

Understanding God's Mercy

Part II

Mohammad Ali Shomali

ABSTRACT: In Part I of this series, two major themes were discussed: the infinite mercy of God and its inclusion over everything, and the connection of God's mercy to His essence. Part II expands on God's mercy as illustrated in the holy Qur'an. The use and significance of God's attributes, such as *al-Rahmān*, *al-Rahim*, and *Khayr al-Rāhimeen*, and His concurrent attributes of mercy and power are described with a connection to God's aim in the creation of the universe. God's mercy - the most frequently mentioned attribute in the Qur'an - will be shown to be the reason for creation while bearing in mind it is not a sign of weakness. God is both Merciful and All-powerful.

Names and qualities of God in the Qur'an

Due to our limited understanding, we cannot understand exactly what He is. The Qur'an asserts that no one can describe Him:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمَخْلُصِينَ

Your Lord is to be glorified. He is not what people describe, [all] except God's exclusive servants.
(37:159-160)

Imam Ali (a) says in *Nahj al-Balāghah* that if you ask an ant to describe God the ant would describe Him as a super ant; something like it but much bigger. This is the utmost an ant can think of. We human beings think of God in the same way. We think of something like us but much bigger, much more powerful, though God is not a superman or a super ant or some other super thing. God is completely transcendent, completely different and according to the Qur'an, the only people who can describe Him are those who are purified. Of course, their description is still not perfect though it is acceptable. Thus, the most reliable way of understanding God's attributes is to refer to His own words i.e. the Qur'an and the words of his purified servants i.e. the Prophet Muhammad (s) and his household (a), whose purity is confirmed in the Qur'an by God Himself (33:33).

According to some surveys, there are about six hundred times in which qualities explicitly related to His mercy are used in the Qur'an and this is apart from those things which imply His mercy, since if we count them too it would be thousands.¹ Therefore, God describes Himself as being merciful almost six hundred times in the Qur'an and then other qualities of God are less frequently described. For example, God's knowledge is emphasised in the Qur'an though it has been used about two

¹ See Shomali, Mohammad Ali and Hedarpour, Mahnaz, "Image of God in the Qur'an" in *God: Existence and Attributes*, edited by M.A. Shomali, London: 2008, the Islamic Centre of England.

hundred times. Attributes such as *power* and *justice* all come later.

The names *al-Rahmān*, *al-Rahim*, *Khayr al-Rāhimin*, *Arham al-Rāhimin*, *Dhu'l-Rahmah*, and *Dhu Rahmat-in Wāsi'ah* are several of God's names that refer to His mercy, making it the most frequently-mentioned quality of God in the Qur'an.

Al-Rahmān

The attribute *al-Rahmān* (the All-merciful) has been used 122 times in the Qur'an along with other attributes and if these are added to the 49 times that are mentioned separately, this characteristic is mentioned a total of 169 times. It should be also noted that *al-Rahmān* is used as an alternate name for *Allah*. God has two proper nouns in the Qur'an: *Allah* and *al-Rahman*. In verse 110 of Chapter *Isra*, God says:

قُلْ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَانَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ
الْحُسْنَى

Say, 'Invoke God or invoke *al-Rahmān* (the All-merciful). Whichever [of His Names] you may invoke, to Him belong the Best Names.

It was disputed at the time of Prophet Muhammad (s) whether it would be permissible to call God 'Allah,' 'al-Rahmān,' or another name. In this verse, God gives us a choice of which to call Him; it must be one of the two. This indicates that among all Allah's names, only *al-Rahmān* comes in order next to *Allah*, and other names come of a lesser importance and refer to some qualities of God, instead of referring to His entire reality.

As mentioned earlier, sometimes *al-Rahmān* has been used with other qualities or other names. For example, *al-Rahmān* is used with *Allah* and *al-Rahim* 114 times in the Qur'an as seen in the verse:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

Every chapter in the Quran except for Chapter Nine (*Tawbah: Repentance*) opens with this phrase. However, because the phrase is used twice in chapter Twenty Seven (*Naml: Ant*) this phrase is repeated equal to the number of all the chapters in the Qur'an.

According to the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a), the inclusion of this phrase at the beginning of a chapter means it is considered a part of it. Otherwise it would mean that it was not part of the chapters and was revealed once and people found it interesting, or the prophet said it was nice and it should be put at the beginning of each chapter. According to the school of the Ahlul Bayt (a) this verse was revealed with each chapter apart from chapter *Tawbah*. This shows its significance; God revealed it 114 times to emphasize the message. In a narration from Imam Sadiq (a), this phrase is introduced as the greatest verse of the Qur'an (*a'zam āyat*) which unfortunately Satan has managed to steal from the people and that is when they do not start the recitation of the second chapter of each prayer with it.

In any case, this phrase alone shows that among all the different qualities and names of God which are more than a thousand, He has preferred to be described in this way: *al-Rahmān al-Rahim*. He could have used many other attributes, e.g. 'the Most-forgiving, the All-powerful' but His mercy exceeds other attributes as they are the closest to His reality. It should be noted that even at the beginning of Chapter Nine where stress on God's mercy may not serve the purpose of warning the pagans, God has not been pleased to introduce Himself in a different way by mentioning names other than *al-Rahmān al-Rahim*. This suggests that God either introduces Himself as God who is *al-Rahmān al-Rahim* or prefers not to say anything.

The Chapter *al-Fātihah* (*The Opening*), a chapter so important that Muslims cannot implore God without its recitation in each of the five daily prayers, is not only the beginning of the Qur'an but in a sense a summary of it.¹ In such a short chapter God wants to give us a summary of all that we need for our life: a summary of Islam and a summary of the Qur'an. It begins like this:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

In the Name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful. All praise belongs to God, Lord of all the intelligent inhabitants of the world, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

¹ According to many authentic hadiths, there can be no daily prayer without recitation of the Chapter One. For example, we read in some hadiths: “لا صلوه الا بفتح الكتاب.” Explaining rulings concerning recitation of the Qur'anic Chapters in prayer, Ayatollah Khomeini in his *Tahrir al-Wasilah*, vol. 1, p. 147 writes as follows:

Problem #1. It is obligatory to recite Surat al-Fātihah (Chapter 1 of the Qur'an) and some other complete Surah after it in the first and second Rak'ats of the obligatory (daily) prayers. A person is allowed to give up the recitation of the second Surah in certain circumstances. Rather, it is obligatory in case of the time being short for the prayer, or there being fear or the like which are among the necessary cases...

Problem #2. It is obligatory to recite Surat al-Hamd in the supererogatory prayers like the obligatory (daily) prayers, in the sense that it is a condition for their validity. As regards the recitation of the second Surah (in supererogatory) prayers, it is not obligatory in any of them, except when a prayer has become obligatory due to some other reason such as a vow or the like. Of course, in case of some of the supererogatory prayers in which some particular Surahs have been mentioned, recitation of those particular Surahs shall be a condition for the fulfilment of the vow, but it must be known that their recitation is a condition for the fulfilment of the vow, but not as a religious obligation, or for their validity.

Whenever there is a shortage of space one normally tries not to repeat things. However, in such a short passage, it is so important that God feels it necessary to repeat the phrase ‘*the All-beneficent, the All-merciful*’ because if one does not remember that He is the most merciful, then he or she cannot properly understand the way He exercises His Lordship in this world and the hereafter. Thus, in this chapter, God first mentions His mercy twice and then talks about His lordship in this world. He again mentions His mercy twice and then talks about His kingdom in hereafter. So before and between reminding us of His lordship in this world and His kingdom in the hereafter, Allah (swt) reminds us of His mercy.

Al-Rahmān and al-Rahim are seen together in other chapters as well, such as Chapter *Fussilat* (41), verse 2, Chapter *Baqarah* (2), verse 163 and Chapter *Hashr* (59), verse 22. It is also mentioned with al-*Musta’ān* (the one whose assistance is sought) (29:112). In Chapter *Naba’* (78), verse 37, God uses al-Rahmān with *Rabb*, the Lord:

رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَانِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ
خِطَابًا

The Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever
is between heavens and earth who is al-Rahman.

Thus, everything in this world began with His mercy. The creation and its continuity, and the hereafter depend on it. Chapter *Hamd* by itself is a great evidence of the significance of the mercy of God.

Al-Rahim

The next name is al-Rahim (or simply Rahim). This is mentioned 227 times in the Qur’an. This has been used for God 226 times and for the Prophet Muhammad (s) once. In Arabic, Rahim and al-Rahman are both adjectives and derived from the same root:

rahmah. Thus the question arises: What is the difference between *al-Rahmān* and *Rahim*? Using the Qur'an and narrations as their source, Muslim scholars assure us that *al-Rahmān* is used as an adjectival and a proper noun for God. When used as an adjectival, it refers to mercy that is all-embracing that is: believers, unbelievers, human beings, and nonhuman beings in this world and in the hereafter. *Rahim*, however, indicates the special mercy of God for those who are good.

In this way, we understand that God has two types of mercy: one that embraces everything and everyone, even those who are wrongdoers, and an exclusive mercy reserved for the faithful people depending on their merits and qualities. Thus, people who are good and bad are not equal though they both receive mercy from God because without His mercy, nothing can exist.

Normally the phrase, “بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ” is translated to “In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful” or “the All-beneficent the All-merciful.” However, since these two attributes are derived from the same root, for the sake of accuracy, we can translate it to: “In the name of God, the All-merciful, the Most-merciful.” To be even more accurate, we can also say “In the name of God who has mercy for everything and has a special mercy for the good people.”

Khayr al-Rāhimin

In verses 23:109 and 118, God is described as *Khayr al-Rāhimin*. For example, God says:

Say, ‘My Lord, forgive and have mercy, and You are
the Best of those who are merciful.’ (23:118)

You may consider, for example, mothers being merciful though none of them can be compared to God, whose mercy precedes the mercy of everyone. If you consider the most merciful mother in

the world compared to God's mercy, her characteristic is likened to that of a drop compared to an ocean.

You may have heard the story of a person during the time of Prophet Moses (a) who had a very old mother and was fed up with her. At the end, he decided to get rid of her by taking her to a mountain and leaving her there so that she could not go back. Despite all the mercy and the attention he had received from his mother he did that to her. While he was leaving the mountain it was getting dark. God informed Prophet Moses (a) about that lady and told him to visit her. As Prophet Moses (a) approached the mother, he heard her imploring, "Oh God! It is dark while my son is returning home. Please protect him from running into a problem." A mother who was treated badly by her son still prayed for her son to be safe instead of cursing him. Then God informed Prophet Moses (a) that His love for His servants is much greater than the love of this mother for her son.

Therefore, we should never think that if God punishes wrongdoers because of His wrath or desires to satisfy His anger to get revenge. No! Even His punishment originates from His mercy. Indeed, it is not God who is responsible for our punishment. It is us who wrong ourselves. God's mercy is much more than anyone else's.

In another narration, fatherly love has been compared to the love of God. Prophet Jacob (a) had twelve sons and as a Prophet, he knew that he had to show his love equally to his sons. However, in his heart, Jacob had an exceptional love for Joseph, for Joseph was special. Joseph was not just a son. He was a chosen servant of God. Jacob did not love him just as a son. He loved Joseph so much that when Joseph was taken away from him he became blind. The Qur'an says:

And he turned away from them and said, 'Alas for Joseph!' His eyes had turned white with grief, and he choked with suppressed agony. They said, 'By God!

You will go on remembering Joseph until you wreck your health or perish.' He said, 'I complain of my anguish and grief only to God. I know from God what you do not know.' (12:84-86)

Being a prophet of God, Jacob had great patience and when informed by the Joseph's brothers that the wolf had killed him he said he would have "a beautiful patience." But still he was in so much pain that his body could not tolerate it and he became blind. The narration says that the love of God for His servants is seventy times more than the love of Jacob. It should be noted that seventy here is not meant to be a mere number. In Arabic, the number seven and seventy are used often to indicate abundance. So you cannot compare His mercy to anyone else's mercy even if it is a father like Jacob. That is why God says in the Qur'an: "You are *the best of those who are merciful* (23:118)."

Arham al-Rāhimin

In four other verses God says that He is Arham al-Rāhimin which means the most merciful among all the merciful. So not only is He the best of the merciful, He is the most merciful. For example, the Qur'an says:

He said, 'My Lord, forgive me and my brother, and admit us into Your mercy, for You are **the most merciful of the merciful.**' (7:151)

And Job, when he called out to his Lord, 'Indeed distress has befallen me, and You are **the Most merciful of the merciful.**' (21:83)

Reflecting on these two names i.e. the Best of the merciful and the Most merciful of the merciful, we realize that with respect to mercy, to be better requires to exhibit more mercy. This is not the case about some other qualities or acts. For example, we cannot say that the best mother is the one who is *more* mother or who

has more children or that the best writers is necessarily the one who writes more.

Dhu'l-Rahmah and Dhu Rahmat-in Wāsi'ah

On two occasions, God is described in the Qur'an as Dhu'l-Rahmah meaning the Possessor or the Dispenser of mercy:

Your Lord is the All-sufficient **Possessor of mercy**. If He wishes, He will take you away, and make whomever He wishes succeed you, just as He produced you from the descendants of another people. (6:133)

Your Lord is the All-forgiving **Possessor of mercy**. Were He to take them to task because of what they have committed, He would have surely hastened their punishment. But they have a tryst, [when] they will not find a refuge besides Him. (18:58)

Also God is described once in the Qur'an as *Dhū Rahmat-in Wāsi'ah* meaning 'the Possessor the Dispenser of an all-embracing mercy'. The Qur'an says:

But if they deny you, say, 'Your Lord is **Possessor of an all-embracing mercy**, but His punishment will not be averted from the guilty lot.' (6:147)

God's mercy as His aim of creation

In the Qur'an, God mentions His purpose for creating the universe. These reasons can be described in a hierarchical order:

I. To worship and to know Him: The Qur'an says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّن رِّزْقٍ
وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا

And I have not created jinns or human beings except to worship me. I do not want from them any sustenance or to feed Me. (51:57)

He does not want to be worshipped in the manner in which people used to worship idols. They used to offer sacrifices or food to their gods. God is not in need of our worship. "To worship Me" means "to be able to know Me" and eventually "get close to Me" as Imam Sadiq (a) quotes Imam Husayn (a) as saying:

أبي عبد الله ع قال: خرج الحسين بن علي ع على أصحابه فقال:
إن الله عز و جل ما خلق العباد إلا ليعرفوه، فإذا عرفوه عبده،
فإذا عبده استغنوا بعبادته عن عبادة من سواه

Truly God the Almighty has not created His servants except to know Him so when they know Him they will worship Him. When they worship Him they will not need to worship anyone else. (*Al-Mizan*, vol. 18, p. 390)

Elsewhere, the Qur'an mentions the fact that God has created the world to know Him:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ
بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ
شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا

God is the one who has created seven skies and seven earths and whatever is happening between them so that you know two things: He is able to do everything and His knowledge encompasses everything. (65:12)

In this verse, God's knowledge and power are mentioned together. To be able to be the Lord of universe, God needs power

and knowledge. If He is not both knowledgeable and powerful, He cannot run the world.

II. To give and show His mercy: The Qur'an illustrates a very beautiful point regarding giving mercy. God created the universe because He wants to give mercy:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَ لَا يَرْوُونَ مِثْلَ بِلْدَانِ عِثْرٍ إِلَّا
 مَنْ رَحِمَ رَبُّكَ وَ لِذَلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ وَ تَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لِأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
 مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَ النَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Had your Lord wished He would have made mankind one community; but they continue to differ. Except those on whom your Lord has mercy and that is why He created them and the word of your Lord has been fulfilled: 'I will surely fill hell with jinn and humans, all together.' (11:118-119)

People often dispute and waste their time and energy arguing with each other except for those who have received mercy from God. These people have realised the truth and do not dispute over it. They simply commit themselves to the truth and if we all did the same, there would be no need to dispute as God says that He has created us in order to give us mercy.

Suppose you are a good teacher and you love your job and do not want to merely teach people who come to you and ask you to teach them. You would go and find people and offer them your knowledge. You would try to find students even if they were not interested in learning. You would say that you wanted to teach them not to gain anything but because you love to teach. Or suppose you are a good, responsible doctor who loves your job and does not merely work for money. You would seek out people who are ill even either because they do not realize it themselves, they feel shy to approach you, or they do not have the money to pay you. None of these would matter to you. You would continue to find them because you want to offer them your help. Again,

imagine you are a wealthy and generous person who wants to help. You would not wait for people to come and beg you. You seek out people who are in need and offer your help.

God created us not because we deserved to be created. When one does not exist he does not deserve anything. We did not have any right upon Him to claim that He must create us. But He does not only look at what we deserve. He is able to give and He is the most merciful. Hence, He creates opportunities to show generosity and He created us because He is so merciful and generous. If God had not created us, there could be no explanation why. And that would not be because we deserved; rather, it would be because we do not expect a God like Him with such merciful nature, with such generosity, with such power, and with such knowledge to not create. Like a good doctor who does not go to offer his treatment, a good teacher who does not go to offer teaching. This is strange but if they do what they are supposed to do it is not strange. Thus, if God had not created us, you were not able to challenge Him but we would be surprised as to why He had not created. So He had created us.

Imam Sadiq (a) was asked by Abu Basir about the meaning of the verse 11:118-119 and Imam replied:

خلقهم ليفعلوا ما يستوجبوا به رحمة فيرحمهم

God created man so that they do something to deserve His mercy and then He would give them His mercy. (*Al-Tawhid* by Saduq, p. 404)

Thus, God wanted to give opportunity to people to do good deeds so that they would deserve extra mercy from Him.

God's concurrent attributes of mercy and power

The Qur'an mentions that along with God's mercy, He has the power to carry out all that He wants. Some people are merciful as long as they do not have power; yet when they have power they

are no longer merciful. Indeed, one of the ways to test one's loyalty is to see what he will do when he becomes rich or powerful. As long as someone is poor or weak, he may be friendly but when he gets established he may forget. God is both merciful and powerful. His power does not change Him and He is not merciful because of weakness. In thirteen verses of the Qur'an, God describes Himself as being both All-mighty (*al-'Aziz*) and All-merciful (*al-Rahim*). For example, we read:

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ

And truly your Lord is the All-mighty, the All-merciful. (26:9, 68, 104, 122, 140, 159, 175 & 191)

In modern Arabic, *'aziz* means dear, but it originally means someone who is strong and undefeatable resulting in his dearness and honourableness. Here the emphasis is on the fact that God is able to carry out what He wants. When He wants to give you mercy, no one can stop Him. He is able to give you mercy in all circumstances, whether people like it or not. In the same chapter, God says:

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ

And put your trust in the All-mighty, the All-merciful (26:217)

If one wants to trust someone, he or she needs to know whether or not that person is helpful and capable. We cannot trust the powerless to carry out what we want. In addition, if he has power without love and mercy there is no point in trusting him. He is not going to do anything for me. However, God is both powerful and merciful and this gives us every reason to put our trust in Him. This is why the Qur'an stresses on the fact that those who want to trust anyone must put their trust in God. For example, Prophet Jacob is quoted as saying:

And he said, 'My sons, do not enter by one gate, but enter by separate gates, though I cannot avail you anything against God. Sovereignty belongs only to God. In Him I have put my trust; and in Him let all the trusting put their trust.' (12:67)

See also the verses 14:12 and 39:38. The Qur'an defines the believers as those who trust God:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

The faithful are only those whose hearts tremble [with awe] when God is mentioned, and when His signs are recited to them, their faith increases, and who put their trust in their Lord (8:2)

Naturally, people do not trust those whom they have had a negative experience with, such as showing avarice, betrayal, or standing idly by when in need of help. However, none of these characteristics is correct about God. He protects and loves you with His power and knowledge. There is no reason why we should not trust Him, especially when we remember what He has already done for us: "And why should we not put our trust in God, seeing that He has guided us in our ways? Surely, we will put up patiently with whatever torment you may inflict upon us, and in God let all the trusting put their trust. (14:12)"

As mentioned earlier, nothing hinders God's bequest of mercy:

مَا يَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا
مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

Whatever mercy God unfolds for the people, no one can withhold it; and whatever He withholds no one can release it after Him, and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise. (35:2)

God has full control. When God wanted to support Moses, Pharaoh, with the all the power that he had, could not prevent Moses from being born or being killed while Moses was growing up. When Moses was not even able to defend himself, God supported him and defeated Pharaoh, who contributed to his own defeat through his own actions. Needless to say, this is repetitive throughout history: emperors, kings, or tyrants are the cause of their own defeat when God wants to overthrow them as a result of their wrong actions. God does not need to stand against them and fight. Because of their actions, God takes further wisdom and understanding away from them, and then they destroy themselves. This is a general pattern. Anyone who no longer deserves God's gift of understanding and wisdom ends up destroying himself. This can happen to individuals, communities, and civilizations. Remarkably, in the life of Moses, God made his enemy serve Moses, and in the palace of Pharaoh, Moses received all the care and attention he needed, more that his parents could offer him. This has not only happened to Moses, however. It applies to all those who work for the sake of God, who in turn helps and supports them:

وَ لَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلْ
 أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِيَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ
 كَاشِفَاتُ ضُرِّهِ أَوْ أَرَادَنِي بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَاتُ رَحْمَتِهِ قُلْ
 حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will surely say 'God [for they knew God] was the creator although they used to worship idols. Say, 'Have you considered what you invoke besides God? Should God desire some distress for me, can they remove the distress visited by Him? Or should He desire some mercy for me, can they withhold His mercy?' Say, 'God is sufficient for me. In Him let all the trusting put their trust.' (39:38)

In Chapter *al-Ahzāb*, to further illustrate God's mercy and protection, we read:

قُلْ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَعْصِمُكُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوءًا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ
رَحْمَةً وَ لَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَ لَا نَصِيرًا

Who is it that can protect you from God should He desire to cause you ill, or desire to grant you mercy? They will not find for themselves any protector or helper besides God. (33:17)

God is telling us that He is very merciful and at the same time His mercy is not because of His weakness. Indeed, He is very strong. He can give us mercy or stop giving us mercy. No one can force or stop Him. But in the end He wants to give us mercy. If one does not want to accept His mercy, it would be his problem. However, as far as God is concerned, He gives. And He has created us to give. He says that He did not have any other reason to create us but to show us mercy. He is merciful while having full control and power.

Taqwa

Part II

Ayatollah Murtada Mutahhari¹

Translated by Ameneh Hamzeloo, Samereh
Nooshinravan, and Hannaneh Fathollahi

ABSTRACT: In part I of this article, Ayatollah Mutahhari elaborated on the definition, meaning, value, and effect of taqwa, or Godwariness, and self-restraint, as emphasized in the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balāghah*. He demonstrated that 1) fear of God is, in fact, fear of His justice, 2) piety is more than merely performing religious duties, 3) taqwa is a freedom rather than a restriction, and 4) true perfection lies in a person's freedom to do wrong and yet he or she refrains from doing so. In this article, Mutahhari offers an additional description of taqwa: it gives a person insight, or the ability to make correct decisions, and the strength to overcome difficulties. In order to achieve these qualities, a person must rid himself or herself of vain desires which hinder one's ability to clearly reason and reach a virtuous state as a result.

¹ This paper is based on a lecture delivered by Ayatollah Murtada Mutahhari in on October 21, 1960 in Farsi, published in *Dah Gofār*.

As stated in Part I of this article, the term *taqwa* refers to Godwariness and self-restraint. As the term *muttaqi* is usually understood as one who “fears God,” it is important to note that this fear is interpreted as fearing God’s punishment rather than fearing His qualities. The two effects of *taqwa* mentioned in the holy Qur’an are 1) providing a person with insight and 2) giving one the strength to overcome difficulties.

The relationship between *taqwa* and insight

To understand the relationship between *taqwa* and insight, it is necessary to discuss it from a scientific and philosophical perspective. The question arises as to how it is possible for *taqwa*, an ethical virtue relating to one’s conduct, to have an effect on one’s wisdom, reason, and judgment. There has been disagreement as to whether having *taqwa* is the only way to achieve a high level of wisdom.

Taqwa and practical wisdom

For the most part, Muslim philosophers, as well as their Greek predecessors, agreed that the rational part in human beings is divided into two categories: practical and theoretical. That is, reasoning produces these two kinds of thought productions that greatly differ from one another. The wisdom created by *taqwa* is practical, not theoretical. Theoretical reason is responsible for knowing the eternal aspects of the universe. It is the basis for natural and mathematical sciences, as well as divine philosophy. The role of the intellect in these sciences is to judge facts. To gather a fact, a piece of information is gathered and judged based on its verity. However, practical intellect is a person’s ability to make decisions, i.e., what would be the right thing to do. Practical reason is the basis for life sciences and moral principles. According to early scholars, it is the basis for ethics, the management of houses, and politics of cities.

However, practical intellect is also a basis for life sciences and moral principles. Practical intellect is a person's ability to make decisions. Practical intellect is the one which creates the concepts of goodness and badness, virtue and vice, the necessary and unnecessary, and rules and regulations. The way in which a human being makes choices in his life is related to the manner in which he works and makes decisions. Taqwa causes one to use his intellect effectively which brings about wisdom. With taqwa, one can better recognize a problem and its solution; he is more capable of making good life decisions. Taqwa has no connection with theoretical intellect nor does it affect one's theoretical intellect. In other words, taqwa does not improve mathematical skills or an aptitude for natural sciences. This also applies to divine philosophy, unless it has a philosophical aspect and it proceeds with logic and reasoning to organize premises and reach a conclusion.

