Abu Ja'far said that our faith on the subject was that the Ahadith, which have reached us through consistent and authentic channels of the Imams, were all correct and reliable in their essence. These were in line with the Qur'anic commandments, due to their one-to-one relation with the revelations. If, however, Ahadith were from a source other than God, then there was likely to be greater division in its meanings and connotations.

If we found an apparent conflict in some Ahadith, then it should have some reasons of its own. For example, it was mentioned in a hadith regarding the compensation for *Zihar* (if someone said that his wife was like his mother), then that the alleged person should free a slave. At the same time, another Hadith suggested that he should fast continuously for two months, and the third Hadith proposed that he should feed sixty needy persons.

In this case there appeared to be some apparent conflict in the punishment that was awarded to the

accused, but in fact all three recommendations were correct at its appropriate moment. Fasting was mandatory for a person who could not afford to free a slave and feeding the poor was recommended for the one who did not have the strength to fast for two months. It was also mentioned that if he had to pay Sadaqa (charity) for its compensation, then he should pay whatever he could afford. This order was for a person who could not afford to feed sixty people:

فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ

***"... So, its expiation is the feeding of ten of the needy ones with the average of that wherewith ye feed your own folk, or the clothing of them, or the liberation of a slave, and he who findeth not (the wherewithal to do so), he must fast for three days"* (*5:89*).**

There were some *Ahadith* which apparently looked different but were not different at all. Instead, their recommendations could replace one another. An ignorant person would find conflicting reports regarding the atonement of breaking the oath, but in fact there was no divergence between any of those amends. It was mentioned about the recompense of breaking an oath that the accused should feed or clad ten destitutes or free a slave or fast for three days. It was understood that if the accused could fulfil anyone of those conditions, then the other two could be automatically replaced.

There were some Ahadith that were narrated in the state of *taqaiyya* (not revealing the identity of a Shi'a). The variation in these *Ahadith* had a reason. Qais Ibn Halali said: "I told Imam Ali ('a) that I have heard explanations of some Qur'anic Verses and Ahadith of the Prophet from Abu Dharr, Salman and Miqdad that differ hugely, with the deliberations from other elucidators, and then I have heard you backing up the trio. I have also seen a treasure of the elucidation of the Qur'an and Ahadith of the Prophet with your opponents, which they use in order to defy your status. You, on the other hand, think that all of this literary treasure is fake and forged. Is it true that these people have knowingly misrepresented the Prophet, and added personal dimensions to the elucidation of the Qur'an?"

The narrator (Salim Ibn Qais Helali) said that Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) replied that he should try to understand, if his desire was to question him. He continued to say that whatever people had with them was a mixture of truth and deceit. It also included matter that invalidated a decree, and that had been made redundant. It also contained what was clear and established, along with the metaphor. People had remembered a few and were in doubt about the other. Lies were spread in his name, in the life of the Prophet, so much so that he had to openly say, 'Beware, there are lots of people who are spreading untruths on my name. Remember such people are preparing their abode in the hell.'

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِنْ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ وَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْآنُ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

"O you who believe! do not put questions about things which if declared to you may trouble you, and if you question about them when the Quran is being revealed, they shall be declared to you; Allah pardons this, and Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing" (***5:101***).

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا بِهَا كَافِرِينَ

"A people before you indeed asked such questions, and then became disbelievers on account of them" (***5:102***).

This act of lying was maintained after his death. All the Ahadith that reached you, had come from four types of people with no fifth component involved in them. First was from a hypocrite, who was a fake Muslim. He was apparently cladded in Islam, but did not feel any reservation in telling lies in the name of the Prophet. If people had known the reality of this person, they would not have trusted his words.

However, due to ignorance they considered him as a companion of the Prophet. Their narrations were accepted since he had seen the Prophet and had heard him, although God warned us of the presence of hypocrites among the companions of the Prophet and has explained how to identify them. It is said:

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ وَإِن يَقُولُوا تَسْمَعْ لِقَوْلِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ خُشُبٌ مُّسَنَّدَةٌ

"When thou lookest at them, their exteriors please thee; and when they speak, thou listenest to their words. They are as (***worthless as hollow***) ***pieces of timber propped up,*** (***unable to stand on their own***)***"*** (***63:4***).

After the death of the Prophet these people dispersed. They acquired special positions near corrupt and distorted leaders by telling lies and using deceitful means. These crooked rulers appointed them as leaders over the people and they accumulated lots of worldly allure. These hypocrites were placed over the necks of the people. It has been an established fact that people always sided with the rulers, other than those whom God had saved. This was first of the four kinds of the narrators of the Hadith of the Prophet.

The second type of narrator was the one who had heard the Prophet but could not remember completely the contents of his address. So, he was confused and totally misrepresented the message of the Prophet. This person did not lie on the Prophet purposely, and acted upon whatever right or wrong he had accrued, and also claimed that he had heard a particular hadith from the Prophet. If Muslims had realised that he was confused in his understanding, they would have opted not to receive the hadith from him. Also, if the narrator himself had realised his confusion, he would not have offered himself as a narrator of the *hadith*.

The third type of narrator of hadith was a person, who heard one directive of the Prophet but was not

present at the time when the Prophet withdrew the order. Therefore, he remembered the annulled but was unaware of the statement that negated it. If he had known that this particular command has been annulled then he would have certainly dissociated himself from that, as so was the community of the faithful.

The fourth was the person who had never lied about hadith of the Prophet. In fact, he hated lying due to fear of God and respect for the Prophet. He had not forgotten anything and remembered the message of the Prophet in its spirit and letter. He had not added or subtracted any content. He had the knowledge of the invalid and also that of its replacement. Therefore, he acted upon the substitute and kept away from the annulled.