Taqwa, purity, and spiritual striving (*jihād*) have effects on the other kind of divine sciences in which theoretical intellect, philosophy, logic, and reasoning do not exist and the order of premises and the way of thinking is not from result to premises and not from premises to result. The idea that taqwa results in wisdom and insight is not related to theoretical intellect. Perhaps the reason why some scholars do not accept this matter is that they associate this matter to theoretical intellect. But this applies to practical intellect and it can be stated that before any reasoning, experience proves this matter. In fact, taqwa affects insight and intellect; it does not mean that intellect is like a light and taqwa is its oil or the system of intellect is like an electric plant that at a time it produces some kilowatt electricity and when taqwa enters, it adds some more kilowatt electricity to the electricity produced by the plant.

Taqwa helps intellect

There are different types of friends and enemies. Imam Ali (a) states:

Your friends are three and your enemies are also three. Your friends are: your friend, your friend's friend and your enemy's enemy. And your enemies are: your enemy, your friend's enemy and your enemy's friend.¹

In the same way that in a militant fight, the enemy's enemy acts in a sense as a friend, since he restricts one's enemy and keeps him busy and therefore not able to plan or harm too much, in the spiritual battle inside us, taqwa serves intellect by fighting against enemies of the intellect. One's spiritual forces influence each other. They may sometimes weaken or neutralize the effects of each other and there may sometimes strengthen each other. In the past and the present, attention has been paid to contrast that exists between different forces of human being.

The effect of taqwa on one's insight

Excessive desires and biased and obstinate feelings is a spiritual condition that has a negative effect on a person's practical reasoning. Because the domain of practical intellect is related to one's action, it is the same domain of feelings, tendencies, and passions. If these issues exceed the norm and a person becomes controlled by them instead of dominating them, they will command against the intellect, shouting against the call of conscience. For those who ignore this call, they will not hear the call of intellect and will blow dust and thick smoke against its light, rendering the light unable to radiate. For example, we are sitting in here, talking and hearing and seeing, a situation in which one speaks and the others are silent; it is like the lights are shining and the atmosphere is clear. But if everyone were to speak loudly while the speaker is talking, it would be obvious that even the speaker himself is not able to hear his own voice. And if this place were to be filled with dust and smoke, no one would be

¹ *Nahj al-Balaghah*, Maxim no. 295

able to see each other. This point has been elucidated in several poems. For example, in his *Bustān*, Sa‘di writes:

*Truth is a spotless house
Lust and desire, the blown dust
Do not you see where the dust is blown?
No one can see, though he has a good sight.*

Hafiz states:

*Neither veil nor screen hath the beauty of the true
beloved.

But lay aside the dust of the path (of thy existence) so that
glance thou canst make.*

Rumi also stated:

*When self-interest appears, virtue becomes hidden:
a hundred veils rise from the heart to the eye.¹*

Sa‘di, Hafiz, and Rumi all portray lust, desire, and self-interest as dangerous hindrances to one’s ability to achieve a virtuous state and seeing the beauty of Allah.

In another example, consider a young student returning from school thinking it necessary to do his homework. To do so, he has to spend several hours reading, writing, and thinking, knowing too well that the result of being inconsiderate and lazy is failure, remaining uninformed, and the cause of many other misfortunes. We know that his hard work is the result of the call of his intellect. There might be a call of passion against that call of intellect, that feeling of ogling and debauchery in his heart that prevents him from being calm. If this call increases, the young man can no longer hear the call of his intellect, blocking him

¹ *Mathnawi* by Rumi, tr. by R. A. Nicholson, Book I, Story III. The Dewish King, his Vazir, and the Christians. [1930]

from attending to the light of his nature as he tells himself, “Let’s have a good time now and later I will think about what will happen next.” Thus, if such desires exist in one’s mind and heart, they will weaken and neutralize the effect of his intellect and in other words, these desires become the enemies of human being’s intellect. The poets influenced by the infallibles (a), as well as the infallibles themselves, have all warned people against this call. Imam Ali (a) states about pride and self-admiration:

A man’s vanity for himself is one the enemies of his intelligence.¹

The Imam (a) also states:

Most of the deficiency of intelligence occurs due to the flash of greed.²

Imam Sadiq (a) states:

Vain desires are the enemy of reason”³.

Sa’di also states with regards to this:

*Avarice blocks the eyesight of the intelligent
Greed traps every living thing.*⁴

The holy Prophet (s) states:

The greatest enemy of you is your tempting self and unquenchable desires which are closer [than anything] to you of all and is placed between your sides.⁵

¹ *Nahj al-Balaghah*, Maxim no. 212.

² *Ibid*, Maxim no. 219.

³ *Misbāh al-Shari’a*, ch. 38, p. 223.

⁴ Sa’di, *Gūlestān*,

⁵ *Bihar al-Anwar*

‘The tempting self and unquenchable desires’ are the great enemies of a human being because they are the enemy of one’s intellect. The Prophet (s) regards the tempting self and its desires as enemies because “the real friend of everyone is his intellect.”¹ We can defend our self against every enemy using the power of intellect; however, if an enemy is able to steal one’s intellect, it would be most dangerous. Using the abovementioned hadith in his poem, Ṣā’ib Tabrizi says, “How can we spread a restful bed for a good sleep / when we have an enemy like heart in our sides?”

Thus, one’s spiritual conditions and powers have adverse effects on each other because of the contrast that exists between the two. They almost neutralize the effects of each other; in other words, desires and intellect envy each other. Thus, the effect of taqwa in strengthening the intellect and increasing insight becomes clear.

Undoubtedly, traits such as anger, lust, greed, envy, obstinacy, bigotry, selfishness and alike make a person deaf and blind. The one who has insatiable desires is blind and deaf. Is it possible to doubt about this matter that one of the natural states of a human being is that he does not see his defect in himself and he sees it in others while he is suffering from it more than the other? Is the reason of this blindness toward one’s own defect other than selfishness? If there is any doubt that pious people, who struggle in moralities and overcome selfishness and greed and other vices of the self, can better understand their defects? And is there any knowledge for a human being more useful than he recognizes himself, his defects and the way to correct them? If we can succeed in subduing the tempting self then we can manage to find out the way of salvation. We would gain a clear insight as a result of having an intellect that is able to reveal our virtues and flaws. We would also be able to better solve our problems with ease, realizing that the hindrance to the call of our intellect were our

¹ *Ibid.*

inordinate desires. Thus, we would understand better, see more clearly, and our intellect would reveal things better to us.

The difference between intelligence and intellect

There are those who are both smart and intelligent in scientific issues though may not exactly know how to lead their lives. On the other hand, those with average intelligence may know how to make better choices. Thus, people have two kinds of mental abilities: intelligence and intellect. Some people are more sharp-witted; others are wiser. But the fact is that we do not have two faculties: intelligence and intellect. There are quick-witted people who are confused in practical matters because of enemies of their intellect have become inordinate. Such people have confused souls, though they do not have any defect in their intellect.

At the beginning, I mentioned that taqwa, moral struggle and the purity of the soul do not have any [direct] effect on what theoretical intellect is concerned with. Even philosophical theosophy is not associated with these moral concepts. I also mentioned that taqwa and moral striving have an effect on acquiring divine knowledge in another way. Imam 'Ali (a) describes the state of a believer who strives against his own desires:

He [the believer] kept his mind alive and killed [the desires of] his heart till his body became thin, his bulk turned light, and an effulgence of extreme brightness shone for him. It lighted the way for him and took him on the [right] path. Different doors led him to the door of safety and the place of [his permanent] stay. His feet, balancing his body, became fixed in the position of safety and comfort, because he kept his heart [in good acts] and pleased Allah.¹

¹ *Nahj al-Balāghah* sermon no.218

Allah (swt) guides those who strive to seek His pleasure:

With it Allah guides those who follow [the course of] His pleasure to the ways of peace, and brings them out from darkness into light by His will, and guides them to a straight path. (5:16)

Taqwa and the refinement of feelings and emotions

Taqwa affects one's feelings and emotions. It makes feelings tenderer. It is not impossible for a pious person to have the same feelings as the feelings of one who is drowned in bad deeds and vices. A pious person who refrains from impurities, bad deeds, hypocrisy, and flattery and instead keeps his self pure to preserve his dignity and high-mindedness and pays attention only to real issues at stake and not to forms will certainly have more excellent and more delicate feelings and have better reactions to spiritual beauties. He sees the world with a different insight and better feels the intellectual beauty in the world. Sometimes we face the question as to why there are no great poets like the ones in the past. Why is there no similar delicacy in the words of other poets as with the words of Sa'di and Hafez? That is in the contrary with the fact that all things like science and ideas and the world have advanced in all aspects. I hope the contemporary poets do not feel offended by my words. This is just my impression and many others. The reason lies in the fact that in addition to natural talent and thoughtful creativity, poets also need a special kind of delicacy and sensitivity in their selves which are achieved when one pays more attention to taqwa, that is, he has self-determination and broad-mindedness and is not a captive of desires and anger. But if some people insist on introducing earlier poets, who have a clear conscience, as evil persons like themselves it is another issue.

In any case, an evil person with a contaminated heart cannot understand the grace of God; even if he has a high level of intelligence, he would not be able to create the gracious and

delicate meanings similar to those which exist in some people's words.

Taqwa and overcoming difficulties

The question which arises here is: what is the relationship between taqwa, a spiritual and moral characteristic, and overcoming difficulties? This relates to another effect of taqwa which is stated in the holy Qur'an:

...And whoever is wary of Allah, He shall make away out for him. (65:2)

...And whoever is wary of Allah, He shall grant him ease in his affairs. (65:4)

Imam Ali (a) states:

Therefore, whoever entertains fear of Allah, troubles remain away from him after having been near, affairs become sweet after their bitterness; waves (of troubles) recede from him after having crowded over him, difficulties become easy for him after occurring.¹

Two kinds of difficulties

As an introduction, it must be stated that there are two kinds of difficulties human beings face. The first type consists of problems beyond one's ability to control, i.e. those caused by natural disasters. The second type consists of problems a person can control and learn how to overcome them. These are social and moral difficulties. Concerning the first type, I cannot comment on whether the Qur'an states anything about saving human beings from these kinds of difficulties or not. However, there is no problem for the existence of such a law as a divine guarantee in

¹ *Ibid.* Sermon no. 198

the world, such as responding the prayer. But with regards to the second difficulty, there is a sentence in *Nahj al-Balāghah* which we can consider as an interpretation for this matter. Imam Ali (a) says:

You should know that whoever fears God, He would make for him a way to get out of troubles and (grant him) a light (to help him) out of darkness.¹

Tribulations are moral and social difficulties. Problems caused by natural disasters are less than those caused by moral and social problems. Most difficulties people face with are due to immoral actions that make a person's life bitter and full of adversity, taking away any kind of happiness in this world and in the hereafter.

Considering that the main cause of one's difficulties is one's self and that everyone shapes his destiny through his own decisions, Sa'di says:

No one would do to his enemy

*What a fool, for his desires, does to himself.*²

Through my own experiences as well as observing that of others, I have come to the conclusion that most of the difficulties we face are created by ourselves, not by others. Having taqwa prevents moral and social problems. God gives those who are Godwary a unique perception:

When those who are Godwary are touched by a visitation of Satan, they remember and, behold, they perceive. (201:7)

¹ *Ibid.* Sermon no. 183.

² Sa'di, *Advices*, Ghazals no. 33

Because taqwa increases insight, it will produce the second effect as well which is saving people from perilous situations and difficulties. Difficulties arise in the darkness of sins and desires. When the light of taqwa is felt, one can distinguish good from the evil, preventing him from experiencing difficulties. If he is involved in a problem, he can find a better way to solve these difficulties through the light of taqwa. In addition to these effects, taqwa prevents a person from wasting his powers in forbidden ways and diversions. It is clear that a strong and determined person can make decisions and rescue himself better than the others. Both light and power help in being rescued.

Toward the end of the chapter *Joseph* in the Qur'an, after Joseph became the ruler of Egypt and his brothers came to Egypt from Canaan to take grains during the famine, they did not recognize him. However, Joseph was aware of who they were although he did not identify himself. The first time his brothers came, Joseph used excuses to keep Bendamin, his full-blooded brother, with himself. The second time his brothers came, they begged and implored Joseph to give them grains. The holy Qur'an portrays their deplorable condition in the following verse:

Then, when they entered into his presence, they said: 'O Emir! Distress has befallen our family, and us, and we have brought [just] a meagre sum. Yet grant us the full measure, and be charitable to us! Indeed Allah rewards the charitable.' (88:12)

Thus, Joseph decided to introduce himself to them:

He said, 'Have you realized what you did to Joseph and his brother, when you were senseless?' (89:12)

He asked if they could remember what they did to Joseph and his brother. The question surprised them:

They said: 'Are you really Joseph?' He said, 'I am Joseph, and this is my brother. Certainly Allah has

shown us favour. Indeed if one is Godwary and patient Allah does not waste the reward of the virtuous.' (90:12)

This is the fruit of taqwa and purity. Joseph became a slave but had kept taqwa. One of the most distinguished and prettiest women of Egypt made an attempt to seduce him, an anonymous young man, although he kept himself under the protection of taqwa when he said, "My Lord! Prison is dearer to me than to what they invite me." (33:12)

The taqwa Joseph kept in that condition made him the ruler of Egypt. Taqwa, patience, and piety will not be lost in this world; it takes people from the lowest to the highest level of honour and dignity as stated in the holy Qur'an: "...Indeed if one is Godwary and patient God does not waste the reward of the virtuous (90:12).

This, it seems that the holy Qur'an summarizes the result of the story of Joseph in one sentence: "Taqwa is an endurable fruit that saves people from difficulties and take them from the base to the top level of dignity as it is stated in the holy Qur'an that: "...And whoever is wary of Allah, He shall make away out for him" (65:2). There is no defeat for the pious who consistently protect themselves.

One cannot help but admire the words and sermons of Imam Husayn (a) when addressing his respected family and assuring them with absolute faith and confidence. My God! What high morale, faith, and confidence and where did he gain such certainty from? According to some historical sources, when he (a) said goodbye to his family for the second time addressed them:

You must be ready to endure difficulties and be aware that God protects and supports you and He will save you and give you a good destiny, inflict different kinds of punishment on your enemies and

grant you blessing and grace for [enduring] these hardships. Do not ever complain and say that which decreases your value.

The faith of Imam Husain (a) in a final victory by which he inspired his family originated from the words of the holy Qur'an: "...And whoever is wary of God, He shall make away out for him." (65:2) This kind of confidence and faith was the same as the pious Joseph who said with happiness and satisfaction: "... Indeed if one is Godwary and patient God does not waste the reward of the virtuous" (90:12) and later he reaped the fruit of taqwa. But Imam Husayn (a) knew the result before the story came to the end. The clear words of Imam Husayn (a) hit the heart of his family like spears. They endured difficulties such as being held captives, but under the protection of patience and taqwa, the result of their deeds became what Imam Husayn (a) had promised them and God had guaranteed it in the Qur'an. After Imam Husayn's (a) martyrdom, Lady Zaynab (a) confidently rephrases her brother's statements in the face of their brutal enemy:

Use any trick you want and try hard, but I swear by God that you cannot abandon our names, make our popularity wane and disrespect us and disfigure the revelation of God in our family. Shame, disgrace, and scandal are the only things which remain with you in this world.

Indeed, during the tragedy of Karbala, Imam Husayn (a) and Lady Zainab (a) portrayed their perfection in Godwariness, and this trait led them to withstand the suffering and pain of losing their loved ones and having their rights trampled on.

Those living a life led by firm principles increase their willpower and have a spiritual and rational personality. Having taqwa, or keeping one's self from that which leads one to sins while being wary of God, helps them reach those goals. It gives a person a

sense of deep morality, freeing him or her from slavery of all types, whether it be his own evil-prompting thoughts or servitude in society. It also leads them feel contented, confident, clear-sighted, and tranquil. Not only does it help the individual, but it helps society as a whole, as the destruction of taqwa is the source of social problems. Therefore, taqwa is regarded as one of the pillars of one's life, personal or social, without which one is unstable.

Khums: A Support for Financial Independence, Part III

Ayatollah Nasir Makarem Shirazi

Translated by Bahador Shirazian & the translation
team of the *Message of Thaqaalayn*

ABSTRACT: In Part I of this series, we used terminology, Qur'anic verses, Sunni and Shi'a hadiths, and exegetes' commentaries to describe khums as more than merely defining war booties in the Qur'an and as something that has been collected by the Prophet (s) and Imams (a). Part II offered more hadiths on khums and an account of its practice in early Islam. In this part, the ruling of khums during the occultation of Imam Mahdi (a) will be studied. A few writers who are not familiar with fiqh have suggested that the Shi'a are exempted from paying khums in this period. However, a glimpse of fiqh books, especially the books written in recent centuries, shows that this issue has been dealt with in a very detailed way by some of the great jurists. In what follows, the hadiths that have been taken to suggest that khums has been forgiven will be studied, as well as the state of khums in the first centuries, and the basis for allocating khums for needy Sayyids.

It has been assumed that during the occultation of Imam Mahdi (a), the Shi'a have been exempted from paying khums. Jurists have argued against this by scrutinizing those hadiths that have been misinterpreted and concluding that the Shi'a are not entirely exempted from paying khums. These hadiths can be divided into five groups:

Group One: There are eight hadiths which are all related to the captives of war who eventually married the people with whom they stayed. These have nothing to do with general exemption from khums.¹

Group Two: This group consists of hadiths which indicate that khums was forgiven in a specific and certain time, because as we said in previous parts, the Prophet (s) and Imams (a) as the governor of the Islamic government had the right to forgive this Islamic tax under special circumstances according to the conditions of Muslims. Just as it had sometimes been necessary to add some extraordinary taxes temporarily in hard conditions, one of the authorities of the Islamic government is to temporarily dispense with the khums tax according to the conditions of Muslims. Here are some examples of these types of hadiths:

I. Yunus ibn Ya'qub quotes:

I was with Imam Sadiq (a) when a man entered and said, "Your holiness, there are assets and benefits and merchandises that we gain and we know that your right is in them and we are guilty about this matter. Imam (a) replied: 'If we order you to pay these rights today this is unfair (because of pressure from the government or the living conditions you face).'²

¹ See *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 6, hadiths 3, 4, 6, 15, 16 & 18 Chapter 4 of the Chapters on *Anfāl* and hadith 8 from Chapter 8 of "What Khums is obligatory in it."

² Hadith 6, Chapter 4 of the Chapters on *Anfāl*.

II. Hakim ibn 'Isā quotes:

I asked Imam Sadiq (a) about the meaning of the Qur'anic phrase: "Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth of it is for God and the Apostle, for the relatives and the orphans, for the needy and the traveller...(8:41)." Imam (a) answered: "Any benefit one gains day by day; however, my father forgave Shi'as in order for them to be pure."¹

These hadiths are related to an exemption for a group of Muslims who were lived under special conditions from this Islamic tax and, therefore, there is no proof of general exemption that can stand against all the hadiths that indicate the generality of khums for all ages.

The clear proof and strong evidence about this matter is that some of the other Imams (a) such as Imam Baqir (a) and Imam Sadiq (a) had ordered Shi'as to pay khums and take this Islamic tax seriously in ordinary situations when they were capable of paying. Here are some examples:

a) Mohammad ibn Zayd Tabari quotes that one of the merchants from Fars who was a friend of Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (a) wrote a letter to his holiness and asked for forgiving khums, and his holiness replied:

In the Name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful. Allah is All-bounteous and Generous. He rewards for any good act and deprives rewards for those who abstain from good deeds. There is no halāl asset unless Allah has made it halāl. Know that khums helps us to organize religious tasks, family duties, and that which concerns our Shi'a and we save our honour by that against oppressors.

¹ *Ibid.*, Hadith 8. See also *ibid.*, Hadiths 1, 2, 7, 9, 14 & 19.

Therefore, do not ignore paying khums. A Muslim is a person who is loyal to the divine oath and pledge, not in the way his tongue says it yet his hearts denies.¹

b) The same person quotes that a group came to Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (a) from Khurasān and asked him to exempt them from paying khums. Imam (a) replied:

I do not permit such a thing. You express your kindness to me by your words, but you withhold the right that Allah has legislated for us and has made us responsible for its expenditure from us. I do not exempt any of you, I do not exempt, I do not exempt.²

c) Abu Basir quotes from Imam Baqir (a):

Anyone who buys something from khums, Allah will not forgive him because he has bought something that is not halāl for him.³

Moreover, hadiths 8, 9, and 10 of this chapter and also hadiths 1 through 6 of chapter eight of *What Khums Is Obligatory in It* say that some Imams (a) not only did not forgive khums, but also seriously criticised those who did not pay it.

Thus, it is clearly understood from these hadiths that the exemption was not meant to be permanent, but it was exclusive to specific conditions similar to some tax exemptions.

Group Three: These hadiths relate to cases, in which certain individuals faced difficulties and were exempted by the Imams (a) from paying khums. For example, Hakam ibn ‘Ulyā Asadi

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 6, Chapter 3 from the Chapters on *Anfāl*, hadith 2.

² *Ibid.*, Chapter 3, hadith 3.

³ *Ibid.*, Chapter 3, hadith 5.

approached Imam Baqir (a) with the khums of his assets; however, his holiness took that khums and then gave it back to him. The fact that Imam (a) took from him his khums and gave it back to him shows that khums was obligatory and therefore the Imam (a) took it and then for some reason (such as Hakam's financial hardship) gave it to him in order to meet his needs.¹

Group Four: This group includes hadiths which indicate exemption, but it is clear that they are not related to khums; rather, they are about *anfāl* (the spoils of wars which end without fighting, abandoned lands, mines, woods, the mountains, bedrocks of rivers, inheritance of someone who has no heir, etc.). Hadiths 12 and 17 of Chapter Four of the Chapters on Anfāl relate to this category and it is well understood from sentences following the hadiths that they relate to anfāl lands and not khums.

Group Five: This group consists of hadiths that seem to indicate general exemption of khums and are not exclusive to a specific time or person. There are only three hadiths like this and we study all of them here. Here are three hadiths:

a) Salim ibn Mukram quotes that he was there when someone went to the Imam Baqir (a) and asked for permission to have sexual intercourse with women. The Imam (a) [behaved as if he] was shocked by his words. A person in attendance explained that he does not mean to rape women; rather, he wants to buy a maid (female slave) [from spoils and assets on which their khums has not been paid] or he wants a woman to marry him, using an inheritance which he receives, or the income of business or what was given to him as a gift. Imam (a) said:

These are all halāl for all of our Shi'as, consisting of those who are present here or absent, those who

¹ *Ibid.*, Chapter 1 of Anfāl, hadith 13.

are dead or alive, or those who will be born until the end of days. These are halāl for everyone.¹

Although nothing has been mentioned explicitly about the khums in the text of the hadith, what the Imam (a) has made halāl for everyone consisting of merchandise and spoils of war and gifts should be an asset, to which khums has been applied.

Evaluation: First of all, this hadith is weak because Salim ibn Mukram is the subject of many debates among scholars of the Science of al-Rijāl. Some people considered him reliable; others considered him weak, and yet other scholars stopped debating about him and expressed no comment. Thus, the hadiths which Salim ibn Mukran had quoted alone are not acceptable.

Secondly, if we pay a little attention to the question asked from the Imam (a), it is clear that the entire discussion in the hadith is about female servants to whom khums had been applied or women for whom their *mahr* (marital gift) had been paid from assets which their khums had not been paid, or a female servant or a women who has been given to a person with gifts and heritages on which khums had applied.

Overall, the content of the hadith is completely about women and wives who are given to a Muslim, and either their mahr or they themselves have been subject to khums. The answer of the Imam (a) is therefore exclusive to this part; otherwise, it does not make any sense for a person to ask about women and another person from attendance generalizes his words to encompass everything. Therefore, what is understood from this hadith is that Imam (a) forgave any right which belongs to the khums of the mahr of women and spouses for anytime and anyone of the Shi‘as in order to establish purity of birth which means legitimacy of children. This is related to Group One and our faqihs have dealt with this thoroughly in their books as an exception. It could not be the

¹ *Ibid.*, Chapter 4 of Anfāl, hadith 4.

proof of forgiveness of khums forever, but forgiveness is exclusive to the issue of the wife and female servant.