In the Prophet's work, like the word of God there was a pattern of metaphoric and lucid decrees. Like Qur'an, sometimes the Prophet's directives had two facets. At one point, it was relevant in general and at another, it was particular or specific. God said in His book:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانتَهُوا

"…And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back…" **(*59:7*).**

This dual featured phrase became mystified by less erudite people because not all the companions of the Prophet were such that they could question him on every issue to discover the truth of his saying, as indicated in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِن تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ وَإِن تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْآنُ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

"O ye who believe! Ask not questions about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if ye ask about things when the Qur'an is being revealed, they will be made plain to you, Allah will forgive those: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Forbearing" **(*5:101*).**

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا بِهَا كَافِرِينَ

"Some people before you did ask such questions, and on that account lost their faith" **(*5:102*).**

To summarise it, we could say that some people were stopped from asking questions to the Prophet (S). For this reason, they used to wait for a Bedouin to come to the Prophet for seeking some explanations regarding a theme, and they should benefit from that talk. However, my status was such that I used to go the Prophet every evening in privacy to talk to him. Whatever subject I chose for discussion, the

Prophet used to answer me.

I have travelled with the Prophet (S) in every one of his journeys. All the companions of the messenger of God knew that the Prophet (S) had not given this privilege to anyone else other than me. These private meetings with the Prophet (S) were usually held at my residence, and whenever I visited the Prophet, he used to arrange seclusion for me by even asking his wives to leave from the meeting place. Every time, the Prophet visited me, he asked all attendants to leave, other than Fatimah (‘a) and my two sons Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a).

I usually asked him the questions and he replied. When I became silent and my questions ended, Prophet (S) himself used to initiate conversation. Therefore, there was no Verse in the Holy Qur’an that was revealed to the Prophet or any other teaching message from God that was related to legal code, episodes of the past or the happenings of the future, that were not taught to me by the Prophet (S). He then, advised me to preserve those commands in writing. I wrote those facts in my handwriting and the Prophet taught me about their apparent and intrinsic meanings.

I learnt these teachings by heart and did not miss a single word. During the process of teaching, he used to put his hand on my chest and asked God to enhance my capabilities; and further extend my knowledge of all things and do not let forgetfulness to prevail over me. I asked the Prophet, if he was afraid of empty–mindedness on my behalf. The Prophet replied that he had no such fears about me as God had informed him that He had accepted his supplication for the associates of the mission that will follow. I asked the Prophet about those associates of mine. The Prophet replied that they were those people, whose obedience was mandated with the obedience of God and the Prophet according to the Qur’anic Verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ

“O believers obey God, the Prophet and people of authority, who are among you” (***4:59***).

I asked the Prophet (S) about their identity. He replied that they were his legatees, who would not differ from each other. They would meet him at the banks of the springs of Kawthar, after fulfilling their duties. Whoever deceived them and did not help them in their endeavour would not be able to harm them. They will always remain with the Qur’an, and Qur’an will also to side with them. My Ummah will get help, there will be rain, calamities will be removed and supplications will be accepted through their intervention. I asked the Prophet to provide me with their names. He replied,

“O Ali (‘a), you are the first of them. He then, he put his hand on the heads of Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a), suggesting that they will be the Imams after me. Then Zayn Al–’Abidin (‘a), your namesake will be the Imam followed by his son Muhammad (‘a), who will expand knowledge and he will be the custodian of the God’s revelations. He asked Husayn (‘a) to send his greetings on him.

Then Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a), Musa Ar-Ridha (‘a), Ali Ibn Musa Ar-Ridha (‘a), Muhammad Ibn Ali (‘a), Ali Ibn Muhammad (‘a), Hasan Ibn Ali (‘a) – better known as Hasan Al-'Askari (‘a). And, after them the last one whose name and appearance is in my mould, who will establish his rule towards the end of the time and fill the earth with peace and justice in place of injustice and tyranny with which it will be filled at that time.

Imam Ali (‘a) then said to the recipient of this Hadith that he knew, in the name of God, where oath of allegiance will be offered to him in the place between Hajar al-Aswad and Maqam Ibrahim. He also knew the names of the people and their tribes who will offer their allegiance."

Salim Ibn Qais said that after a time, when Mu'awiyah was in Syria, he went to Medina to meet Imams Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a) and related this Hadith of the Prophet, S) to them. They replied that I was telling the truth, as they were also present in the company of the Prophet (S) at that time. They also remembered this hadith after listening to him, and said that the same Hadith narrated later by their father to them with almost the same details, just as he had related to you.

Salim said that after some time he went to the presence of Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a), when his son Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) was also present with him. I narrated the hadith, which I had heard from his grandfather. He also confirmed that he had heard this hadith from his grandfather in his childhood, while he was ill. Imam Al-Baqir (‘a) also confirmed that he has heard this Hadith from his grandfather (Imam Al-Husayn, ‘a) who had passed on the salutations of the Prophet (S) to him.

Aban Ibn Abi Ayyash said that when he had narrated the hadith, which he had heard from Qais Ibn Salim, to Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a), he had confirmed the contents of the hadith. He had said that Jabar Ibn Abdullah Ansari had come to his son, while he was going to Kaaba and presented the salutations of the Prophet (S) and had kissed him.

The same Aban Ibn Abi Ayyash says that after the death of Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a), he went to Makkah for Hajj, and met with Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) and discussed with him the *hadith* narrated by Qais Ibn Salim Halali. Imam became emotional and said,

"May God send His blessing on Qais. He was telling the truth. He had come to see my father after the martyrdom of my grandfather, while I was also present and the same hadith was presented there in the same manner, and my father had confirmed the contents of his narration."

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SHARES

Notes And Commentary On Chapter 45

Definition Of Hadith

According to the dictionary, speech and hadith are synonymous with each other. However, in the terminology of *Muhadhdhitheen*, hadith is the name of a medium, which incorporates sayings, work or the speech of the infallibles. According to *Muhadhdhitheen*, news is also allegorically used for these meanings, while the phrase Sunnah, whose literal meaning is speech, acts or adage of the infallibles is also called hadith.

In earlier times, people used to narrate Ahadith on the basis of memory. However, with the passage of time, Ahadith were collected and edited in the book form in the first century Hijra. Later on, this process acquired great fame and the world of Islam then produced great masters of this maintaining this tradition, the example of which is not found in any other religion of the world.