Moreover, according to the hadiths of the Chapters on *Mahr* if a person has decided not to pay the mahr of a woman or pay it from a harām asset, he is considered a fornicator.¹ Although some faqihs understood them as indicating such act to be forbidden and some others as indicating to be disliked, it shows that paying mahr from an asset that is not completely owned by a person is not without influence on the spiritual condition of their children and accordingly this part of khums has been forgiven in order to ensure the purity of the children.

b) Ma‘ādh ibn Kathir quotes Imam Sadiq (a) as saying:

There are many opportunities for our Shi‘ites in order to spend their wealth in charity in the way of Allah, but when our *Qā’im* (he who arises; the 12th Imam) arises, any treasure which anyone has saved will become harām for him and he must give it to the Imam him so that he will be able to use it for his goals.²

Evaluation: Clearly, nothing has been mentioned about the issue of khums in this hadith; however, it refers to the fact that rich people of a nation can save wealth and also spend charity in the way of Allah until the day Imam Mahdi (a) arises. Then they should give all of their savings to him in order to use them to establish justice on earth. The best reason to show that this hadith has no relation with khums is that Imam Sadiq (a) says they should give all of their savings to Imam Mahdi (a) and not only its khums (one fifth); otherwise, Imam (a) would have just mentioned that khums must be given to Imam Mahdi (a).

¹ Refer to *Ibid.*, vol. 15, pp. 21 - 23 (Chapter 11 from Chapters on Mahr).

² Hadith 11, Chapter 4 of the Chapters on Anfāl.

Also we should note that there is Mohammad ibn Sinan among tellers of this hadith whose reliability is not clear for the scholars of the Science of al-Rijāl and they have arguments about him.

c. In a *mursal* (hurried) hadith which has been quoted in *Tafsir of Al-‘Ayyāshi*, Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

The most difficult thing which people will be involved with on the Day of Judgment is that the owner of khums stands and says, ‘My God! My khums has not been paid, but our Shi‘as are exempted from it.’

Evaluation: Clearly, this hadith is *mursal*, that is, an unknown person has quoted it from Imam Sadiq (a) and, therefore, it cannot be verified.

Conclusion: We conclude from all that we said that there is no acceptable proof for the *tahlil* (exemption) of khums in a general way, and those who claim this, in fact, had not studied these hadiths enough, and it is clear according to the above hadiths that there is no hadith available whose content shows the exemption of all people from khums in all situations.

The state of khums in the first centuries

Was khums collected at the beginning of Islam? To answer this question we should say that if the period of the beginning of Islam includes the time of the Imams (a), then the answer is positive, because as it is understood from the previous discussions, most of the Imams (a) not only took the khums of income during their time, but they also emphasized on the payment of this khums, and they had even chosen special deputies and agents for collecting this khums. For example,

people like Ali ibn Mahzyār and Abu Ali ibn Rāshid had been given this duty.¹

During the time of the Prophet (s) and Imam Ali (a), khums had been taken from the spoils of war and mines, treasures, and gems which were obtained by diving in the sea. For example, it is reported in Bayhaqi's *Al-Sunan* that during the time of Imam Ali (a) a person who had found a treasure approached the Imam with it. The Imam left four-fifth of that asset for the finder and took one fifth (khums) of that asset.² There is a similar which is again registered in the same book.³

Also in that same book which is considered to be one of the famous Sunni resources, it has been quoted that Imam Ali (a) said: "There is khums in rikāz." The people asked what *rikāz* was, to which he replied, 'Gold and silver which Allah has created since the day of beginning of the earth.'⁴

Moreover, a detailed hadith about this matter has been quoted in *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah* from the time of Imam Ali (a) that a person found a *rikāz* (a mine or treasure) during the time of Imam Ali (a), and when his holiness was informed about it, he told that man to hand its khums over to him.⁵

In previous parts, we have shown some hadith such that the Prophet (a) continuously ordered that there is khums in *suyūb* and people should pay its khums. As we have said before, *suyūb* is the plural form of *sayb* which refers to mines and treasures. Some people said that it can also consist of any kind of gift or bestowal; hence, we conclude that the order of khums for other than spoils

¹ Refer to *ibid.*, hadiths of Chapter 8 from the Chapters on *Obligatory Cases of Khums*, vol. 6 of *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*.

² *Sunan* of Bayhaqi, vol. 4, p. 156.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 157.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁵ *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 6, The Section on Khums, Chapter Six, hadith 1.

of war had been issued in the time of the Prophet (s) and that the Prophet (s) had ordered people to give that in his letters.¹

But the question remains as to whether or not khums had been taken from all kinds of income during the time of Prophet (s) and Imam Ali (a). In response we say that we do not have clear historical evidence as to whether khums had been taken on all kinds of income during the time of Prophet (s) and Imam Ali (a); however, this does not present a problem regarding the ruling of khums. This is because as we have said before, the collection and forgiving of this Islamic tax is one of the authorities of a legitimate Islamic government. When the government finds itself needless or when people are in trouble, it can forgive the payment of khums, but when the government has needs and sees the ability of the people to pay, it can take khums, similar to the later Imams (a) who took khums or forgave it according to the conditions of the people or the Bayt al-Māl.

During the time of Prophet (s) and Imam Ali (a), there were lots of spoils from battles and also a lot of income from *kharāj* lands whose rents had been paid to the Bayt al-Māl. At times, the amount of these spoils was so high that their khums could easily solve most of the financial problems of the Islamic government. Indeed, sometimes income from *kharāj* lands was so much that the Bayt al-Māl had been overflowed by assets and in these conditions there was no need to take khums on all types of income; therefore, they exempted people from paying khums.

At the beginning of Islam when the need of the Bayt al-Mal was so much compared to resources of income, the conditions of Muslims were so unsettled and weak that paying khums after zakat could be too difficult for them, and accordingly khums had not been taken. But in the time of other Imams (a) when the khums of spoils of war and also income of *kharāj* lands had been taken by the caliphs and not given to the Imams (a), and also

¹ Refer to *Makātib al-Rasūl*, pp. 397 & 405 and *Usd al-Ghābah*, Section 3, p. 38.

people had the ability of paying the khums on all of their income, Imams (a) had taken khums from them. Briefly, not taking khums on all types of income during the time of Prophet (s) and Imam Ali (a) is not the reason for the nonexistence of this ruling in Islam. It is also necessary to mention that it is understood from some letters of the Prophet (s) which we quoted before that he had taken khums from anfāl. And we read in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, a well-known Sunni collection of hadith, that the Prophet (as) said:

ان لكم بطول الارض و سهولها و تلاع الاودية و ظهورها
على ان ترعوا نباتها و تشربوا مائها على ان تؤدوا الخمس

Truly you can benefit from the plants and water of the lands, planes and valleys, provided that you pay khums.¹

Allocating khums for sayyids

As we know, half of khums is spent under the supervision of marāji' on sayyids i.e. the progeny of Hāshim, the grandfather of the Prophet (s). Some people who do not have proper understanding of philosophy behind legislation of khums take this to be a kind of discrimination.

First of all, half of khums which is for the sayyids of the Bani Hashim should be given exclusively to their poor people, for their living expenses for one year; therefore, it would apply only to people who are either retired or ill, children who are orphans, or any poverty-stricken person. Therefore, the sayyids who are able to work and potentially or practically can gain an income which covers their costs of living can never use this part of khums.

Secondly, the needy people of the Bani Hashim do not receive zakat while non-sayyids who are needy may receive zakat.

¹*Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 7, p. 65 & *Makātib al-Rasūl*, p. 365, as well, it has been quoted from other resources.

Details can be learnt from the manuals on fiqh by Grand Ayatollahs.¹

Thirdly, if the share of sayyids is more than their need, then the excess amount should be paid to the Bayt al-Māl, and if the sayyids' needs are more than their share of khums, they should inevitably be paid from the Bayt al-Māl.²

Thus, the needy sayyids can cover their costs of living up to one year from khums and not zakāt; on the other hand, the needy who are not sayyids can take from zakāt and not khums. The only question that remains is that if there is no difference in the result between these two sources, what is the benefit of the program of khums? To answer this question, it is noteworthy to say there is an important difference between khums and zakat. Zakat is one of the taxes considered as public assets of the Islamic society; therefore, its usage should be in this same part, but khums is one of the taxes related to the Islamic government. Thus, the costs of

¹The proof that the Bani Hāshim have been prevented from taking zakat is based on many hadiths which have been quoted in Shi'a and Sunni books, and there are so many hadiths that leave no room for doubt. Denying these hadiths is equal to denying self-evident matters. For further information about these hadiths in Shi'a resources, you can refer to *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 6, Chapter 29 from Chapters of "People Who Deserve Zakat," hadiths 1-4. Other references regarding this are Chapter 30, hadith no. 1; Chapter 31, hadith no. 3; Chapter 32, hadith numbers 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9. Also, in Chapter 33, refer to the first hadith; in Chapter 34, refer to hadith no. 4. For more information about hadiths of this issue in Sunni resources, you can refer to *Sunan* by Bayhaqi, vol. 7; *Al-Sadaqāt*, p. 29, Chapter "The Household of the Prophet (s) Are Not Given from Obligatory charity" and p. 30, Chapter "Explanation of Who the Household of the Prophet (s) Who Cannot Receive Charity." Other references for this is *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 2, p. 89, Chapter "Charity for the Messenger of God and His Household" and *Makātib al-Rasūl*, pp. 216, 224, 230 and 432. Also, *Al-Musannaf* by Abd al-Razzāq, vol.4, p. 50, Chapter "Charity Is Prohibited for the Household of the Prophet (s)" contains many hadiths about this matter. One can also refer to *Al-Māghāni* by Ibn Qudāmah, Beirut Edition, vol. 2, p. 519, and *Sunan* of Ibn Dāwūd, Beirut Edition, vol. 2, p. 45.

²*Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, Chapter 3 from Chapters on Share of Khums, haditha 1 and

the Islamic government and its governor should be provided from this source.

Therefore, depriving sayyids from zakat is in fact for leaving no excuse for anybody to think that the Prophet (s) has dominated his relatives on zakat which is a public fund. But at the same time, the needy and poor sayyids should also be provided. This matter has been planned for in Islamic laws in the way that they receive from the money that belongs to the Islamic governor i.e. the Prophet (s) and Imams (a) and not the public budget. Therefore, not only is the right of needy sayyids over half of the khums not an extra privilege or advantage for sayyids, but it keeps them away from public benefits to avoid problems.¹

It should be noted that, according to both Shi'a and Sunni sources, some members of the Bani Hāshim took it as a sign of deprivation that there were not granted the right to benefit from zakat at all. For example, in a hadith from Imam Sadiq (a) a group of people from the Bani Hashim went to the Prophet (s) and asked his holiness to assign them to the duty of collection of zakat of four-footed animals and they said we deserve to receive from the share which God has specified for collectors of zakat. The Prophet (s) said:

O Bani Abd al-Muttalib! Zakat is not halaal neither for me nor you, but I promise my intercession in exchange of this deprivation... you should be satisfied with what God and your Prophet have specified for you (and do not deal with zakat)! They said they were satisfied.²

¹ In some Islamic hadiths, such as hadith 2 of Chapter 29 from the Chapter "Those Who Can Receive Zakāt," vol. 6 of *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, zakat has been expressed as "*awsākh*" (dirt of people's hands), and the purpose of this expression is to illustrate that unless necessary no one should be willing to receive zakāt and that people should provide their needs with their own efforts as much as they can and they should not impose themselves on Bayt al-Māl.

²*Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 6, p. 186.

Thus, it becomes clear that Bani Hashim had viewed this matter as a deprivation for themselves and Prophet (s) promised them the intercession in change. According to a hadith in *Sahih* of Muslim, Abbas and Rabi'ah ibn Harith went to Prophet (s) and asked him to appoint their two young sons: Abd al-Muttalib ibn Rabi'ah and Fadl ibn Abbas as the collectors of zakat and take a share like others in order to provide the costs of their marriages. Prophet (s) denied that and ordered that their means of marriage to be provided from another way and mahr to be paid from khums.¹

It is clear that khums is not considered as an advantage for sayyids and it is legislated in order to offset a kind of deprivation in order to save public benefits.

Conclusion

Studying and evaluating different sets of hadiths that are taken by some people to indicate general removal of obligation of paying khums, we realized that under some specific circumstances, some Imams (a) had forgiven khums but that this did not invalidate the general ruling. We also saw that khums has been paid from the early centuries of Islam. Finally we explained the reason why half of the khums is paid to needy sayyids.

¹ *Sahih* of Muslim, vol. 2, p. 752.

Shi'ite Authorities in the Age of Minor Occultation, Part III: Shaykh Saduq

Huj. Ali Naghi Zabihzadeh

Translated by Hannaneh Fathollahi

ABSTRACT: Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Babiwayh al-Qummi was one of the greatest scholars of Shi'a Islam. His honesty, which earned him the title *al-Saduq*, assisted him in his success as a great traditionist whose works deeply influenced those with a thirst for understanding Shi'a Islam, and particularly the teachings of Ahlul-Bayt (a). Though not exhaustive, this article makes accessible to the reader an understanding and reference of Sheikh Saduq's life, works, students, and teachers. A summary of the political conditions during his time is also offered as this had an impact on his role as a scholar in that it gave him the opportunity to exercise his knowledge.

Muhammad ibn ‘Ali Babiwayh al-Qummi, known as Sheikh al-Saduq, was the leading Shi‘a traditionist of the 10th century A.D. He was one of the greatest Islamic scholars of all time whose reputation for honesty earned him the title *Sheikh al-Saduq*. He lived close to the age of the Infallibles (a), and with that opportunity, he compiled the narrations of the Ahlul Bayt (a) and published tens of volumes that proved valuable to the Islamic world, and particularly that of Shi‘a Islam.

His educational journeys

Sheikh Saduq was educated in the holy city of Qum, the center of the study of Shi‘ite religious learning. Being influenced by his religious schooling, he traveled widely to collect traditions and met many scholars as a result.

He experienced his first journey to Rey, the capital of the Buyid dynasty, on an unknown date. What is known about the date of his journey to Rey is that he heard a part of the traditions of ‘Aī ibn Ibrāhim Qummī and other traditions of Sharīf Hamzah ibn Muhammad ‘Alawī that he had been in Qum during the month of Rajab, 339 A.H.¹ and he had been in Rey in Rajab, 347 A.H.² After the death of Ibn Walid, Saduq’s closest teacher after his father, it is inferred that the Sheikh desired to leave Qum in 343 and reside in Rey.

In 352 in the month of Rajab, Sheikh Saduq planned to travel to Mashhad. He consulted with Emir Rukn al-Dawlah, who asked Saduq to pray for him at the holy shrine of Imam Rida (as). On his way to Mashhad, he stopped at Neyshabur and heard narrations from great religious scholars of the city such as Abd al-Wahid ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abdus Neyshaburi, Hakim Abu ‘Ali

¹ Ibn Bābwayh (Sheikh Ṣadūq), *Al-Khisāl; Ma‘ānī al-Akhhbār*, p.301; *‘Uyūn Akhhbār al-Ridā* (a), vol. 1, p.178, cited from Islamic Eencyclopaedia, p. 63.

² *Al-Khisāl*, p. 641.

Husayn ibn Ahmad Bayhaqi, Abu Tayyib Husayn ibn Ahmad Razi, and other scholars.¹

Upon his return, he left Rey to go on the Islamic pilgrimage (*hajj*) in the late 353. No evidence shows he benefitted from religious scholars during this trip. In the early 354, he went to Fayd, Iraq and heard narrations from Abu 'Ali Ahmad ibn Abi Ja'far Beyhaqi. He also went to Kufah, where he gathered narrations from over ten great scholars and Baghdad, where he had the honor of meeting and learning from Sheikh Mufid. Sheikh Saduq left in the same year, and on his way to Rey, he stopped at Hamadan and continued to gather narrations from great scholars. This was the end of his journey in the west.

In 367, Sheikh Saduq began his journey in the east. After his travel to Mashhad, he went to Māwarā al-Nahr (present-day Sogdiana). On his way between Mashhad and Turkmenistan, he stayed for a short time in the cities of Sarakhs, Marv, Mervrūd, Balkh, and Samarkand where he met yet another group of great scholars.² Saduq had two journeys from Samarkand to the major cities of Turkmenistan, namely Fergana (southeast of present Uzbekistan) and Ilaq (near present Tashkent). It was in Ilaq that he wrote the book *'Man Lā Yahduruh al-Faqih*. He benefitted from groups of scholars in both areas. In Fergana, Saduq visited the villages of Akhsikat and Jubal Butag³ where he also gathered narrations.

Knowing that another one of his books *Kamāl al-Din wa Tamām al-Ni'mah* was written after his journey to Māwarā al-Nahr (Sogdiana), it is inferred from the introduction (footnote) that Saduq had traveled to Mashhad again to visit the holy shrine of Imam Rida (a). He also had a short stay in Neyshabur, where he

³ Sheikh Ṣadūq, *Al-Tawhīd*, pp. 328, 387, cited in *Ali Akbar Ghaffārī*, *Ibid.*, p. 20 and *Encyclopedia*, p. 63.

¹ Ya'qūbī, *Tārīkh*, pp. 279, 291; quoted from *Encyclopedia*, *Ibid.*, p. 293.

² *Sheikh Ṣadūq, Kamāl*, p.473, cf., *Ibid.*

propagated the Shi'a belief of Occultation and wrote part of *Kamāl al-Din wa Tamām al-Ni'mah*.¹

Sheikh Saduq's method of presenting jurisprudential and theological issues

Sheikh Saduq held discussions with people of various religions and ideologies about theological issues. He held debates with followers of some Imamate ideologies, including those who held an exaggerated belief about the Imams (a) and those who ignored the Imams' (a) positions. As a result, he wrote *Ibtāl al-Ghuluww wa al-Taqsīr*, portraying his refection of these two groups.

Saduq's discussions also included issues about Mahdism. To explain Mahdism from the viewpoint of the Shi'a Twelvers, Saduq wrote various books, the most important being *Kamāl al-Din wa Tamām al-Ni'mah* in which he relected criticisms made by the Mu'tazilites, the Zeydis and other opposing groups. He made serious efforts to dismiss the opinions of those who believed in the existence of a break in the chain of Imamate. He also made efforts to remove doubt of those who were confused.

Another aspect of Saduq's theology was seen in his *al-Tawhid* which was an effort to relect the charges laid against the Twelvers about the belief of comparing God to creatures (the belief comparing of God about the unity of God) and determinism just as he mentioned in the introduction of the book (p. 17).

One of Saduq's important activities regarding the Twelvers' theology (*kalam*) was writing books used as ideological references rather than in a narrative or deductive format. His *Risālah I'tiqādāt* is the first famous example of these kinds of treatises in the Twelvers' theology (footnote). The continuation of

³ For more information: refer to *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif Islāmī*, vol. 3, "ibn," pp. 62 & 63; 'Alī Akbar Ghaffārī, The Introduction of *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār*, pp.17-25 "Rīhlatuh-u ilā al-Amsār wa Al-Buldān; Abū al-Qāsim Gurjī, *Tārīkh Fiqh wa Fuqahā'*, p.130-133.

his work is in *Madālis* 93, *Al-Amālī* (pp. 509-511) and the introduction to *al-Hidāyah* (pp. 46-48). His way was followed by Sayyid Murtadā in the first part of *Dumal al-'Ilm wa al-A'māl* and by Sheikh Ṭūsī in *I'tiqādāt* and also by other scholars.

In addition to his theological works, his jurisprudential works mainly consist of hadiths texts either protecting or omitting their sources. He sometimes offers the meaning of the hadiths instead of directly quoting them; however, Saduq usually suffices to offer the direct quote of the hadiths without presenting its interpretation. He uses the approach of finding similarities between contradicting hadiths, called *Aṣl wa Rukhsat*. He also provided references for unauthentic hadiths. This issue is discussed in the history of Uṣūl. If he came across two contradicting hadiths, one of which was agreed by the majority while the other was not, he preferred the hadith in which most people did not agree with. He regarded the hadith in harmony with the opinion of most people as an act of dissimulation.¹

The position of Sheikh Saduq among scholars

There is no doubt that Sheikh Saduq was the greatest of all Shi'a narrators and traditionists. He was also renowned for his scholarship of Islamic law (*shari'a*). For this reason, many scholars have praised him, some of which are mentioned in the following:

1. Sheikh al-Ṭā'ifāh in his *Ridāl* and *Fihrist*²
2. Nadāshī in his *Ridāl*, Khaṭīb Baghdādī in his *Tārīkh*
3. Rashīd al-Dīn Sarwī in *Ma'ālim al-'Ulamā'*

¹ *Encyclopedia*, *ibid.*, p. 4-63.

² In page 304 of his book, *Al-Fihrist*, Sheikh al-Ṭā'ifāh praises Sheikh Ṣadūq and then states: "He is the author of nearly 300 books" and then Sheikh al-Ṭā'ifāh mentions names of some books of Sheikh Ṣadūq.

4. Allāmah Hillī in *Khulāsah*
5. Hasan ibn Dāwūd in *Ridāl*
6. Ibn Idrīs in *Sarā'ir*
7. Sheikh Husayn, the father of Sheikh Bahā'ī, in *Dirāyah*
8. Sayyid Shafī' Dāpulqī in *Al-Rawdat al-Bahīyyah*
9. Fakhr al-Muhaqqiqīn in his permission to Sheikh Shams al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Sadaqah
10. Muhaqqiq Karakī in his permission to Maysī, Shahīd al-Thānī in his permission to Sheikh Muhammad Taqī Majlisī and others¹.

His Works

Sheikh Saduq wrote 300 invaluable books used as a reference by great Shi'a scholars, some of which are:

1. *Ibtāl al-Ikhtiyār fī Amr al-Imāmah va Ithbāt al-Nass fī-hā*;
2. *Ibtāl al-Ghuluw va al-Taqsīr*;
3. *Ikmāl al-Dīn wa Itmām al-Ni'mah* on occultation of Imām Zamān (a);
4. *Al-Amālī* which is known as *Majālis*;
5. *Al-Tafsīr al-Jāmi'* & *Al-Tafsīr al-Saghīr*;
6. *Al-Tawhīd*;
7. *Thawāb al-A'māl*;

¹ Abū al-Qāsim Gurjī, *Ibid.*, p. 130.

8. *Al-Khisāl*;
9. *Da'ā'im al-Islām fī Ma'rifat al-Halāl wa al-Harām*;
10. *Ṣifāt al-Shī'ah*;
11. *'Iqāb al-A'māl*;
12. *'Ilal al-Sharāyi' wa al-Ahkām wa al-Asbāb*;
13. *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā (a)*;
14. *Al-Ghaybah*;
15. *Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*;
16. *Man lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh*.

His Teachers

Though there is no clear record on the exact number of his teachers, Sheikh 'Abd al-Rahim Rabbani Shirazi quotes 252 of them in *Ma'ani al-Akhbar*, some of whom are:

1. Sheikh Ṣadūq's own father, 'Alī ibn Bābiwayh Qummī
2. Muhammad ibn Hasan Walīd Qummī
3. Ahmad ibn 'Alī ibn Ibrāhim Qummī
4. Hasan ibn 'Abdullāh 'Askarī
5. 'Alī ibn Muhammad Qazwīnī, Husayn ibn Ahmad 'Alawī
6. 'Alī ibn 'Abdullāh Wurrāq
7. Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn 'Alī Asadī

8. Muhammad ibn Ahmad Shaybānī.¹

His Students

Najashi writes:

Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Musa ibn Babiwayh Qummi settled in Rey. He was our jurisprudent and an outstanding Shi'a personality in Khurasan. He entered Baghdad in 355 and the great Shi'a scholars heard hadiths from him while he was young.

Considering what Najashi said indicates that Shi'a scholars received hadiths from Saduq during his young years. It is clear that he did not merely gather hadiths throughout his journeys; rather, he disseminated the science and propagated the hadiths of Ahl al-Bayt (a). During his lifetime, which is estimated to be over 70 years, he constantly wrote books, held sessions about hadiths, collected the principles of hadith, and spread jurisprudential rules. Therefore, it is inferred that he had many students as well as those who narrated from him. Translators have mentioned the names of a few of the great scholars among them:

1. Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Mūsā ibn Bābiwayh Qummī, Sadūq's brother;
2. Sheikh Thiqaḥ al-Dīn al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Mūsā ibn Bābiwayh, his nephew;
3. Respectable Sheikh, 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn al-'Abbās, Sheikh Najāshī's father;
4. Respectable Sheikh, Abū al-Qāsīm 'Alī ibn Muhammad 'Alī Khazzāz, the author of *Kifāyah al-Athar*, etc.;

¹ Dawānī, *Ibid.* p. 183.

5. Respectable Sheikh, jurist scholar, Abū 'Abdullāh al-Husayn ibn 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ibrāhīm Ghadā'irī;
6. Great Sheikh, Abū al-Hasan Ja'far ibn al-Husayn Qummī, a teacher of Sheikh Ṭūsī;
7. Sheikh Abū Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn al-'Abbās ibn Fākhir Dūrīyastī, Sheikh Ja'far Dūrīyastī's father, contemporary with Sheikh Ṭūsī;
8. Abū Zakarīyyā Muhammad ibn Sulaymān Hamrānī;
9. Sheikh Abū al-Barakāt 'Alī ibn al-Hasan Khūzī;
10. Sheikh Abū al-Hasan, Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn 'Alī ibn Shādhān Qummī;
11. Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Amurī;
12. Grand Sheikh, the leader of community, Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Nu'mān nicknamed 'Mufīd' that Sadūq had heard hadiths of him;
13. Grand Sheikh Abū Muhammad Hārūn ibn Mūsā Tal'ukbarā;
14. 'Abd al-Samad ibn Muhammad Qummī¹ and others whose name could be seen in detail in Rijālī books [references about narrators of hadith].

The political situation in the period of Sheikh Ṣadūq

Sadūq's respected father passed away during the reign of Muttaqī, the son of Muqtadir in 329/941 - 333/945 who became a caliph after Rādī's death with the agreement of the minister

¹ To find more information about the students of Sheikh Ṣadūq, see Ali Akbar Ghaffāri, the Preface to *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār*, pp. 68-72 and Abū Al-Qāsim Gurjī, *Ibid.*, pp. 4-133.

Abu al-Qāsim Sulaymān and other officials. In that period, some were involved in fighting over the ministry and the caliph had to act in favour of some and against the other.

In such a situation, the Buyid dynasty gained power in Iraq. This dynasty was the most important one in Iran and then Iraq along with the Sāmanids of Khurasan and of Māwarā' al-Nahr. The three brothers who founded the dynasty, namely Ali, al-Hasan, and Ahmad, named it after their father, Buyeh. Ten years before the Buyid dynasty had entered Baghdad in 324/936, Iraq was under absolute dominance of the first prime minister, Ibn Rā'iq¹ and the Abbasid caliph had been deprived of a real executive power. The Buyid dynasty had previously achieved dominance

¹ Rā'iq was a servant of Mu'tadid Abbāsī who was sent to fight with Husayn ibn Hamdān in 303 A.H. The sons of Rā'iq who had been appointed as the rulers of Basrah and its suburb gradually seized lands and gained wealth in those regions and extended their possessions to Ahwāz in the period of Qāhir the 'Abbāsīd. These lands were under the control of the sons of Rā'iq until Abū al-Hasan 'Alī ibn Būyah gained control over them in the period of Rādī, the caliph, in 322 A.H. But because Abū al-Hasan 'Alī made peace with the caliph and returned to Fārs, Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Rā'iq was appointed for the second time as the ruler over those regions. Abū Bakr was allied with Ibn Muqallah who was the minister and the enemy of Muhammad ibn Yāqūt. Afterwards, Muhammad ibn Yāqūt was sent to prison by Ibn Muqallah and died there. The power and glory of Abū Bakr ibn Rā'iq increased and attracted others.

Mardāwīj was later killed by his Turkish slaves in Isfahān; the Turkish murderers escaped from the fear of the brave Daylamite men. A group of Turkish slaves went to Shīrāz under the protection of Abū al-Hasan 'Alī ibn Būyah and another group went to Ahwāz under the command of Badkūm and doined Muhammad ibn Rā'iq. Counting on them, Muhammad ibn Rā'iq openly refused to send tax and governmental properties to Baghdād in 324 A.H and sent a message to Baghdād that he himself needed the tax for military expenses. The caliph and his minister could not cope with him. Finally, Rādī removed Ibn Muqallah of his ministry position; he had changed him several times since he was incapable of working efficiently and was a stooge of militaries. Moreover, the agents of the suburban areas did not send money to Baghdād in such a terrible financial situation. To ease the situation, he called Abū Bakr ibn Rā'iq to Baghdād to handle the affairs of the ministry and charged him with all duties (Hasan Pīrnyā,'Abbās Iqbāl: *Tārīkh-e Iran*, SectionU Tārīkh-e Islam, p. 151 and pp. 4 – 153.

over Fārs, Rey, Isfahān, and Jibāl. Kermān was under the command of Muhammad ibn Ilyās. Āl-e Hamdān had also dominance on Mūsil and Dīyārāt (Dīyār Rabī'ah, Dīyār Bakr and Dīyār Mudīr). Egypt and Damascus were under the dominance of Āl-e Muhammad ibn Ṭughd al-Akshhīd. West and Africa were under the command of the Fatimids. The Sāmānids were ruling over Khurāsān and Sogdiana. Ahwāz, Wāsiṭ, and Basrah were under the command of Baridīds.¹ Carmathians had occupied Yamāmah and Bahrain. Tabaristān and Jurjān were under the domination of Daylamites and Umayyads were ruling

¹ The Sāmānids (Sāmānī) are related to Sāmān Khajāt, the Īwānī family who ruled over Khurāsān, Sogdiana and a part of central Iran from 261 A.H to 389 A.H (874 – 999 AD). After Sāmān Khadāt, his son, Asad became the ruler of Khurāsān. The caliph Ma'mūn turned his attention to all four sons of Asad. He appointed each of them to rule on a region in 204 AH (819 AD). He appointed Nūh as a ruler in Samarkand, Ahmad in Fergana, Yahyā in Chad and Ilyās in Herat. Among those four brothers, Ahmad was superior to others. Ahmad's second son Ismā'īl ended the Ṣaffārīds' occupation of Khurāsān in 290 A.H (903 A.D) and defeated Muhammad ibn Zayd, the 'Alawī ruler of Tabaristān, and occupied all regions between Kavīr-e Lut and the Persian Gulf and border of India to the suburbs of Baghdad. Principally, the centre of power of Ismā'īl was in Sogdiana and during his period of ruling, Bukhārā and Samarkand developed so much that it helped the progress of civilization, sciences, literature, and art in most parts of the Islamic world. The Sāmānid government at the time of the successors of Ismā'īl were weakened because of the revolutions in Khurāsān and Sīstān, and the credit of the Daylamites aggravated this situation as well so that Sāmānids after Ismā'īl, in addition to Khurāsān and Sogdiana, ruled over another country for half a century; gradually, the Turkish slaves who were in the Sāmānid court took the reins of government. The Alp Tigin established the Ghaznavid dynasty in 384 A.H (994 AD) and it replaced the Sāmānids in the lands around the south of the Oxus (*Amu Daryā*) river and lands on the north of it were possessed by the rulers of Ilkhanate of Turkmenistan. These rulers were presided by Turkish tribes and ruled from *Farghānah* to China. After domination over *Sogdiana*, they also conquered Bukhara in 380 A.H (990 AD) and finally overthrew the Sāmānids in 389 A.H (990 A.D). (*Mu'īn* Dictionary, Proper Names Entry: *Sāmānids*). For more information about the beginning of history of Sāmānids refer to *Tārīkh-e Iran*, Hassan Pīrnyā and Abbās Iqbāl, ch. 5, p. 221.

over Spain.¹ Daylamite Buyids who descended from Shīrdel were living in the mountains of Gīlān south of the Caspian Sea. Secure shelter of the Daylamites gradually accepted ‘Alawīd refugees who had escaped from the tyranny and oppression of the ‘Abbāsids since 175 AH and these refugees had created a pocket of resistance in that area until 250 A.H. One of the ‘Alawīds,² Hasan ibn Zayd, Dā’ī al-Kabīr (d. 270 A.H) propagated Shi‘ism in Daylam and established the ‘Alawī independent government in Daylam and Gīlān.³ After Hasan ibn Zayd, his brother, Abū ‘Abdullāh Muhammad ibn Zayd al-Dā’ī Ila al-Haqq (d. 287 AH) succeeded to the throne after him;⁴ but after a while, the Sāmānīds overthrew the ‘Alawī government⁵ and established their own government for thirteen years. After that period, Hasan ibn Ali, known as Nāsir al-Aṭrush, reinstated the ‘Alawī government and ruled from 301 until the end of his life (304 A.H). He left the government before he died and taught jurisprudence and hadith in the school he built in Āmul where he

² Rasūl Ja’farīyān, *Tārīkh-e Tashayyu’ dar Iran (The History of Shi‘ism in Iran)*, vol. 1, p. 359.

¹ The ‘Alawīds of *Tabaristān*: A group of great ones among the descendants of Imam ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (a) known as ‘Alawī or Zaydī Leaders revolted in the 2nd century A.H in Tabaristān. Hasan ibn Zayd known as Da’ī al-Kabīr rose in 250 AH and many dissatisfied persons as well as the Caliph’s minions (such as Ṭāhirīds) supported him. He propagated Shi‘ism and advocated the Family of Imam Ali (a) (*Dā’ al-Khalq*). His successors ruled over Tabaristān from 250/864 to 424 A.H (1034 AD). His last successor was Abū Ṭālib Yahyā Nāṭiq Bil-Haq who passed away in 424 A.H. Their capital city was mostly Āmul. They were eventually ousted by the Sāmānīds and the Zīyārīds. (*Mu‘īn Dictionary*, vol. 5, ‘The ‘Alawīds of Tabaristān’. For more information see *Tārīkh-e Iran (The History of Iran)*, Ibid., p.109 to end.

² Sayyid Zāhīr ad-Dīn ibn Sayyid Nasīr ad-Dīn Mar‘ashī, *Tārīkh-e Tabaristān va Rūyān va Māzandarān*.

³ Mar‘ashī, op cit., p.211, cf. Alī ibn Muhammad (ibn Athīr) *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 6, p. 403.

⁴ Mar‘ashī writes in *Tārīkh-e Tabaristān*: "...after a while, *Ismā‘īl ibn Ahmad Sāmānī* sought to gain control over Tabaristān and he sent Muhammad ibn Hārūn along with a large army to Tabaristān...The first one they killed was Dā’ī (Muhammad ibn Zayd) and beheaded him." p. 214.

is currently buried.¹ He propagated Zaydī thoughts among the people of Deylam and Gīlān and reformed common social and political organizations.

From the beginning of the fourth century, the Daylamites penetrated the west of Iran chiefly by mercenary soldiers and armed bandits; very soon, the Daylamite commanders (Leylī ibn Nu'mān, Mākān ibn Kākī, Asfār ibn Shīrūyeh, and Mardāwīd ibn Ziyār) succeeded to establish small governments; however, none of these forked forces of the Daylamites had an influence comparable with the influence which the Buyids as the greatest family of the Daylamites had gained in the west.

After Mardāwīj died, the three brothers who had established the Būyid dynasty invaded Fārs, Kermān, and Khūzistān.² Later, the caliph Mūstakfī, nicknamed them respectively: 'Imād al-Dawlah, Rukn al-Dawlah, and Mu'izz al-Dawlah.

In this period, the political power of the 'Abbasid caliph was being weakened while it was shifting to the supreme commander. The first supreme commander, Ibn Rā'iq was overthrown by the commander of his army, Abū al-Hasan Badkum Turk in 324/936 – 326/938. After Badkum was dismissed from his position, a period of disorder began with the interference of the Baridids of Basra and Kūrankīd Deylamī and then regaining the throne by Ibn Rā'iq for the second time who was killed by the order of Hamdānī commander of Mosul, Hasan ibn 'Abdullāh (Nāsir al-Dawlah) in 330/942 who had become the supreme commander. Also, Nāsir al-Dawlah was removed by a Tūzūn Turk.³

⁵ *Mar'ashī*, op cit., p. 215 - 221; *Tārīkh-e Ṭabarī*, vol. 8, p. 33, "The events in 302 A.H", *Al-'Ibar, Tārīkh-e Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, p. 483.

¹ Mas'ūdī, *Murawwid al-Ḍahab*, vol. 5, p. 273.

² Doel Kremer, *Ihyāy-e Farhangī dar 'Ahd-e Āl-e-Būye* (Cultural Revival in the Period of Būyid Dynasty), pp. 67 – 72.

Muttaqī, the caliph who had previously sought refuge with Nāsir al-Dawlah Hamdānī in the disputes between the Baridid brothers and Tūzūn returned to Baghdad under the protection of Tūzūn, commander of army; however, the next day Tūzūn blinded him and appointed Mustakfī as the caliph. Tūzūn died in 334/946 and country affairs fell in the hands of Ibn Shīrẓād, the Tūzūn's hired writer.¹ He barely could pay the salary of the army and so allowed them to plunder people's properties. Thus, the throne was thrown into disorder. People were not physically and financially secure and so emigrated. In that situation, Ibn Shīrẓād sent an army with Yanān Kūshah and appointed him as the governor of Wāsiṭ and Takrīt; but they revolted and called Ahmad ibn Būyah to capture Iraq. Ahmad went to Baghdad with an army. Ibn Shīrẓād could not resist and escaped to Mosul and Ahmad ibn Būyah captured Khuzestan in 334/946 A.H and then entered Baghdad.² The next day, he went to Mustakfī and the caliph nicknamed him 'Mu'izz ad-Dawlah', his brother Ali as and his last brother 'Imād al-Dawlah' and Hasan as 'Rukn al-Dawlah.' With this, he ordered to forge these nicknames on the current money of that period, the dirham and dinar.³

³ 'Abbās Pazwīz, *Tārīkh-e Dīyālamēh va Ghaznawīyān* (The History of Daylamites and Ghaznavids), p. 75.

¹ 'Azizullāh Bayāt, Ibid, pp. 141-end, 'Abbās Pazwīz, Ibid, p. 69.

² Miskiwayh, Ibid, vol. 2, p. 85; 'Alī Asghar Faqīhī. *Shāhanshāh-ye 'Adud ad-Dawla*, p. 28. It is mentioned in page 45: *Daylamites* believed in the 'Alawītes' caliphate and considered 'Abbāsīds usurpers, so *Mu'izz ad-Dawla* appointed *Abū al-Hasan, Muhammad ibn Yahyā Zeydī* as a governor who was a well-mannered and pious man and *Abū al-Hasan* wanted to remove the 'Abbasids from the government. When *Abū Ja'far Muhammad Humayrī*, who was the minister, found out about that said to *Mu'izz al-Dawlah*, "If there is a man (sayyid) who is worthy of Imamate, will you obey him or not?" He replied, "I will try to keep him content of myself." The Minister answered, "If he said that you must resign from power and be satisfied with its titles, would you accept?" He replied, "He would not ask me such a thing." The minister asked, "What will you do if he does?" *Mu'izz al-Dawlah* answered, "I will forget government if I can convince my self, unless I will be a wrongdoer and will go to the Hell." *Humayrī* stated: "Why should not the caliph be someone who is contented with a title and do not expect obedience from you and if later he tries

Mu'izz al-Dawlah ordered to curse Mu'awiyah in written format and those who had seized the right of Fatima (a).¹ The caliph was obliged to obey the Buyid ruler. Mu'izz al-Dawlah publicized mourning for the Commander of the Martyrs, Imam Husayn (a) in Baghdad in 352/963 and appointed 'Ashūrā as a public holiday. He ordered that women come out of their houses and mourn and lament for the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a) by hitting their chests and heads and disheveling their hair.²

to rule [strictly]? You could remove him and appoint someone else instead.” (Quoted from *Rawdah as-Şafā*, vol. 3, p. 520. and *Hamedānī, Takmileh-ye Tārīkh-e Ṭabarī*, p. 149)

³ Khānd Mīr (Ghīyāth ad-Dīn ibn Humām ad-Dīn al-Husaynī), *Tārīkh-e Habīb al-Sayyid*, vol. 2, p. 426.

¹ *Faqīhī*, Ibid, p. 119. Regarding the events of 352 AH, Ibn Dowzī says, “*Mu'izz al-Dawlah* ordered people gather on the Day of 'Ashūrā and express their grief. In 'Ashūrā, markets were closed. Buying and selling were stopped. Butchers did not slaughter sheeps. Those who were cooking Harīсах (a soft dish consisting of ground wheat and meat), did not cook. People did not drink water. They set up tents in market areas and hanged coarse woolen cloth from the tents. Women hit their heads and faces and wept for Imām Husayn (a). On that day, people mourned for Imām Husayn (a). (Abū al-Farad Abd ar-Rahmān ibn 'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn al-Jawzī, *Al-Muntazam fī Tārīkh al-'Umam-i va al-Mulūk*, vol. 14, p. 150.); About the events of the same year, *Ibn al-Athīr* says, “Sunnites did not have power to prevent Shi'ites from doing these acts [of mourning] because they were many and the king supported them.” (*Al-Kāmil*, vol. 7, following the events of 352 A.H) Since then, the same ceremony was being performed every year until the end of the Būyid government.

In 'Ashūrā, the inhabitants of Karkh would gather and mourn. It is clear from the writings of *Ibn Athīr* and *Ibn Kathīr* that the Shi'ites of Karkh would simulate the events of Karbalā (*Al-Kāmil*, vol. 7, p. 51 and *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nahāyah*, vol.11, p. 275, quoted from *Faqīhī*, Ibid). However, after Daylamites' victory and removing the influence of the Caliph, the Shi'ites and Sunnites formed two political parties in this city. The Shi'a backed the Būyids and the Sunnites supported Sabuktigin and Turks. This favoritism led to many disputes and conflicts. In 363, the people of Baghdad were divided into two parties: the Sunnites shouted slogans for Sabuktigin, the great chamberlain, and the Shi'a shouted for 'Adud al-Dawlah Daylamī (*Takmalah Tārīkh-e Ṭabarī*, Hamadānī, p. 215, quoted from *Faqīhī*, Ibid, p. 126). This division initiated many fights. Blood was shed and houses were plundered (quoted from *Muntazam*, vol. 7, p. 68; quoted from *Faqīhī*, Ibid, p. 127).

Contrary to the day of 'Ashura, Mu'izz al-Dawlah, would also order people to express their happiness in the Feast of Ghadīr. On the eve of Feast of Ghadīr in 'Shurṭah' neighborhood, fire was set on, drums were beaten, horns were blown, and people sacrificed a camel in the morning.¹

Only after some months of during the occupation of Baghdad, Mu'izz al-Dawlah was informed about Mustakfī's plot. He ordered two Daylamite chiefs to tie a turban around the caliph's neck and pull him from his residence to the seat of Mu'izz al-Dawlah. This way they deposed him of the caliphate and threw him into prison. After a few days, Mu'izz al-Dawlah deposed Mustakfī and appointed the son of Muqtadir, Abu al-Qāsim as caliph nicknamed 'al-Muṭī' Billāh'.²

Since then, the 'Abbāsīd caliphs fully obeyed the Būyids. Ahmad ibn Būyah and his successors would pretend to respect the caliphs in order to achieve their goals and benefit from their favor among the Sunnis.

Ibn Muqtadir (Muṭī' 'Abbasi) who attempted to achieve the caliphate in the time of Mustakfī, hid for a while. After Mustakfī's deposition, Mu'izz al-Dawlah appointed Fadl ibn Muqtadir as caliph nicknamed as 'Al-Muṭī'' in 334 A.H; but only Mu'izz al-Dawlah alone had full authority. During his caliphate, the north eastern regions of Iran were under the control of the Sāmānids and the western parts of the Caspian Sea were under the control of the Ziyārīds (Āl-e Ziyār). Also, the south and west of Iran were occupied by the Buyids. The Buyids ruled over Baghdad in place of the Chief Commander as well.

Muṭī' was deposed of being a caliph because of paralysis and was asked to leave the caliphate to his son, 'Abd al-Karīm, to

² Ibn Jawzi, *Muntaẓam*, vol. 7, p. 16; Faqīhī, *Ibid*, p. 121.

¹ Miskiwayh, *Tajārūb al-Umam*, vol. 2, p. 87.

which he accepted.¹ 'Abd al-Karīm, nicknamed Ṭā'i' 'Abbāsī, ruled from 361 to 381/991; the end of his rule coincided with Sheikh Sadūq's death in Rey.

During the rule of Ṭā'i', 'Azud al-Dawlah, son of Mu'izz al-Dawlah, was the ruler of Baghdad after his father's death; however, due to irresponsibility and conflicts among his companions, 'Adud al-Dawlah Daylamī, the son of Rukn al-Dawlah, took the ruling of Baghdad from him and ruled over the city and made significant changes in Baghdad.²

The political power of the 'Alawids in the time of Sheikh Sadūq

Fast and constant socio-political changes in the third and fourth centuries caused various Shi'a groups to meet many of their goals in the political-cultural fights. These changes were also a result of the dominance of the 'Abbasid Caliphs. Since then, the 'Abbasid Caliphs could not continue to exert violence and force against the Shi'a.

The most powerful Shi'a government in the fourth century was the Būyid government whose origin of emergence was sought among 'Alawī government of Tabaristān. Before the emergence of the Shi'a in Tabaristān, after being released from the Fakhkh movement, Yahyā ibn 'Abdullāh ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn (a) entered in Tabaristān and fought along with 170 of his Basrī, Kūfī, and Khurāsānī companions in the time of Mūsā and Hārūn ar-Rashīd in 172 A.H.³ Hārūn wanted Fadl ibn Yahyā Barmakī to capture him anyway.¹

² *Ibid*, vol. 2, pp. 337 & 338.

¹ *Bayāt*, *ibid*, p. 141 – 145.

² Research: Madelung, Wilferd (editor) - Arabic Texts Concerning The History of The Zaydi Imams of Tabaristan, Daylaman And Gilan, Franz Steiner, 1987 trans. as *Akhbār al-A'immah al-Zaydiyyah, fī Ṭabaristān wa Daylamān wa Jīlān*, Beirut, Dār al-Nashr; "*Al-Masābih, Abū al-'Abbās Hasanī*" pp. 55 – 57, quoted by Rasūl Ja'farīyān, *Tārīkh-e Tashayyū' dar Iran (The History of*

Fadl ibn Yahyā entered Daylam and a great crowd of people gathered around him. By sending a safe conduct from Rashīd, Fadl ibn Yahyā forced him to accept peace and was finally murdered in Rashīd's prison.²

In the first half of the third century, Tabaristān was ruled by the Ṭāhirīds. The intrusion of the Ṭāhirī dynasty on properties which did not have any owner in Gīlān and people had authority over them, led them to revolt and people sent out Jābir ibn Hārūn from this region. Two men, Muhammad and Ja'far, the sons of Rustam, were leaders of the revolt. Because they wanted to create a strong alliance among themselves, they decided to invite one of the 'Alawīds who lived in Rey to this region. The Daylamites invited one of the 'Alawīds of Tabaristān, Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm, but he did not accept and guided them toward Hasan ibn Zayd Hasanī [first Dā'ī or great Dā'ī, 250-270 A.H].³

Hasan ibn Zayd who was living in Rey, one of other 'Alawite centers, went to Tabaristān by this invitation; he took an allegiance of the people and fought with the rulers of Ṭāhirīds. After conquering them, he established his government in Āmul. Āmul, Sārī, Gurgān with Gīlān, and Daylam were among the regions ruled by the Daylamites for 20 years.⁴

Although Hasan ibn Zayd was a Zaydi, he believed in Hanafī jurisprudence. And although Zaydids were members of Ashāb

Shī'ism in Iran), vol. 1, p. 288. Other records are mostly quoted by professor Ja'farīyān and we thank him. About this issue, you may refer to Āyati, *Tardumah Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, pp. 9, 603.

³ Abū al-Farad Isfahānī, *Maqātil aṭ-Ṭālibiyyin*, p. 465, 468; Ibn Khaldūn, *Ibid.*

¹ Ibn Khaldūn, *Ibid.*, *Akhbār al-A'imma al-Zaydiyyah*, Al-Tājī, p. 11, *Al-Masābīh*, Abū al-'Abbās Hasanī, pp. 57 – 70, quoted from Ja'farīyān, p. 288; *Maqātil aṭ-Ṭālibīn*, p. 472.

² Mar'ashī, *op cit.*, p. 201 – 210.

³ *Akhbār al-A'imma*, Al-Tādī, p. 21, quoted from Ja'farīyān, *Ibid.*, p. 291.

al-Sayf ("Men of the Sword")¹ against Imāmīyyah, the Zaydī jurisprudence had shared several ideologies with Imāmīyyah jurisprudence.² During this period, the Ṭāhirīds and Ya'qūb Layth sometimes engaged in war with them. They would be defeated after a while and retracted, but the 'Alawites who followed the people would occupy these regions again.

During these years, the 'Alawites revolted many times in Egypt, Iraq, Hījdāz, and Iran that Ṭabarī and Ibn Athīr have written a detailed account of them. The 'Abbasid caliphs would see the origin of all of such movements in Tabaristān; therefore, the 'Abbasids themselves or their stooges provoked other governments to attack this Shi'a government. For example, during the time of the Caliph Mu'tazz, they provoked the Saffārids to attack this government.

The successor of Hasan ibn Zayd was his brother Muhammad ibn Zayd who established his government in Tabaristān by taking the advantage of the conflict between 'Amr ibn Layth and the Sāmānids.³ Historians have written that Muhammad ibn Zayd supported the 'Alawītes who were under the dominance of Iraq and Hīdāz by sending financial help;⁴ but after the dominance of the Sāmānids over Sogdiana and overcoming on 'Amr ibn Layth in Khorasan, Ismā'īl ibn Ahmad Sāmānī sent an army to Tabaristān. This army killed Dā'ī in 287 A.H.⁵ and the Sāmānids had established their government in Tabaristān.

At that time, the Shi'ites revolted. Even the owner of al-Zand revolted having the claim of 'Alawīte descendant and Zangī army resisted for 15 years (255 – 270 A.H). He ruled many years as an 'Alawī (using 'Alawī identity) in the south of Iraq and Iran until

⁴ Zaydids would consider someone as an Imām who is one of the descendant of Fāṭimah (A), brave, generous and revolts by sword.

⁵ Ja'farīyān, *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 292.

¹ Mar'ashī, *Ibid.*, p. 211.