Pre-Eminence Of Hadith

In reality, the science of *hadith* is one of the great branches of Islamic education. It contains all aspects of perpetual success in the hereafter and the material world. Allama Al-Majlisi's thoughts on hadith are worth mentioning. He said -

"I swear on my life that I have found hadith to be an ark of success that is filled of eternal blessings. I have found them the minarets of guidance that are guarantors of salvation in the darkness of ignorance. I have seen the banners of the travellers on this route of guidance flying high, and how pleasant are the sound of echoes of the elders who invite others along this course to this campaign.

I have seen blooming gardens full of flowers and fruits of erudition in the districts of this city. I have seen passages, while travelling through this channel leading to magnanimity and virtuosity. I have not seen anywhere, any word of wisdom and perception, whose essence is not contained in the treasury of hadith. I have not learnt any fact or information whose core is not mentioned in the hadith."

For the satisfaction of the faithful, we have quoted some Ahadith to show its eminence.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a) has said, "O Fazil, our Ahadith revive the dead souls."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) said that if you receive a Hadith from a reliable person, then it was better than the entire treasure of the world.

Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in his *Risala al-I'tiqadia*, "Then our Imams left their signs and news for us. Therefore, it is important that in this period of major occultation of the Imam, we remain in touch with

their news, and ponder on its substance. Unfortunately, the people today have set up their faith on their personal conjectures by forgetting the news, narrations and reports of Ahl al-Bayt. They themselves have lost the way and they are making the rest to follow their drift."

Harm Of Denying Ahadith

One must know that amongst Muslims, there was a sect, which denounced *Ahadith*. Some people sowed the seeds of this mischief during the last days of the Prophet's life. They announced that the book of God was sufficient for them. This shrub has now established firm roots, and on occasions it has flourished well in the community. In the time of Ghulam Ahmed Parvez, it has become a fully blooming tree. This poisonous tree has maligned the clean ambience of Islamic thoughts.

We are thankful to the Lord that scholars of Islam without any sectarian divide have wiped out the essential ingredients of this harmful view by writing books and delivering lectures in public meetings. We present a few reasons below, as a counsel to demonstrate the importance of this topic.

It was clear in the mind of intellectuals that only a specialist rather than a non-specialist of a subject could make the viewpoint and philosophy of the matter much clearer and more lucid by way of explanations. Therefore, a book that contained the realm of almost everything and also declared that its hidden meanings were not known to everyone, rather only certain people had this knowledge, cannot be left to the conjectures of the general populace.

Among the religious responsibilities of the Prophet (S), one important chapter was the erudition of the Qur'an and its relevant logical discourses. If the Muslims, who were also excellent linguists, were capable of interpreting the Qur'an and its hidden meanings and concepts in the manner desired by God, then there was no need for the Prophet (S) to act as a teacher for them. Naturally, the teaching process of the Prophet (S) must involve words and phrases, which were different aspects of hadith. Any fair-minded individual could not deny this.

God says in Surah Al-Nahl:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

***"... And We have revealed the Book to you explaining clearly everything, and a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit..."* (*16:89*).**

This Qur'anic Verse made it abundantly clear that those narrations, elucidations and comments were nothing but the teachings about the subject matter of the Qur'an, and this was what was called *hadith*.

It was revealed in Surah Al-Nisa':

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ

***"(O Prophet) Surely We have revealed the Book to you with the truth that you may judge between people by means of that which Allah has taught you..."* (*4:105*).**

Again, these decisions that were made by the Prophet (S) for the people were in the form of words and texts, which were separate from the Qur'an. It was therefore, essential for the people to attain success of both worlds by stimulating Qur'anic concepts in the light of the prophetic conversations.

If the news and hadith were not counted as a necessary document, then we would not be able to solve any socio-religious problem related to the Islamic society. It was true that Qur'an had the mention of everything, but it had been kept so short and metaphorical that we could not even ascertain the numbers of *rakat* of the mandatory prayers or the measure of *zakat*.

There Is No Contradiction In The Ahadith Of Imams From Ahl Al-Bayt

It was an established fact that there was no contradiction in the *Ahadith* of the Prophet (S) and the Imam ('a) from Ahl al-Bayt. Even the Sunni scholars appreciate this quality. Allama Muhammad Saeed Sindhi wrote in book *Darasat al-Labib*, "Whatever is the religion of one Imam is the religion of another Imam, among the Imams from Ahl al-Bayt. The apparent reason for this is that a contradiction arises only when there are false exponents."

However, those who had been taught by God Himself through the Holy Spirit and Gabriel, and who could read the Preserved Tablet at an early age of their life, their words could never be incongruous. This was why Shaykh Bahai had written in his research paper, "Majority of our Ahadith, except a few, reach us through the Imams, and through them the chain of reporters reaches until Prophet (S) is the source, because their knowledge is illuminated from the lamp of Prophethood."

Reasons Of Apparent Disagreement

One reason of this conflict between *Ahadith* was the interpreter's own lack of knowledge and expertise. As a result, they assumed in their mind that there was some conflict in a given *Ahadith* when in reality there is none. The author of this book Shaykh Abu Ja'far has given several examples of this attitude in the text. Shaykh At-Tusi quoted some Ahadith from the Imams ('a) in his book Al-*Istabsar*, stating, "Our Ahadith are very difficult; which can be only be appreciated either by the Angels, a Prophet or a tried and trusted Mu'min (faithful)."

It was also mentioned in some other Ahadith that their contents contained both lucid and metaphoric materials. Their understanding and interpretation were beyond the capabilities of less erudite people.

They could not understand the apparent variation in Ahadith with their own limitations. Therefore, they jump to the conclusion that these Ahadith were conflicting in terms of their logical approach, reporting methodology or the Qur'anic verdict. Whereas, in actual fact there was never been any conflict between such Ahadith.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (‘a) had said, "Those theologians who say that this is within our logical parameters and that is beyond or this can be interpreted by us by employing appointed rules and that cannot, are in the knowledge of the godly trained individuals as passages or statements with definite meaning. They can see the reflections of reality in those Ahadith."