² *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 4, p. 577.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 403.

he was finally suppressed; however, Shi‘i belief had attracted great numbers of people and even Muntasir. Contrary to his father, ‘Abbāsī, the son of Mutawakkil, had a tendency toward the Shi‘ites by being inclined toward the Household of the Prophet.¹ ‘Abbāsī respected the ‘Alawītes as a result.²

Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Shi‘i revolted in order to support of the Imām of Ismā‘īlītes and ‘Ubaydullāh al-Mahdī in 286 A.H and dominated Africa, Egypt, and Damascus. In Yemen, Yahyā ibn Husayn revolted in 290 A.H and achieved dominance over it.³

Hasan ibn Ali, known as Nāsir Kabīr al-Aṭrush, was a pious and virtuous man. He was one of the descendants of Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (a) and attempted to call people to Islam in Gīlān and Daylamān.⁴ He propagated Islamic names among them, taught them the Holy Qur’an and took revenge for Muhammad ibn Zayd’s death from the Sāmānids. He also seized Tabaristān from the Sāmānids in 301 A.H. He called himself al-Nāsir Li’l-Haqq and named Āmul as the capital of his government. After 3 years, he died in 304 A.H⁵ and was buried in Āmul.

¹ *Maqātil at-Ṭālibiyyin*, p. 636.

² Compiled by Muhammad Ramaānī and revised by Malik al-Shu‘arā Bahār, *Mudmal al-Tawārīkh va al-Qisas*, p. 368.

³ *Tārīkh ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 1, p. 13.

⁴ Mas‘ūdī, the well-known Islamic historian and great geographer, who was contemporary with Nāsir Kabīr, spoke about Nāsir Kabīr with the name of ‘Aṭrush’ in two places in his book ‘*Tārīkh-e Murūd al-Dhahab*’ and writes: “Aṭrush revolted in Tabaristān (now called ‘Māzandarān’) and expelled ‘Sīyāh Dāmegān’h who were followers of ‘Abbāsīds in 301 A.H. He had a comprehensive understanding and knowledge in religious beliefs. He lived among Daylamītes for a while. In that period, Daylamītes were Magian unbelievers who were ignorant (as if living in the Age of Pre-Islamic Ignorance). The people of Gīlān were the same in that period. Nāsir Kabīr called them to One God and they accepted Islam. At that time, the territory of Muslims reached to Qazvin, Chālūs and other parts of Tabaristān. He built many mosques in Daylam...” (*Murūd al-Dhahab*, vol. 5, p. 260)

⁵ *Akhhār al-A’immah al-Zaydiyyah*, p. 71, quoted from Da’farīyān, *ibid*, pp. 345 – 349, Cf. Sayyid Kāzim Rawhānī, *Nihzat-hāy-e Sīyāsī Dīnī-ye Iran*

It is stated that Ahmad, the son of Nāsir Kabīr, believed in Imamate¹ and criticized his father for being Zaydī. According to Madelung's report, the Būyids were the Daylamites of Lahidan who became commander by serving in the army of al-Nāsir Li'l-Haqq and his successor, Hasan ibn Qāsim. Although they later supported the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate for political reasons, they would support the 'Alawites' ruling in their own territory. The children of the Būyid Mu'izz al-Dawlah respected Abu 'Abdullāh al-Mahdī, the son of Hasan ibn Qāsim Dā'ī and the next Zaydī Imām after him. Abū 'Abdullāh al-Mahdī was appointed as a leader of the 'Alawites with the privilege that neither did he have to wear black formal clothes nor did he attend the caliph's court. We mentioned previously that Mu'izz al-Dawlah considered him as his Imām.²

First, Būyah's sons were among Nāsir al-Haqq 'Alawī's army though they doined Mardāvid's army afterwards. Because of the great competence they demonstrated, Mardāvid appointed them as the rulers of Rey. From there, they entered Shiraz in 322 A.H and prepared themselves to occupy Baghdad. At the same time, they had constant conflicts with Mardāvid and his brother, Wushmgīr. Finally, Mu'izz al-Dawlah entered Baghdad in 334 A.H and after a while, he dismissed Mustakfī and appointed Muṭī' Lillāh.

One of the main causes of the growing Shi'a population in the 4th century lies in creating Shi'ite governments. Iraqi Fātimids were ruling Egypt, Būyids were ruling Iran, Hamdānī Shi'ites were ruling Syria, Zaydids were ruling Yemen, and the Qarmatians as extremist Shī'a were ruling some regions. Judge Abd al-Dabbār,

(Political-religious movements of Iran), pp. 3 – 20; Ismā'īl Mahdūrī, *Tārīkh-e Māzandarān*, pp. 86 – 122.

¹ Ibn Isfandīyār (Bahā al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Hasan), *Tārīkh-e Tabaristān*, p. 97, quoted from Ja'farīyān, p. 347; *Tārīkh-e Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, p. 13.

² *Akhbār al-A'immah al-Zaydiyyah*, Madelung, quoted from Ja'farīyān, ibid, pp. 353-54.

the opponent of the Shi'ites, admitted to this matter.¹ However, before the entering Būyids, interest in Shi'ism was increasing in Baghdad. The activities of the Shi'a in the Burāthā mosque were the reason why Muqtadir 'Abbāsī ordered to ruin it to suppress revolt of Hanbalites in 313 A.H. Before that, it was warned that the Caliph would not force anyone who badmouthed the companions of the Prophet.² After the Buyids came to power, a fair degree of security was provided for the Shi'ites and during 113 years of Būyid government, Shi'ites could develop Shi'ite ideology using relative freedom and present their beliefs and hadiths in the form of books and treatises.

³ Judge' 'Abd al-Jabbār Hamidānī, *Tathbīt Dalā'il al-Nabuwwah*, p. 433, op. cit., p. 361. Another Shi'ite government was Hamdānīyyan government which was formed in the early 4th century. This Shi'ite government rose from the inside of Arabic tribes and gained independence autonomy against 'Abbāsīd Caliphate. The major cities of this government were in Mosul and Aleppo. Nāsir al-Dawlah Hamdānī was the ruler of Mosul since 317 AH. Sayf al-Dawlah Hamdānī became the ruler of Aleppo in 332. Shi'ite tendencies of this government were well-known (Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Mahāsīn Ūsuf Atābakī, *Fi al-Mulūk al-Misr wa al-Qāhirah*, vol. 4, 5; Abd ar-Rahmān Sayf Āzād, *Tārīkh-e Khūlafā-ye Fātimī* (History of Fātimīd Caliphs), cited in the journal of *Hawzah*, no. 54, Bahman and Isfand 1371 (Jan. & Feb. 1993 CE) (Millennium Memorial Sheikh Mufīd) p. 7. On remaining coins of Hamdānīyan government, Imamate and guardianship of Imām 'Alī (A) has been inscribed (Ahmad Amīn Misrī, *Zuhr al-Islam*, vol. 2, p. 74, quoted op. cit.). ... Hamdānīd government was a longer experience of a Shi'ite government. Although it did not last long in the north of Iraq and fell after some decades because of conflicts with Būyids, but Hamdānīyan government of Aleppo lasted until 394 AH and then it became one of the dependent territories of Fātimīd government.

The powerful Fatimid government was an experience of a Shi'ite government. Although it developed from the west of Africa, but quickly settled in the borders of 'Abbasid Caliphate and was considered as a serious danger to their government. Hostilities and competitions between 'Abbasids and Fatimids lasted three decades until Fatimid government was removed by Ayyubids (Cf. *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 5, p. 384 op cit., p. 8).

¹ Ibn al-Jawzī (Abū al-Faraj 'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn 'Alī) *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 13, pp. 313 & 314.

Political relation of Sheikh Sadūq with the Buyids

The Buyids supported famous scholars such as Sheikh Ṣadūq (d. 381 A.H). He also had relationships with Rukn al-Dawlah. Rey was the major city of his government. He is called the sole authority of Khurāsān.¹

The most distinguished student of Ṣadūq was Sheikh Mufīd (d. 413 A.H) who revived the Shi'a in different aspects, especially theologically at the time of Buyids' rule.

Sāhib ibn 'Abbād, Buyids' learned and powerful minister, was very fond of the Household of the Prophet (s). More than half of his poems are in praise of the Household of the Prophet (s).²

The Shi'ites built many libraries and schools during the Būyid period, some of which were destroyed by Sultān Muhammad Qaznawī who had deep prejudice against the Shi'a and oppressed the Shi'a as a result. However, Shi'ism continued to develop there. In the period of Būyids in Rey, an educated class of Shi'ites developed in the city who participated in politics and were remarkable authors of scientific works. One of them was Abu Sa'id Ābī who was the Madd al-Dawlah Buwayhi's minister and passed away in 421 A.H. He was one of the students of Sheikh Sadūq and is considered a Shi'ite minister of the Būyids. For the first time, he prepared an index of verses of the Qur'an according to their subjects called '*Nathr al-Durr.*' Sheikh Sadūq had a close relationship with the Būyids. He gifted the book '*Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā*' to Sāhib ibn 'Abbād. His brother, Husayn ibn Ali, wrote a

¹ *Rijāl Najāshī*, p. 389.

² Cf. *Dīvān of Ṣāhib ibn 'Abbād*; About Ṣāhib's religion, refer to *Āl-e Yāsīn* with the titles inside such as Al-Ṣāhib ibn 'Abbād, Hayātuh-u wa Ādābuh, cited in Ja'farīyān, ibid, p. 339.

book to redect *Tashbīh* (comparison with God) and gave it to Sāhib ibn ‘Abbād.¹

Sheikh Sadūq tried to support the Shi‘ite government of the Būyids and lead them. The withdrawal of this Shi‘ite scholar would make the cruel ‘Abbasid caliphs and the contradictory religion more dominant; thus, the Bābiwayh family and Sheikh Sadūq settled in Rey for Islamic and Shi‘ite interests. They presented their books to the Būyid ministers, which proved to be effective in their assistance to Shi‘ism.

The Būyids could not satisfy the ‘Abbasid caliphs because they weakened the base of the caliphate and also supported the Shi‘ites. The ‘Abbasid caliphate wanted to put the Būyids under pressure in any possible way. One way of doing so was the zealous Sunni governments ruling the east of Iran. The Sāmānids and after them the Ghaznavids were both anti-Shi‘ite governments; their most significant action in Rey was Sulṭān Mahmūd Ghaznawī’s attack on it.² He carried out this attack to take revenge on the ‘Abbāsīd caliph who did not feel content by neither the Būyids, Shi‘ites, or the Mu‘tazilites. The attack of the Ghaznavids on Būyids’ land satisfied the caliph. Historians and Sulṭān Mahmūd Ghaznawī state that attacking Rey was to suppress the Shi‘ites and Mu‘tazilites. Khājah Nizām al-Mulk quoted from a letter of Sulṭān Mahmūd Ghaznawī saying:

He has come here not to occupy Iraq but to improve the corrupted conditions of this region. In his letter, he mentioned the conflicts between Sunni Turks and

³ Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 2, p. 306, quoted from *Ibid*, p. 401; *Ma‘ānī al-Akhhār*, Preface by ‘Alī Akbar Ghaffārī, p. 84.

¹ Sulṭān Mahmūd Ghaznawī rose in Khurāsān in 389 A.H and established a powerful government in the east of the Islamic caliphate through numerous victories. He demonstrated himself as a loyal person to ‘Abbasid caliphate. He knew himself as a implacable enemy against the enemies of the caliph, especially the Karmathians and Shi‘ites; this was favourable to the ‘Abbasids. (*The Hawzah Journal*, no. 54, 1371, p. 9)

the Daylamites who were Shi'ite. He wrote, "...I preferred to come to Iraq rather than attack India. I also appointed an army of pious Turks and Hanafite Muslims as chiefs over the Daylamites, atheists (Zindīqs) and Esotericists (*Bāṭinīs*) with the intention of destroying them completely. Some were killed by the Turks' swords, sent to prison, or became homeless. I ordered all masters and those who have occupied a property in Khurāsān to be Hanafī or a pure Shāfi'i. The two families of our enemy are the Bāṭinīs and extremist Shi'ah; both are in harmony with the Turks.¹

According to Ibn Kathīr, Sulṭān Mahmūd Ghaznawī informed the 'Abbasid caliph through a letter in 420 A.H and wrote that he had brutally killed Bāṭinis and Shi'as who lived in Rey. They were hanged and the properties of their leader worth 1000 dinars were seized.² According to Ibn Kathīr's report, the Sulṭān hanged the Bāṭinis who were companions of Madd al-Dawlah who spent their time studying, destroyed philosophical books, and exiled the Mu'tazilites to Khurāsān.³

The appearance of Shi'ite governments created a calm period for religious scholars. Shi'ite jurists, narrators of hadith, theologians, and philosophers recollected scattered Shi'ite resources and were able to both revive and refine collections of hadiths. They restated the truth of Shi'ite thoughts in jurisprudential and theological areas and wiped unreal extras out from them. They prepared the way for regaining new powers under the available social security. Religious scholars understood that the existing opportunity was an effective and useful means

¹ Khajeh Niẓām al-Mulk, *Sīyāsāt Nāmeḥ*, pp. 87 & 88, cited in ja'farīyān, *ibid*, p. 402.

² Abū al-Fidā' ibn Kathīr al-Damishqī, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nahāyah*, vol. 12, p. 26, cited from *Ibid*.

³ Mahdī Muhaqqiq, *Duvvumin Bist Guftār*, p. 221, Quoted from *Ibid*.

for spreading Shi'ite thoughts. They eventually established good relations with them.

When the Būyids dominated, the political situations changed in favour of the Shi'ites. It was then that the 'Abbasid caliphs became obedient to the Būyids and the history of the Shi'ites entered a new phase in which Shi'ite scholars changed their policies and came out of dissimulation. They approached Shi'ite governors and introduced and propagated thoughts of Imāms (a); thus, by using Shi'ite suitable political situation, Sheikh Saduq posed jurisprudential and theological subjects and wrote books in various Islamic fields with Shi'ite tendency. He took a big step in introducing Shi'a Islam, in protecting the foundation of Shi'ah intellectuals, and introducing truths for Islamic society which became well-known among the people. With regards to Saduq's travels to Baghdad, Khaṭīb Baghdādī in *Tārīkh-e Baghdād* wrote:

He came to Baghdād and narrated hadiths of his father to narrators of hadiths. He was a Da'fari follower and one of the most famous Rafidīs. Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah Na'āl narrated hadiths from him for us.¹

The relationship between Ali ibn Bābiwayh and Rukn al-Dawlah in Rey was so close that king respected him in the meetings and would push him to speak in presence of Sunni scholars by asking questions about Imamate and guardianship (*wilāyah*).² The author of *Majālis al-Mu'minīn* writes:

In an independent treatise, Sheikh Ja'far Durīyastī counted some of the considerable fruits he had had in some meetings of Rukn al-Dawlah. Because his treatise was very rare and it was a sample of the

¹ Quoted from Mudarrisī Gīlānī, *Muqaddamah-ye Khisāl* (The Introduction of *Khisāl*), p. 7.

² 'Alī Asghar Faqīhī, *Shāhanshāhī-ye 'Adud al-Dawlah*, p. 117.

great Sheikh's thoughts and it was related with the goal of this book, speaking about virtues of that pious scholar became frequent among people. Malik Rukn al-Dawlah heard about Sheikh Sadūq's reputation for leadership and authority among Shi'ites and became eager to hear his delicate words. Showing great courtesy, Rukn al-Dawlah entreated to take Sheikh Sadūq to him. When he entered in Rukn al-Dawlah's meeting, Malik Rukn al-Dawlah seated him by himself and greatly respected him. When meeting started, he addressed Sheikh and said: 'O' Sheikh! A group of scholars have gathered here and have differences of opinion among themselves about those who are cursed by Shi'ites. Some say that cursing them is obligatory and some say it is not obligatory and not permissible either. What is your opinion about this? Sheikh said: 'O Malik! Be aware that God, the Exalted, does not accept servants' acknowledgment of His Divine Unity unless they reject whatever among gods or idols rather than Him; as in the expression of '*Lā Ilāh-a Illa'llāh*' (There is no god but Allah) and He would not accept savants' acknowledgment of prophethood of the holy Prophet (s) unless they reject every false prophet at that time; such as Musaylamah-e Kadhdhāb [liar], Aswad 'Ansī and Sajāḥ and the like. Allah would not accept savants' acknowledgment of Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a) unless they reject those who dishonestly have come to power as the caliph instead of him. Malik admired his answer and praised him.¹

¹ Judge Nūrullāh Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-Mu'minīn*, vol. 1, p. 456. To bring this issue to a conclusion refer to the thesis of the author under the title *Rīshehhāy-*

Malik Rukn al-Dawlah also asked many questions to which Sheikh Saduq answered. The following are a few of them:

Malik: 'Although our opponents consider Imamate necessary, they say that the holy Prophet (s) did not appoint anyone as his successor after his death; thus, the people appointed a caliph.'

Sheikh Saduq: 'If it is true, then the succession of the first and second caliphs was contrary to the action of the Prophet (s) and was null and void; and if their action was true, then the action of the Prophet (s) would have been wrong!

Would God (swt) make a mistake, or the people? If someone as simple as poor rural man with spades and baskets as his possession writes a will for his children and family, how would the holy Prophet (s) pass away and not mention anyone in his will about his successor? If the holy Prophet (s) did not really appoint anyone as his successor, then Abū Bakr acted contrary to the action of the holy Prophet (s) and appointed 'Umar as the next caliph after himself. Also, 'Umar acted contrary to Abū Bakr and the holy Prophet (s). He elected a council with six members to appoint his successor.'

Malik: 'What did they assume to appoint Abū Bakr as the Imām?'

Sheikh Saduq: They thought that the holy Prophet (s) had appointed him as the leader of the prayer during the time of his illness while the holy Prophet

e Rawābet-e 'Ulamāy-e Tashayyu' bā Şafavīyān [Roots of relations between Shi'ite scholars and Şafavids] available in the library of 'Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute'.

went to the mosque with the help of Imām Ali (a) and ‘Abbās, and pushed Abū Bakr aside. They would also narrate from Hafsah [the daughter of Abū Bakr] that the holy Prophet (s) had appointed her father as the leader of the prayer... Why do we have to accept narrations of Hafsah and Ayisha while they did not accept what Lady Fāṭimah (a) said about Fadak according to the fact that the holy Prophet (s) had granted it to her before he (s) passed away?

This was done disregarding the position of Lady Fāṭimah (a) as the master of all women in the world. She was infallible and the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a), Imām Hasan (a), Imām Husayn (a) and Umme Ayman could testify Fāṭimah's (a) claim. How could Abū Bakr and ‘Umar did not accept their testimony?

How can the reports of Hafsah and Ayesha be accepted while they themselves narrated [from the Prophet (s)] that the testimony of a daughter for his father is not credible. Also accepting the testimony of women is not credible in 10 dirhams and more unless a man gives testimony about it?

Malik: Why do the Shi'a insist on the existence of twelve Imams (as)?

Sheikh Saduq: It is due to the Divine statement through the holy Prophet (s) just as the general principles of prayer are mentioned in the holy Qur'ān though the number of rak'as was determined by the holy Prophet (s). With regards to Imamate, the Qur'an tells us to, '...Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority

among you ...' (4:59) which is in agreement with the statement of the holy Prophet (s) about the twelve Imams (a) after himself.¹

Thus, when Sheikh Sadūq found Buyids' political condition ready to launch his plans, he stopped hiding his beliefs and revealed the truth by explaining the Shi'ite sciences. He took advantage of the ideal political condition of the Buyids and wrote books to introduce the Shi'ite system from the political, jurisprudential, and exegetical viewpoints, all resources possibly adding up to 300 books.²

The political relation of Rukn al-Dawlah with Sheikh Şadūq and Şāhib ibn 'Abbād

Rukn al-Dawlah, the older brother of Mu'izz al-Dawlah, ruled over Isfahan, Qazwin, Rey, and Hamadan for more than 44 years. He was a Shi'a follower and was considerably interested in the household of the Prophet (s). When Sheikh Sadūq came to Rey by his invitation, Mu'izz al-Dawlah and people of Rey welcomed him warmly. He stayed there for a while and propagated re`ligion and Imamate. When Sheikh Sadūq wanted to go to Mashhad, Rukn al-Dawlah asked him to pray for him in the holy shrine of Imām Ridā (a). Sheikh Sadūq wrote about this in one of his books:

It was Rajab in 352 A.H. I asked for permission from the prosperous Emir Rukn al-Dawlah to go to Mashhad for a visit. After I left him, he called me and said, 'Mashhad is a pure and holy place. I have visited there and prayed to God for my requests. He granted my requests; so do not forget me and pray for me, because prayer is accepted in that place.' [Sheikh Sadūq writes:] I accepted and kept my

¹ *Ibid.*

¹ *Rijāl*, Najāshī, p. 389.

promise. After returning from Mashhad, I paid him a visit. When he saw me, he asked if I prayed for him and made pilgrimage on his behalf to which I replied that I did.¹

The Būyid rulers tried to select their ministers and commanders from the followers of the Household of the Prophet (s). One of them was the pious scholar, Ismā'īl ibn 'Abbād, the minister of Rukn al-Dawlah. He was the minister for 18 years and in this period, he offered valuable services for propagating Shi'ism. He composed many poems praising the Imams (a) and propagated his beliefs. Sheikh Sadūq deeply respected Sāhib ibn 'Abbād. We can find the depth of Sheikh Sadūq's respect for Ibn 'Abbād in the introduction of *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā'*.

Sheikh Ṣadūq wrote this book for Sāhib ibn 'Abbād and dedicated it to him. In the introduction of *'Uyūn Akhbār ar-Ridā'*, he writes:

The author of this book, Muhammad ibn 'Alī ibn Bābiwayh-e Qummī says: 'I saw two odes of Sahib ibn 'Abbād, (May God prolong his life) which were about offering salutations to Imām Ridā (a). I wrote this book for the library he has built because I did not find anything more valuable for him than the knowledge of Ahl al-Bayt (a). I want to bring up the two odes of him in the beginning of this book; it is these two verses that inspired me write this book.'²

Then Sheikh Sadūq mentioned three hadiths of the Imams (a) and stated:

Imām Sādiq (a) states: 'Whoever composes one couplet in praising us, God the Exalted grants him a

² *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā'*, vols. 1 & 2, p. 718.

¹ *Ibid*, p. 1.

house in paradise. No poet composes poems for us unless the Holy Spirit helps him.' So God may grant great rewards to the composer of these poems, Sāhib ibn 'Ubbād, and fulfils his wishes, and may God grant him the intercession of those whose names are imprinted on his ring.'¹

Muhammad Taqī Majlisī stated about Sāhib ibn 'Abbād in *Naqd al-Rijāl*:

He [Sheikh Saduq] was the best jurist among early jurists and contemporary ones and he was superior to what is mentioned as the knowledge and eminence.²

There were twenty thousand books in the library of Sāhib ibn 'Abbād which were listed in ten volumes of books. Sheikh Sadūq benefited from that great library.

Sheikh Sadūq passed away in 381 A.H while he was a little over seventy years old. He is buried near the tomb of Abd al-'Azim al-Hasani in the city of Rey where people continuously visit to pay their respects and seek blessings.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

² Khānsārī wrote: "He was known as Shī'ite in Rijāl books and in *Kashf al-Yaqīn*, Sayyid Radī ad-Dīn (Ibn Ṭāwūs) and also the author of *al-Ma'ālim al-'Ulamā* praised him and considered him as the poet of Ahl al-Bayt (a) (*Rawdāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 2, p. 26).

Lady Nafisah

Dr Zahra Kashaniha¹

Translated by Asma Sultan

ABSTRACT: Islam urges mankind to purify themselves and provides them with male and female role models in order to guide people to successfully live their lives. In all ages, those who have reached a high level of spirituality and attained nearness to God are worthy of being exemplars for those who desire guidance. Lady Nafisah led her life as that example, as one who was well-known for her asceticism, worship, and miracles. This article offers a brief biography of this revered woman, with a description of her noble qualities and its influence on those who were acquainted with her and benefited from her support.

¹ Doctorate in philosophy and member of the scientific board of the Rajai University

Introduction

Lady Nafisah was the daughter of Hasan, son of Zaid, son of Imam Hasan (a), son of Imam Ali (a). Due to her reverence, she was titled “the Pure One” (*tāhirah*) and “the Noble Lady of the Two Worlds [i.e. this world and the hereafter].”¹

She was born in 145 A.H. and lived for 65 years. In the noble city of Medina where she grew up, she immersed herself in worship and asceticism as she fasted most of the days and spent most of her nights in worship through genuflection and prostration. With regards to this Lady, her niece observed during her 40 years of serving her that she had never seen her aunt sleep during the night and eat during the day. This was not due to any sort of poverty, as Lady Nafisah was indeed wealthy and used to spend her money on the needy and the ill. Moreover, she regarded the pilgrimage to the House of God with importance, as it has been said that she visited Mecca thirty times, most of which were on foot.²

Her lofty status was not unknown by her society. Anne Mary Shimmel writes:

Some of the female grandchildren of the Prophet (s) such as Lady Nafisah were the most distinguished among the people of their time in terms of excellence of character and piety. Her gravesite, located in Cairo, Egypt, is still among the most visited sites of the believers.³

As a result of her asceticism, Lady Nafisah was able to perform extraordinary acts for those in need, such as curing the ill, praying for the poverty-stricken and freeing the detained. Until today,

¹ Ibn Khallakān, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 5, p. 423

² Mirza Mohammad Ali Mudarris, *Rayhānat al-Adab*, vol. 2, p. 440.

³ Anne Mary Shimmel, *Spiritual dimensions of Islam*, translator: Abdul Rahim Gohari, p. 658

Egyptians continue to flock to her gravesite for their prayers to be answered.

Spouse and children

In *Muntahā al-Āmāl*, Shaykh Abbas Qummi describes Lady Nafisah's husband, Ishaq ibn Ja'far as a "God-fearing and righteous person..." whose diligence gave him the reputation of being a trustworthy scholar of hadith. His lineage goes back to the Bani Zuhrah, who were known for their honourable qualities, as well as great personalities such as Abu al-Makārim, known as Hamzah, who was the son of Zuhrah Halabi. Hamzah was a great scholar and writer of theological and jurisprudential books. His father, grandfather and brother Abdullah ibn Ali and his nephew Muhammad son of 'Abdullah were also among the great Shi'ite jurists.¹

According to historical sources, the Bani Zuhrah were the most well-known group in the region of Halab. Shaykh Abbas Qummi writes in *Muntahā al-Āmāl*:

And from among them is [Abu al-Makārim] a teacher, writer and jurispudent who is among the notable sayyids (descendants of the Prophet) and leaders of Halab, author of many books and famous scholar of hadith. His grave is well known in Halab at the foot of Mount Jawshan near Mashhad. On it his genealogy up to Imam Sadiq (a) and date of death are engraved on it.²

Historical accounts on her life and piety

The writer of *Rayāhin al-Shari'ah* writes:

¹ Shaykh Abbas Qummi, *Muntahā al-Amāl*, vol. 2, pp. 178 & 179; Dhabih'ullāh mahallāti, *Rayāhin al-Shari'ah*, vol. 5, p. 95.

² Sheikh Abbas Qummi, *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 179.

Information about Nafisah and her extraordinary deeds have been mentioned in many books, among them being: *Rūh al-Rayhān*, p. 103, *Wafayāt al-A'yān* of Ibn Khallakān, Shablanji in *Nūr al-Absār*, Shaykh Muhammad Saban in *Is'āf al-Rāqibīn* and Muqrizi in *Khitat* and others have also written of her in detail.

According to *Nāsikh al-Tawārich*, in order to protect the oppressed, Lady Nafisah wrote a letter to the governors:

Since you attained dominion and became custodians over the lands of the servants of God, you chose a foundation of oppression, enmity and injustice (in your rule) and you kept for yourselves the bounties that God gave to you from His blessings and withheld them from the poor and those under your guardianship and closed the doors of comfort and livelihood on them, whereas you know that the cry of the oppressed in the early hours, is like an arrow that pierces through a thousand steel armours and never misses its target, especially from hearts that you have caused pain to and bodies you have left without cloths. Do not hold back in oppression and injustice! We will be patient and seek refuge in God. Very soon the oppressors will receive the penalty of their actions.

When Lady Nafisah finished writing the letter, she picked it up and stood in the pathway of Ahmad ibn Tulūn and called his name. When Ahmad recognized her, he came down from his horse in respect of her dignity, took the letter and read it. The letter left a deep imprint on him as he soon afterwards, gave up oppression and injustice and built a foundation of righteousness. This incident is partly questionable because Ahmad son of Tulūn was born in the year 203 A.H. and died in the year 270 A.H., whereas Nafisah passed away in the year 207 A.H. Therefore it appears that Nafisah's disputes were with a person other than him.

Lady Nafisah's niece, Zainab, was asked about her diet. She replied:

She would eat once every three days, and whenever she desired food, a basket would appear at her place of prayer. In that basket she would find whatever she wanted. I do not know where it came from and when I asked her about it, she stated, 'Whoever perseveres in the path of the Lord the reins of the universe are in their control.'

Lady Nafisah was indeed an ascetic. The question then arises: What are some characteristics of a mystic? The great philosopher Avicenna says:

Whenever you hear that a mystic stays away from food for more than the normal time period, keep an open mind about it and consider it among the well-known doctrines of nature.¹

Every time you hear that a mystic has achieved a feat which none other than he can achieve, do not refuse it entirely, many a time you might find its reason in the laws of nature.²

Nafisah was a person of great temperament and nobility of spirit. Apart from her husband's wealth, she took no money from anyone else. She had memorized the Qur'an and knew its commentary, and whenever she would recite it, she would cry and implore, "O my Lord! Make it possible for me to perform the pilgrimage of your friend, Ibrahim (a)."

¹ Ibn Sinā, *Al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbihā*, Book Ten, p. 461.

² *Ibid.*, p. 465.

Her Extraordinary Acts

Lady Nafisah entered Egypt in the year 193 A.H. When the people of Egypt heard of her arrival, they flocked to welcome her. For a while she stayed in the house of Jamal al-Din Abdullah, son of Jassās, and people from all over came to visit her and seek her blessings. After a short time, she shifted to Mansusa in Daraam. Manāwi, the author of *Tabaqāt al-Sufiyyah* [generations of Sufiam], writes,

Lady Nafisa entered Egypt, and so many extraordinary acts were seen from her that none entered Egypt but that they visited her. Her status rose and her pure and modest home became a refuge for the people. After some time, she decided to migrate to Hijāz and live near her own kin. This decision was every difficult for the Egyptians and they begged her to stay; however, she refused.

The people of Egypt were so adamant that a great number of them assembled in the house of the governor and informed him of Lady Nafisah's imminent migration. The news was difficult for him to bear as well and he sent a letter via a messenger requesting her to change her mind. Lady Nafisah did not agree to do so. Seeing no other option, the governor himself went to visit her and with utmost humility asked her to stay. In reply to this offer, Lady Nafisah mentioned her concerns of being alone in the city, and the crowds of people kept her from her worship, recitations, and gathering provisions for the Hereafter. Thus, the governor arranged to solve the problem by giving her a house in 'Darb al-Saba' and ordered people not to occupy her more than twice a week; that is, they visited her only on Sundays and Wednesdays. She willingly accepted the offer.

Many miracles have been narrated from Lady Nafisah, a few of which will be mentioned below:

Curing the ill

A Jewish man lived in Lady Nafisah's neighbourhood and he had a daughter who was ill and unable to stand. One day her mother wanted to go to the bathhouse and did not know where to keep her daughter. Since her daughter preferred not to go with her and her mother did not want her to stay alone, her daughter asked if she could stay with Lady Nafisah. Her mother accepted. It was time to pray at Lady Nafisah's house; the Lady brought some water to make wudū' (ablution). As she did so, she sprinkled some of the water over the girl and she was immediately cured. When her parents came, to their amazement, the girl came to greet them herself. After coming to know what had happened, the entire family accepted Islam.

Praying for the poverty-stricken

Another one of the wonders that have been related about Lady Nafisa is the story of an old woman who had four orphaned daughters. From one Friday to the other the girls used to spin cotton thread and the second Friday the woman used to take the thread to the market and sell it; with half the value she got, would buy materials and with the other half she would buy food. One day when she was passing through the market and carrying that thread on her head, a bird with sharp talons came down, grabbed the thread and took flight. The old woman fell unconscious on the ground at this awful event. When she awoke, she kept murmuring to herself and crying over what to do with her hungry daughters. People gathered around her, and seeing her state, referred her to Lady Nafisah who through the blessing of her prayer would ask to God to solve the problem. The old woman hurried to Lady Nafisah and related her story to her and asked her to pray. Lady Nafisah raised her hands in prayer and murmured these sentences:

يا من علا فقدر و ملك فقهر جبر من امتك ما انكسر فإنها
خلفك و عيالک

O the One, Who transcends and has power over everything, and rules and overwhelms. Please restore from among your nation those who are broken. Truly they are your people and dependent on You.

She recited these words and told the woman of God's capability to do everything. The woman sat at the door of the house, her heart burning for the hunger of her children. An hour had not passed when suddenly a group of people asked permission to enter the house of Nafisah. When they entered and greeted her, the merchants gave a description of their state: they were travelling in the sea and were thanking God for their health when they reached near the Lady's city and their ship got a leak and water gushed into it. To save themselves from drowning, they tried to block the hole to prevent water from entering, though to no avail. They then desperately asked God for help with the Lady as an intercessor, and at that moment, they saw a bird drop a piece of cloth containing cotton thread. They placed the thread in the hole and the water stopped flooding the ship; then entered the city to see the Lady in thankfulness to God, and had brought 500 silver dirhams. When Nafisah heard this she started crying and said:

الهي ما ارأفك والطفك بعبادك

O God! How kind and merciful you are to Your servants!

Since the elderly woman used to sell her thread for 20 dirhams, Lady Nafisah told her that God has sent her 25 dirhams in return for every dirham. The woman returned to her children overjoyed. *Rayāhin al-Shari'ah* mentions this same story and then writes that a similar event took place in the time of Prophet David (a) as well.¹

¹ Zabihullah Mahallati, *Rayāhin al-Sharia'h*, vol. 5, p. 91

Praying for the detained

It has also been reported that a woman's son was captured in the enemy land and she spent her time crying and worshipping in the temple because of the separation from her son. One day she told her husband about a woman who lived in this city by the name of Nafisah and asked him to visit her and tell her of their lost son and pray for him. She vowed that if her son returns, she would accept Lady Nafisah's religion. Her husband visited Nafisah and related their story and Nafisah prayed to God to return her son. Night fell, and suddenly they heard someone knocking on the door. The woman hurried to the door and saw her son. She was overjoyed and asked him to describe how he was freed. He said, "At that time I was standing next to the door (and this was the time that the Lady had prayed) and heard a voice saying: "Release him..."

Death and burial

Lady Nafisah had dug a grave with her own hands outside her house and prayed a great deal in that grave. She had finished recitation of the Qur'an 190 times there, or according to another relation 1900 times. Zainab, her niece, mentioned that her aunt fell ill in the beginning of Rajab and wrote a letter to her husband Ishaq Mo'tamin who was in Medina at the time. Her ill state continued until the first Friday of the month of Ramadan. At this time she was overwhelmed with pain while fasting. The best doctors visited her and asked her to break her fast due to her weak state. Lady Nafisa was astounded at this statement because she had been praying for God to take her life while in the state of prayers, and breaking her fast at this moment was simply out of the question. She did not break her fast. Instead, she recited these poetic verses:

*Take the doctor away from me, leave me alone
with my Beloved!
My yearning for Him has increased, in a way that*

it burns my will.

My love for Him has been exposed to the rival and my secret has been revealed. Everyone knows I am in love with Him.

I give no importance to this revelation of my secrets, because this has been my luck. None of these who blame those who fall in love with Him has got it right.

My body is content with this illness, and my tearful eyes are content with my cries and moans.

Zainab describes her aunt as being in this state until the second week of the month of Ramadan when the last moments before death came to pass. She started reciting Chapter al-An‘ām until she reached the verse: “They shall have the abode of peace with their Lord” and her soul ascended to the Heavens. Her husband wanted to take her body to Medina. The people came to the governor and asked him to request her husband not to do so. Ishaq did not agree. They collected a great amount of wealth in order to dissuade him, but still he did not agree. The people of that city passed the night in great difficulty and when they saw him in the morning he was agreeable to their request. When they asked him the reason, he said, “Last night I saw the Prophet (s) in my dream and he (s) said, ‘Return their wealth to them and bury her near them.’”

Lady Nafisah was buried in a part of ‘Darb al-Saba’ and that day was very eventful. People gathered from all over the land to pray over her and that night, after she was buried, candles were lit and from every house in Egypt the sound of crying could be heard; she was mourned greatly.

According to *Nūr al Absār*, a number of pious and virtuous people have visited her grave, such as Yunus of Egypt, Abil Hasan Daynuri, Abu Ali Rudbāri, Abu Bakr Ahmad son of Nasr Daqqāq, Hammāl Wāsiti, Shuqrān son of Abdullah Maghribi, Idris son of Yahyā Khulani, Fadl son Fadala, Qādi Bakkar, Son of

Qatiba, Ismail Mazni and Sāhib Shāfi‘i.¹ Today, her grave is a place of pilgrimage of people from all over the world.² Maqrizi, in *al-Khtat* writes:

There are few places in Egypt well known for prayers being accepted there: one of them is the gravesite of Lady Nafisah. And the first person to build a tomb over her grave was Abdullah ibn Siri ibn Hakam, the governor of Egypt and the Caliph Hafiz in the year 532 A.H. ordered its dome to be renewed and its mihrab (or altar) to be renovated.³

Spirituality

Some of the best spiritual words narrated from Lady Nafisah are the verses of poetry written shortly before her death. In these verses she reveals her desire for death which is, in truth, her desire to reach her Beloved – God - and she wants to be released from this worldly life so she may reach her Beloved faster. This desire for death is similar to what the true saints whisper in their invocations with God; it is as though they have witnessed death as a bridge to reach their Eternal Beloved, the same way that Imam Ali (a) says: “I swear by God! My desire for death is greater than the desire of a child for his mother’s breast.”⁴

Her notion of death is similar to Rumi’s verses in his *Ghazaliyyāt of Shams Tabrizi*:

*On the day of death when my coffin is ready
don’t think I moan this world
When you see my body don’t say: Separation!
Separation
For me is the union and meeting of that time*

¹ Sayyid Mu’min Shablanji, *Nur al-Absār*, p. 125

² See: Smith Margaret, *Ibid*, pp. 148-150

³ Maqrizi, *Al-Kuhtat*, vol. 5, p. 94.

⁴ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 5, Fayd al-Islam, p. 57

*Which seed, when sowed, did not grow?
Why then this assumption for the seed of your
humanity?¹*

Yes, the day of death for the friends of God like Lady Nafisah is a day of union and meeting, in reality it is to rise; man is released from matter and nature and begins his upward journey and at its height is in union with the Beloved. In this way, the mystics and true saints were farsighted, and this world not only did not tempt them, indeed, it strengthened their wing for flight towards Allah and set their desire upward. Due to their spirituality and knowledge, they wisely and knowingly took steps forward, and in this way, success has been their friend, and God has taken their hand.

Lady Zainab of Egypt, researcher and writer, describes Nafisah in her book as a lover and friend of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) and has brought this verse from Lady Nafisah in her book:

O my Lord! Surely I am a believer in Muhammad (s)
and his progeny and children of his family, free from
the corruption of the world and evil of wealth.²

Conclusion

Allah (swt) continuously provides male and female examples to guide humankind to the correct way of life. Indeed, Lady Nafisa's love for Allah (swt) influenced her to act upon that which pleased Him. In return for her pure intentions and lofty acts, she was a great service to the people: not only did she act as a physician in curing the ill and helping the oppressed, her mere presence was a blessing to those who desired an example of one who modelled the Infallible Ones (as) before her.

¹ Jamaladdin Muhammad Mauwlavi, *Gazaliyat Shams Tabrizi*

² Sayyidah Zainab, *Durr al- Manthur fi Tabaat Rabbat al-Khudur*, Egypt, 1312 A.H. p. 522.

Quality of Hijab and the Social Relation of Men and Women

Late Zahra Haajkhalili

Translated by Mohammad Javad Shomali

ABSTRACT: One of the most significant current discussions regarding the Islamic modest dress is the extent to which both men and women should dress. This paper studies the factors both men and women must take into consideration with regards to dressing modestly in society. Islamic rulings and the narrations of the Infallibles (a) are provided as evidence in offering the decrees all must adhere to with regards to clothing. Both men and women must avoid wearing 1) conspicuous clothing, 2) outfits specific to the opposite gender, and 3) tight clothing in which the curves of the body are revealed. Both are also to avoid any action that attracts inappropriate attention. Clothing with silk or gold is forbidden for men. Abiding by the first four rules eliminates the dilemmas faced in any society relating to male-female relations and ensures stability as a result.

Although Islam provides guidelines about the extent of covering and its general conditions, it does not give specific rules regarding its shape or type. This is because the issue of clothing and covering is not one of the *ta'abudi* and *tawqifi* issues (i.e., it is not exclusively religious so that all its details must be taken from religion); rather, it is somehow dependent on the public view and understanding of the subject at issue. A person's clothing is acceptable provided that it meets the general conditions and the extent of covering stated by Islam, although this varies in different situations.

Ibn Taymiyyah gives his opinion on the ambiguity of this subject. He uses the Prophet (s) as an example, asserting that following the Prophet (s) may mean two things: 1) doing the exact thing he did, and 2) following the Prophet (s) to achieve the objective of the action. Because the Prophet (s) performed actions due to a specific purpose, people are to follow that purpose, and not the action. For example, the Prophet (s) oiled his hair to keep it healthy. It is not necessary for us to oil it, though we are to follow the purpose, which is to care for our hair with anything that ensures its health. The Prophet (s) also ate dates, bread and wheat. Doing the same exact thing regardless of time and place is not necessary. The Prophet's companions and Islamic jurists ate their own way and dressed according to the customs practiced by the society they lived in.

Men and women must take several factors into consideration with regards to covering and their social relations. Men and women must:

1. Avoid wearing conspicuous clothing
2. Avoid wearing outfits specific to the opposite gender
3. Avoid wearing tight clothes such that the curves of the body are revealed
4. Avoid any action (e.g. flaunting) that attracts attention

5. Realize that clothing with silk or gold is forbidden for men

1. Wearing conspicuous clothing

Conspicuous clothing consists of clothes that are uncommon for a person to wear. If he or she wears this type of clothing and will definitely attract people's attention, then his or her clothes are deemed conspicuous.

Islamic rulings

The majority of the jurists (*mujtahids; faqihs*) have said that wearing this kind of clothing is prohibited in Islamic law, although the late Hurr 'Amili who is a great scholar of hadith as well as a great jurist, in *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah* deems it *makrūh* (not prohibited though it is better to be avoided).¹ Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Kazim Yazdi, the author of the book *Al-'Urwat al-Wuthqā* says: "It is prohibited to wear conspicuous clothing i.e. the clothing which is not common for a person in terms of its fabric, colour or style. A clergyman wearing a soldier's uniform or vice versa is an example of conspicuous clothing."² Ayatollah Khomeini holds the same opinion although he regards it as a precaution instead of a prohibition.

Narrations as evidence

Several hadiths portray the conspicuousness of clothing as objectionable, resulting in God's retribution. In what follows, we will refer to some of these hadiths.

I. Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

¹ Shaykh Hurr 'Amili, *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 5, Book of Clothing, Chapter 12 (The Abomination of Fame in Clothes and Other Aspects).

² *Al-'Urwat al-Wuthqā*, Book of Prayer, Cloth of one who prays, p. 302, Problem 42. The text is as follows:

«بحرم لبس لباس شهرة بأن يلبس خلاف زيّه من حيث جنس اللباس أو حيث لونه أو..»

ان الله يبغض شهرة اللباس

Certainly God dislikes the conspicuousness of clothing.¹

II. Ibn Miskān narrates from a person that Imam Sadiq (a) said:

عن ابن مسكان، عن رجل، عن ابي عبدالله (ع) قال: كفى بالمرء خزيا أن يلبس ثوباً يشهره أو يركب دابه تشهره

For a man to be degraded it is enough to wear clothes that make him famous (or infamous) or to ride animals that make him famous (or infamous).²

III. ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Isā narrates from those he mentions that Imam Sadiq (a) said:

عن عثمان بن عيسى، عن ذكره، عن ابي عبدالله (ع) قال: الشهرة خيرها وشرها في النار

Both the good and evil of fame (favourable and negative) are in the fire.³

IV. Abi Jārūd narrates from Abi Sa‘id that Imam Husayn (a) said:

...عن ابي الجارود، عن ابي سعيد، عن الحسين (ع): من لبس ثوبا يشهره كساه الله يوم القيامة ثوبا من نار

God will dress anyone who wears clothing that makes him famous with a dress made out of fire on the day of Judgement.⁴

¹ Shaykh Hurr ‘Āmili, *Wasā’ill al-Shi‘ah*, vol. 5, Book of Clothing, Chapter 12, p. 24, number 1.

² *Ibid.*, number 2.

³ *Ibid.*, number 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, number 4.

V. Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

نهانى رسول الله (ص) عن لبس ثياب الشهرة

The Prophet (s) banned me from wearing conspicuous clothes.¹

VI. Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

إن الله يبيغض الشهرتين: شهرة اللباس و شهرة الصلاة

Truly, God dislikes two types of fame: fame in clothing and fame in prayer.²

Islamic rulings

Some jurists believe in the prohibition of conspicuous clothes and refer to the above narrations to mean that if a person does an act that degrades him or makes people disrespect him, he has committed a sinful act. Wearing conspicuous clothes results in degrading and ridicule and therefore, it is not permitted. Some have considered it disliked (*makrūh*) based on the fact that fame is only prohibited when it results in degrading and abjection and when the person becomes popular for a bad thing among people.³

2. Avoid wearing clothes specific to the opposite gender

One of the Islamic rulings that concern many (especially those who are in the movie industry) is prohibition of wearing clothes specific to the opposite gender.

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, Chapter on the *Lubs al-Moasfar*, p. 447, number 4.

2 Nuri, Husayn, *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 1, Chapters on Ahkām al-Malābis, Chapter 8, p. 208, number 2.

3 Shirazi, Sayyid Muhammad, *Al-Fiqh*, vol. 18, Book of Prayer, pp. 256 – 257 (with slight changes).

Islamic rulings

Normally earlier jurists study this issue among other Prohibited Jobs (*al-makāsib al-muharramah*) while talking about the prohibition of ornamenting men with things which are prohibited for them, such as gold. For example, Zayn al-Din al-‘Āmili (known as the Second Martyr) says:

One of the prohibited acts is ornamenting men or women with things which are prohibited for them, like for a man to wear a bangle, anklet, or a cloth that is usually worn by women, or for a woman to wear clothes specific to men, such as a belt and turban. Of course, this might change by time and place, and a cloth that had been specific to men in a time can be common for women at another time.¹

Mohammad ibn Makki (known as the First Martyr) says:

One of the prohibited jobs is to ornament men or women with ornaments specific to the other one.²

Muhaqqiq Hilli [describing the prohibited jobs] says:

And to ornament men with what is prohibited for them.³

Contemporary jurists normally study this issue while talking about conditions of the cloth that can be worn during prayer. For example, Ayatollah Sayyid Kazim Yazdi says in *Al-Urwah al-Wuthqā*:

1 *Al-Rawdat al-Bahiyyah*, Book of Matājir, p. 273:

«و تزئین کل من الرجل و المرأة بما يحرم عليه كلبس الرجل السوار و الخلال و الثياب المختصة بها عادة و يختلف ذلك باختلاف الأزمان و الاصفاة، و كلبس المرأة ما يختص بالرجل كالمنطقة و العمامة»

2 *Al-Durūs al-Shar‘iyyah*, Vol. 3, p. 163:

«و تزئین کل من الرجل و المرأة بزينة الاخر»

3 Muhaqqiq Hilli, *Sharāye‘ al-Islam*, vol. 2, Book of Matājir, p. 4.

It is also prohibited for men due to precaution to wear clothes specific to women and vice versa and it is better not to do the prayer while wearing these kinds of clothes.¹

Ayatollah Khomeini had an opinion similar to the previous one:

Men and women must avoid wearing clothes which are exclusive to the other gender due to precaution. However, if someone prays while wearing such cloth, his or her prayer is not void.²

The late Ayatollah Shirazi, while explaining the opinion of the author of *Al-'urwah al-Wuthqā*, writes:

There are three opinions on this issue: a) Those who consider it prohibited, b) those who claim it to be permissible, the opinion most modern-day jurists hold, and c) those who distinguished between what completely changes the outfit of a man or a woman and turns it into the outfit of the other gender (which is prohibited), and what is only worn with good intention for a short time (which is not prohibited).³

a) *Those who consider it prohibited.*

This is the most famous opinion and closest one to the truth. It might even be claimed that it was agreed on by all the early scholars as it has been claimed in *Riyād*. Several narrations by the infallible Imams (a) depict its prohibition.

1 *Al-'Urwat al-Wuthqā*, Book of Prayer, p. 302, Problem 42:

«و كذا يحرم على الاحوط لبس الرجال ما يختص بالنساء و بالعكس و الاحوط ترك الصلاة فيهما».

2 *Risālah Tawdih al-Masā'il*, Problem 846.

3 Sayyid Muhammad Shirazi, *Al-Fiqh*, vol. 18, Book of Prayer, p. 257.

Narrations as evidence**I. Imam Baqir (a) quotes the Prophet (s) as saying:**

لعن الله المشتهين من الرجال بالنساء و المشتهيات من النساء
بالرجال

May God curse men who make themselves look like women and women who make themselves look like men.¹

II. Jābir ibn Yazid al-Ju'fi reports that he heard Imam Baqir (a) saying:

لا يجوز للمرء ان تشبه بالرجل لأن رسول الله (ص) لعن
المشتهين من الرجال بالنساء و لعن المشتهيات من النساء
بالرجال

It is not permissible for a woman to look like a man, since the Prophet (s) cursed men who make themselves like women and women who make themselves like men.²

III. Imam Rida (a) is quoted as saying:

قد لعن رسول الله (ص) سبعة : الواصل شعره بشعر غيره و
المشته من النساء بالرجال و الرجال بالنساء و ...