It might also be due to *taqaiyya*. It was reported from Imam (‘a), who said "We have put some divisions among you in order to save your and our lives because if you were all seen standing on a single platform then your identification might be easy and it would have resulted in your demise."

Therefore, these shrewd individuals, who were godly trained, gave the true answer of a problem to some trusted individuals and the rest were provided with a disguised answer. This made the less scholarly ones a little baffled, while those who were accustomed with the diction of the Imams, knew what the real reply was and what was under the influence of *taqaiyya*?

Major reason of the diversity between *Ahadith* was a gap between the prevailing circumstances of those who reported and those who documented them. This has been adequately mentioned in the report of Salim Ibn Qais Hilali, which was documented in the text of this Risalah. We do not feel the need to add anything more than what has already been said.

We can only say that just as the Prophet (S) has encountered hypocrites and blighters, the Imams also came across a similar band of troublesome people, who wickedly manufactured fake reports to malign the name of Islam. It was for this reason that the Imams (‘a) and their true companions rendered a great service to unveil their criminal acts.

Our senior scholars made great efforts to remove majority of such material from our books. If an odd report was left behind, then Imam's instructions were available to deal with it. Some rules and regulations have been developed in the light of these instructions. However, before we comment on those rules, we would like to add few words on the book of Salim Ibn Qais Hilali.

Book Of Salim Ibn Qais Hilali

Salim Ibn Qais Hilali was a major figure among the companions of Imam Ali (‘a), who died in 90th Hijra, during the reign of Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin (‘a). Allama Al-Hilli, along with other great Masters accepted his validity in his book *Khulasat al-Rijal*. Aban Ibn Abi Ayyash said that he was a God-fearing humble man and his face was radiant with piety. Hajjaj Ibn Saqafi tried to murder him and he escaped to reach the protection of Aban Ibn Abi Ayyash and stayed with him till his death.

Salim related the *hadith*, which was mentioned in the text of this chapter, to Aban close to his time of death. He handed over his book, whose initial name was *Kitab as-Saqifa* to Aban as well. There was a long debate among the Shi'a scholars about the origin of this book. Some scholars did not attribute it to Salim.

Shaykh Abi Ali Haeri had written with reference to *Rijal al--Ghazaeri* that it was undoubtedly a forged book. However, it was recently published in Najaf with a strong foreword that proved through undeniable evidence to be the work of Salim Ibn Qais. It was also established that this book was long used as a reference by senior clerics. In its foreword, Shaykh Nu'mani's opinion about this volume was mentioned in chapter titled "Aaimma Athna Ashr" of Gaibat al-Nu'mani, "The summary of our investigation is that there is no doubt among grand Shi'a scholars about the book of Salim Ibn Qais. It is one of his immense original works, and it is an invaluable source to which our academics have always referred to and relied upon."

Similarly, it was learnt from Qazi Badruddin Sabki's book – *Mahasa-nur Rasail Fi Marafatul Awail*, that the first book, which had been written by a Shi'a scholar was that of Salim Ibn Qais. Ibn Nadeem confirmed this on the pages 307-308 of his book, *Al-Fihrist.* Allama Al-Majlisi wrote in *Bihar ul Anwar,* "Kitab Salim Ibn Qais is very famous. Some people have cast doubts on it. It is however, one of the major historical sources. Although Shaykh Al-Mufid has not offered a good opinion about it, but he too has accepted the Hadith narrated by Salim. It has been quoted by Shaykh Abu Ja'far."

We could say that this book was reliable on a majority of counts, even though some of its narrations are questionable. This division of Ahadith suggested that Sahih will take precedence over Hasan, Hasan over Qavi, Qavi over Moosiq (reliable) and Moosiq over Dha'eef. Nevertheless, the book of Salim, gave us information about the diversity of *Ahadith* and its reasons. It was also a document on the legacy of Caliphate and Imamate amongst Ahl al-Bayt.

Types Of Ahadith

There were two types of Ahadith:

- *Mutawatir* (continuous)

- *Wahid* (singular).

If so many channels of repute reported a hadith then any fabrication or falsehood was unlikely. Such a hadith is called a continuous or a *Mutawatir* hadith and those, which have no such justifications available, are called singular reports.

According to the Senior Masters a singular report was also of two types: reliable, or – unreliable (anecdotal). A reliable singular report was the one that must have some intrinsic and extrinsic justifications to be certain of its reliability. The other type, which was devoid of this validation, was called

anecdotal.

In the earlier period, as the scholars, due to the proximity with Imams (‘a) had access to such a material, but in the later period those references were not possible. Therefore, the scholars had to rely on the character and the disposition of the narrator. Therefore, the standards of vetting a narration or a report have changed. We have mentioned below a few types of Ahadith.

– Hadith al–Sahih (Correct) was every hadith, whose chain of authority reached the Imams (‘a) and all its narrators were Shi’as and righteous people. This was called a *Sahih Hadith*, according to the scholars of later period.

– *Hadith al–Ahsan* (Good) was a hadith whose chain of authority did not reach the Imams (‘a), yet its narrators were all Shi’a Ithna ‘Ashri. They were venerated even though their candour was not highlighted.

– *Hadith al–Qavi* (Strong) was a hadith, whose reporters were all Shi’a Ithna ‘Ashri, but there was no evidence available on their authenticity or inaccuracy.

– *Hadith al–Moosiq* (Reliable) was hadith whose chain of reporting reached the Imams (‘a) through pious individuals, who were not Shi’a Ithna ‘Ashri.

– *Hadith al–Dha’eef* (Weak) is that Hadith, which was devoid of all such conditions, mentioned earlier. It was called a weak narration.

In this chapter on *hadith*, one significant problem has remained untouched. The honourable author had not commented on this. It was that if some variations were found in the *Ahadith* and the reports that have reached us, then what should be done at the moment of its application. In other words, what should be accepted and what should be rejected, and what was the plan to adopt a suitable standard to justify such a step?

This has been a very long debate, and a complete chapter of Islamic law was devoted to this subject. In this connection, several statements of the Imams (‘a) were available that directed these reports to be judged against Qur’anic concepts or be compared to the accepted norms or assess the validity of the narrator. In this respect, most authentic narration was the one offered by Imran Ibn Hanzala from Imam Ja’far As–Sadiq (‘a). This being a detailed Hadith, and is presented below as a summary.

“Narrator: if a dispute is generated between two of your followers, can they approach an unjust ruler for mediation?

Imam: If someone approaches them on an issue that deals with fundamental concepts of the religion, then such a person has appointed Satan as his attorney. If the case is decided in his favour, when he was genuine, however, whatever he has gained from that litigation is haram (illicit)

Narrator: What they should do then?

Imam: They should search for a knowledgeable person among their creed, who is well versed with our Ahadith, and fully conversant with our penal judgements and other relevant religious affairs, and appoint him as a judge, then abide by his decision. If his decision is contested, then they have doubted our opinion, which is equivalent to denying God, and such a person is a *mushrik*.

Narrator: If the two protagonists appoint two judges and then differences arise in their judgement and that difference is caused by your Ahadith. Then what they should do?

Imam: The decision of that judge will prevail, whose sanctity, integrity, piety and abstinence is markedly high.

Narrator: May my parents be ransom to you, if the two judges are equally good at that level?

Imam: The verdict of that judge will prevail, whose decision is based upon the most recognised tradition of ours, among the intellectuals.

Narrator: If both of the narrations are authentic and their narrators are also reliable, then what should we do?

Imam: The narration, which is in accordance with the Book of God and the Sunnah of the Prophet and against the religion of the opposition, should be adopted.

Narrator: If both of the narrations are in harmony with the views of the opposition, then what should we do?

Imam: That tradition, which is favoured by the opposition's judiciary, should be dropped and the other adopted.

Narrator: If both traditions are equally divided, then what shall we do?

Imam: If the situation is so grave then wait for the meeting with your Imam and seek his opinion, because waiting in a period of uncertainty is better than jumping in the pit of destruction."

When Two Ahadith Are Equally Significant

If it happens that two Ahadith were equally preferable then what should the person do? Was he free to choose between the two or he should wait for further consultations?

There were a few opinions on this issue. Some reports suggested personal choice in these matters, while there are other statements proposing delay and adjournment. One can make several combinations of the two possibilities as well, such as:

The Judge could wait before announcing the judgement. However, at the moment of decision he could opt for either route. In the instance, where Imam was available and it was possible for him to seek his, audience, one should wait for the opportunity, thereby delaying judgement.

When the circumstances were different, as in present times, a judge would be able to choose. If the *Ahadith* related to worship and God's rights then the Judge could exercise his personal discretion. However, in case of *Huquq an–Nas* (people's rights), he should wait.

If he was forced to choose between one of the debated Ahadith then he had to apply his prudence, and if he was not under duress then he should wait. Discretion and choice were based to the rationale, but delay was related to rectitude. If a hadith followed a cautious route, then the judge must opt for that hadith.

On deeply studying different reports, we would find that the route of discretion or delaying a decision, had the same connotations, because exercise of choice or a delay in making the judgement was only possible during the occultation of the Imam, otherwise, the judge must refer to him for supporting the facts.

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Chapter 46: Statement On The Qur'an Being Free Of Contradictions

Shaykh Abu Ja'far has said that imprudent people have contributed to conflicts and contradictions to some Verses in the Qur'an, to which. In reality, there was no such imperfection in the book of God. We have cited below to exemplify such Verses.

الْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاهُمْ كَمَا نَسُوا لِقَاءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ

"So today We forsake them, as they neglected the meeting of this day of theirs and as they denied Our communications" **(*7:51*).**

...نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ...

"...They have forsaken Allah, so He has forsaken them..." **(*9:67*).**

وَقِيلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنسَاكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ

"And it shall be said: Today We forsake you as you neglected the meeting of this day of yours and your abode is the fire, and there are not for you any helpers" (***45:34***).

قَالَ عِلْمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّي فِي كِتَابٍ لَّا يَضِلُّ رَبِّي وَلَا يَنسَى

"He said: The knowledge thereof is with my Lord in a book, my Lord errs not, nor does He forget" (***20:52***).

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا

"The day on which the spirit and the angels shall stand in ranks; they shall not speak except he whom the Beneficent Allah permits and who speaks the right thing" (***78:38***).

وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْثَانًا مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ

"***And he said: You have only taken for yourselves idols besides Allah by way of friendship between you in this world's life, then on the resurrection day some of you shall deny others, and some of you shall curse others, and your abode is the fire, and you shall not have any helpers"*** (***29:25***).

إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ

"Lo! that is very truth: the wrangling of the dwellers in the Fire" (***38:64***).

قَالَ لَا تَخْتَصِمُوا لَدَيَّ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ إِلَيْكُم بِالْوَعِيدِ

"He will say: "Dispute not with each other in My Presence: I had already in advance sent you Warning" (***50:28***).

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

"On that Day We will set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their

feet shall bear witness of what they earned” (***36:65***).

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ

“(Some) faces on that day shall be bright” (***75:22***).

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

“Looking to their Lord…” (***75:23***).

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

“Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is the Knower of subtleties, the Aware” (***6:103***).

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ

“And it is not for any mortal that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases; surely He is High, Wise” (***42:51***).

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا

“…And to Musa, Allah addressed His Word, speaking (to him)” (***4:164***).

وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَن تِلْكُمَا الشَّجَرَةِ

“And their Lord called unto them: "Did I not forbid you that tree…” (***7:22***).

وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ

“… And there does not lie concealed from your Lord the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heaven, nor any thing less than that nor greater, but it is in a clear book” (***10:61***).

وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

"... and Allah will not speak to them, nor will He look upon them on the day of resurrection nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful chastisement" (***3:77***).

أَأَمِنتُم مَّن فِي السَّمَاءِ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ

"Do you feel secure that He Who is in heaven will not cause you to be swallowed up by the earth when it shakes (***as in an earthquake***)***?"*** (***67:16***).

الرَّحْمَٰنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

"The Beneficent One, Who is established on the Throne" (***20:5***).

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ

"And He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth; He knows your secret (***thoughts***) ***and your open*** (***words***)***, and He knows what you earn"*** (***6:3***).