The Messenger of God cursed seven groups of people: ... and those women who make themselves look like men and men who make themselves look like women and...³

1 Shaykh Hurr 'Āmili, *Wasā'ill al-Shi'ah*, vol. 17, Book of Tijārah, Chapters on *Mā Yuktasab-u bih*, Chapter 87, p. 284, number 1.

2 Shaykh Saduq, *Al-Khisāl*, Chapter 70, p. 585, number 12, cited in *Al-Fiqh*, vol. 17, p. 258.

3 Shaykh Saduq, *Fiqh al-Rida*, Chapter on al-Tijārah wa ..., p. 252.

IV. Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) نَهَى النِّسَاءَ أَنْ يَكُنَّ مَعْطَلَاتٍ مِنَ الْخُلَى
أَوْ يَشْتَبِهْنَ بِالرِّجَالِ وَ لَعَنَ مَنْ فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُنَّ

Truly, the Messenger of God forbade women from not using ornaments or being similar to men and cursed women who do this.¹

V. Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) يَزْجُرُ الرَّجُلَ أَنْ يَشْتَبِهَ بِالنِّسَاءِ وَ يَنْهَى
الْمَرْأَةَ أَنْ تَشْتَبِهَ بِالرِّجَالِ فِي لِبَاسِهَا

The Messenger of God used to blame men from becoming similar to women and forbid women from being similar to men in terms of their clothes.²

VI. Imam Ali (a) saw a man in the Prophet's Mosque who looked like women. Imam asked to leave the Mosque and quoted a hadith from the Prophet (s):

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ رَأَى رَجُلًا بِهِ تَأْنِيثٌ فِي مَسْجِدِ
رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص) فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَخْرَجْ مِنْ مَسْجِدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص)
يَا لَعْنَةُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص) ثُمَّ قَالَ عَلِيُّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: سَمِعْتُ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) يَقُولُ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ الْمُشْتَبِهِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ بِالنِّسَاءِ
وَ الْمُشْتَبِهَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ بِالرِّجَالِ

I heard from the Messenger of God saying: “May God damn men who make themselves look like

1 Nu'mān ibn Muhammad, *Da'ā'im al-Islam*, vol. 2, p. 162, Fi Dhikr Libās al-Hullah, number 580, cited in *Al-Fiqh*, vol. 18, p. 258.

2 Shaykh Hurr 'Āmili, *Wasā'ill al-Shi'ah*, vol. 5, Chapters on Ahkām al-Malābis, Chapter 13, p. 25, number 2.

women and women who are similar to men.”¹

VII. Shaykh Saduq refers to some hadiths:

أخرجوهم من بيوتكم فإنهم اقذر شىء

Send these kinds of men out of your house for they are the dirtiest things.²

Again Shaykh Saduq narrates from Zayd ibn Ali who narrated from his father that Imam Ali (a) said:

كنت مع رسول الله (ص) جالسا في المسجد حتى أتاه رجل به
تأنيث فسلم عليه فرده ثم أكب رسول الله (ص) الى الارض
يسترجع ثم قال: مثل هؤلاء في امتي؟ إنه لم يكن مثل هؤلاء
في امه إلا عذبت قبل الساعة

I was sitting in the mosque with the Messenger of God when a man who dressed like a woman went to him and said “*Salām*” (the Islamic greeting “peace”). After replying, he looked at the ground and raised his eyes back up and said “Are people like him in my nation? If people like him exist in a nation, that nation will be tormented before the Judgement Day.”³

Islamic rulings

The late Ayatollah Shirazi says:

Those who believe in prohibition have used these narrations and said that the curse mentioned in them shows prohibition and the fact that some of

1 *Ibid.*, vol. 17, Book of Tijārah, Chapters on *Mā Yuktasab-u bih*, Chapter 87, p. 284, number 1.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 285, number 3.

3 *Ibid.*, number 4.

the narrations have a weak chain of narrators does not mean that we cannot use the rest as evidence, especially because they are well-known. Furthermore, this act is considered evil (*munkar*) among Islamic scholars.¹

Those who believe in the permissibility of this act have used the principle that indicates everything is allowed except for what we are sure is not. They have also said that the curse mentioned in the narration does not mean that the act is prohibited. Curse mean to be far from good and it includes both prohibited and disliked (*makrūh*). It has been used to refer to makrūh so many times that it no longer shows prohibition. Even if we accept that curse is more likely to show prohibition of an act it does not mean the issue we are talking about is prohibited, since some of the narrations are not about clothing rather they are about for a man to look like a woman or vice versa. For example, in the sixth and the eighth narrations, it can be understood from the words of Imam Ali (a) and the Prophet (s) that what he meant had not been all kinds of similarities between men and women; rather, they have meant men and women who completely look people of the other gender. This conclusion is supported by the fact that once Imam Ali (a) ordered forty women to wear like men to accompany Aishah (the Prophet's wife) after the Battle of Jamal and also the fact that there had been times when Muslim women used to fight in battles appearing as men.²

The third group have distinguished between what completely changes the outfit of a man or a woman and turns it into the outfit of the other gender which is prohibited and what is only worn with good intention for a short time which is not prohibited.³

The third group, as it has been said by Ayatollah Sayyid Muhsin

1 Sayyid Muhammad Shirazi, *Al-Fiqh*, vol. 18, Book of Prayer, pp. 258 -59. (with slight changes in translation)

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*, p. 257.

al-Hakim in *Mustamsak*, have argued that the similarity which has been banned in the narrations, is apparently doing an act with the intention of becoming similar. Thus, if a man dresses like a woman but does not intend to become similar to her or vice versa, this act is not prohibited nor is it forbidden. It is possible to claim that the similarity that has been cursed does not include cases where similarity is casual, lasts for short period, and is based on some logic.

The Preferred Opinion

Considering the fact that narrations are about similarity and not just wearing clothes, it can be concluded that if a man or a woman decides to wear similar clothes to the opposite gender with the intention of becoming similar, he or she has done a prohibited act and is cursed by God and His Prophet (s). Therefore, if a woman wears male clothing under her clothes it is permissible; wearing clothes which are known to be common for both genders in the society is also permissible.

3. To avoid wearing tight clothes that the shape of body can be seen over them

Another feature a cloth, especially for women, is to be thick enough and loose-fitting so that it completely covers the curves of the body. The body should also not be seen through it. It cannot be so tight that the sexually stimulating parts of the body of women become apparent.

Narrations as evidence

I. Asbagh ibn Nubah narrates from Imam Ali (a):

يظهر في آخر الزمان و اقترب الساعة و هو شر الازمنة
نسوة كاشفات عاريات متبرجات، من الدين خارجات، في
الفتن داخلات، مائلات الى الشهوات، مسرعات الى اللذات،
مستحلات للمحرمات، في جهنم خالدات

At the end of time and just before the Resurrection Day, there will be women who are nude, show their beauties, are out of religion, are involved with corruptions, yearn for lust and pleasures, allow what is prohibited, and will be in hell forever.¹

II. Imam Ali (a) is quoted as saying:

عليكم بالصفيق من الثياب فإن من رقق ثوبه رقق دينه

It is a must for you to wear thick clothes, for anyone who wears thin clothes [through which her body may be seen] has a weak religion.²

4. To avoid flaunting and any act that attracts attention

As our Imams have ordered women to embellish and wear makeup in front of their husbands, they have also strongly forbade women from flaunting in front of non-mahrams or to do any act that excites or attracts their attention, as the Qur'an states, "And do not display your finery with the display of the former [days of] ignorance" (33:33). This verse does not imply restricting women to their houses or having to shun society since historically the direct audience of this verse were the wives of the Prophet who used to accompany him on journeys and participate in battles, both of which the Prophet encouraged. To understand the meaning of the verse and its relation to this topic, it is necessary to understand the meaning of *tabarruj*, or displaying one's finery.

According to *Al-'Ayn*, "tabarruj" is an act of a woman who displays the beauty and finery of her face and neck.³ According to

1 Shaykh Hurr 'Āmili, *Wasā'ill al-Shi'ah*, vol. 20, Chapters on *Muqaddamāt al-Nikāh*, Chapter 7, p. 35, number 5.

2 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, Chapters on Cloth of One Who Prays, Chapter 21, p. 389, number 5.

3 Farāhidi, *Al-'Ayn*, vol. 6, p. 115.

Fayyūmi, this refers to the practice of women who flaunt and display their beauties in front of non-mahrams.¹ *Lisān al-‘Arab* gives the same meaning with more details.² *Maqā’is al-Lughah* defines *baraġa*, the root of tabarruj, as displaying one’s beauties.³ *Qāmūs al-Muhit* also considers as tabarruj the act of flaunting in front of men.⁴ In his *Al-Nihāyah fī Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar*, Ibn Athir, too, takes tabarruj to mean dressing and flaunting in front of others and quotes the Prophet’s narration as a proof:

كان يكره عشر خصال منها التبرج لغير محلها

The Prophet did not like ten features for women, one of which was tabarruj in an inappropriate place [i.e. not for her husband].⁵

The exegetes of the Qur’an too have defined the meaning of tabarruj. For example, in *Al-Furqān* several meanings have been mentioned for tabarruj: 1) strut and pride while walking, 2)

1 Fayyūmi, *Misbāh al-Munir*, vol. 6, p. 115.

2 Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, vol. 2, p. 211. He writes:

التَّبْرُجُ: إِظْهَارُ الْمَرْأَةِ زِينَتِهَا وَحَاسِنَاتِهَا لِلرِّجَالِ. وَتَبَرَّجَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ: أَظْهَرَتْ وَجْهَهَا. وَإِذَا أَبَدَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ حَاسِنَ جِيدِهَا وَوَجْهَهَا، قِيلَ: تَبَرَّجَتْ، وَتَرَى مَعَ ذَلِكَ فِي عَيْنَيْهَا حُسْنَ نَظَرٍ، كَقَوْلِ ابْنِ عُرْسٍ فِي الْجَنِيدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بِهَجْوِهِ:

يُبْعَضُ مِنْ عَيْنَيْكَ تَبْرِيْجُهَا، وَصُورَةٌ فِي جَسَدٍ فَاسِدٍ
وَقَالَ أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ فِي قَوْلِهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: عَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ، التَّبْرُجُ: إِظْهَارُ الزَّيْنَةِ وَ مَا يُسْتَدْعَى بِهِ شَهْوَةَ الرَّجُلِ، وَقِيلَ: إِنَّهُنَّ كُنَّ يَتَكَسَّرْنَ فِي مَشِيهِنَّ وَ يَتَبَخَّرْنَ، وَقَالَ الْفَرَّاءُ فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: وَ لَا تَبْرُجْنَ تَبْرُجُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى، ذَلِكَ فِي زَمَنِ وَلَدِ فِيهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ النَّبِيِّ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، كَانَتْ الْمَرْأَةُ إِذْ ذَاكَ تَلْبَسُ الدَّرْعَ مِنَ اللَّوْلُؤِ غَيْرَ مَخِيْطِ الْجَانِبِيِّنَ، وَ يُقَالُ: كَانَتْ تَلْبَسُ الثِّيَابَ سَلْعَ الْمَالِ لَا تَوَارِي جَسَدَهَا فَأَمْرُنَ أَنْ لَا يَفْعَلَنَّ ذَلِكَ، وَ فِي الْحَدِيثِ:

كَانَ يَكْرَهُ عَشْرَ خِصَالٍ خَلَالَهَا، مِنْهَا التَّبْرُجُ بِالزَّيْنَةِ لغير محلها
وَ التَّبْرُجُ: إِظْهَارُ الزَّيْنَةِ لِلنَّاسِ الْأَجَانِبِ، وَ هُوَ الْمَذْمُومُ، فَأَمَّا لِلزَّوْجِ فَلَا، وَ هُوَ مَعْنَى قَوْلِهِ لغير محله.

3 Ahmad Rādi, *Mu‘jam Maqā’is al-Lughah*, vol. 1, p. 238.

4 Tāhir Ahmadzadi, *Tartib-u Qāmūs al-Muit*, vol. 1, P. 24.

5 Ibn Athir, *Al-Nihāyah*, vol. 1, p. 113.

displaying finery, and 3) wearing thin clothes.¹ Qurtaby writes: “Tabarruj is to display things which are better to be covered.”² In *Al-Tafsir al-Munir*, we read: “Tabarruj is to display finery and beauty for men, like when a woman wears scarf but leaves it open that her neck and necklace can be seen.”³ It has been narrated from Ibn Abi Fadi’ that “tabarruj is when a woman shows her beauties to men and displays finery in front of strangers.”⁴

In any case, with a little consideration we can find out that tabarruj is flaunting and attiring. Women have been told to avoid flaunting and showing off their beauty or any act that attracts strangers’ attention to them. This is to keep in mind that not only have women not been forbidden from this at home with their husbands, but also they have been encouraged to do so:

عن جعفر بن محمد (ع) عن آبائه (ع) قال: رخص رسول الله
(ص) للمرأة أن تخضب رأسها بالسواد قال: و أمر رسول الله
(ص) النساء بالخضاب ذات البعل وغير ذات البعل أما ذات
البعل فتزين لزوجها وأما غير ذات البعل فلا تشبه يدها يد
الرجال

Imam Sadiq (a) narrated from his fathers who said: “The Prophet allowed women to colour their head with black colour.” Imam Sadiq (a) added that: The Prophet had ordered women, married or single, to colour. Married woman should nicely dress themselves for their husbands and single ladies [should colour] so that their hands do not look like the hands of men.⁵

The following narrations have forbidden women from wearing

1 *Al-Furqān*, vol. 22, p. 105.

2 Qurtabi, *Al-Jāmi’ Li Ahkām al-Qur’an*, vol. 14, p. 117.

3 *Al-Tafsir al-Munir*, vol. 22, p. 10.

4 *Basā’ir*, vol. 32, p. 217.

5 Shaykh Hurr ‘Āmili, *Wasā’il al-Shi’ah*, vol. 2, Chapters on Ādāb al-Hammām, Chapter 52, p. 97, number 2.

make-up in front of men other than their husbands:

قال ابو عبدالله: ... و ايما امرأة تطيبت لغير زوجها، لم تقبل منها صلاة حتى تغتسل من طيبها، كغسلها من جنابتها

Imam Sadiq (a) said: “God will not accept prayers of a woman who uses perfume for men other than her husband unless she takes a bath like when she does ghusl....”¹

عن أبي عبدالله (ع) قال: قال رسول الله (ص) اي امرأة تطيبت لغير زوجها ثم خرجت من بيتها فهي تلعن حتي ترجع الي بيتها متي ما رجعت

Imam Sadiq (a) narrated that the Prophet(s) said: “Any woman who uses perfume and then leaves her house is cursed by God until she returns, no matter when that is.”²

According to *Sahih* of Muslim, the Prophet used to tell women: “Do not use perfume when attending the mosque.”³ In the famous hadith of Manāhi [prohibitions], it has been said:

...و نهى ان تتزين لغير زوجها فان فعلت كان حقا علي الله ان يحرقها بالنار

The Prophet forbade women from wearing make-up for men other than their husbands and warned that if they do so, God has the right to burn them with fire.⁴

From the above narrations, we can clearly understand that women wearing make-up outside the house for men other than their

1 *Ibid.*, Chapters on Muqaddamāt al-Nikāah, Chapter 80, p. 160, number 1.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 161, number 4.

3 Nishāburi, Muslim, *Sahih*, vol. 8, p. 203.

4 Shaykh Hurr ‘Āmili, *Wasā’il al-Shi‘ah*, Chapter 117, p. 211, number 5.

husbands is not permitted at all and is considered as one of the great sins. Another example of an ornament prohibited in front of non-mahram men has been stated in Qur'an:

And let them not thump their feet to make known their hidden ornaments. Rally to God in repentance, O faithful, so that you may be felicitous. (Qur'an 24:31)

According to exegetes, Arab women used to wear anklets and bring attention to them by thumping their feet. The Qur'an forbade this. According to Fādil Javad, it can be understood from the verse that all acts that lead to corruption are to be avoided.¹ Abi al-Su'ūd makes a similar point:

The prohibition of making the sound of an ornament known emphasises on the prohibition of displaying the position of the ornament. The reason for forbidding thumping one's foot is that it might excite a male stranger and it might show that the woman has a tendency towards him.²

Sayyid Qutb writes:

It has been proved in its appropriate place that the fragrance used by a woman or the sound of her ornament might be more stimulating for men than seeing herself and Islam has put all of these delicate attentions to maintain a healthy society.³

Regarding this part of the verse, Ayatollah Mutahhari says:

It can be understood from the verse that anything that attracts men like using fragrance or wearing

1 Fādil, Javad, *Masālik al-Afhām*, vol. 3, p. 288.

2 Abi al-Su'ūd, *Irshād al-'Aql*, vol. 6, p. 171.

3 Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilāl al-Qur'an*, vol. 5, p. 2859.

make-up on the face is prohibited. Overall, in her communication, women should not do anything that stimulates, excites or attracts men's attention.¹

Sometimes the soft voice of women is more seductive than her body. God asks us in the Qur'an:

... do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech. (33:32)

Explaining this verse, 'Allamah Tabataba'i says:

In this sentence, He bans wives of prophet from talking with softness and that is to make his tone tender and gentle while talking to men in order to excite and seduce them Then He says they have to talk appropriately. A kind of talking which is accepted by God laws and Islamic common laws and that is a speech which is only intended to transfer the intended meaning. It has not been said with coquetry and affectation to seduce the audience along with transferring of the meaning.²

It has been said in *Tafsir Nemūneh*:

Speak firmly and seriously. Do not be like disrespectful women who use seductive phrases that is sometimes along with special coquetry which makes a salacious person think of prohibited acts.³

The seductive effect of a woman's voice has been discussed by psychologists. One of them is a Canadian who came up to the idea

1 Murtada Mutahhari, *The Issue of Covering*, p. 162.

2 'Allamah Tabataba'i, *Tafsir al-Mizān*, vol. 16, p. 482.

3 Nāsir Makārim Shirazi, *Tafsir-e Nemūna*, vol. 17, p. 289.

that voice is the first sexual stimulus and effect and that a woman's voice has an impressive effect on men.¹

The verse gives useful instruction for both tones of voice and content of speech: "But speak with appropriate speech." This means that women should not say inappropriate things and should not use exciting words in her speech. This has also been emphasised by exegetes of the Qur'an.

There are several definitions for the term "appropriate speech." Qurtaby writes: "What is meant by *appropriate speech* is a right and true word that is in accordance with Islamic laws and accepted by people."² Sayyid Qutb says: "*Appropriate speech* means that their speech should be about good issues and not bad ones like making jokes and ..."³ Suyūti also marks that: "It has been narrated from Mohammad ibn Ka'b that *appropriate speech* is a speech that does not make anyone think of bad deeds."⁴ According to *Kanz al-Daqā'iq*, it refers to "a fine and good saying without any sexual feeling."⁵

In addition to instruction given in this verse about the way women should talk, it is also necessary for women to avoid wit and unnecessary talks with men. This behaviour has also been forbidden in our narrations. Khawat ibn Jabir says that:

Along with the Prophet (s) we settled in Zahrān (on the outskirts of Mecca). I came out of the tent and saw some women talking to each other. I was overjoyed at the scene. I went back to the tent, wore nice clothes, went towards them and doined their conversation. Then Prophet (s) came out of

1 Seyed Rida Paknejād, *Awwalin Dāneshgāh wa Ākharin Payāambar* (The first University and the Last Prophet), vol. 20, p. 282.

2 Qurtaby, *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 14, p. 116.

3 Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilāl al-Qur'an*, vol. 5, p. 2859 (with slight changes).

4 Suyūti, *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 5, p. 196.

5 'Alqami al-Mashhadi, *Kanz al-Daqā'iq*, vol. 10, p. 371.

the tent and called me. I became worried. I said: 'My camel has escaped and I am looking for it.' He gave me his robe and left. He then washed his body, performed wudū' (a ritual ablution for the prayer), looked at me and asked: 'What happened to your camel that had escaped?' For a long time he used to ask me this every time we met.¹

In view of all we mentioned so far, it is concluded that:

- a) It is prohibited for women to ornament themselves for non-mahrams or to display any kind of ornament that has to be hidden except for outward ornaments that are counted as apparent ornaments. Some contemporary jurists believe that these ones are not considered as ornaments by majority people [so they are not haram].
- b) Women are banned from flaunting and any action that attracts attention of non-mahrams in a way including using fragrance, wearing thin or tight clothes, speaking soft and with coquetry.

5. Banning men from wearing clothes in which silk or gold has been used

One of the conditions that must be met in covering for men is that their clothes should not be made of pure silk or gold. All the jurists agree that it is prohibited. Furthermore, if a man prays while wearing such clothing, not only has he committed a sin for wearing it, but his prayer is also void. *Shahid al-Thāni* says:

The clothing of a person who is praying should not be made of pure silk except for when there is a necessity, such as during wars, and this is agreed upon by all scholars. The Shi'a believe that this prayer is void because it has been banned. The ban of an act shows its voidance. It does not make any

¹ Haythami, *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 401.

difference whether the cloth can cover the private parts or not. There are a great number of narrations that have forbidden this kind of clothing.

This rule is for pure silk. However, clothes which are made of a mixture of silk and other fibres can be worn and to pray while wearing them is acceptable. Gold, on the other hand, should not be used in clothes of men whether it is worn during the prayer or not, or mixed with other materials or not.¹

Ayatollah Sayiid Muhammad Kazim Yazdi in his *Al-'Urwat al-Wuthqā* holds the same opinion:

The fifth [condition of clothes appropriate for prayer] is: Men should avoid gold in their clothes while praying, although he cannot wear if even if he is not praying. It does not make any difference whether the gold is apparent or not.”

Elsewhere, he holds that wearing silk clothes is prohibited for men during the prayer or other acts.² In the book *Al-Fiqh 'Alā al-Madhāhib al-Khamsah*, Mohammad Javad Mughniyyah says:

All jurists agree on prohibition of wearing gold or silk clothes for men both in and out of prayer. [However,] it is permissible for women. This is

1 Shahid al-Thāni, *Dhikrā al-Shi'ah*, vol. 3, p. 40 (with slight changes in translation):

«و ثالثها: الحرير المحض للرجل في غير الحرب و الضرورة و عليه اجماع العلماء الاسلام و تبطل الصلاة فيه عندنا، لنهي الدال على فساد العبادة سواء كان هو الساتر للعبادة أو غيره و الاخبار بتحريم لبسه متظافرة»

2 Sayyid Muhammad Kazim Yazdi, *Al-'Urwat al-Wuthqā*, Book of Prayer, p. 300:

«الخامس: أن لا يكون من الذهب للرجال و لا يجوز لبسه لهم في غير الصلاة ايضا و لا فرق بين أن يكون خالصا أو ممزوجا...» .

due to prophet's word that said: 'It is prohibited for men of my nation to wear silk and gold and it is permissible for their women.' Shi'as believe in prohibition of prayer with pure silk or gold clothes even if it is a cloth that does not cover enough for prayer and even if he is wearing a gold ring. On the other hand, Shafei and Hanifah have said that if he does his prayer wearing it he has done a prohibited act, but his prayer is not void. Other sects do not seem to have a clear opinion regarding this but they apparently accept this last opinion.¹

Narrations as evidence:

عن أبي جعفر (ع) أنّ رسول الله (ص) قال لعلي (ع): إني أحبّ لنفسي و اكره لك ما اكره لنفسي فلا تختم بخاتم ذهب - الى ان قال - و لا تلبس الحرير فيحرق الله جلدك يوم تلقاه

Imam Sadiq (a) narrates: the Holy Prophet (s) said to Imam Ali (a): "I like for you whatever I like for myself, and dislike for you all I dislike for myself. Therefore, do not wear golden rings ... do not wear silk clothes because if you do, God will burn your skin the day you meet Him."²

عن محمد بن مسلم عن ابي جعفر (ع) قال : لا يصلح لباس الحرير و الديباج فأما بيعهما فلا بأس

Imam Baqir (a) said: "Wearing silk or gold clothes is not permissible. It is not forbidden to buy or sell them, however."³

1 Muhammad Javad Muqni'ah, *Al-Fiqh 'alā al-Madhāhib al-Khamsah*, Book of Prayer, pp. 94-95 (with slight changes).

2 Shaykh Hurr 'Āmili, *Wasā'il al-Shi'ah*, vol. 4, Book of Prayer, Chapters on Cloth of One Who Prays, Chapter 11, p. 369, number 5.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 368, number 3.

عن ابي الحارث قال: سألت الرضا (ع) هل يصلى الرجل
فى ثوب ابريشم؟ قال: لا

It has been narrated from Abi al-Hārith that he said:
“I asked Imam Rida (a): Can men do their prayer
wearing silk clothes? He replied: No.”¹

عن أبى عبدالله (ع) قال: قال رسول الله (ص) لأمير المؤمنين
(ع): لا تختم بالذهب فإنه زينتك فى الآخره

Imam Sadiq (a) narrates from the Holy Prophet (s)
that he said to Imam Ali (a): “Do not wear golden
rings, for that is your ornament in the hereafter.”²

عن عمار بن موسى عن أبى عبدالله (ع) فى حديث قال: لا
يلبس الرجل الذهب و لا يصلى فيه لأنه من لباس اهل الجنة

Imam Sadiq (a) said: “Men should not wear gold
clothes nor should they pray with it, since that is the
cloth of the people of heaven.”³

عن أبى عبدالله (ع) فى الحديد: إنّه حليه اهل النار و الذهب إنّه
حليه اهل الجنة و جعل الله الذهب فى الدنيا زينه للنساء فحرّم
على الرجال لبسه و الصلاه فيه

Imam Sadiq (a) regarding iron has said: “Truly, iron
is the ornament for people of hell and gold is
ornament of people of heaven and God made gold
ornament of women in this world and banned men
from wearing it and praying with it.”⁴

عن جعفر بن محمد عن ابيه (ع) أنّ رسول الله (ص) نهاهم
عن سبع منها التختّم بالذهب

1 *Ibid.*, p. 369, number7.