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَىٰ ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَىٰ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا

"Do you not see that Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth? Nowhere is there a secret counsel between three persons but He is the fourth of them, nor (***between***) ***five but He is the sixth of them, nor less than that nor more but He is with them wheresoever they are..."*** (***58:7***).

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

"We are closer to them than their Jugular vein" (***50:16***).

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَن تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ

"They do not wait aught but that the angels should come to them, or that your Lord should come, or that some of the signs of your Lord should come" (***6:158***).

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّاكُم مَّلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ

"Say: The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die, then to your Lord you shall be brought back" **(*32:11*).**

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ

"...At length, when death approaches one of you, Our messengers **(*angels*)** ***take his soul, and they never fail in their duty"*** **(*6:61*).**

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ

"Surely **(*as for*)** ***those whom the angels cause to die while they are unjust to their souls..."*** **(*4:97*).**

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا

"Allah takes the souls at the time of their death" **(*39:42*).**

Therefore, the people who claimed some kind of inconsistency in Qur'an were lacking in pure intellect. The people made such a claim in the past and failed miserably to demonstrate it. We have quoted an example.

During the time of Imam Ali An-Naqi (‘a), a heretic who was fully conversant with many avenues of knowledge decided to write a book to highlight the inconsistencies in the Qur'an. When Imam came to know of this, he asked one of his disciples to become a student of that heretic and develop a good rapport to become his confidante.

Imam (‘a) advised that when the student was satisfied that he had gained the confidence of the heretic, he should ask him whether it was possible that whatever meanings of the Qur'an he had understood, might be incorrect, and God's point of view might be different from his thinking. The heretic being a philosopher, would certainly give the desired answer.

If, the heretic confirmed that possibility of his own understanding might be flawed, then he should be asked as to why he was wasting his time by writing a book on the inconsistencies of the Qur'an, when it was strongly possible that his understanding of the Qur'an is possibly different from that of God?

This companion of Imam followed the instructions to the last letter, and when he asked the final question of the heretic, he started reflecting. After some time got up and destroyed everything that he had written thus far. The heretic then asked the student to tell him, how he had arrived at this question. He replied after some reservations that he got this argument from Imam Ali An-Naqi (‘a).

The Holy Qur'an had several such Verses, which were apparently in conflict with another, but required careful consideration to understand the consistency of message. It remains a wonder how the people, who were not able to interpret a few couplets of Iqbal and Ghalib's poetry, claimed to comprehend the intrinsic meanings of the Qur'anic Verses!

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Notes And Commentary On Chapter 46

Absence Of Contradiction In The Qur'an Is A Proof That It Is A Heavenly Book

It is an established fact that there are definite contradictions in a fake product, while this is absent from a genuine work. God cited this as reason to claim Qur'an to be His work. He said:

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

"If Qur'an was the word of anyone else, then it must have contradictions in it" **(*4:82*).**

Description Of Some Of The Abstract Verses Of The Qur'an

There were so many Verses in the Qur'an that heretics, atheists and men of superficial knowledge could not grasp. They then started singing the old tune of contradictions in the Qur'an. The respected author of this Risalah has mentioned a few Verses that have been cited above. He has also referred to a lengthy *hadith* of Imam Ali ('a) for clarification.

He indicated that he intended to write a book on the topic. We do not know if he was successful in completing that book, as we were not able to find any such book amongst his repertoire. Hence, we have referred to a relevant section of a hadith of Imam Ali ('a) that tackles this issue, in the following text.

Once a heretic asked Amir Al-Mu'minin ('a) about Verses that were interpreted as contradictory to others. He gave satisfying answers to all those questions. The answers to these were mentioned in great detail in the book *Kitab at-Tawhid*, with the view that the author would write a book on this topic.

The man came to Imam Ali ('a) and said, "I am in confusion about the word of God, and I want you to rectify the situation for me." Imam asked him, why he doubted the word of God? He replied that why

should he not, when parts of it were contradicting the other. Imam replied that Qur'an reinforced its chapters rather than opposing it. However, he had not been granted with that much of acumen so as to benefit from it.

Imam ('a) then asked him to present those conflicting Verses. The man started presenting the following Verse:

فَذُوقُوا بِمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا إِنَّا نَسِينَاكُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْخُلْدِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

"So, taste, because you neglected the meeting of this day of yours; surely We forsake you; and taste the abiding chastisement for what you did" (***32:14***).

And, in another place He says that:

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا

"... and your Lord is not forgetful" (***19:64***).

Is this not a conflict? he asked. Imam replied that the people referred to here, had disregarded God in this world. They did not obey Him. Therefore, on the day of Qiyamah God will also overlook them by not granting His favours to them, as if they never existed, and for this reason God had employed the word "Nasiyyun" for Himself. To sum it up, it meant that they will be treated according to their deeds. After listening to this reply the man said, "God has cleared my blockage, may the Lord reward you for this act."

Imam ('a) then asked him to present another Verse. The man said that God has said:

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا

"The day on which the spirit and the angels shall stand in ranks; they shall not speak except he whom the Beneficent Allah permits and who speaks the right thing" (***78:38***).

It is quoted elsewhere that the heathens would say:

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُن فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا وَاللَّهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ

"Then their excuse would be nothing but that they would say: By Allah, our Lord, we were not polytheists" (***6:23***).

At another place in the Qur'an, it was said:

ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ

"Then, on the resurrection day some of you shall deny others, and some of you shall curse others" (***29:25***)***.***

This shows that criminals would be able to speak on the Day of Judgement, when in another place it was mentioned that their mouths would be sealed.

Imam replied that all these happenings will not be taking place at the same venue and at the same time as the Day of Judgement will be around 50,000 earthly years and as a result they would talk, argue and curse each other. Some will seek repentance for the others, and at certain place some immoral people will be barred from speaking, as suggested by the Qur'an. This was by no means a contradiction as the man was proposing with his limited understanding.

The investigator became pleased with the answer and repeated the sentences that he had said earlier. Imam asked him, if he had doubts on another Verse of the Qur'an.

The man continued. He said that God says:

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ

"[Some] faces on that day shall be bright" (***75:22***)***.***

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

"Looking to their Lord" (***75:23***)***.***

Yet, He confirms at another place:

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

"Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (***all***) ***vision; and He is the Knower of subtleties, the Aware"*** (***6:103***)***.***

Imam Ali (ʻa) provided a detailed account of this query. We give a brief description of his answer. Imam said, "To look at God means to look at the blessings and approvals of God. Therefore, the spirit of the meanings would be – *ila swahe rabbiha nazira,* then there will be no conflict between the two Verses."

Imam asked, if he had doubts on some other Verses. The man said that God says:

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ

"And it is not for any mortal that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases; surely He is High, Wise" **(*42:51*).**

But further says:

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا

"... and to Moses Allah spoke direct" **(*4:164*).**

This shows that He spoke to some people without any intermediaries. Imam said that this objection arises due to misunderstanding of the revelation. *Wahi* is the speech of God. It has no single form but it has different modes. One of the modes is the way he speaks to his Prophets and Messengers. Another form is the way He inspires His message on their hearts. Thirdly, He speaks through dreams. And, finally through the revelations, which are read and recited. Therefore, there was no clash between the quoted Verses.

The Imam then asked the petitioner to put forward his next objection. To which he said, God says:

وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

"And there does not lie concealed from your Lord the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heaven" **(*10:61*).**

but at another place the same Qur'an He declares that some people will remain hidden from God on that day:

وَلَا يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ

"...And God will not look at them nor is He to purify them" **(*3:77*).**

Is it not a conflict? he asked. The Imam (ʻa) replied that from the phrase:

وَلَا يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ

La yan dhuru ilaihim, it was meant that God will not provide them with good returns and His blessings. Arabs say, *La yan Dhurr alaina flan,* that is the person does not look at us, *iyayay la yuseebuna minu khair* – the person does not gift us anything. Similarly, from the Verse:

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ

***"Nay, but surely on that day they will be covered from (the mercy of) their Lord"* (*83:15*).**

It was meant that they would remain hidden from the being of God and would be deprived of His awards and approvals.

The Imam (ʻa) asked him to quote further Verse about which he was doubtful. He said God says:

الرَّحْمَٰنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

"The Beneficent Allah has assumed power of the Throne (is firm in power)" (20:5).

While at another place He says that:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَٰهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَٰهٌ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ

"And He it is Who is Allah in the heavens and Allah in the earth; and He is the Wise, the Knowing" (43:84).

Again, God said in the Qur'an:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ

"…And He is with you wherever you are" (57:4).

And then says:

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

"And We are nearer to him than his life" (50:16).

Are these not contradicting statements? Imam (ʻa) replied that he has guessed God's attributes to be alongside and similar to that of human beings. The fact is the being of God is above and beyond such

conjectures. He is not confined to space, therefore, the Verse:

الرَّحْمَٰنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

***"'Ala al-Arsh istawa* (*assumed power of the Throne*)*"* (*20:5*).**

Means that the Universe is under His command and control. The meaning of statement:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَٰهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ

***"Allah in the heavens and Allah in the earth"* (*43:84*).**

is that He is the Lord of the Universe, and when He says that:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ

***"…And He is with you wherever you are"* (*57:4*).**

It means that His knowledge circumvented everything and He has apportioned the whole lot.

Imam then asked the man if there was another Verse about which he was concerned. He answered that it is stated in the Qur'an:

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

***"And your Lord comes and* (*also*) *the angels in ranks"* (*89:22*).**

But at another place in the Qur'an, it is said:

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَن يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ

***"Wait they for naught else than that Allah should come unto them in the shadows of the clouds with the angels?"* (*2:210*).**

These Verses showed that God would appear physically on the Day of Judgement. At another place He states:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِن قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا

"... On the Day when some of the signs of your Lord shall come, its faith shall not profit a soul which did not believe before, or earn good through its faith" **(*6:158*).**

This Verse showed that instead of God, some of His signs would appear which contradicted earlier statements. Amir Al-Mu'minin (‘a) replied that the Verses which indicate coming of the Lord, did not mean a movement as indicated by the phrase:

فَأَتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا

"... but Allah came to them whence they did not expect ..." **(*59:2*).**

This actually meant that the punishment of God came suddenly (on them), and the Verses which specified coming of the Angels and some other signs of God, told that the infidels and heathens who did not accept faith in God, would continue to wait for the Angels and the signs of God to come to punish them in this world. In the former Verse "some signs" points to the rising of the sun from the west (that will happen in the time of Al-Mahdi).

Imam again asked if there was another Verse of the Qur'an that puzzled him? He said that Qur'an said,

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّاكُم مَّلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ

"Say: The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die, then to your Lord you shall be brought back" **(*32:11*).**

And, in another Verse it was mentioned:

يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا

"Allah takes the souls at the time of their death..." **(*39:42*).**

Again, it was said,

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

"Those whom the angels cause to die..." **(*16:28*).**

In one Verse, it was mentioned that the angel of death captured their souls, while another Verse suggests that it was God, who performed that task, whereas, the third Verse pointed out towards the Angels. Why should someone not doubt the Qur'an after such a clear contradiction? Please help me so

that I can have my peace of mind. Otherwise, I shall be among those who were lost completely.

So, the Imam (‘a) said that there was no contradiction in these Verses because God was the true administrator. He performed the things the way He wants. When he wanted to end the life of someone, He might send the Angel of death or other Angels as He desired. Ultimately, He was the one who gives life and death.

The interrogator was thus satisfied and left the company of the Imam with a pleasant demeanour.

The End Of Prophethood

The meaning of the title was that Prophethood ended with Muhammad (S) and no one else could claim this office with any modified name, such as – *Tashrihi*, non–*Tashrihi*, *Zilli* or *Baruzi* prophethood. This principle was one of the commonly accepted Islamic articles of faith, and one who denies this concept was casted out of the Islam. We have commented on this issue with minimum description so that this book might not miss this important aspect of Islamic faith.