2 *Ibid.*, Chapter 20, p. 412, number 1.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 413, number 4.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 414, number 5.

Imam Sadiq (a) narrates from his fathers that they narrate that the Prophet (s) banned men from seven things, one of which was wearing golden rings.¹

عن جعفر بن محمد عن آبائه (ع) في حديث المناهي قال : نهى رسول الله (ص) عن لبس الحرير و الديباج و القز للرجال فأما النساء فلا بأس

It has been said in the narration called *Manāhi* that the Prophet (s) interdicted men from wearing silk, gold, and fur clothes. However, it is permissible for women.²

عن أبي عبدالله (ع) قال: لا يصلح للرجل أن يلبس ثوب الحرير إلا في الحرب

Imam Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying: “It is not right for men to wear silk clothes except in wars”.³

عن أبي عبدالله (ع) في الثوب يكون فيه الحرير فقال: إن كان فيه خلط فلا بأس

Imam Sadiq (a) was asked about clothes in which silk has been used. He said, “If it is mixed with other fibres (meaning it is no longer called silk clothes) then it is acceptable.”⁴

We can conclude from what we have mentioned so far that:

- a) It is prohibited for men to wear clothes made of pure silk or gold, while praying or not, and if he does his prayer wearing such clothes his prayer is void.

1 *Ibid.*, p. 415, number 9.

2 *Ibid.*, Chapter 16, p. 380, number 5.

3 *Ibid.*, Chapter 12, p. 371, number 1.

4 *Ibid.*, Chapter 13, p. 374, number 4.

- b) It is permissible to wear clothes that are not made of pure silk or have other fibres mixed with silk and are no longer called silk clothes.
- c) Wearing clothes made of pure silk in wars or in necessity is permissible.
- d) Clothes which contain gold are forbidden for men regardless of the amount of gold.
- e) It is prohibited for men to use gold as an ornament and if he does his prayer having any kind of gold on him, his prayer will not be accepted even if the gold cannot be seen.
- f) Wearing clothes made of pure silk or gold or using gold as an ornament is permissible for women in all conditions and they can do their prayer with such clothes.

Conclusion

The issue of clothing in Islam concerning both men and women has grown in importance in light of recent debates. Because Islam provides general guidelines about the extent of covering, the specific rules regarding its shape and type have been offered by jurists; narrations by the Infallibles (a) also assist jurists in offering their final decree. The following conclusions can be drawn from the present findings:

- 1) Conspicuous clothing is defined as any clothing that is uncommon and must be avoided by both men and women; jurists consider it prohibited based on evidence provided in narrations.
- 2) Clothing specific to the opposite gender is a controversial topic; some jurists deem it prohibited due to precaution and is better not to pray with them. Ayatollah Shirazi provides three views: a) those who consider it prohibited, b) those who claim it permissible and c) those who distinguish the act of fully

changing one's outfit to that of the opposite gender, and those who wear it for a short time. It is concluded that if a person wears the clothing of the opposite gender with the intention of becoming similar to them, she or he has done a prohibited act.

- 3) Wearing tight clothing where the shape of the body is apparent is considered prohibited.
- 4) The Qur'an asks women not to display her finery "with the display of the former [days of] ignorance." *Tabarruj*, or "displaying one's finery," is defined with several meanings, most of them revolving around the concept of a woman flaunting and displaying her beauties in front of non-mahrams. This can be defined as strutting while walking, displaying finery (i.e. make-up), and wearing thin and/or tight clothing, all of which can attract men's attention.
- 5) A woman's tone of voice and speech is also considered an attraction and must be modified to meet the standards of an appropriate voice and speech.
- 6) It is prohibited for men to wear clothes made of silk or gold, regardless of whether it is during prayer or not, although it is permissible to wear it during wars or when necessary, and when the clothing is not made of pure silk, i.e. the clothing is mixed with other kinds of thread.
- 7) Observing Islamic rulings on dressing enables both men and women to be able to pursue their progress and development in both personal and social realms. Men and women will be able to communicate and interact as human beings and in a rational way, instead of being always concerned with sexual relation and desires.

A Glimpse of the Character Traits of the Prophet Muhammad, Part II

Ayatollah Sayyid Abu'l-Fadl Mujtahid Zanjani

Translated by Karim Aghili

ABSTRACT: In Part I of this article published in the previous issue, Ayatollah Zanjani gave a brief account of the Prophet Muhammad's virtuous characteristics displayed throughout his childhood, under his caretakers, and during his employment. The Prophet (s) also showed love and devotion towards the destitute, the oppressed, and the slaves. In offering this description, Zanjani highlighted the admirable qualities the Prophet (s) practiced with utmost perfection, some of them being cleanliness, forgiveness, worship, and companionship. Part II continues with this account on the Prophet's renunciation, his steadfastness, and his respect for public opinion. In accomplishing his mission, the Prophet (s) liberated Muslims from their own whims, thus proving renunciation to be a necessary characteristic. Despite all obstacles, he remained unwavering in his faith. Moreover, he valued public opinion and warned against interfering in the private affairs of others.

Prophet Muhammad (s) lived a virtuous life and he set an example for all of mankind. This paper discusses some of Prophet Muhammad's character traits which we can learn from the Qur'anic verses and from the manner in which he behaved.

Renunciation (*zuhd*)

The Prophet removed all luxurious and unnecessary items from his life and set a righteous example. He used to sit on the ground, sleep on a mat made of palm leaves¹ and place a leather cushion filled with palm fibre under his head.² His main food was barley, bread and dates. He never criticized food he did not like,³ never ate until he was full and would sometimes have barley bread for three consecutive days.⁴ He broke his fast by eating a small amount of dates, and if not available, he had a few sips of water instead.⁵ It has been narrated from 'Ai'shah that sometimes a whole month would pass before the kitchen fire was lit.⁶ When he rode, his horse would be unsaddled and he would let someone else ride behind him, should it be convenient for the animal. He used to patch his own garments, cobble his own shoes, milk his own sheep, and grind his own flour.⁷ Moreover, he would help his family with other household chores. And withal, he would go for prayer whenever he heard the call.⁸

Since the goal of the Prophet and his companions was to save humanity from decadence and to eradicate idolatry to liberate them, how could they be egoists or slaves to their whims? If they had been either of these, it would have been impossible for them

¹ *Nur al-Absar*, vol. 26, p. 26 and *Bihar al-Anwar*, Bab fi Makarim Akhlaq al-Nabi

² *Sahih* of Muslim, vol. 6, p. 145

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 217

⁴ *Bihar al-Anwar*, Bab fi Makarim Akhlaq al-Nabi

⁵ *Sahih* of Muslim, vol. 8, p. 218

⁶ *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 4, p. 190

⁷ *Nur al-Absar*, p. 27

⁸ *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 8, p. 14

to resist three years of hardship in the mountain pass (*shi'b*) of Abu Talib, where the rebels had confined them and denied them access to food and commodities.¹ Similarly, the homeless Meccans (*ashāb al-suffah* – literally meaning people of the ledge or portico) could not have lived on the raised platform by the side of the mosque without food, clothing, or housing and still resisted the pressure against them. Or in the Battle of Tabuk, if they had been slaves to their whims, it would have been impossible for them to patiently tolerate the extreme hardship, hunger, and thirst in the heat of the Arabian Peninsula.² Even when the pressure had been alleviated, the true companions continued to live like desert trees which have to live with little water. In any case, the high ambitions of just and philanthropic rulers did not allow them to live in comfort and luxury as long as poverty and hardship existed and people's basic needs had not been met.

That is not to say, of course, that the blessed Prophet was opposed to the acquisition of wealth and the spending of it in lawful and legitimate ways. In fact, he actually supported this when he said: "The best assistance to guarding against evil (*taqwā*) is wealth (*ghinā*)."³ He considered wealth a means of survival⁴ and taught that there is no means more effective than wealth to further one's objectives.

Steadfastness

Muhammad (s) had not only been sent for the guidance of a tribe or a nation but he had also been assigned a universal mission "...that he may be a warner to all the nations" (25:1).⁵ It was necessary for Prophet Muhammad (s) to save humanity from the darkness of lust and ignorance, from the worship of animate and inanimate idols, from the despotism and authority of unjust rulers,

¹ *Imtā' al-Asmā'*, Miqirzi, vol. 1, p. 25

² *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 472

³ *Wasā'il al-Shia'a*, Bab al-Tijarah

⁴ Chapter 4 (al-Nisa': Women), 5

⁵ Chapter 25 (al-Furqan: the Criterion), 1

from the unconditional imitations of the soothsayers and impostors, from the racial and class biases, and from material and spiritual poverty. He was also sent to liberate humanity from the many chains that had imprisoned them and had eroded their souls and bodies and to abrogate the fake and false criteria that had been accepted for centuries as the means for evaluating habits and character traits and that actually displayed ugliness as beautiful, falsehood as truth, and evil as good. In short, he had to destroy a corrupt world and rebuild a new and better world.

In the beginning, when the command for the open call to Islam had not yet been sent down and when only a small number had converted to Islam, the Quraysh thought that the Prophet was also one of *hunaḥā* (true believers; believers in the faith of Abraham) along with Zayd ibn ‘Amr ibn Kufayl, ‘Uthmān ibn Huwayrith, and Waraqah ibn Nawfal, who sometimes expressed their opinions on certain matters of theology, but generally did not challenge people. The relationship between the converts and the Prophet was thought to be similar to that of a spiritual master and a novice. Although they caused no inconvenience, some looked upon them with suspicion and indignation.¹ The blessed Prophet was not afraid of praying and/or worshipping in public as he was occasionally seen standing in prayer with Ali and his wife, Khadijah, by the side of the Ka‘bah. One day, ‘Afif al-Kindi saw them and asked ‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib, “O ‘Abbas, what is this religion?” ‘Abbas answered,

This is Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah, who claims that Allah called him to be a messenger, and that the treasures of Kisra (Khusraw, the Sassanid Persian Emperor) and Qaysar (Caesar, the Byzantine Emperor) will be opened for him. This is his wife Khadijah, daughter of Khuwaylid, who has

¹ *Imtā’ al-Asmā’*, Miqirizi, vol. 1, p. 18

believed in him. The youth is his cousin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib.¹

Three years after this, the Prophet started to open the invitation to Islam under the command of God. His invitation is summarized as follows:

I have brought the best of this world and the next. You who worship the idols are in error, because you are following in the footsteps of your fathers and ancestors. They have no power over gain and loss. It is only the Creator of the world Who is Worthy of praise and Who can reward you for your good and punish you for your evil deeds. I warn you against the path that you have adopted which will lead you to be afflicted with a painful punishment.

These words fell heavily on the ears of the polytheists and upset them. It was his uncle Abu Lahab who first declined the Prophet's invitation in an aggressive tone. From that day onwards, he and the polytheists rose in opposition and resisted the advancement of Islam. Their opposition was not merely because of their bias in favour of their religious beliefs and sanctities, but also because they saw their whole world threatened by this new religion. Their benefits and social status depended on the situation in Arabia at that time. If a revolution or transformation were to occur, the circumstances would naturally change and their supremacy and privileges would disappear. The polytheists had installed three hundred and sixty idols in the Ka'bah² and each of the Arab tribes worshipped one or more of them. They also considered the Ka'bah to be the house of God and had posed as its guardians and thereby imposed their authority on all of the Arab tribes. They imagined that they had gathered together the deities of heaven and

¹ *Al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 334-337

² *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 5, pp. 45 and 46

those of the earth so that everybody could worship their own desired object of worship. If they abandoned their idols, they would have to relinquish all the privileges and benefits that had been gained from the frequent visits, offerings, and vows of the pilgrims.

Furthermore, haughtiness and jealousy had blinded them and left a profound impact on the intensity of their resistance. Abu Jahl demonstrated this when he said:

We have competed with the clan of ‘Abd Manaf for honour and position and fell behind them on the race field. Now they claim that a prophet has been sent from among them and wish to overtake us. That will never happen.¹

From then on, the blessed Messenger and his followers were under a lot of pressure and were prevented from performing their religious rites. They were forced to go to a valley outside Mecca where they could pray together without being seen.² They were abysmally tormented by the polytheists, who laid them on the ground and put heavy, burning hot stones on their bare backs and chests while attempting to force them to abandon the religion of Muhammad (s) and acknowledge that al-Lāt and al-‘Uzzā were their gods.³ They tied ropes around the necks of the believers and dragged them through the valleys. They dressed their naked bodies in armour and laid them out in the burning sun. Some were beaten, imprisoned and kept hungry and thirsty. The holy Prophet (s) was severely saddened at the extent of the cruelty that was being inflicted on his followers. One day, he happened to see ‘Ammār and his mother Sumayyah, who were almost unconscious as a result of the torture they had undergone and said, “O family of Yasir, be patient! Your final destination is paradise.” After a

¹ *Sirah* by Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 388

² *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 275

³ *Imtā’ al-Asmā’*, Miqirizi, vol 1, p. 18

while, Yasir and Sumayyah were martyred,¹ making them the first martyrs in Islamic history.

The infidels of the Quraysh did not refrain from reviling and insulting the blessed Prophet whenever they met him. One day, while the Prophet (s) was in prostration, 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'it placed the abdominal contents of a camel onto his back in between his shoulders. The Prophet did not lift up his head until his daughter Fatima (a) came and removed them.

On another occasion, while the Prophet (s) was praying in the courtyard of the Ka'bah, the same person came and seized him by the shoulder, twisted his garment around his neck and began brutally choking him. At that time, Abu Bakr came, seized 'Uqbah's shoulders and threw him away from the Prophet (s). The blessed Prophet patiently faced this arduous persecution and continued to enjoin perseverance upon his followers.

Khabbāb ibn Arat narrates:

I complained to the Prophet (of the persecution inflicted on us by the infidels) while he was in the shade of the Ka'bah wall. I said, 'Will you invoke Allah to help us?' He sat down with a red face and said, 'A believer among those who were before you was combed with iron combs so that nothing of his flesh or nerves remained on his bones, yet that never made him desert his religion. A saw might have been put over the middle of his head and his head split into two parts, yet all of that would not make him abandon his religion. By Allah! This religion will be completed and triumphed.'²

¹ *Al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 334-337

² *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 5, pp. 45 and 46

On another occasion, it was said to the Prophet (s), “Invoke curse upon the polytheists,” whereupon he replied, “I have not been sent as the invoker of curse; rather, I have been sent as a mercy.”¹

In the face of the steadfastness of the blessed Prophet, his opponents from the tribe of Quraysh intensified their obstinacy and decided to nullify his invitation by staining his good name and reputation and trying to seek out his weak points. He was called a madman (*majnūn*, literally meaning possessed by jinn), a poet, a soothsayer, or a magician wherever he went. Rumours were also spread that he alienated fathers from sons or wives from their husbands by using witchcraft. During the pilgrimage season, they influenced the strangers and pilgrims with nonsensical words to discourage them from communicating with him.²

At first, the Quraysh proceeded toward the Prophet (s) in a threatening manner. Then, they approached Abu Talib who, from within their group, was Muhammad’s only strong supporter. They did so in order to dissuade him from supporting his nephew though he did not succumb to them. As soon as the Quraysh found out that their threats proved to be ineffective, they resorted to bribing. They sent ‘Utbah ibn Rabi‘ah to tell the Prophet (s) that if he wanted wealth, they would make him the richest man in the country. If the Prophet wanted power and leadership, they would make him their ruler as long as he abandoned his call to Islam. However, the Prophet (s) replied, in a decisive and explicit manner deserving of the rank of the divinely-sent Prophets:

I swear by the Name of God that if they place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand in return for giving up this matter [calling people to Islam], I will never desist until either God makes it triumph or I perish defending it.³

¹ *Sahih* of Muslim, vol. 8, p. 24

² *Sirah* by Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 284

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 278

In short, neither threat nor bribery nor defamation nor the three-year siege of Shi'b Abi Talib, nor hunger nor deprivation nor homelessness could destroy the Prophet's (s) steadfastness. After twenty-three years of struggle, he accomplished his goal in delivering the message of Islam to the world.

Respect for Public Opinion

With regard to the subjects (*mawḍūʿ*) and rulings (*hukm*) that are determined by definitive revelation (*wahy*) and explicit statements (*nass*), including the divinely legislated acts of worship and transactions, the Prophet (s) did not grant himself or others the right to intervene and express opinions. This group of rulings should be unconditionally implemented and violating them is regarded as disbelief in God as stated in the Qur'an: "Whoever does not judge by that which God has revealed: such are disbelievers" (5:44).¹ However, when it came to subjects pertaining to the individual's life and activity, as long as these were permissible, the individual Muslims were entitled to independent opinion and freedom of action. No one had the right to interfere in the private affairs of others.² When it came to society, the Prophet (s) believed that everyone had an equal right to express their opinion. Although his clear-mindedness and extraordinary intelligence excelled that of others in discerning public interest, he never behaved in a despotic and/or imperious manner and did not show indifference to public opinion. He always took the opinions of others into consideration while putting the Qur'anic order into practice and only wanted Muslims to bear this prophetic tendency in mind.

There were three occasions in the Battle of Badr where Prophet Muhammad (s) invited his companions to consult together and asked them to express their opinions. On the first occasion, he consulted his companions as to whether they should fight the Quraysh or leave them alone and return to Medina. All of them

¹ Chapter 5 (al-Ma'idah: the Table), 44

² *Sahih* of Muslim, vol. 8, p. 10

preferred to fight, so he agreed.¹ Secondly, he consulted his companions about where the camp should be established. At this point he agreed with the advice of Hubāb ibn al-Mundhir. In the third instance, he consulted his companions and followers as to how the captives should be treated. Some said that they should be killed; others preferred that they should be set free on ransom. The blessed Prophet agreed with the second group.²

At the battle of Uhud, the Prophet (s) consulted his companions about the best strategy to follow. He accepted the majority preference to go out of Medina and meet the armies of the Quraysh rather than remaining inside the fortifications to fight.³

At the battle of Ahzab, the Prophet (s) held an urgent consultation as to whether they should draw up their forces and arrange them outside Medina or defend themselves inside the city. After the consultation, it was agreed that Mount Sal' should be used as the headquarters of the army of Islam and a trench should be dug to act as a barrier to prevent the enemy forces from proceeding to attack.⁴

During the battle of Tabuk, the Roman emperor was frightened when the army of Islam approached the frontier of Syria. He did not launch an attack because he could not count on his army. At this juncture the Prophet (s) assembled his esteemed officers and, acting on the established Islamic principle of consultation, he asked for their views as to whether they should advance into the territory of the enemy or return to Medina. As a result of this military consultation, it was decided that the army of Islam should return to Medina.⁵

¹ *Sirah* by Ibn Hisham, vol. 2, p. 253

² *Imtā' al-Asmā'*, Miqirizi, vol. 1, pp. 74, 78 and 97

³ *Sirah* by Ibn Hisham, vol. 3, p. 7

⁴ *Imtā' al-Asmā'*, Miqirizi, vol. 1, p. 220

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 463

It is known that all Muslims believe in the Prophet's (s) infallibility and do not find any of his deeds objectionable.¹ However, the blessed Prophet was nevertheless tolerant towards criticism even if it was irrelevant and baseless, and he was careful not to place people under suffocating circumstances. Instead, he used to make the critic aware of his error by using convincing arguments told in a quiet and gentle way. He used to abide by the natural law that the Creator of the world has endowed all humans with the power of thinking and critiquing, and openly acknowledged that this was not exclusive to those who possessed influence and power. He did not allow the rights of freedom of expression and criticism to be denied to the people. He particularly ordered his followers to exercise their rights in the face of a ruler who did something against the laws of justice by rejecting and protesting against it.

In another instance, the Prophet (s) sent out an army to carry out a campaign. He appointed a man from the Ansār as a commander and ordered the soldiers to obey him. During the campaign, the commander became angry with his soldiers and said, "Didn't the Prophet order you to obey me?" They replied in the affirmative. Then he said, "I order you to collect wood and make a fire and then throw yourselves into it." Thus the soldiers collected wood and made a fire, but just as they were about to throw themselves into it, they started having second thoughts. They looked at each other and questioned, "We followed the Prophet (s) to escape

¹ It has to be noted that all Muslims believe in the infallibility of the Prophet (s) with respect to his mission, but with respect to his personal life before or after the mission there are differences among different schools of Islam. Shi'a Muslims believe in the infallibility of the Prophet (s) both before and after his mission in his delivery of the message as well as his personal life. Sunni Muslims are divided in this matter. Basically they agree on the infallibility in the delivery of message, but with respect to his personal life some believe in the possibility of committing unintentional sins and others in possibility of committing minor sins. With respect to the period before the mission started, they normally do not believe in the necessity of infallibility. For further explanation see Shomali, M.A., *Shi'i Islam: Origins, faith & Practices* (2001), pp. 97-106 (editor).

from the fire. We embraced Islam to save ourselves from the 'fire' so why should we enter it now?" While they were in that state of indecision, the fire went out and with it went their commander's anger. The event was relayed to the Prophet (s), who said:

If they had entered it [the fire] they would never have come out of it [i.e. out of the fire of injustice], for obedience [to someone's orders] is required only when he enjoins what is good.¹

At the battle of Hunayn, the Prophet (s) deemed it expedient to allocate a large proportion of the booty to the newly converted Meccans. Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah and some of the other Medinite Ansārs who were among the foremost warriors expressed their dissatisfaction with the preference given by the Prophet (s) to the Ansārs. When their discontent reached the ears of Muhammad (s), he assembled the disheartened Ansārs together, and with an eloquent and pleasant mode of expression, he made them aware of the causes of his partiality and of their own error. When they heard the Prophet's (s) words, the Ansārs present started weeping and apologized to him.²

In another incident that occurred after the Battle of Hunayn, a man called Hurqus from the tribe of Banu Tamim, (who later became one of the chiefs of the Khārijites), rebuked the Prophet (s) by saying, "Be just in your distribution, O Messenger of Allah." 'Umar ibn Khattāb was incensed by this rude remark and asked the Prophet (s) to allow him to behead Hurqus. The Prophet (s) said, "Leave him alone!" He then turned to Hurqus and said gently: "Then who can be called just if I am not just?"³

With regards to peace contracts, 'Umar ibn Khattāb strongly objected to the Prophet (s) with regards to the unequal terms of the treaty of Hudaibiyyah concluded by the Prophet (s) with the

¹ *Sahih* of Muslim, vol. 6, p. 16

² *Imtā' al-Asmā'*, Miqrirzi, vol. 1, 431

³ *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 4, p. 200

tribe of the Quraysh. The blessed Prophet did not get upset with him, but instead persuaded him with a convincing argument.¹

In yet another instance, a man demanded his debts from the Prophet (s) in such a rude manner that the companions of the Prophet intended to harm him, but the Prophet said, "Leave him, for he [the creditor] has the right to demand it. Buy a camel of the same age and give it to him." They challenged, "But the camel that is available is older than the camel he demands," to which the Prophet (s) replied,

Buy it and give it to him, for the best among you are those who repay their debts in the most generous manner.²

The blessed Prophet (s) imbued both the values of justice and mercy. In this way, he taught the rulers of the world how to rule so that they were aware that their rank and status in society was like that of a kind father rather than an absolute master, and that they should always consider the best interests of their subjects instead of imposing their own whims and wishes upon them. The Prophet (s) said, "I am more considerate and compassionate of the best interests of the believers than they are of themselves." He also said:

The Qur'an describes my rank and status in these words: '*The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves.*' (33:6)³ So, if a true believer dies and leaves behind some property, his inheritance will be given to his inheritors [from the father's side], and if he leaves behind some debt to be paid or destitute children, then I am their guardian.⁴

¹ *Imtā' al-Asmā'*, Miqrirzi, vol. 1, p. 296

² *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 3, p. 116

³ Chapter 33: 6

⁴ *Sahih* of Bukhari, vol. 3, 118

News and experiences of the noble character and high moral qualities of the blessed Prophet (s) spread so widely within a short period of time and became so deeply-rooted in the hearts of the earliest Muslims that they transformed everything into the best form possible. Through them, the Prophet (s) was able to change Arab pride into humility, mercilessness into compassion, disunity into unity, infidelity into faith, idolatry into monotheism, division into solidarity, immorality into chastity, vengeance into forgiveness, idleness into activity, selfishness into altruism, roughness into tenderness, niggardliness into selflessness, and foolishness into sagacity and intelligence. Indeed, the Prophet's way of life was the very perfect and practical interpretation of God's heavenly Book, the Glorious Quran, which he embodied in all of the various stages of his life.