End Of The Prophethood In Qur’anic Perspective

There were many Verses in the Qur’an that supported this view. We have present a couple of such Verses:

مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

***“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of the prophets …”* (*33:40*).**

There were two significant issues – one was the analysis of the word *Khatam* and the other that of Al–*Nabiyeen*. There remained a difference in the pronunciation of the word *Khatam*. Among the seven *Qura* (plural of Qari) i.e. special rendering, Hasan and Aasim have pronounced it *Khatam*, while the rest have marked it as *Khatim*.

According to the Arabic dictionary, if it was pronounced as *Khatam*, it meant gem of a seal on which the name was engraved or a ring or a last portion of a nation. On the other hand, if it was pronounced as *Khatim*, it meant the one who ends a thing. This was such a lucid fact that it needed no further explanation. Here, the first two meanings were not possible therefore, there was no escape from either accepting the third or the fourth meaning. This concept would then imply that it was referring to a person on whom the chain of Prophethood had ended.

If the first two meanings are metaphorically adopted then the end result was once again the same – that Muhammad was the last Prophet of God, because a seal was posted at the end of some written

document in order to authorise its validity. If something was added after the seal then it was considered as counterfeit. On the other hand, if an envelope was sealed then nothing further could be added to the envelope without breaking the seal. Such an act would be illegal.

Secondly the scrutiny of the word Al–*Nabiyeen* was required. This phrase was plural of *Nabi*. It contained Alif–Lam of praise, which according to the principles of Arabic language stands for common people, if no connection was provided for predetermined or special individuals. Therefore, keeping aside the elucidations of the Prophet of Islam, his companions, and that of Imams of Ahl al–Bayt, if this phrase was examined purely from a linguistic point of view, it would mean that the Prophet of Islam was the last connection of the chain of Prophethood and no new or old person could come as a Prophet or a Messenger after him.

God has said:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"... Today I have perfected your religion and completed my favours and I pleased with the religion of Islam" **(*5:3*).**

This Qur'anic Verse vied to say that the citadel of prophethood, whose foundation was laid down by Adam and many other Prophets working relentlessly to upgrade it was finally completed by Muhammad – the last of the Prophets. Now that its principles, codes, practices, prohibitions and permissions had been perfected, no new Prophet was required for any intervention.

To emphasise this, the Qur'an said:

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"If someone practices any religion* (*Deen*) *other than Islam, it will not be accepted and he will be a loser on the Day of Judgement" **(*3:85*).**

And:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا

"Blessed is He, Who has sent this book that differentiates* (*between good and bad*) *for His servant, so that he may be a Warner for all the worlds" **(*25:1*).**

This Verse declared that Muhammad was God's Messenger for the Universe, which benefitted from his

grace. This was the end product of:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

"And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds" **(*21:107*).**

When Prophet Muhammad (S) was the rescuer in both the worlds and the success only depended upon his fellowship and obedience, then where was the need for another Prophet? Would it not be a wasteful exercise?

End Of The Prophethood Through Ahadith Of Khatm An-Nabiyeen

So much material was available in this context that it required a treatise to accommodate all contents. We have presented a sample of only five *Ahadith* to clear the matter.

Bukhari, Muslim and Musnad of Ahmad have quoted a Hadith of the Prophet, which stated, "Mine and the Prophets that lived before me – their example is like that of a person, who has made a house and then decorated it nicely but left an empty space for a brick. People who come, while appreciating their efforts ask – why was the empty space not filled? (One must know) I am that last brick, and I am the one on whom the Prophethood has ended."

This Hadith was self-explanatory in describing culmination of the Prophethood. It was also mentioned in Tirmizhi and Sunan Ibn Daud, "Qiyamah will not establish, until many false Dajjals are raised, and each one of them has claimed that he is a Prophet, while I, (Muhammad (S) am the last Prophet and there is no Prophet after me."

It remained true that if Prophet Muhammad (S) was not the last Prophet in accordance with the traditions of the previous Prophets, would have then introduced the new messenger who would come after him, instead of calling the newcomers as Dajjals and liars.

Ibn Maaja, Bokhari and Muslim quoted a Hadith of the Prophet, which stated, "It was customary in Bani Isra'il that they were led by their Prophets. When a Prophet died, he was replaced by another but there is no Prophet after me, instead there will be the caliphs." This Hadith also barred all kind of Prophets after Prophet Muhammad (S).

It was mentioned in *Kanz al-Ummal*, *Musnad of Ahmad*, *Sunan of Nisa'i* and *Sunan of Ibn Maaja* that the Prophet of God had said, "No component of Prophethood has left after me, other than Mubasherat?" Companions then asked him about this new phrase. He replied that it was a good dream seen by a Muslim or it was shown to somebody else for him. This Hadith was the final word that all components of

Prophethood had ended, other than superb dreams.

The Prophet of God (S) said about Ali (‘a) during the battle of Tabook, “O Ali, you bear same relation to me as Aaron held with Moses, except there is no Prophet after me (otherwise, you would have been the Prophet like Aaron).” This Hadith also banishes all kind of ideas regarding continuation of the Prophethood after Muhammad (S).

It was mentioned in Tirmizhi that the Prophet of God has said, “The chain of Prophethood has been terminated after me. Now no new Messenger or a Prophet could come.”

End Of The Prophethood According To The Ahl Al-Bayt

Here we have presented a few statements of Imams (‘a).

Amir Al-Mu’minin said in his sermon, “God had sent Muhammad (S) to fulfil the promise and end the chain of Prophethood.” It was related from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), “God has ended the revelation of books through the Qur’an and the chain of Prophethood through your Prophet.”

It was narrated by Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (‘a), “God has ended the chain of Prophethood after your Prophet. Now no new Prophet would come and neither there are Divine books after the Qur’an.”

Imam Ar-Ridha (‘a) had said, “The Constitution (Shariah) of Muhammad (S) will not be abrogated and no new Prophet would come after him until the Day of Judgement. If someone listens to a statement that somebody has claimed prophethood after Muhammad (S) and that of a book after Qur’an, then it is legal to kill such a claimant.”

[1] [1]
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